



1996

## Adams County History 1996

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# Adams County History 1996

## **Keywords**

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# ADAMS COUNTY HISTORY



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## Note from the Editor

We are gratified to report that the 1995, premier, issue of *Adams County History* (copies of which are still available for purchase at the society) has been well-received. Not only did many of our own members express their pleasure over the journal, but not a few readers whose historical interests range far beyond Adams county's past wrote or spoke of their delighted surprise—surprise that a small historical society such as ours, with limited resources and funds, would be able to publish a professional, informative, and artistically presented gathering of essays exploring the area's significant history. We believe that this, our second issue, continues in the direction promised by last year's publication. As this issue goes to press, moreover, the editor can report that two articles, already developed beyond the "drawing-board" stage, promise a full historical spectrum for the third volume: at the earlier end of the time line, one article will focus on the poignant fates of several individuals, Tories or British Loyalists, who, during the Revolutionary War, refused to commit themselves to the new nation; and at the other, twentieth-century end, the second will examine the career of an important Adams county suffragette. Conceivably, the underlying emphasis of both articles might be used to define a theme for the third volume—Adams countians whose consciences and ideals set them in opposition to the dominating, popular beliefs and feelings of their times. Irrespective of such a common idea, however, we eagerly invite essays and proposals for articles for the 1997 issue of *ACH*.

Although not immediately evident—and certainly not as the consequence of a preconceived design—the four pieces presented here suggest a unity beyond the simple, bald fact that they explore Adams county history. Each one, tacitly or obviously, looks at how Adams county men and women dealt with the upheavals and cataclysms wrought by war—from the dislocations and scalplings of the French and Indian War through the three-day artillery barrages and the attacks and counterattacks of the Battle of Gettysburg itself to the privations, shortages, daily losses of friends and relatives, and the ever-present threat of attack from the skies and from saboteurs on the ground during World War II.

Our executive and associate directors join efforts to understand the earliest settlement patterns in the Buchanan Valley in the South Mountain. Using as a starting point the famous Indian raid on the farm where Mary Jameson and her family lived, Charles H. Glatfelter, reinforced by the research and mapping expertise of Arthur Weaner,

unravels many mysteries surrounding the valley's first homesteaders, even as he discovers additional questions which will perplex the curious for years to come.

Timothy H. Smith draws upon both his deep experience as a licensed battlefield guide and his careful, painstaking research into the impact of the battle on Gettysburg's residents to document the extant visual evidence of battle damage within the borough and to bring vividly into focus the very events and moments that scarred the architecture of the town.

A contributor to the first issue returns with a more exploratory essay. Elwood W. Christ speculates on the apparent significance of an obscure nineteenth-century novel to a family preparing its damage claim after the battle had completely destroyed their farmstead. Woody's literary and historical detective work will confirm for many readers their perceptions of how art astonishingly and unexpectedly parallels and foreshadows life.

Finally, M. Francis Coulson, skillfully interviewed by Jennifer Sonnenberg, recalls his rich experiences in Adams county during the trials of World War II. Although much closer to us than the events of the late 1750s or of 1-3 July 1863, the feelings and details recollected by Francis Coulson set down for today's interested readers and future historians how a community reacted to a crisis that indeed threatened its existence as much as, though in very different ways, the less proximate ones of 200 and of 80 years earlier.





**Fig. 1. Buchanan Valley Statue.**

This statue of Mary Jameson at St. Ignatius Loyola Roman Catholic Church in the Buchanan Valley was dedicated on October 13, 1923. Father Will Whalen, pastor of the church from 1917 to 1938, was largely responsible for making it possible. In the same year as the dedication he published *The Red Lily of Buchanan Valley*, which he described as “a romance founded on the life of the Irish girl stolen by the Indians from Buchanan Valley, Adams County, Pennsylvania, in 1758. A story too strange and grim not to be true.” (Photo in the Adams County Historical Society.)

## The Jameson Raid(1758) as a Focus for Historical Inquiry

by Charles H. Glatfelter

Each year the Adams County Historical Society receives inquiries either in person or by mail from persons asking for information about a young woman who with the rest of her family was seized and carried off from their home in what is now Adams county during the French and Indian War.<sup>1</sup> She was the only member of that family who was not slaughtered as the raiding party and its captives moved into the western part of Pennsylvania. The subsequent life of this woman among the Indians was deemed of sufficient historical importance that she was chosen to be among some 13,000 well-known Americans who were included in the prestigious *Dictionary of American Biography*, a reference work of twenty volumes published between 1928 and 1937, and still being updated today. The volume containing her sketch, the tenth, was published in 1933.<sup>2</sup>

The young woman in question, in the *Dictionary of American Biography* sketch, and almost everywhere else, is called Mary Jemison. In the autumn of 1823, a group of residents of western New York, where she was then living, persuaded Dr. James E. Seaver to interview Mary at length and prepare an account of her eventful life. The two spent almost three days together. The first of many editions of *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison* was published in Canandaigua, New York, in 1824. In this and later versions of the book additional material was included, some of which had little or nothing to do with her. What was labeled a twenty-second edition was published as late as 1925. The long title of one of the editions referred to Mary as the White Woman of the Genesee, a designation which has persisted. For this essay, a 1967 reprint of the first edition was used. Added material in this reprint was copyrighted by Charles C. Kelsey and Allegany Press.

In the preface of his work, Dr. Seaver stated, incorrectly, that Mary was "destitute of education." Whether she knew how to spell her last name, whether indeed after so many years she even remembered how to pronounce it as her family once had, we do not know. In any event, Seaver spelled it *Jemison*, and virtually everyone since 1824 has followed his example. There is overwhelming evidence that the eighteenth-century spelling in Pennsylvania, and presumably also in Ireland, was *Jameson*. For the purpose of this essay, it will be *Jameson*.



In deciding whether to accept the Seaver narrative as a credible source for Mary's life in Adams county, one needs to remember that it was not intended to be an exact transcription of what she told her interviewer. We do not know to what extent his own ideas entered into the composition of the finished work. Nor do we know how accurately Mary could remember events which had occurred in her life years earlier, before it was radically and irrevocably changed from that of a colonial American youth of Ulster-Scots origin into that of a Seneca Indian woman. In his introduction, Seaver wisely reminded his readers that "it cannot be reasonably supposed, that a person of her age has kept the events of seventy years in so complete a chain as to be able to assign to each its proper time and place." Actually, one of the remarkable things about his narrative is how much of it which relates to Mary's life before her capture has the ring of truth about it.

According to what Mary Jameson remembered in 1823, eighty or eighty-one years earlier she was born while her parents, Thomas and Jane Jameson, were crossing the ocean on their way from Ireland to Pennsylvania.<sup>3</sup> Accompanying them when they left home were two sons and a daughter: John, Thomas, and Betsy. There may have been other

**A NARRATIVE  
OF THE LIFE OF  
MRS. MARY JEMISON.**

**Who was taken by the Indians, in the year 1755,  
when only about twelve years of age, and  
has continued to reside amongst  
them to the present time.**

**CONTAINING**

**An Account of the Murder of her Father and his  
Family; her sufferings; her marriage to two Indians;  
her troubles with her Children; barbarities of the  
Indians in the French and Revolutionary Wars; the  
life of her last Husband, &c.; and many Historical  
Facts never before published.  
*Carefully taken from her own words, Nov. 29th, 1823.***

**TO WHICH IS ADDED,**

**An APPENDIX, containing an account of the tragedy  
at the Devil's Hole, in 1763, and of Sullivan's Ex-  
pedition; the Traditions, Manners, Customs, &c. of  
the Indians, as believed and practised at the present  
day, and since Mrs. Jemison's captivity; together  
with some Anecdotes, and other entertaining matter.**

**BY JAMES E. SEAVER.**

**CANANDAIGUA:**

**PRINTED BY J. D. BEMIS AND CO.**

**1824.**

*Fig. 2. Reproduced from the 1967 reprint of the first edition by Allegany Press, Ann Arbor, Michigan.*

family members in the party, including Jane's parents, whose family name was Ervin or Erwin, and a brother of Thomas, whose name was John.

As Mary recalled, whatever her father may have been in Ireland, he was a farmer at heart. Soon after arriving in Philadelphia, he took his family toward the western frontier, choosing a tract of land along the banks of Marsh creek in Adams county. Here he built the necessary buildings and cleared some of the land. Here Jane gave birth to two more sons, who were named Matthew and Robert.

Mary attended school, where she learned to read. Under the direction of her parents, at home, she read the Bible and studied the catechism. In all probability it was the Presbyterian Westminster Catechism. It is evident that, to the end of her life, she remembered with fondness the days she had spent with her family in Adams county. She called them her "childish, happy days" and told Dr. Seaver that she still often dreamed about them.

After about a decade living on their first American homestead, along Marsh creek, Thomas Jameson moved his family some miles to the west, into the mountains. There will be more about this move later.

\* \* \* \*

Within less than a decade after the Jameson family arrived in Pennsylvania, the rivalry between the French and English for control of the vast and valuable Ohio river country had reached serious proportions. In 1753 the French built a string of forts along the upper Ohio to assert and defend their claims to the region. Virginia, which then insisted that western Pennsylvania was part of their province, sent Colonel George Washington (he was twenty-two years old at the time) with a small force of Virginia militiamen and others to assert the British claim to the Ohio country. After a brief contest at Great Meadows in July 1754, Washington surrendered Fort Necessity to the French. His casualties were about one hundred men, of whom about one-third were killed. The Fort Necessity National Battlefield is located about ten miles east of Uniontown, Fayette county, on U.S. Route 40.

Mary Jameson told Dr. Seaver that her uncle, John Jameson, was one of the men who lost their lives at Great Meadows. According to her, the uncle had been married and was the father of one child. After his wife died, Jane Jameson took care of the infant "in the most tender manner, till its mother's sister took it away, a few months after my uncle's death." No evidence has yet been found to explain how John Jameson became a



member of the forces which Washington commanded at Great Meadows; his niece offered none.

Soon after Washington's defeat, and in anticipation of full-scale war, the British government sent General Edward Braddock to America to seize a series of French forts, stretching southward from Canada to Fort Duquesne, at the present Pittsburgh. While attempting to seize the latter fort in July 1755, the British were defeated by a force of Frenchmen and their Indian allies, suffering a loss of about 1,000 men killed and wounded. Braddock himself was among those killed. His successor retreated with his remaining troops all the way to Philadelphia, leaving the entire Pennsylvania-Maryland-Virginia frontier open to cruel attacks by the French and Indians.

The expected raids began as early as September 1755. From Easton southwestward into the valley of Virginia, along a frontier of about 180 miles, no settlement was safe from the ravages of a war party, usually small in number, which might suddenly burst upon a family, pillaging; setting fire to buildings; murdering innocent men, women, and children; and carrying off whomsoever they chose. With a legislature still dominated by Quakers, the provincial government was slow to act. Tardily, it built a chain of forts along the frontier and attempted to make peace with the Indians, but relative freedom from attacks had to await the destruction of the Indian stronghold at Kittanning in September 1756 and the occupation of Fort Duquesne, which the French had just abandoned and destroyed, in November 1758. General John Forbes, who commanded the British expedition, wrote the governor of Pennsylvania a few days later from "Fort Duquesne, or now Pittsburgh," that his forces had "totally expelled the French from this Fort and this prodigious tract of Country" and "in a manner reconciled the various Tribes of Indians inhabiting it to His Majesty's Government."<sup>4</sup>

\* \* \* \*

At least as early as the summer of 1756, the threat of imminent attack had reached Adams county. In sending the governor a petition from residents of York county in August of that year, Rev. Thomas Barton, the local Anglican minister, declared that

the complicated Distresses of these poor Creatures are beyond Expression. What few Inhabitants remained in Cumberland are daily flying from thence, so that in three or four days it will be totally relinquish'd. Marsh Creek is now the Frontier, and such a Panick has seiz'd the Hearts of People in general, that unless we have soon

some favourable Turn in our Affairs, I am affraid the Enemy need not long be at the Pains to dispute a Claim to those two Counties.<sup>5</sup>

Although the South Mountain did offer some protection to Adams countians, it was not enough to shield those living in the western townships from a determined band of French and Indians who were on the warpath. The nearest frontier forts were miles away and not nearly close enough together to prevent enemy incursions. In fact, they were most useful as places of refuge for those who had some warning of an impending raid.<sup>6</sup> In the summer of 1757 there were several attacks in Hamiltonban township, but apparently no one was killed or carried away.<sup>7</sup> When Colonel Hance Hamilton, one of the leading local figures in defending the frontier, secured a survey in 1768 for his mill property along the Conewago creek in Menallen township, the surveyor noted that "this Tract had been Settled a considerable Time ago & a small Improvement made, & in the Time of the last Indian War had been Deserted."<sup>8</sup> Only recently had anyone reoccupied it.

On Thursday, April 13, 1758, seven months before the several efforts to achieve peace along the frontier had succeeded, some nineteen Delaware Indians descended upon the mill property of Richard Bard. It was located at the present Virginia Mills, northwest of Fairfield, in Hamiltonban township. The all-too-usual sequel was repeated here: pillage, burning, torture, and murder. Of the nine persons who were in or near the house at the time, four were killed as they fled westward, including the Bards' six-month old baby. Three young people, who were not their children, were eventually liberated. Richard Bard, who was then twenty-two years old, miraculously escaped from his captors and then spent most of the next two and one-half years searching for his wife. In September 1760 he found her near Sunbury and paid forty pounds to gain her release. During her long captivity she had traveled about 500 miles on foot, first west to Fort Duquesne and then east to the upper Susquehanna valley. Once free and reunited, Richard (1736-1799) and Catherine (1737-1811) Bard spent the rest of their lives in Franklin county, where they had at least four more children. Their graves are near Mercersburg.

Richard Bard left behind a rich primary source for what happened to him and his family during the war. On May 12, 1758, less than a month after his abduction and escape, he made a deposition before George Stevenson, the chief Penn representative in York county, in which he recounted the facts of his seizure and escape. The importance of Bard's deposition warrants quoting it completely:



York County, ss.

The Affirmation of Richard Beard, of Hamilton's Bane Township, aged twenty-two years, who saith, that his Habitation being at the Foot of the South Mountain, on the South-East side thereof, on Thursday the thirteenth day of April last, about 7 o'clock in the morning, He, this Deponent, was in his house with Katharine his Wife, John his child, about seven months old, Thomas Potter, son of the late Captain John Potter, Esq., Deceased, Frederick Ferrick, his Servant, about fourteen Years of age, Hannah McBride, aged about Eleven Years, William White, about nine Years old; in his Field were Samuel Hunter and Daniel McMenomy, Labourers, when a party consisting of nineteen Indians, came and Captivated Samuel Hunter and Daniel McMenomy in the Field, and afterwards came to the dwelling house of this Deponent, and about six of them suddenly rushed into the house, and were immediately driven out by this Deponent and Thomas Potter; the Door of the house was thrown down by our pressing to keep the Indians out, and their pressing to come in, they shot in the house at us, and shot away Thomas Potter's little finger. We then had time to know their Numbers, and in a little time surrender'd, on the promise of the Indians not to kill any of us, they tied us, & took us about Sixty Rods up the Mountain, where their Watch Coats lay, for they were naked except the Britch Clouts, Legins, Mocasins and Caps; then they brought the two men that had been at Work in the Field, and in about half an hour, they order'd us to March, seting me foremost of the Prisoners. We marched one after another at some Distance; at about seven miles they kill'd my Child, which I discovered by seeing its Scalp, about twelve o'clock I saw another Scalp, which I knew to be Thomas Potters. I have since been informed that they killed him at the Place where their Match Coats lay. Fryday the 14th, about twelve o'clock, they murder'd Samuel Hunter on the North Mountain, they drove us over the Allegheny Mountain a day and an half, and on Monday Night about ten o'clock, I escap'd, they having sent me several Times about three Rods from the fire to bring Water. In nine Nights and Days I got to Fort Lyttleton, having had no food other than four Snakes, which I had kill'd and eat, and some Buds and Roots, and the like; three Cherokee Indians found me about two miles from Fort Lyttleton, cut me a Staff, and Piloted me to the Fort.

In conversation with the Indians during my Captivity, they informed me that they were all Delawares, for they mostly all Spake English, one spake as good English as I can. The Captain said he had been at Philadelphia last Winter, and another said he had been at Philadelphia about a year ago; I ask'd them if they were not going to make Peace with the English? The Captain answered, and said they were talking about it when he was in Philadelphia last Winter, but he went away and left them.

RICHARD BAIRD.

Affirmed & Subscribed at York, }  
the 12th May, 1758,

COL. GEO. STEVENSON.<sup>9</sup>

\* \* \* \*

A letter dated York county, April 5, 1758, and published in the Philadelphia *Pennsylvania Gazette* eight days later, reported on an enemy raid into York county just eight days before the one on the Richard Bard family:

three Indians were seen this Day by two boys near Thomas Jamieson's, at the Head of Marsh Creek; upon which they gave the Alarm, when six Men went to said Jamieson's House, and found there one Robert Buck killed and scalped, also a Horse killed, that belonged to William Man, a Soldier at Carlisle, whose Wife and Children had just come to live with Jamieson. This Woman, and her three Children, Thomas Jamieson, his Wife, and five or six Children, are all missing.

It is evident that, at this point in her story, Mary Jameson's memory failed her, a lapse for which she can surely be excused. She referred to "Indian barbarities inflicted upon the whites" as early as the spring of 1752, and then told Dr. Seaver that the attack on her family occurred "in the spring of 1755."<sup>10</sup> That was before the Braddock defeat in July of that year and his successor's retreat across Pennsylvania, the event which exposed the frontier to attack. While there may have been occasional raids on frontier settlements before that time, the letter in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, as well as other evidence, clearly fixes the date of the raid on the Jamesons as occurring three years later, at a time when all but a few such incursions were about to end, at least until a brief return of Indian warfare in 1763-1764.

According to Mary's account, the raiding party of six Shawnee Indians and four Frenchmen had little difficulty in subduing the ten persons who were then in or near the Jameson house. These included Thomas, Jane, Robert, Matthew, Betsy, and Mary Jameson, as well as a woman, her son, and two daughters, whose names Mary did not remember. All she could recall was that, while the woman's husband (identified as William Man in the newspaper account) was in the military service, she and her children were staying with her brother-in-law (identified in the same account as Robert Buck), who lived somewhere near the Jamesons. Perhaps for added protection, the five of them had just come to remain for a time with Mary's family.

After gathering up as much food as they could carry, the French and Indians headed with their ten captives back into the west from which they had come, leaving behind the corpse of Robert Buck, whom they



had shot down as he returned from a brief visit to his house. They also left behind Mary's two older brothers, who she remembered were working in the barn when the attack occurred. Years later, a man named Fields visited her in New York and told her that John and Thomas had somehow escaped and gone to live with their Ervin grandparents in Virginia.

As the little band moved westward, prodded by the captors to keep a rapid pace, neither Mary's father nor mother had much to say. Both undoubtedly knew too well what was about to happen to them. Thomas Jameson, she said, "lost all his ambition in the beginning of our trouble, and continued apparently lost to every care - absorbed in melancholy." He refused to eat, and the only thing she heard him say from the time they were captured was to utter the name of a small fort which they passed. Jane Jameson, on the other hand, "manifested a great degree of fortitude, and encouraged us to support our troubles without complaining."

Toward the end of the second day, the party arrived at what Mary described as "the border of a dark and dismal swamp, which was covered with small hemlocks, or some other evergreen, and other bushes." Later that evening, when Jane Jameson saw the Indians remove Mary's shoes and stockings, and then place moccasins on her feet, she interpreted this act as a sign that her daughter's life would probably be spared. Years later, Mary recounted to Dr. Seaver the substance of her mother's farewell advice to her. After expressing her great pain and anguish, Jane urged her daughter always to remember her own name, the names of her parents, her English tongue, and the prayers she had been taught as a child. Any effort to escape, she warned, would be unsuccessful, indeed fatal.

After the Indians did to the young Man (more properly Mann) boy what they had done to Mary, one of them took the two ahead of the rest of the party, to a spot where they spent the night. Remembering her mother's admonition, she rejected the boy's pleas that they try to escape. The next morning, when the other French and Indians joined them, there was no sign of Mary's relatives and friends. "It is impossible for any one to form a correct idea of what my feelings were at the sight of those savages," she told Dr. Seaver. Later that day, she saw the "wet and bloody" scalps which she immediately recognized. "My mother's hair was red," she said, "and I could easily distinguish my father's and the children's from each other." There was no comfort for her in the captors' assurance "that they should not have killed the family if the whites had not pursued them." The emotion of this experience was still evident some sixty-five years later. "The manner in which I was deprived" of my family "all at

once," she told Dr. Seaver, "affects me so powerfully, that I am almost overwhelmed with grief, that is seemingly insupportable."

When Fields visited Mary in New York, he told her that he was living near her family in 1758. Upon hearing of the raid, he said, "the whole neighborhood turned out in pursuit of the enemy." Eventually they located the bodies of the slain, "stripped and mangled in the most inhuman manner." Finding no trace of French or Indians for them to follow, and believing that all of the captives had been killed, the would-be rescuers called off any further efforts and returned home.

Mary Jameson and young Mann were kept together until they reached Fort Duquesne, which was still in French hands. Here they were separated. Mary told Dr. Seaver that she never saw the boy again and had no idea of what happened to him. Undoubtedly, she never learned that in June 1761 General Jeffrey Amherst, British commander-in-chief in America, informed the governor of Pennsylvania that he was returning eight children who had been held captive by the Indians and Canadians, with the request that the governor deliver "deliver them to their parents or relations." One of these children was identified as John Mann, "of Marsh Creek, in pennsylvania, taken in 1758, by Indians."<sup>11</sup>

Once she and John were separated, Mary Jameson was given to two Seneca women. After spending several years somewhere in the Ohio river valley, she was taken to an Indian town near the present Geneseo, Livingston county, in western New York. Twice married to Indian men, she became the mother of eight children and never took advantage of several opportunities to leave her new community and return to life among the whites. In time she acquired a large tract of land along the Genesee river, but she was living on a Seneca reservation when she died in 1833, aged about ninety years.

About 1859 William P. Letchworth began developing the area around Mary's river property. He moved her remains there in 1874 and the cabin in which she had lived, six years later. He gave this property to the state of New York in 1907, and it is now Letchworth State Park in Livingston county. A statue in Mary's memory was dedicated there in 1910 (see cover illustration).

\* \* \* \*

We have a considerable body of generally credible information about Mary Jameson from the time her family was seized in April 1758 until her death seventy-five years later. Unfortunately, what we know about that family between the time of its arrival in Philadelphia in or about



the year 1743 and 1758 is based upon a regrettable scarcity of credible facts.

As previously noted, Mary remembered that her father was at heart a farmer. That being the case, he decided not to remain in Philadelphia and make his living there as an artisan, craftsman, or laborer. Instead, he joined many other Scotch-Irish families already located in what are now Adams, Cumberland, and Franklin counties. Mary told Dr. Seaver that Thomas Jameson "soon left the city, and removed his family to the then frontier settlements of Pennsylvania, to a tract of excellent land lying on Marsh creek. At that place he cleared a large farm, and for seven or eight years enjoyed the fruits of his industry."<sup>12</sup> It is remarkable that after so many years Mary still remembered the name of the stream along which her family made its first American home. The community of which they became a part was known as the Marsh Creek settlement.

It is more than probable that the first Jameson homestead was located somewhere within the Manor of Maske, a large tract which the Penns had tried, unsuccessfully, to survey, first in 1741 and then on several subsequent occasions. One will look in vain for any record of a deed given to Thomas Jameson for his "large farm" in the manor. Because of the standoff existing between the Penn proprietors and the manor residents between 1741 and 1765 (the latter date being seven years after the Jameson family was carried off), during that quarter century, with only a very few exceptions, there were no warrants issued for the survey of land, no actual surveys made, and no patent deeds issued to confer clear titles. If, as is possible, Thomas Jameson was not the first settler on his "large farm," any document the seller would have given him would not have been in the form of a regularly executed deed which could then have been recorded, but rather it would have been an informal piece of paper transferring whatever right the seller believed he had in the property. After more than two and one-half centuries, no evidence has come to light, and probably none ever will, to indicate where in the Manor of Maske the Jamesons may have lived, except that it was in what became Cumberland township when York county was created in 1749.<sup>13</sup>

Apart from a deed, another valuable source of information about the Jamesons would be the lists of taxables which the Lancaster county commissioners probably began preparing annually for the Marsh Creek settlement sometime in the 1740s and which those in York county began compiling late in 1749 for use in 1750. Unfortunately, the earliest known lists for the latter are for the year 1762.<sup>14</sup> The name of Thomas Jameson does not appear on any known tax list.

It is probably that the Jameson family established some relationship

with, which may have included full membership in, one of the three Presbyterian congregations which were in existence in or near the Marsh Creek settlement by 1750. The two oldest, Upper Marsh Creek (now represented by the Gettysburg Presbyterian church) and Great Conewago, can date their beginnings to 1740. Lower Marsh Creek church dates from 1748. Because no records of early ministerial acts performed in these congregations have survived, we cannot turn to them for the baptisms of Matthew and Robert Jameson or for any other evidence of family participation in the life of one of these congregations.

When Thomas Jameson arrived in the Manor of Maske, there were already some 150 tracts on which families were living. In addition, there were so many families already west of the Susquehanna river in what was then Lancaster county that it was only a matter of time before the provincial legislature would be obliged to establish a new county. Finally, in August 1749 it created the fifth county in the province and named it York.

One of the little-known features of British rule in colonial North America was its reliance on wide participation in performing the tasks of local government. Some county officers (for example, commissioners) were chosen by popular election and others (for example, sheriffs) by a combination of election and appointment. Each township had constables, supervisors of highways, overseers of the poor, and tax collectors, chosen from the body of local residents by the county court or commissioners. The terms were one year and incumbents were usually not reappointed. Few aspired to any of these burdensome positions. Once appointed, however, each incumbent was expected to do his duty or face unpleasant consequences.

The first known evidence that Thomas Jameson had been summoned for public service is contained in an action by the Lancaster county commissioners in June 1749, several months before there was either a York county or a Cumberland township. They issued an order against him, and later imposed a fine, for failure to perform his important duties as constable of what they called the "Mashcreek" [sic] district. It was his duty to prepare a list of taxables for use in levying county taxes for the ensuing year. Unfortunately, efforts extending over many years to find early Lancaster county court and commissioners' records which might shed some light on this incident have been unavailing.<sup>15</sup> We do not know why Thomas Jameson did not do his duty, nor do we know when he was first appointed constable. Since these officers were usually named at the October court of quarter sessions, it may have been in October 1748 or possibly even a year earlier.



When the court of quarter sessions of York county held its first meeting in October 1749, the justices named Thomas Jameson constable of the newly formed Cumberland township. At their next session, in January 1750, when he and all of the other constables were expected to be present and make their required reports, Jameson's absence on this occasion was excused because he was reported to be "sick."<sup>16</sup> It is apparent that he was then relieved of his duties. Neither the county court nor the county commissioners ever again named him to a township office, but it is significant that by the late 1740s Thomas Jameson, still something of a newcomer to the area, had established himself sufficiently in the Marsh Creek settlement that the Lancaster county and then the York county courts would appoint him to the responsible position of township constable.

In 1823 Mary Jameson told Dr. Seaver that one autumn "my father either moved to another neighborhood, a short distance from our former abode." Even after many years, she said, "I well recollect moving, and that the barn that was on the place we moved to was built of logs, though the house was a good one."<sup>17</sup> Given Mary's imperfect memory of the actual chronology of this period in her life, it is not possible to determine with any certainty when the family move occurred. She gave conflicting evidence on that point.

Just as it is more than probable that the first Jameson homestead was within the Manor of Maske, it is more than probable that the second one was outside the manor, somewhere in the mountains to its west.<sup>18</sup> Mary recalled that the family had gone to a place where there were already existing buildings, but whether constructed by a previous owner or by her father before they moved is not clear. In any event, why Thomas Jameson wanted to move his family out of the Marsh Creek settlement, with its community of many other Scotch-Irish immigrants, into a very sparsely populated place in the mountains remains a mystery.

At the time of his death, Thomas Jameson was indebted in the amount of some sixteen pounds to Robert Work, who appealed to the York county court of common pleas for assistance in collecting what was due him. The court responded by ordering a levy on the only available Jameson family assets. On August 1, 1759 Sheriff Zachariah Shugart acknowledged in open court that, in pursuance of the order which the court had issued, he had sold the real estate of a "certain Thomas Jameson, late of York County, yeoman." The purchaser was Hance Hamilton, to whom on that day Shugart had issued a deed for "an Improvement and Tract of Land where on . . . Thomas Jameson lately Dwelt, situate in the South Mountain, in Cumberland Township."<sup>19</sup> The

proper legal language of this deed established that it covered the real estate on which Thomas Jameson had recently lived and that he was now deceased. As one would expect, the deed was completely silent concerning the circumstances of his death and that of all his known heirs.

Sheriff Shugart sold the Jameson property for thirteen pounds, fifteen shillings. Some indication of how prospective buyers valued the abandoned Jameson homestead is conveyed by the fact that, had Robert Work been paid the full sixteen pounds of his claim, he would have been able to buy two good horses and have a little change left over. The purchaser, Hance Hamilton, was one of the leading figures in York county. He was its first sheriff, for many years a justice of the peace, an officer during the French and Indian War, a businessman, and a large landowner. The fact that his deed for Jameson property mentions no acreage, no courses and distances, no adjoining landowners, and no warrant from the Penns on which a claim could be based, proves conclusively that the Jameson family, as well as anyone who might have preceded them, were pure and simple squatters, as indeed the Jamesons had been on their first homestead in the Marsh Creek settlement.<sup>20</sup>

Most early sheriff deeds were simply exhibited in open court and never recorded. Unless they were consistently passed along to succeeding owners, one can know little more about the sale than that it took place. Fortunately, Hance Hamilton recorded his deed and all of the valuable information in it remains available for study. Unfortunately, we do not know when and how he disposed of the Jameson property: that deed was not recorded. There is no evidence from his voluminous estate papers that he still owned it when he died in 1772. There is evidence that he sold it very soon after purchasing it in 1759.

\* \* \* \*

Although there is no evidence either to show that Thomas Jameson ever established a formal claim to any land in Adams county or to suggest how and when Hance Hamilton disposed of his homestead in the South Mountain, and although most of the appropriate tax lists before the Revolution are missing, is it still possible to determine from existing, credible records where the Jameson family lived, or probably lived, in the spring of 1758?

That was the question which Arthur Weaner, associate director of the historical society, agreed to investigate. Ignoring for the moment any statements which others have made over the years about the exact location of the unfortunate family's property, he examined applications



for warrants, the warrants themselves, and existing surveys for several thousand acres of mountain land on both sides of the Franklin and Menallen township boundary line in an effort to answer the question.<sup>21</sup> Obviously, when he found good contemporary testimony that a particular tract had not been lived on or cultivated before 1780, 1790, or 1800, he reached at least the tentative conclusion that this was not where the Jameson family ever lived.

There were only four formal claims made before the Revolution for land in the general vicinity of what Arthur Weaner long ago concluded was probably the Jameson place. All of them were initiated nine or more years after the family had disappeared from the valley. First, on October 8, 1767, Francis Kincannon applied for 100 acres of land "at the foot of Piney mountain at the head of Blackley's run," in Menallen township. By the time a survey was made on June 2, 1768, Nicholas Strausbaugh had come into possession of this land.<sup>22</sup> Second, on September 14, 1768, Nicholas Wolf applied for 200 acres along a branch of Conewago creek. No survey followed until March 27, 1771, by which time James Bleakney was the claimant.<sup>23</sup> On all but two small sides of this 235<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> acre tract, the surveyor wrote that it adjoined vacant or vacant mountain land. Third, on March 10, 1769, Casper Fink applied for 50 acres of land in Menallen township. The survey of 47<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> acres made for him on December 19, 1770, extended for about 3,300 feet along both sides of a branch of Conewago creek. Except for one short course adjoining Nicholas Strausbaugh, it too was surrounded by vacant land.<sup>24</sup> Fourth, on December 3, 1771, George Shaffer secured a warrant for 50 acres of what was described as "vacant wood land" on Maple branch of Conewago creek. There is no evidence of a survey resulting before 1799.<sup>25</sup> After careful study of these four tracts, both Arthur Weaner and the author concluded that none of them was the site of the second Jameson homestead, although all four of them were probably close to it.<sup>26</sup>

There was, in fact, land in the vicinity of these parcels which, after thorough examination of its history, turned out to be most promising in answering the question. On October 24, 1784, William Sharp, then a resident of Franklin county, gave a deed to George Campbell, a resident of the city of Philadelphia. He had been elected in 1780 and again in 1781 to represent Philadelphia county in the Pennsylvania legislature. It is clear from the text of Sharp's deed that no warrant had ever been issued for the land being conveyed and that no survey had ever been made. The deed stated simply that the property contained "about Three Hundred Acres." It gave no courses and distances, simply because there were none to give. According to the deed, what Sharp was selling was

“Land formerly occupied by Francis Kinkennan, and bought by me and James Sharp from John and William Standley.” Since James Sharp had already sold his half interest to William, the latter was now sole owner. The price which Campbell paid for his estimated 300 acres was the purely nominal sum of ten pounds, less than Hance Hamilton had paid the sheriff for the Jameson property in 1759. In responding to a request for information about the property and its previous owners, two York county justices of the peace, Samuel Edie and Jacob Rudisill, certified to George Campbell that the land he was purchasing “was improved (as we are informed) in the year of our Lord one Thousand seven Hundred and Sixty.”<sup>27</sup>

Campbell lost no time in establishing the first formal claim to his new acquisition. On December 15, 1784, he secured a warrant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for 300 acres of land in Cumberland township, “including an Improvement near the waters of Canawaga.” Based upon the information in the report of Edie and Rudisill, interest due on this land from the time of first settlement was to begin on March 1, 1760.<sup>28</sup> It took almost three years for Deputy Surveyor Moses McClean to get around to determining the actual metes and bounds of the Campbell purchase. On October 25, 1787, he surveyed 303 acres “Situated on The main Branch of Conawago Creek in Franklin and Manellen Townships.” It is significant that, except for what Moses McClean described as “Jacob Simmons at a Distance,” this large tract was entirely surrounded by what he called vacant mountain land.<sup>29</sup>

Using aerial, topographical, and current tax maps, in addition to the warrant, survey, and patent records discussed above, Arthur Weaner reached the conclusion, with which the author agrees, that the Thomas Jameson property of 1758, which Hance Hamilton purchased at sheriff sale in 1759, was either part or all of the property to which George Campbell began taking title in 1784.<sup>30</sup> Francis Kincannon may well have purchased the Jameson real estate from Hance Hamilton about 1760. Later, it passed through the hands of John and William Stanley (they appear as coowners of real estate in the 1767 Cumberland township tax list) before the Sharps bought it.

It is quite possible that in 1784 someone told the two justices of the peace about the Jameson and Hamilton connection with at least part of the land William Sharp was selling. If so, neither thought it necessary to include this information in the statement which they sent to George Campbell. After all, they were not making a record for the benefit of some unknown person or persons many years later, a record which had nothing to do with establishing the validity of the Philadelphian’s claim.

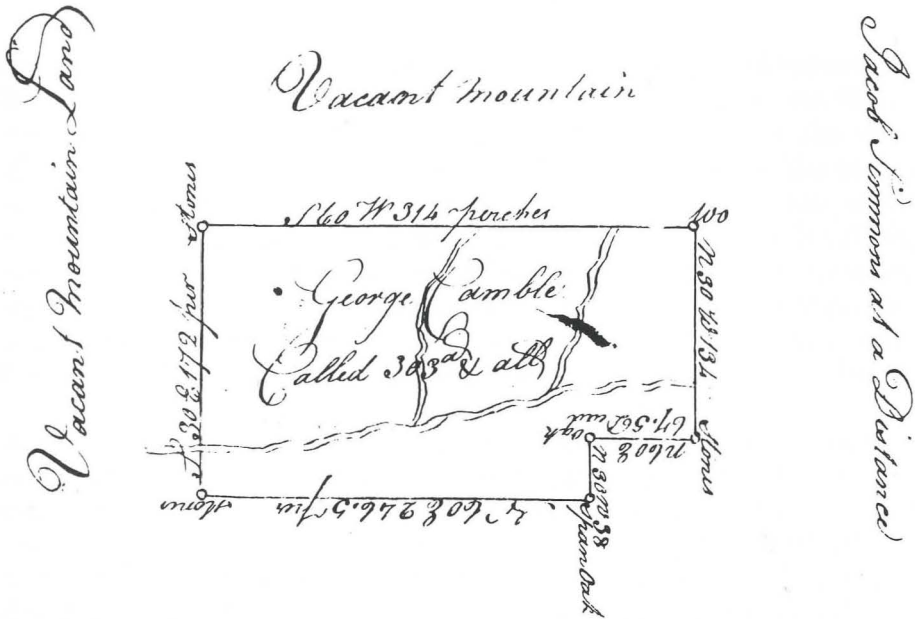


Fig. 3. George Campbell's Survey

• Moses McClean's 1787 survey of the "George Camble" tract. For some reason, he drew it with south rather than north at the top: upside down. Sharp's Run is the small stream on the left, emptying into the Conewago Creek, which flows from right to left in the survey as drawn. McClean used the dot in the upper left corner of the survey to mark the location of the buildings then on the property. (From the Adams County Draft Book B, p. 140, Office of the Prothonotary.)

\* \* \* \*

In addition to Mary Jameson's autobiographical statement and the surviving public records, there is valuable information, which along with everything else needs to be examined critically, in still another source. It offers an additional perspective which helps to supplement and complement our knowledge of the Thomas Jameson family.<sup>31</sup>

In late 1873 Henry J. Stahle, for many years (1845-1892) editor of the weekly Gettysburg *Compiler*, rode into the Buchanan valley in the South Mountain.<sup>32</sup> While there, he visited several people, including Robert (1810-1883) and Agnes Bleakney. Knowing, as he later wrote, "their knowledge of local history to be extensive and reliable," he began asking them questions about the French and Indian raid into their immediate area more than a century earlier. He was confident of at least the general credibility of what they told him. As he explained it, the Bleakneys "have the facts from tradition through generations of the family residing on

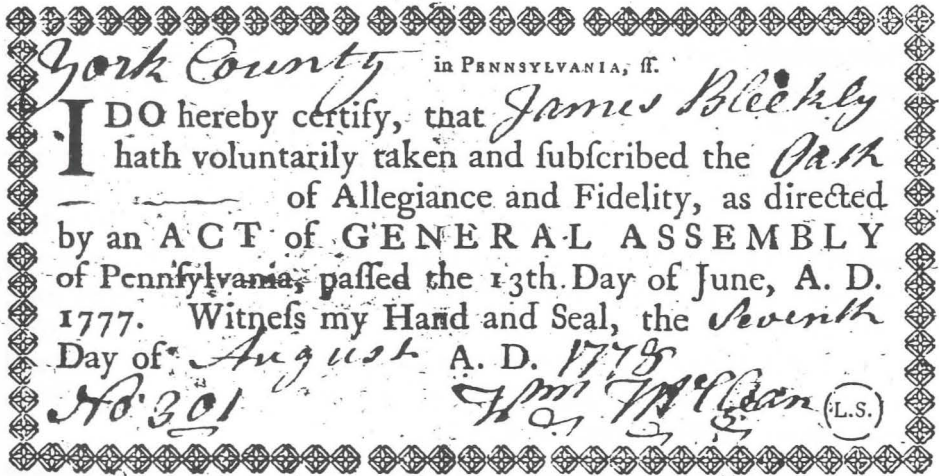


the same farm, corroborated by records in an old family bible." One might ask how reliable facts based solely on tradition are. Nowhere did Stahle inform his readers how Bible records were used to verify anything the Bleakneys told him.

Under the heading "Indian History.- A Man, Wife and Daughter Carried Off," Stahle used part of a column in the *Compiler* for January 7, 1874, to present his readers with a detailed description of what happened to the Jamesons (that was how he spelled the family name in this account) and their neighbors. The date of the seizure, he was told, was "about 1755." A year later, on February 5, 1875, in a lengthy story entitled "Early History of State and County," Stahle retold the Richard Bard story as his son Archibald had compiled it, and then repeated his earlier column on the French and Indian raid on the Jamesons.

Almost five years passed before the subject came up again in the pages of the *Compiler*. In four weekly issues of the paper in December 1879 (December 4-25), an unidentified person calling himself Knor and announcing that he was writing for the newspaper went into much greater detail about the seizure than Stahle had earlier. Knor visited the Bleakneys, on at least one occasion accompanied by Stahle. At that time, Knor had access to what he described as "a small, well-worn book," which he concluded corroborated what the Bleakneys had been saying "in every material particular." Although its title page was lost, Knor concluded from the preface that it had been published in Genesee county, New York, in 1824 and from an appendix that the author's name was J. E. Seaver. An Adams county resident, named Garret Brinkerhoff (1787-1862), had purchased the book about 1830 while visiting relatives in Cayuga county, New York. Someone had given it to Knor after Stahle's 1874 and 1875 stories in the *Compiler*. In his four articles, Knor tried to weave the Bleakney and Seaver testimonies into one narrative of Mary's life. She ceases being *Jameson*; she has now become *Jemison*. Because the Seaver narrative used the year 1755 for the attack and the Bleakneys had told Stahle it had occurred "about 1755," that now becomes the accepted date.

It is evident from the Stahle and Knor accounts that the testimony of Robert and Agnes Bleakney in the 1870s was derived ultimately from James Bleakney who, with his wife, lived in the South Mountain as early as the time of the raid. The implication is that Robert and Agnes heard what they believed directly from the old pioneer, but this is unlikely. James Bleakney died in Menallen township on June 27, 1822, at the age of ninety-eight years. Robert was only twelve at the time. There is no evidence that Agnes, who was fifteen, was then living with the Bleakneys.



YORK-TOWN: Printed by HALL and SELLERS. 1778.

Fig. 4. James Bleakney's Certificate of Allegiance, 1778

During the American Revolution, all males over eighteen years of age in Pennsylvania were required to renounce all allegiance to the British Crown and take an oath of allegiance and fidelity to the state of Pennsylvania. When many persons ignored the first deadline for taking the oath (July 1, 1777), the legislature passed a more stringent measure with heavier penalties and set a new deadline (June 1, 1778). "James Bleakley" waited until August 7, 1778 to appear before Justice of the Peace William McClean and do his duty. (Original in the Adams County Historical Society.)

These two people may well have heard what they long remembered from Robert's parents or other relatives.

James Bleakney was living in the valley without a formal claim of any kind when rumors of possible Indian raids prompted him to move to a place Robert and Agnes called Little Conewago, where they supposedly remained "a year or two." The Little Conewago creek flows north from its sources southeast of Hanover and empties into the Big Conewago north of New Oxford.

In 1762, the year of the earliest York county tax list, there was no James Bleakney in either Cumberland or Menallen township, but there was a taxable by that name in Mount Pleasant township, along whose eastern boundary the Little Conewago creek flows. By the time of the next surviving list for Menallen, in 1772, and regularly thereafter, James is on record there as a taxable. It is apparent that he and his family remained in Mount Pleasant for more than a year or two. It is equally apparent that, if Robert and Agnes are to be believed, his family was not



in the Buchanan valley when the Jameson family was seized.

Possibly because he lived in such a sparsely populated part of the county, James Bleakney was never appointed to fill a township office, but in 1808 the governor of Pennsylvania commissioned his son and namesake a justice of the peace for Cumberland and Franklin townships. A large landholder, the younger James was assessed in 1799 for 236 acres and a sawmill. In the 1830s he and his wife moved to Perry county, Ohio, where he died in his eighty-second year in 1841. In 1804, when he was about eighty years of age, the elder James and his wife transferred their homestead, which then consisted of 389½ acres, to two unmarried daughters, Margaret (1770-1856) and Hannah (d. 1849). Because during his many years of occupancy their father had never obtained a warrant for this land (he did have a survey, but one without benefit of warrant, which was unusual), it remained for them to secure a clear title, which they did when the state issued them a patent deed on June 15, 1811.<sup>33</sup> Margaret owned much of this land until her death, when Robert Bleakney acquired it. This is where he and Agnes were living when Henry J. Stahle and Knor visited them.

In 1873 the Bleakneys told Stahle that a family named "Kilkennon" lived in their neighborhood in the 1750s. Since they believed that it included a "good number of stout boys, all well armed," they could understand that the family first decided "they would risk staying if the Indians should come." However, as the rumors became more menacing, the Kincannons too decided to find a safe place and to ask the Jamesons to go along with them. Approaching their neighbors' house on that fateful April morning, and "hearing much firing," they turned away and hurried down the Conewago creek toward a blockhouse which some local residents had erected. This was not one of the frontier forts which the provincial government built; there were none of these in either York or Adams counties. The Bleakneys told Stahle that the blockhouse was "somewhere near where Samuel Hartman now resides, back of Arendtsville."<sup>34</sup>

From existing contemporary records, it is possible to confirm some of what the Bleakneys remembered about the Kincannon family and also to correct some faulty parts of their memory. On January 12, 1758, about three months before the Indian raid and in the county town of York, Francis Kincannon entered into an agreement, called a bill of sale in one part of the document and a mortgage in another part. For sixteen pounds he "granted Bargend Sold and Delivered" to Thomas Kelly of Chanceford township in southeastern York county certain specified household goods, farming implements, grain, and farm animals, as well as an "Improvement and Clame to a Tract of Land Situate in Menalen Township



... Suposed to Contain one Hundred Acres, more or less." According to the deed, this land adjoined James Bleakney on the south. We do not know whether the Kincannons remained on their property after the bill of sale, but at least the Bleakneys believed that they did. In April 1760, Kelly acknowledged that he had received payment of the debt owned him.<sup>35</sup>

There was a Francis "Cancanen" in the Menallen township tax list for 1762, but he does not appear on any subsequent one. Although in 1873 the Bleakneys said they knew where the Kincannons had once lived (they identified the property as one belonging to Samuel McKendrick), the fact that Francis's name has been associated with at least three different parcels of land, for none of which he obtained a survey or a patent deed, leaves one in doubt.<sup>35</sup> What is certain is that the family moved to the present Washington county, Virginia, probably between the time Francis got his application in 1767 and when the resulting survey was made for Nicholas Strausbaugh in June 1768. He acquired large tracts of land in Virginia and died in 1795. A sketch of the family published in 1974 which shows that in 1758 there were four Kincannon sons, ranging in age from two to sixteen years of age, leads one to wonder about the identity of the "good number of stout boys" in the family in the spring of 1758, "all well armed."<sup>36</sup>

Although Henry J. Stahle was certainly interested in learning about the Bleakneys and Kincannons when he journeyed into the Buchanan Valley, he wanted even more to find out what people there could tell him about the Jameson family and its tragic disappearance on that spring morning in 1758.

There is no evidence that, at the time of his first visit in 1873, the Bleakneys knew anything about the Seaver book. What they told him at that time, and what appeared in the *Compiler* on January 7, 1874, therefore, was not in any way influenced by what Mary Jameson had told her interviewer in western New York half a century earlier.

Robert and Agnes said that the Indians had carried off three people (the correct number was ten), that Mary's two younger brothers escaped by creeping into a hollow log (we have no other source for the log story, but they were her two older brothers), and that Mary never knew what happened to her parents (it is clear from the Seaver book that she did know). The Bleakneys told Stahle in 1873 that a man named William Mann, who worked for the Jamesons, was killed on the spot before the raiding party left the farm. By the time Stahle returned to the valley, they were able to say that the victim was actually William Buck, not William Mann (the *Pennsylvania Gazette* article calls him Robert Buck).

The Bleakneys showed Stahle and Knor where they believed some of the neighbors had buried the man. Two maple trees and a border of field stones still marked the grave. All that remained to identify the rest of the Jameson farm, the house and barn having long since disappeared without leaving a trace, were "a few gnarled and decaying apple trees." If the Bleakneys knew anything about what happened to young John Mann after his release from captivity or the identity of the man named Fields, who visited Mary Jameson in New York, they apparently did not discuss these subjects with their visitors.

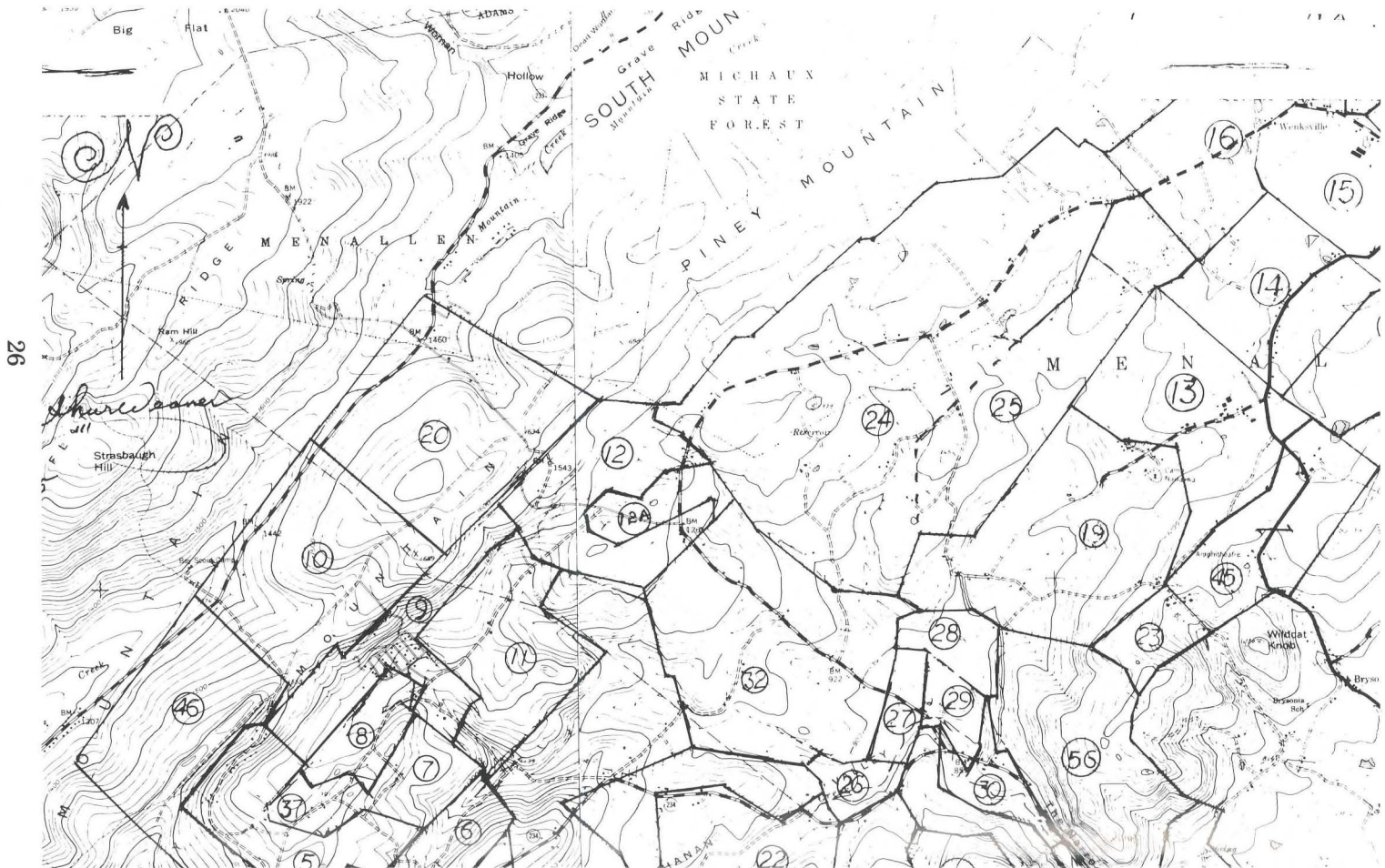
At the time of his first visit, the Bleakneys told Stahle exactly where, in their opinion, the Jameson farm had been. They identified it as the property that Joseph I. Livers had recently sold to Francis Cole. Actually, this property was part of the 303 acres which George Campbell had surveyed in 1787 and which he had retained until 1798. Successive owners were Peter Breighner, Peter Keckler, Philip Stambaugh, John Lowstetter, and Jacob Harbaugh. In advertising the property for sale in 1822, the sheriff reported that it contained two dwelling houses, a barn, and a sawmill.<sup>37</sup> When Samuel Brady (1779-1847) purchased it from Harbaugh in 1831, the original survey of 303 acres was still intact. In 1842 he sold off 131 acres to his son Samuel. The remaining 172 acres went to his older son, John, in 1849. Since neither George Campbell nor any of his successors had secured a clear title to this land, John and Samuel Brady took that step when the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania granted them a patent deed for the whole 303 acres on July 29, 1853. By the time he sold his part to John Livers in 1867, Samuel had about 100 acres left. John's part was the one with his father's former sawmill. He was still being assessed for 180 acres and the sawmill in 1882, the last year in which he appears on the lists.

In 1995 there are but two owners for most of the Campbell tract. One is Reva Mae Rarig, who with her late husband, Frederick J. Rarig, purchased 107 acres, 142 perches on April 26, 1973. The other is the Glatfelter Pulp Wood Company, which acquired 191 acres, 100 perches on August 28, 1973.<sup>38</sup> According to the Bleakneys, the Jamesons lived on the part which Mrs. Rarig now owns and which local residents long called the "White Squaw farm." This may indeed have been the case, but since there was no survey of what the Jamesons believed was their land until long after they were gone from it, it is impossible to be certain.

The map on pp. 27-8, drawn on a United States Geological Survey map, is part of a much larger one prepared by Arthur Weaner in order to facilitate a throughgoing study of the patterns of early settlement both north and south of the Buchanan Valley in the South Mountain.



Part of a larger historical connected survey prepared by Arthur Weaner,  
this map illustrates early settlement patterns in the area of the Buchanan Valley.







Beginning at the present U.S. Route 30 in the south, the larger map extends in a northeasterly direction along the ridge and east slope of Piney Mountain, to include several tracts north of the village of Wenksville. It incorporates more than fifty parcels and more than 15,000 acres of land.

Most of the warrants for this large area were issued only in or after the 1790s and only after one or two persons, usually neighbors, testified before one or two justices of the peace whether, from their own knowledge, the land to be warranted was improved or unimproved.<sup>39</sup> If the former were the case, the information given would generally follow an established sequence. For example, when Peter Keckler wanted a warrant for 180 acres in 1809, neighbors Andrew Noel and Peter Strausbaugh swore that "the said Peter Keckler Is an actual Settler of the said Described Track of Land that he has a House on it fit for the habitation of man and a person now Living In it and that we have Seen grain Raised and Reapt on It."<sup>40</sup> They then went on to give their best estimate of when the land was first improved.

Although there was an abundance of fairly level and fertile soil in the area covered by the larger Weaner map, much of it was hilly and the surveyors were fully justified in calling it "mountain land." For many years, especially during the nineteenth century, the chief economic activity in much of the region was lumbering, and one could find sawmills everywhere, along with an occasional shingle or lath mill. At the time of the 1840 census, for example, there were twenty-eight sawmills in Franklin and Menallen townships. Surveying mountain land, both here and elsewhere, was a difficult task which must have tried the patience and ingenuity of even an experienced surveyor. When Samuel Sloan resurveyed the Nicholas Wolf claim (Tract 22) in 1809, he wrote on the draft that "this Survey does not close well but it is extremely rough with Laurel and other bramble."<sup>41</sup> In preparing his map, Arthur Weaner encountered numerous instances in which surveys either did not properly join each other, which they should have, or which actually "interfered with" (to use a surveyor's term) earlier ones of adjacent properties. It is not difficult to imagine how steep hills, heavy timber, laurel, other brambles, and a scarcity of carefully tilled fields can explain a jigsaw land puzzle whose pieces do not fit neatly together.

The persons who committed to print what Mary Jameson and the Bleakneys told them described the area in which Thomas Jameson and his family lived as a neighborhood, implying that they had at the very least a fair number of close neighbors. Even after taking into consideration that there may have been residents nearby who were also

squatters and whose names have never yet come to light, the credible evidence which is available indicates strongly that, even long after 1758, the Jameson neighborhood was a very sparsely settled one. A careful study of the Menallen and Franklin tax lists for 1786, the year after the latter township was formed, yields fewer than ten taxables known to have lived in the area covered by the Weaner map.

Most or all of the known neighbors of the Jamesons were also Scotch-Irish and Presbyterian. The ethnic and religious composition of the area began to change with the arrival of several Roman Catholic families who had come from the vicinity of Paradise township in York county.<sup>42</sup> After being served for some time by priests coming from Conewago chapel, located near McSherrystown, on October 10, 1816, these Catholics laid the cornerstone for their own church, which was soon given the name of St. Ignatius Loyola. The church was built on land warranted by George Shaffer in 1771, but not surveyed until twenty-eight years later. On November 15, 1816, a few months after he obtained a patent deed for a larger tract of land, which included the Shaffer survey, Jacob Sterner and his wife sold 125 acres 30 perches to Rev. Francis Neale, a Jesuit priest, for the use of the church (Tracts 42, 43, and 47A). In 1855, after the parish had divided this large tract into lots, Neale's successor deeded 8 acres 148 perches, on which the church stands, to two lay trustees, John Brady and George Cole.<sup>43</sup>

Several of the families which settled in the northern part of the area covered by the Weaner map were Germans who had some affiliation with the Lutheran and Reformed churches. Members of these two denominations joined in 1781 to organize a union church is what is now Arendtsville, but which did not become a town until many years after that date.

The following section illustrates some important features of settlement in the area north and south of the Thomas Jameson homestead by a discussion of the early history of some twenty-seven tracts and their claimants or owners.

\* \* \* \*

### **Some Menallen Township Heads of Families at the Time of the First Federal Census, 1790**

Frederick Warrant, 7 males, 7 females  
Abraham Kackler, 2 males, 2 females  
Peter Kackler, 2 males, 2 females  
James Bleckley, 4 males, 3 females

Andrew Knowel, 5 males, 8 females  
Peter Trasbaugh, 6 males, 7 females  
Nicholas Trasbaugh, 1 male, 1 female  
Daniel Knowel, 8 males, 2 females  
Philip Simon, 1 male, 1 female  
John Simmon, 3 males, 3 females  
William Boyd, 4 males, 6 females,  
1 other free person  
Valentine Fail, 4 males, 4 females

Census entries for twelve families referred to in this section. The first ten are listed together. Those for Boyd and Fehl follow a few entries later.

*Tract 1.* This is the parcel of 303 acres surveyed in 1787 for George Campbell. Most of it was owned in 1995 by Reva Mae Rarig and the Glatfelter Pulp Wood Company. Somewhere on this tract were the Jameson family buildings. The 1787 survey showed clearly that all of the land immediately surrounding this tract was then vacant, the only neighbor being "Jacob Simmons at a distance." A study of the land papers for the adjoining properties confirms the accuracy of this statement. For example, no warrant was issued for the large Tract 50 until 1806, and interest was charged only from 1801, the presumed time of settlement. No evidence has yet been found to indicate that Jacob Simmons was ever anything more than a squatter, possibly on part of Tract 4 or 33.

*Tracts 2, 21, 22.* These three tracts, totaling about 955 acres, were claimed by James Bleakney (died 1822, aged ninety-eight years) and James Bleakney the younger (died 1841, in his eighty-second year). The original family homestead was probably located somewhere on Tract 2. At the time of the 1798 federal direct tax assessment, there was a 28 by 16 foot, one-story log house on this property, with three windows and fourteen panes.<sup>44</sup> This was the property which the elder James transferred to his two unmarried daughters in 1804; it then consisted of 389 acres. Robert Bleakney took over what still remained of the original in 1856. It passed out of the family only after Agnes's death in 1890.

Tracts 21 and 22 (this was the Nicholas Wolf tract which the elder James had surveyed in 1771) were eventually acquired by the younger James. They passed out of family hands about 1802, when James moved to his late father-in-law's property in the Manor of Maske.

*Tracts 1, 7, 11, 37.* Land papers associate the name of Francis Kincannon in some way or other with these four tracts, including 1 (the Sharp deed to George Campbell identifies him as a previous claimant), 7 (Andrew Noel's 1811 warrant was issued on the basis of Kincannon's



1767 application), and 11 (Peter Keckler's 1811 warrant refers to an improvement which Kincannon had earlier made on the land for which he was now filing a formal claim). The survey made for Nicholas Strausbaugh and called "Wild Catt Swamp" in response to Kincannon's 1767 application is identified on the map as Tract 37; it was incorporated into the larger survey made in 1811 for Andrew Noel. Kincannon's 1758 bill of sale or mortgage locates his real estate as being south of John Kelsey (Tract 12A) and north of James Bleakney (Tract 2). This is probably the most accurate information we shall ever have identifying where the Kincannon family actually lived.

*Tract 8.* Casper Fink, for whom a survey was made in 1770, was a taxable in Menallen township through the year 1784. He may have been the "Gasper Fink" listed in the Washington county, Pennsylvania, census for 1790. Many families did leave York and Adams counties for southwestern Pennsylvania and Ohio both before and after 1800. No patent deed was issued for the Fink land until 1851.

*Tracts 5-7, 33, 37, 48-9, 51.* Andrew Noel came from Paradise township into Menallen township between 1771 and 1778.<sup>45</sup> Several surviving signatures of his in German script establish his ethnic origin. As late as 1789, he was still being assessed for less than one hundred acres; beginning in the 1790s, he took up unclaimed and unimproved land west, south, and east of the Campbell tract. On the basis of nine warrants issued between 1793 and 1811, two of which were for land west of the area of the Weaner map, some 2,000 acres were surveyed for him and he obtained patent deeds for almost all of it. Noel was usually assessed for one or more sawmills, and sometimes for a grist mill and a distillery.

Andrew Noel made his will on October 31, 1816, and it was probated on March 11 of the following year. In it, he named eleven children. There is no record of a tombstone for him.

*Tract 3.* Daniel Noel, a member of the Paradise township family of the same name, appears in the Cumberland township tax list as early as 1779. According to the 1790 census record, he was then living in Menallen township and his household consisted of eight males and two females.

On the authority of a warrant which he secured in 1805, 197 acres adjoining the Campbell tract on the north were surveyed for him a few months later. When he applied for the warrant, Andrew Noel testified that the land being claimed had not been improved before the spring of 1785.<sup>46</sup> Daniel obtained a patent deed for this land in 1816 and continued as a taxable in Menallen township through the year 1823.

*Tract 4.* Peter Strausbaugh came into Menallen from Paradise township sometime between 1762 and 1771. He was almost certainly



the son of the Nicholas Strausbaugh for whom the Wildcat Swamp survey was made in 1768 and whose household is listed next to his in the census of 1790. The family name appears in the records spelled in a variety of ways, including *Strosper* and *Trosbach*.

By means of two warrants, one in 1793 and the other in 1815, Peter made formal claim to his lands. Over the years he is assessed for increasing acreage. Along with many others in Adams county and elsewhere in the country, as a landowner he did not survive the hard times which followed the Panic of 1819. In August 1824 the sheriff sold his real estate, consisting of 250 acres, on which there were four dwelling houses, a log barn and stable, and a spring house. He lived on in Menallen, assessed now for only a cow or two, through 1826. The record for the following year stated that he was now "out of the township."

According to the *Gettysburg Compiler* for June 15, 1830, Peter Strausbaugh died on the preceding May 31, in his eighty-second year, in Hamiltonban township, where he may have gone to live with one of his children. His wife Barbara was the daughter of Peter Noel of Paradise township. At the time of the 1790 census their household consisted of six males and seven females. There is no record of a tombstone for either Peter or Barbara.

*Tracts 9, 11.* Peter Keckler appears for the first time in the Menallen township tax lists in 1787, as a single man. His father Abraham (1732-1823) had moved into Menallen from Manheim township, York county, a year or two earlier. The family name was sometimes spelled with a C or a G. At the time of the federal direct tax assessment of 1798, Abraham claimed about one hundred acres of land, but without benefit of warrant, survey, or patent deed.

Peter is not assessed for real estate until after 1800. By means of warrants in 1807 and 1811, he secured surveys and then patent deeds for some 416 acres of land, on which for some years he operated one or more sawmills. This was almost certainly the land which his father had occupied before him.

Peter Keckler died on March 9, 1852, and was buried in Arendtsville. The baptisms of several of his children were entered in the union church register there. If the age carved on his tombstone is correct (87 years, 4 months, and 17 days), he was born on October 22, 1764. He and his wife Mary had a large family. In his will Peter named nine sons and two daughters.

*Tract 24.* Frederick Warren arrived in Menallen township between 1762 and 1771. In the tax lists and elsewhere, his name is often spelled *Warrant*, *Warrenton*, and *Warrington*.

Possibly locating first on small tracts warranted and surveyed by others (William Davis in 1751 and Charles Tolford in 1753), but not necessarily settled by them, near the end of his life Frederick secured two warrants, one for 400 acres and the other for 300. When he died in 1800, the sheriff's inquest found that his real estate holdings amounted to 1003 acres and 81 perches.

Warren left no will, but the Orphans' Court papers show that he was survived by his widow and fifteen children. Three of his sons married daughters of Andrew Noel. The Warren homestead was near Wenksville and many later members of the family, including two of Frederick's sons, were buried in the cemetery there.

*Tracts 12, 12A.* William Boyd was the son of Thomas Boyd, an early settler in Cumberland township, in the Manor of Maske. He was a farmer and tanner and left a family of young children when he died in 1760.

William Boyd appears first in Menallen township as a taxable in 1783, when he took up residence on Tract 12A, which was one of the oldest occupied properties in the area. There is evidence that it was the residence of John Kelsey, or Kelso, in the 1750s and that he and his family were living there when the raid on the Jamesons occurred in 1758. Laid out a few years before the Revolution, the road from Shippensburg to Baltimore was cut through the mountain at a place called Kelso's Gap, which was in all probability named for John Kelso.

In 1779 William Kelso, a gunsmith and probably John's son, sold the family property to Andrew Boyd. A few years later it came into the hands of his older brother, William, who farmed parts of it. He also operated a sawmill and tannery. Taking advantage of his favorable location along a well-traveled road, Boyd secured a license to keep a tavern in 1795 and continued operating it until 1825. At the time of the federal direct tax assessment in 1798, his dwelling house and tavern was one of the two in the area included in this discussion (Valentine Fehl had the other one) which consisted of two stories. It was a log structure.

Although he certainly established himself as a successful businessman in Menallen township, William Boyd made no recorded effort to lay any formal claim to land until 1815, when he secured a warrant for 300 acres. What was surveyed a few weeks later was not what his family had been living on for more than thirty years, but the vacant and unimproved land which surrounded it on three sides. Something eventually prompted William Boyd to secure a clear title to his actual homestead. When he applied for a second warrant in 1831, two justices of the peace recorded Peter Keckler's testimony that there was indeed an improvement on this property, but he believed "there is no person now in the neighborhood



who can recollect the first improvement of it but from the best information he has been able to obtain he supposes it was first improved about the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy."<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, when the warrant was issued, the date from which interest was to be charged, and presumably the date of first improvement, was given as 1755. The patent deed which the Commonwealth gave Boyd late in 1831 was for 444 acres 120 perches, for both Tracts 12 and 12A.

According to the Gettysburg *Sentinel* for April 3, 1837, William Boyd died on March 30 of that year, in his eighty-eighth year. He was buried at Black's, the graveyard of the Upper Marsh Creek (and later the Gettysburg) Presbyterian church. There was a tombstone, but without dates. Boyd left no will, but his estate papers mentioned six children, three of whom acquired his real estate.

*Tract 32.* William Boyd, Jr. was born about the time his family moved into Menallen township. He first appears as a taxable there in 1807. Unlike his father, he quickly took steps to make a formal claim for land. A warrant was issued to him in 1808. On the authority of sworn testimony that it had not been previously improved, he was charged almost no interest.<sup>48</sup> Later that year, 402 acres were surveyed, and he obtained a patent deed for them in 1814.

Assessed for a time for one or more sawmills, Boyd sold his real estate about 1818 and disappears from the tax lists. Presumably he was not living when his father died in 1837, since he is not listed among the heirs.

*Tracts 26-30, 45.* Valentine Fehl came into Adams county from Berks county about 1790. By the time the first federal census was taken in that year, his family, which already consisted of four males and four females, was living in Menallen township.

In 1794 Fehl bought a 292 acre property (Tract 45) from James Johnson, but the location with which his family was most closely associated was the one which he purchased at a sheriff sale in 1795. It consisted of five tracts (26-30) which had been warranted and surveyed north and west of the Narrows about a quarter century earlier, about the time the Shippensburg-to-Baltimore road was being opened. Court documents at the time of the sheriff sale, when all of the tracts were owned by the estate of Hans Morrison, refer to the property as "the sawmill place."<sup>49</sup> In 1809 Fehl obtained a patent deed for 320 acres 96 perches.

Valentine Fehl continued to operate a sawmill. In addition, between 1796 and the time of his death in 1827 he also operated a tavern, which his son Henry continued for about a decade longer. At the time of the

federal direct tax assessment in 1798, his dwelling house and tavern was one of the two in the area (William Boyd had the other) and consisted of two stories. While Boyd's house was log, Fehl's was described as "log boarded," which undoubtedly meant logs covered with boards.

Valentine Fehl died on April 28, 1827, in his seventieth year. If the German inscription on his tombstone in Arendtsville gives his correct age (69 years, 8 months, and 8 days), he was born on August 20, 1757. The baptisms of several children born to Valentine and Elizabeth Fehl were entered into the Arendtsville union church register.

\* \* \* \*

As noted earlier, each year the county court or the commissioners appointed a constable, two supervisors of highways, two overseers of the poor, and a tax collector in each township. They were chosen to serve for one-year terms, with the prospect that one would not be appointed again, at least not for two years in succession. Some idea of the extent to which people living in the area of the Weaner map were on the fringes of things in the later years of the eighteenth century is conveyed by the fact that neither the elder James Bleakney, Andrew Noel, Abraham Keckler, nor Peter Strausbaugh was ever called upon to serve in any of the above capacities.

Before 1800, three men living north of the Conewago creek in Menallen township were appointed supervisors of highways: Frederick Warren in 1784, William Boyd in 1787, and Valentine Fehl in 1798 and 1799. It is true that the younger James Bleakney was commissioned a justice of the peace for Cumberland and Franklin townships, but this was only about 1800 and only after he had moved into a more densely settled part of the townships.

\* \* \* \*

This essay explores one small part of Adams county history. Although most of the county's first settlers chose to make their new homes on land in its eastern and central sections, a very few ventured beyond, into the South Mountain. Until the French and Indian War began, these few could feel secure as they established new homesteads for their families.

In the spring of 1758, the Bards and Jamesons learned that their security, and indeed their very lives, could be abruptly snatched away. In both cases, someone survived to tell their story. Although years later Mary Jameson offered enough testimony of her life to fill a small book,



the inquiring student of Adams county history wants to know more than she could ever be expected to remember about her few years in the South Mountain. Who lived nearby when she and her family were seized and carried off? Was there anyone left in the vicinity to remember what happened to the Jamesons? If so, how accurately did they recall the facts and then pass them along to later generations? Who were the people who eventually possessed not only the abandoned Jameson homestead, but also the mountain land which surrounded it? What diversity, if any, did they bring to the area? How long did it take them to occupy the land and then to perfect a title to it? In the meantime, what use did they make of the resources available to them?

This essay is an effort to find a fuller answer to these and other questions than has been attempted before, but, in spite of the scarcity of good credible sources, this is not the definitive treatment of the subject. There is still more to be learned.

## Notes

1. This essay is a greatly expanded version of two articles entitled "The Thomas Jameson Family in Adams County," which appeared in the January and February 1995 issues of the *Newsletter* of the Adams County Historical Society. Associate Director Arthur Weaner has contributed significantly to the section of this essay dealing with land occupancy and ownership, and I gratefully acknowledge his help. The reader should be aware that Adams county was formed from York county only in January 1800. When the term "Adams county" is used in this essay, it refers to the present Adams county.

2. The author of the sketch was Eleanor Robinette Dobson.

3. Mary Jameson's recollections of her life before April 1758 as reported by Dr. James E. Seaver are found in James E. Seaver, *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison, Who was taken by the Indians, in the year 1755, when only about twelve years of age, and has continued to reside amongst them to the present time...* (Canandaigua, New York, 1824), pp. 17-25 (hereafter cited as Seaver, *Jemison*).

4. In *Colonial Records* 8:232-3 (hereafter cited as CR). (The *Colonial Records* were published in sixteen volumes before the First Series of the *Pennsylvania Archives* appeared.)

5. In *Pennsylvania Archives*, First Series, 2:755 (hereafter cited as PA).

6. See the *Report of the Commission to Locate the Sites of the Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania*, ed. Thomas Lynch Montgomery, 2 vols. (Harrisburg, 1916), 1:474-5.

7. However, a Franklin (then Cumberland) county weaver and former resident of the Manor of Maske, James McCullough, noted in his diary that on July 27, 1757, "one McKisson [was] Wounded and his son taken Captive from ye South Mounten" and that on August 17 of the same year "William Waghs Barn was burnt in ye trak [that is, Carroll's Tract] York County by indines."

McCullough kept a detailed record of Indian attacks on the settlers in the York and Cumberland counties of his time. He briefly set down, for example, the bare bones relating to the attack on the Jameson homestead: "Aprill ye 5th, one man killed and 10 taken near blaks gape [that is, Black's Gap, along today's U.S. Rt. 30 in Caledonia]. He also mentioned the raid on the Bard or Baird farm discussed below: "Aprill ye 13 one man killed and 9 taken near Archibald beards at South mounten 1758."

As may be clear from these entries, taking captives to replenish their dwindling numbers was one principal motive for the Delaware and Shawnee raids on the settlers. Mary Jameson's example, actually one of many, suggests that up to a point the Indians were successful in retaining captured Whites.

James McCullough's diary is in the possession of Charles J. Stoner of Mercersburg, Franklin county. Mr. Stoner has generously allowed the ACHS to make a copy for its records.

8. Adams County Draft Book A, p. 191, Office of the Prothonotary (copy in the Adams County Historical Society).

9. PA, First Series, 3:336-7. Later, Richard Bard made several written records which went some years beyond the time of finding his wife and bringing her home. Upon his father's death, Archibald Bard used his papers to prepare an account describing his family's captivity and release. It was first published in a two-volume work edited by Archibald Loudon, a Carlisle newspaper publisher, under the title *A Selection, of some of the most Interesting Narratives, of Outrages, Committed by the Indians, in their Wars, with the White People*, 2 vols. (Carlisle, 1808, 1811). See also *Captivity of Richard Bard, Esq., And His Wife Catharine Poe Bard*, . . . , ed. Archibald Bard (Chambersburg, 1904).

10. Mary's recollection of her life between April 1758 and 1823, including



some direct quotations, are taken from Seaver, *Jemison*, pp. 20-34.

11. *CR*, 8:628-9. There were a number of taxables named John and William Mann in Pennsylvania in the 1770s and 1780s.

12. Seaver, *Jemison*, p. 19.

13. For more information on this subject, see Charles H. Glatfelter and Arthur Weaner, *The Manor of Maske: Its History and Individual Properties* (Gettysburg, 1992).

14. There are xerox copies of all surviving eighteenth-century tax lists of Adams county townships in the Adams County Historical Society.

15. There are typed abstracts of the pertinent court and commissioners' records, as well as microfilm copies of the York county records before 1800, in the Adams County Historical Society.

16. *Ibid.*

17. Seaver, *Jemison*, p. 21.

18. The place where the Jamesons lived in 1758 was about seven miles west of the north-south line of the Manor of Maske.

19. The term *improvement*, when used in applications and warrants, meant that someone had built enough buildings, however primitive, and begun to till enough land, however primitively, to enable an individual or family to subsist on the land for which a formal claim was being sought.

In October 1785 the York county court divided Cumberland township and named the northwestern part Franklin township, obviously in honor of Benjamin Franklin. The property which the sheriff sold to Hance Hamilton is now in Franklin township.

20. York County Deed Book A, p. 352. There was a Robert Work named in the 1762 Cumberland township tax list as a single man. He eventually owned a 400-acre manor tract, near Greenmount. How Jameson came to owe him sixteen pounds and what other relationship may have existed between them we do not know. If we did, it might tell us something about where in the manor the Jamesons lived. One of the first storekeepers in the manor,

Samuel Reynolds, who lived several miles north of the present Gettysburg, died in 1758. According to his inventory, among those owing him money was Thomas Jameson, whose store bill was four shillings and five pence.

21. Following a request made by Menallen township residents that they "labor under great inconvenience and difficulty by reason of the present form and situation of Menallen Township," the Adams county court on April 21, 1858, approved redrawing the line between Menallen and Franklin townships so as to move about 12,000 acres from the former to the latter. Some of the properties discussed in this essay, including that of Robert and Agnes Bleakney, which had been in Menallen township, were now in Franklin.

22. West Side Application 4478 and Copied Survey C-145-248, Pennsylvania State Archives. (Microfilm or xerox copies of many Adams county land papers are available in the Adams County Historical Society.)

23. The name of this old South Mountain family is spelled in many ways, including *Blakely*, *Blakly*, and *Blakney*. The spelling used here is the one found most frequently in estate and similar papers. The Franklin township section of the 1886 history of Adams county contains the absurd statement that James Bleakney arrived in the area in 1734 and that he was a shoemaker (*History of Adams County* [Chicago, 1886; 1992 reprint], p. 256). In 1734 he was about ten years old. Who was there within miles in any direction to buy the shoes which he made?

24. West Side Application 5357 and Copied Survey A-38-355, Pennsylvania State Archives.

25. York Warrant S314 and Copied Survey D-61-259, Pennsylvania State Archives. The land on which St. Ignatius Roman Catholic church stands was taken from this survey.

26. Although any careful study of land acquisition and ownership in colonial

Pennsylvania must rest on actual warrants, surveys, and patent deeds, it is clear that these sources must often be supplemented by whatever evidence can be found in various places about the presence of squatters and the informal claims which they established for themselves. The Jamesons, Bleakneys, and Kincannons are excellent examples.

27. York County Deed Book 2D, p. 32. It is probable that much of what we know about the previous owners of the Campbell tract comes from the certification of Edie and Rudisill of the information which older residents of the area told these men. Applications for Warrants, Microfilm Roll 7.29, Pennsylvania State Archives.

28. York Warrant C80, Pennsylvania State Archives.

29. Copied Survey K-322, Pennsylvania State Archives.

30. The author of Mary Jameson's biography in the *Dictionary of American Biography* stated that the family was taken from "their farm near the junction of Sharp's Run and Conewago Creek" (*Dictionary of American Biography* 10:39). William and James Sharp, either or both, undoubtedly gave their name to the run through their property. It still appears on topographical and other maps.

31. On March 9, 1835, the *Gettysburg Sentinel* published an account written by a missionary at Seneca Station, New York, who had visited Mary Jameson shortly before she died. They discussed her mother's religious counseling, including that of their last hours together, which Mary said she had never forgotten. In calling attention to the article, the editor expressed the belief that "some of our aged Marsh-creek friends" would remember having heard of the fate of the Jameson family. Neither of the two other newspapers being published in Gettysburg at the time used the missionary's account.

32. In reporting on a celebration of the recent election of James Buchanan to the presidency, held at David Goodyear's tavern in Franklin township, Henry J.

Stahle stated that "in the course of the evening, the beautiful valley on the line of Franklin and Menallen townships, . . . was, at the instance of a large number of its inhabitants then and there present, christened 'Buchanan Valley,' which elicited several appropriate speeches" (*Gettysburg Compiler*, December 15, 1856). The author of the 1886 history of Adams county stated (p. 256) that the earliest name of this valley was Pleasant Valley, but offered no evidence to support the statement.

33. Patent Book H-6, p. 106, Pennsylvania State Archives.

34. The 1872 Adams county atlas shows "S. Hartman" living about half a mile north of Arendtsville.

35. York County Deed Book A, p. 279. This is the earliest such instrument on record for property in the vicinity of the Jamesons.

36. See David B. Trimble, *Southwest Virginia Families* (n.p., 1974), pp. 211-2.

37. *Gettysburg Sentinel*, January 9, 1822.

38. Adams County Deed Books 306, pp. 378, 309, and 239.

39. There were three basic steps to be taken in acquiring clear title to unclaimed land in Pennsylvania. The first was to purchase a warrant, which directed a surveyor employed by the land office to lay off a specified quantity of land for a warrantee. The second was to secure an actual survey, which conferred enough of a title to enable the warrantee to sell or bequeath the land. The third step was to pay whatever was still due for the land and obtain a patent deed from the Penn heirs or, after the Revolution, from the Commonwealth. It was the patent deed, not the survey, which conveyed a clear title. Years, even decades, could, and often did, elapse between the issuance of a warrant and the granting of a patent deed. One had to apply for a warrant. Sometimes the application contained much valuable information about the previous use of the land.

40. Applications for Warrants, Microfilm



Roll 7.61, Pennsylvania State Archives.

41. Copied Survey C-94-240, Pennsylvania State Archives.

42. The earliest Catholic families in the Buchanan Valley were the Strausbaughs in the 1760s and the Noels in the 1770s. Although there were Dillons with early warrants, except for brief periods the first taxable member of that family in Menallen township was Charles in 1797 and in Franklin township it was Michael in 1823. Such families as the Bradys, Coles, and Irvins came later.

43. Patent Book H-13, p 701, Pennsylvania State Archives and Adams County Deed Books, H, p. 2 and 69, p. 252.

44. When war with France threatened in 1798, President John Adams signed a measure designed to raise revenue for the federal government by levying a tax directly on real estate. Assessors were directed to determine the amount of land each taxable held as well as the dimensions and material used in the construction of all buildings. In arriving at an assessed valuation of the real estate, the assessors listed the number of stories in each dwelling, as well as the number of windows

and lights (or panes). Virtually all dwellings in Menallen township in 1798 were log and one story. The surviving schedules for York and Adams counties generated by this measure, which was repealed soon after the threat of war had passed, are available on microfilm at the Adams County Historical Society. The same is true for most of the other sources used in discussing the twenty-seven tracts.

45. For Menallen township, the only tax lists available before one surviving from the war years 1778 date from 1762 and the fall of 1771 for use in 1772. In most cases, these lists provide the only reliable source for the arrival of newcomers into the township between 1762 and 1778.

46. Applications for Warrants, Microfilm Roll 7.58, Pennsylvania State Archives.

47. *Ibid.*, Microfilm Roll 7.73.

48. *Ibid.*, Microfilm Roll 7.59. It is surprising, to say the least, that no one had claimed this large tract along the Shippensburg road before 1808.

49. In 1990 a descendant of Valentine Fehl brought the original of the 1795 sheriff's deed into the historical society and permitted us to make a copy of it.

## A Tour of Gettysburg's Visual Battle Damage

by Timothy H. Smith

### Introduction

A little-known aspect of the Battle of Gettysburg is the story behind the Civil War battle damage still present in some of the town's buildings. During the first three days of July 1863, cannons fired over and into Gettysburg, and as a result some of the homes were inadvertently struck by the shells. As a battlefield guide, the author has driven by these structures everyday for the past few years, and a highlight of any tour is a stop in front of the Sheads house on Buford Avenue, where one can point up to an artillery shell embedded just to the left of its attic window. The loud *Oohs* and *Aahs* that emanate from visitors are more than ample evidence of the fascination experienced when coming face to face with battle damage caused more than 130 years earlier. It conjures up the frightening image of a family huddled in the corner of their cellar, while the cannon from both armies fire missiles of death back and forth across the town. For the Gettysburg civilians, this was the true horror of war, the constant fear that one of these shells might crash through their wall, explode in their home, and kill members of their family. It does not take a great knowledge of Civil War tactics to understand and appreciate that fear.

Occasionally, on a tour, however, someone will ask the guide: "Did that cannon ball really hit that wall during the battle and just stick there?" "How come it didn't knock the wall down and keep going?" "If it was an explosive shell, why wasn't it removed after the battle?" And the most feared question of all: "How do you know that shell is really from the battle and not a hoax planted years later?" These are good questions and I am not so sure that anyone really knows the answers. This article is based on research that the author has conducted over the past two years in an attempt to answer some of these nagging questions.

By simply asking around, the author quickly discovered that no one had ever even made a list of the buildings in town that have shells in them, let alone research any of them. Very few people (with the exception of the battlefield guides who point them out daily) even know where half of them are. So why should we bother trying to identify them now? Is there a danger that some of them may disappear if they are not



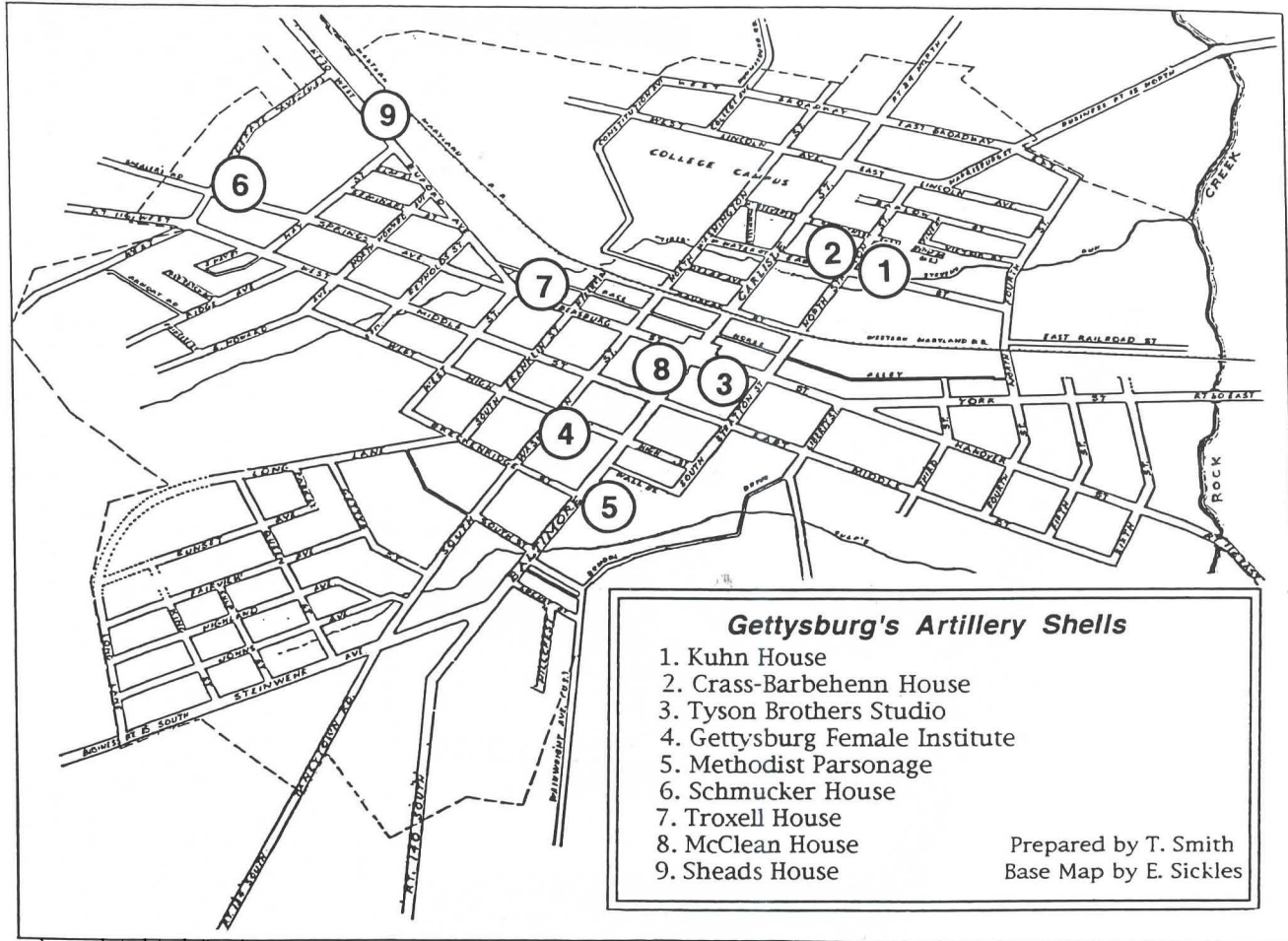
documented? There certainly is—the “I’m sorry, we didn’t know” excuse is a very popular one among developers. There has also been at least one recent attempt by a Gettysburg property owner to “create history” by cementing a Civil War artillery shell into the side of his house. The purpose of this article is to set the record straight, make a list of those battle-damaged buildings, and hopefully, to give some new information concerning what we know about their origins. It is also hoped that providing this information will help bring to light other evidence concerning the buildings we know nothing about.

## The Presentation

By this author’s count, today in the borough of Gettysburg there are at least fourteen buildings which still have visible battle damage, meaning exterior injury. (This is my count; the true number may be much higher.) This enumeration does not include buildings that still show internal damage, such as a bullet hole in the mantle of a fireplace. It does not include buildings that probably have hard-to-detect battle damage (like the stone wall on the western side of the Thompson house along Buford Avenue). And it does not include buildings outside of the borough, such as the Josiah Benner farm in Straban township (which has an artillery shell in it), or the Joseph Sherfy farm in Cumberland township (the west side of which is perforated with bullet holes). Of the fourteen buildings, five show evidence of having been struck by bullets or cannon fire. The other nine have artillery shells embedded in their walls. For the purposes of this study we will focus on these nine structures—where are they? and what do we know about them?

Each building is identified by name, usually the name of the owner at the time of the battle. The current address is given, and the location of each is shown on a map of town. I have also tried to document the inhabitants of the structure at the time of the battle, and in some cases, where available, provide a brief biography of the owner. If a description of the building’s role in the battle could be found, it has been included, as well as any information concerning the artillery shell in it. It should be pointed out that the proper identifications of each of the nine shells was made by Dean S. Thomas, author of the book *Cannons: An Introduction to Civil War Artillery* (Gettysburg, 1985) and an authority on the identification of Civil War projectiles.

Although it is intended that this study will be used as a guide—and the reader is encouraged to visit each of the homes—it should be noted that these structures serve today as private dwellings. Please observe the rights of the current property owners when visiting these sites.





## **The Kuhn House**

(221 North Stratton Street; Built ca. 1859; 3"-Hotchkiss Projectile)



*Fig. 1. The John Kuhn house from a 1971 photograph. The shell can be seen on the right (or south) side of the house. (ACHS).*

This two-story building is situated on the east side of North Stratton Street directly across from the Crass-Barbehenn House. At time of the battle, it was part of a five-acre tract owned by John Kuhn, a German immigrant from Hesse-Darmstadt. The Kuhn Family included John (52), his wife Mary A. (52), and his children, Peter (20), Adam (18), John (11), Mary (10), and Samuel (8). Also living with the family were George T. Little (18) and John Weigle (14). John Kuhn is best known for operating a large brick-yard along the northern edge of his property.<sup>1</sup>



On July 1, 1863, this brickyard was the site of the stand of the 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, 11th Army Corps under the command of Colonel Charles Coaster. About 3 P.M., soldiers from North Carolina and Louisiana overwhelmed and captured a large number of men from the 134th, 154th New York, and 27th Pennsylvania directly on Kuhn's property. Because of its involvement in the "brickyard fight," the losses of the 154th New York rank as the highest percentage of any Northern regiment in the battle.<sup>2</sup>

In 1908, a veteran of the 154th wrote of a trip to Gettysburg in which he visited the Kuhn House and noticed a cannonball stuck in the building.<sup>3</sup> It is uncertain if he was referring to the three-inch Hotchkiss shell that now protrudes from the south side of the house, but like many of the other shells in town, it has been embedded in the wall as long as anyone can remember.

### **The Crass-Barbehenn House**

(218 North Stratton Street; Built ca. 1861; 3"-Reed Projectile)



*Fig. 2. Crass-Barbehenn house from a 1971 photograph. The shell is embedded on the right (or north) side of the house. (ACHS).*

This two-story brick dwelling is situated on the west side of North Stratton Street. As with the Kuhn House situated across the street, little is known about its occupants. Records suggest that this structure was built sometime around 1861 by a German immigrant named George Crass (or Krass). In 1864 ownership of the house was transferred to another immigrant named Henry Peter Barbehenn.<sup>4</sup> The best current evidence indicates that both families lived in the dwelling at the time of the battle. In 1863 the Crass family consisted of George (31), his wife Catherine (31), and their children Margaret (15), Elizabeth (6), and Joanna (3). The Barbehenn family consisted of Henry (36) and his wife Mary Ann Bortner (30), whom he had married just a year earlier.<sup>5</sup> During the afternoon of July 1, 1863, the area around this home was the scene of heavy fighting, being located near the brickyard fight previously mentioned. Certainly, some of the pockmarks on the north wall of this house were caused by Confederate bullets fired at the retreating Union soldiers of the 11th Corps.

A letter written to the Adams County Historical Society in 1971 by the Civil War Round Table House Marking Committee explains the 3-inch Reed shell now embedded in the north side of the structure between its second-story windows. Harland Stuart, chairman of the committee, wrote that in 1966 the owners of this building, Martha and her sister Edna Barbehenn, grandchildren of Henry and Mary Ann Barbehenn, related the following information concerning their house during the battle:

Two ladies had their babies in the upper room where the shells came through, and had removed the infants approximately ten minutes before the shells came through. There are two shell holes in the hallway wall upstairs where the shells came through. One shell lodged and remained in the outside wall, height of the second floor, and still remains there.<sup>6</sup>

Mr. Stuart added that bullet holes in an inner partition were also carefully preserved. At some point, he visited the house and personally examined the "shell holes in the partition":

They have been left exposed to view and covered with transparent plastic in the hall, but the side of the partition in the room has been repaired. The shells evidently came from Benner's hill area and passed through an open doorway on the south side of the house. The inner wall of the outer brick wall shows evidence of repair. I am of the opinion that the shell in the wall which exploded is a fragment which was recovered and placed in the wall during repairs.<sup>7</sup>



If in fact this shell was picked up off the field and cemented into the building afterwards, it seems more likely that this shell might have struck the building from the direction of Colonel Hilary P. Jones's Battalion which was posted on a ridge just east of the Harrisburg Road near the present location of the Lutheran Home and not from one of the Confederate batteries posted on Benner's Hill.

### **The Tyson Brothers' Studio** (9 York Street; 3"-Hotchkiss Projectile)

In 1863 this building, along with the one adjacent to it on the southeast quadrant of the square, was owned by David Wills, a prominent lawyer and influential member of Gettysburg's Republican party.<sup>8</sup> In 1861 Charles J. and Isaac G. Tyson (better known as the Tyson Brothers) moved their photographic studio into part of the building and transformed the structure into the "Excelsior Sky-light Gallery." During the years preceding the battle, the Tysons established a thriving business, and their advertisements can be found throughout the local newspapers.<sup>9</sup> On April 30, 1863, Charles Tyson (24) married Maria E. Griest, and shortly after moved into a house on Chambersburg Street, along with Charles's brother, Isaac.<sup>10</sup> During the battle, Charles and his wife fled town with all the valuables they could carry and headed south towards Littlestown, Pennsylvania. On their return to Gettysburg a few days later, and after Charles had made sure his house had not been destroyed by Confederate forces during the battle, he made a "hurried visit to the photograph gallery." Noble Preston, of the 10th New York Cavalry, who accompanied Tyson on his visit, recalled that the door to the gallery "was found locked." Apparently, no one had entered it during the battle. There was, however, one visible scar left by the fierce struggle: "in the front wall of the building a three inch rifle shell was half buried."<sup>11</sup> In a letter written on January 16, 1884, Tyson described the damage incurred on his place of business during the battle:

[Upon our return] . . . we found the gallery undisturbed. The wife of lawyer [David] Wills claimed to have prevented the men from going into the gallery by telling them it was dangerous. They, however, entered the cellar and emptied a barrel of ninety-five percent alcohol. I had a gross of eight ounce bottles there also and they were seen carrying these bottles out filled with alcohol. The shell has never been removed—it is still there just as it was, ready to blow somebody up perhaps, sometime or other. A minie ball passed through the back window, which was raised, passing through both panes of glass,

cutting a round hole through the first pane, without cracking the glass. The next pane the hole was much larger and the glass cracked. The ball then passed through an inch pine partition and lodged on its side on the opposite side of the room, half embedded in another partition.<sup>12</sup>



*Fig. 3.* A close-up of the Hotchkiss shell located in the **Tyson Brothers' Studio**.  
(Photo by author.)

According to this account, it would seem that the shell we see today embedded under one of the building's second-story windows is an actual relic of the battle. From the position of the shell and the angle at which it protrudes from the wall, it is likely that it came from the area of Oak Hill, where the Eternal Light Peace Memorial stands today. This hill was used as a Confederate artillery position throughout the battle. It is fortunate for historians that the Tysons' studio was not severely damaged during the Confederate occupation of town, for within a month following the battle, Charles and Isaac would begin to record the views of the town and surrounding fields that are today an invaluable resource to historians.



## **The Gettysburg Female Institute** (66-68 West High Street; Built 1813-1814; 3"-Reed Projectile)



**Fig. 4. The Gettysburg Female Institute.** In this William H. Tipton view taken in 1882, the shell is barely visible between the middle upper story windows. (ACHS.)

This building, situated at the southeast corner of Washington and High Streets, has long been a Gettysburg landmark. During its distinguished history, the structure served as the first home for both the Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary (1826-1832) and the Pennsylvania (now Gettysburg) College (1832-1837). "For the next nineteen years thereafter, the property was used for school purposes under various names and titles."<sup>13</sup> In 1856 the Reverend David Eyster moved into the building, and with the help of his wife, established the Gettysburg Female institute. During the next few years, the school "attained great popularity and usefulness."<sup>14</sup> In 1861, Reverend Eyster died at 59 years of age, leaving his widow Rebecca Reynolds Eyster to take over the duties as principal.

Rebecca was described as a "lady of culture and administrative ability," and during the Civil War many of the young ladies from the better families in town were students of Mrs. Eyster's finishing school.<sup>15</sup>

Elizabeth McClean, who was fifteen years old at the time of the battle, recalled that she and the other girls at the "Young Ladies' Seminary," just pretended to study during those days at the "Old Academy" building. Their minds were really on the boys in the Union Army, "... for they were our cousins and friends, brothers of many in the school."<sup>16</sup> Tillie Pierce, another student, and also fifteen at the time, described her memories of the institute years later in her narrative of the battle:

With pleasant recollections I bring to mind the Young Ladies' Seminary on the corner of High and Washington Streets. Here I received instruction; Here in the bright and happy flush of young woman hood, I was graduated and given my diploma. Within the same walls had been placed some of the wounded and dying heroes of the struggle; and as we passed from room to room we would speak in subdued tones of the solemn scenes which imagination and report placed before our minds as having transpired when the conflict was over.<sup>17</sup>

Of course, during the battle, the girls would not have been expected to attend classes, but Rebecca (51) and her two sons, William Reynolds (22), and George Slagle Eyster (14), would have been in the building. William Eyster was a graduate of Gettysburg College and at the time of the battle was employed as a teacher, probably at his mother's school.<sup>18</sup>

There are no accounts to verify the origins of the shell protruding from the front of the building's second floor. However, a photograph taken in 1882 by William H. Tipton does show battle damage on the building where the shell is now embedded. Even under magnification, it is hard to distinguish if the shell appears in the view, but the battle damage surrounding it makes a convincing argument that it was there at the time. Today, thanks to the efforts of the present owners, the structure appears very much the way it did at the time of the battle (with minor changes to the front entranceway). The owners state that shell has remained untouched ever since their relatives first purchased the property in 1932. It appears that the projectile is a Reed shell and would have come from a 10-pounder Parrott rifle somewhere within the Confederate lines. At present, the story surrounding this shell is unknown, but it is hoped that someday more documentation will be uncovered. Several people who attended the institute were prolific writers, including Rebecca's sons, William and George Eyster, who both taught there.



## The Methodist Parsonage

(304 Baltimore Street; Built ca. 1840; 12-pounder Cannonball [Shell or Case])



**Fig. 5. The Methodist Parsonage** before its renovation. In this photograph taken by Henry Stewart sometime in the late 1880s, the shell is visible just to the right of the second story windows. (*Gettysburg Bicentennial Album.*)

In 1857 this house was purchased by the Gettysburg Methodist Church to be used as its parsonage. At the time of the battle, it was occupied by the Reverend George Berkstresser (also spelled Bergstresser) and his family. In 1863 Rev. Berkstresser was fifty-five years old, and had presided as Gettysburg's Methodist minister for just a little over a year. His family consisted of his wife, Anna C. Horn Berkstresser (45), his three sons, Joseph (22), Watson (20), Quincy (18), and his two daughters, Laura (13), and Anna (10).<sup>19</sup>

Directly across the street from the parsonage on the southwest corner of Baltimore and Breckinridge Streets lived James and Margaret Pierce, influential members of the Methodist congregation in Gettysburg. One

of their children was young Matilda Pierce, just fifteen years old in 1863. In 1888 Tillie Pierce Alleman recorded her reminiscences of the battle and left with us an interesting account of the shell which is still embedded in the front of the old Methodist parsonage, just to the right of its second-story bay window. She wrote that

During the first day's battle, and after our men had retreated, a little girl was standing at the second story window of the house opposite ours. She had the shutters bowed, and was looking down into the street at the confusion below. Suddenly a shell struck the wall just beside the shutter, tearing out a large hole and scattering pieces of brick, mortar and plastering all around the room in which the little girl was standing. It entered and struck some place in the room, rebounded and fell out into the street. Another ball is now placed in the wall to mark the place where the first one struck. I am here reminded of the fact that many persons while walking or riding past this place, and having their attention called to this shell sticking in the wall, neatly encased in brick and mortar, think that it has been there just as it arrived on the first day of the battle. Shells were not quite so tidy in introducing themselves at that time. The little girl who had the narrow escape referred to, was Laura Bergstresser [13], a daughter of the then Methodist minister at Gettysburg. She is now deceased. So terrified was she at what had happened that she ran over to our house for safety. The soldiers in the house told her that it was a stray shot and might never happen again. Being assured that she was just as safe at her own home, she ran back to her parents. When this shell struck, a brother of the little girl, lay in a room close by, very low with Typhoid fever. Through the open doors he saw it enter and go out of the building.<sup>20</sup>

In 1897 one of Rev. Berkstresser's sons recalled the family's experience during the Battle of Gettysburg:

The rebel sharpshooters occupied the roof of the parsonage during the battle, thus drawing the fire of the Union forces. Some years after, when balls of carpet rags that were hanging in the garret were unwound, many bullets were found. A shell struck the parsonage over the second-story window, throwing quite a quantity of brick and mortar into the room. My sister Laura was standing at the window. The shell rebounded into the street, and is now, I think, cemented in the wall. Father was, I think, the first one who discovered the retreat of the rebels. He captured two rebel soldiers who were sleeping in an adjoining house, their detachment having neglected to awaken them.<sup>21</sup>

Because Rev. Berkstresser was an itinerant preacher, and required to rotate every couple of years, he and his family left Gettysburg in 1864.



He died on November 3, 1896, in Dadeville, Alabama. During his sixty years as a Methodist minister, he served a number of appointments all over Pennsylvania. He was described as "a strong, forcible, and logical preacher, delighting to present the Gospel whose precious truths were incorporated into his own experience." One of his colleagues wrote that "he was as near without faults as men get to be."<sup>22</sup>

It is not known how soon after the battle or war that the shell was encased in the bricks of the building, or even if the same type of shell was used when it was cemented in place. Tillie Pierce's account suggests that the shell had been there for some time before she wrote her reminiscences. Around the time her account was published (1888), local amateur photographer Henry Stewart recorded a view showing the cannonball embedded in the house. When renovations were made to the front of the structure about 1910, the shell was removed and placed in its present location, near the spot where it originally hit the building on July 1, 1863.<sup>23</sup> The projectile appears to be a Confederate explosive spherical ball from a 12-pounder Napoleon.

### **The Schmucker House**

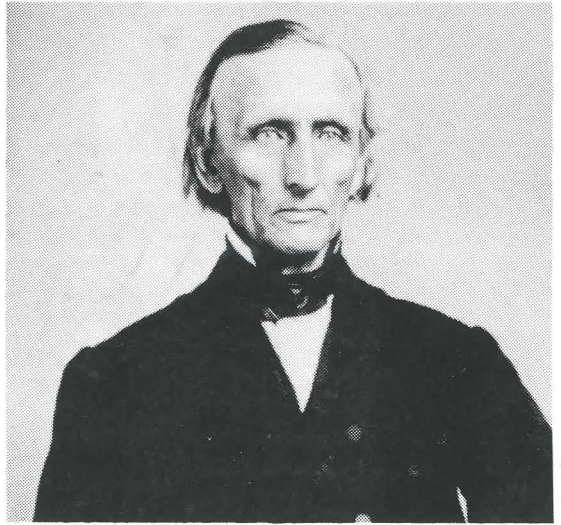
(West Confederate Avenue; Built 1833; 10-Pounder Parrott Shell)

This structure is located on the campus of the Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary. The "First Professor's House," as it was first named, was the second building erected on the grounds of the seminary (Old Dorm being completed in 1832) and was finished in October of 1833. Soon after its completion, the Reverend Doctor Samuel Simon Schmucker and his family moved into the dwelling. Originally, "it had nine large finished rooms, four of them on the first floor, four on the second floor and a smaller one over the main hallway entrance."<sup>24</sup> In 1833 Rev. Schmucker already had a large family, and during the next fifteen years his wife gave birth to seven more children. In the 1840s, "an addition was built to the north end of the house" to accommodate his large and growing family. During his life Rev. Schmucker would have three wives, and father thirteen children.<sup>25</sup>

At the time Rev. Samuel Simon Schmucker moved into the house that now bears his name, "he was probably the best educated young man in the Lutheran Church in this country."<sup>26</sup> Schmucker was also a driving force in the establishment of Pennsylvania College at Gettysburg and a "voluminous" writer. He kept up a large correspondence and during his life authored about fifty books, pamphlets, and magazine articles. In the years prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, Schmucker was an "outspoken

abolitionist. . . . he was among the earliest advocates of African colonization, helped to organize emancipation societies, wrote freely and fully against the institution of slavery, and labored earnestly for improvement among freedmen."<sup>27</sup> It has also been alleged that his home was used as a station along the "underground railway," and that by day he concealed the fugitives in his cellar until it was dark enough to send them safely on their way towards Canada. In 1956 Abdel Wentz, the resident of the Schmucker house at that time, wrote that "to this day in the dingy cellar of the house one can see the evidences of the provision that was made for slaves."<sup>28</sup>

By the time of the battle, all of his children had married and/or moved away. The only residents of the home were Schmucker, then age 64, and his third wife, Esther M. (Wagner) Schmucker, age 48.<sup>29</sup> Because of his outspoken views on slavery, Schmucker considered himself a "marked man." When it was reported that the Southerners were approaching Gettysburg, he and his wife fled town. As it turned out, the ridge upon which his house sat was destined to become a



*Fig. 6. The Reverend Samuel Simon Schmucker. (ACHS.)*

great landmark in the story of the Battle of Gettysburg. During the afternoon of July 1, 1863, Seminary Ridge would be used as a Northern defensive position. It would be attacked and taken by force, and during the next two days would be used as a Southern artillery position. After the battle, Schmucker returned to find that his house had been rifled by the Confederates:

The injury done to the property of the Institution is considerable. The house I occupy was most damaged. The rebels, having driven the occupants out on the first day of the battle, took possession of it themselves and their batteries also planted in the immediate vicinity, it was unavoidably shattered by the Federal artillery from Cemetery Hill. Thirteen Cannon balls or shells pierced the walls and made



holes, several of which were from two to three feet in length and nearly as broad, window frames were shattered to pieces, sashes broken, and the greater part of the glass in the house destroyed. The fences around the yard and garden were nearly all leveled with the ground, as well as those around the entire Seminary lands.<sup>30</sup>

The building also seems to have been used as a temporary field hospital, and it is said that for years after the war, bloodstains could still be seen on its hardwood floors. Much of the furniture in the house was destroyed and "an oil painting of Schmucker's father, the Rev. Dr. John George Schmucker was pierced and slit by a bayonet." Moreover, Schmucker wrote that the seminary's archives, kept in his study on the first floor, "were, like everything else in my house, broken open by the rebels, and the contents scattered promiscuously with my books, papers, letters, etc., over the floor. . . ." Many books were taken from their shelves and thrown around the house, some out the windows, and some trampled with mud.<sup>31</sup>

Shortly after the battle, an article appeared in area papers asking for donations from the public to help repair the damage done to the seminary complex. By 1864 the entire campus was renovated, and today little battle damage can be seen on any of the three seminary buildings that stood at the time.<sup>32</sup> One shell, however, visible in the Schmucker house, recalls the fighting that raged there. Although the author was unable to determine exactly how it became embedded in the wall, it seems likely that it was mortared into the south side of the structure, presumably to mark the location of where a shell hit the building during the battle. If one looks closely at the brickwork around the shell, it seems there was once a window just to right of the spot that it is cemented into. But to the left of the shell, the bricks are original (some are even cracked), and seem to show signs of battle damage. According to his own account, Schmucker recalled that the building was struck by at least "thirteen cannon balls or shells" during the fighting. The author was unable to find any early photographs of the house showing its south side, but in talking to several long-time residents who were familiar with the shell, it seems to have been in the building as long as anyone can remember. The projectile itself is from a 10-pounder Parrott Rifle, and must have entered the building from the direction of Cemetery Hill, probably as a result of the counter battery fire that Schmucker refers to in his account.

## **The Troxell House**

(221 Chambersburg Street; Schenkl Shell)

At the time of the battle, the Troxell house was the home of fifty-four-year-old David Troxell. Listed as a carriage maker in the 1860 census, he was born on April 9, 1809, the son of John and Catherine Troxell. This house is located on the north side of Chambersburg Street, and is adjacent to a group of buildings known as the "Warren Block." The block consists of four two-and-a-half-story brick houses built by Thomas Warren around the year 1859 (presently, 211, 213, 215, and 217 Chambersburg Street).<sup>33</sup>

As the fighting raged around these homes during the first three days of July 1863, shells from both sides flew back and forth over the town. David Troxell's cellar became something of a safe haven for the four families of the Warren Block. In a 1908 article, Elizabeth Gilbert, a resident of what is now 213 Chambersburg Street, described the experience:

During the battle on the second and third days the four families living in the Warren Row gathered in the cellar of Uncle Dave Troxel, making about twenty-two people taking shelter in that cellar. They stayed there until about ten o'clock in the evening of the second day and were there on the third day. They spent the time in listening to the firing and keeping up each other's courage.<sup>34</sup>

From what we know about the families in the Warren Block from census records, Elizabeth Gilbert's account, and the family files located at the Adams County Historical Society, we can construct a probable list of "about twenty-two" who may have been in the cellar at the time of the battle. The Troxell house residents would include David (53), his mother Catherine (78), and Rebecca Keffer (57). The residents of the Warren Block were as follows: the Broadhead family (217 Chambersburg Street), including Joseph (33), his wife Sarah (31), their small child May (3), and Sallie Heckenluber (63), a nurse who was described as a "well known personage of those days." The Myers family (215 Chambersburg Street), according to Mrs. Gilbert, was made up of "George [51], his wife [Elizabeth, also 51], and children then at home, Miss Mary [15], Robert [21], George [25], and John [22]." Twenty-five year old George was married at the time, and at least three years prior to the battle, his wife, Jane (20), and son George (5), were also living with the Myers family. While it is possible they were in the basement, it is also possible that they were living elsewhere at the time. The Gilbert family (213



Chambersburg Street) consisted of Jacob (28), his wife Elizabeth (28), their two daughters, and Jacob's mother, Anna (51). As recorded by Mrs. Gilbert, the Davis family (211 Chambersburg Street), included "Owens Davis [34], an engineer on the Hanover Junction, Hanover and Gettysburg Railroad, his wife [Rachel, 27] and three or four children [George (8), Robert (5), and a small girl (3)]."<sup>35</sup>

Sarah Broadhead recorded the events that occurred in the cellar of David Troxell's house in her 1863 diary. On the evening of July 2nd, she wrote a passage that actually mentions the shell which is still embedded in the front of the Troxell house:

About 4 o'clock PM. the storm burst again with terrific violence. It seemed as though heaven and earth were being rolled together. For better security we went to the house of a neighbor and occupied the cellar, by far the most comfortable part of the house. Whilst there a shell struck the house, but mercifully did not burst but remained embedded in the wall, one half protruding.<sup>36</sup>

In her reminiscences of the battle, Elizabeth Gilbert also remembered the shell striking the house. She recalled that during the bombardment "Miss Sallie Heckenluber was very nervous. When the cold shell struck and entered the house no one mentioned the fact though she [Mrs. Gilbert] and a number of the men heard it enter [the] house while they were in [the] cellar. They were afraid it would excite the women and children to talk about it."<sup>37</sup> After the bombardment ended, the families tried to leave the cellar, but soon returned when the fighting on Culp's and Cemetery Hill became more intense. Sarah described the rest of the evening in her diary:

About 6 o'clock the cannonading lessened, and we thinking the fighting for the day was over, came out. Then the noise of the musketry was loud and constant, and made us feel quite as bad as the cannonading, though it seemed to me less terrible. Very soon the artillery joined in the din, and soon became as awful as ever, and we again retreated to our friend's underground apartment, and remained until the battle ceased, about 10 o'clock at night.<sup>38</sup>

At approximately 1 P.M. on July 3, 1863, the cannons positioned along the ridges on both sides of town roared once again. This time it was the bombardment preceding "Pickett's Charge." Sarah Broadhead's account of the apprehension that she felt while huddled in the corner of David Troxell's cellar has been used again and again by historians to illustrate the civilians' reaction to the bombardment. It is probably one of the best

descriptions of the horror and terrible fear that must have gripped the people of Gettysburg during the battle:

Again, the battle began with unearthly fury. Nearly all the afternoon it seemed as if the heavens and earth were crashing together. The time that we sat in the cellar seemed long, listening to the terrific sound of the strife; more terrible never greeted human ears. We knew that with every explosion, and the scream of each shell, human beings were hurried through excruciating pain, into another world, and that many more were torn and mangled, and lying in torment worse than death, and no one able to extend relief. The thought made me very sad, and felt that if it was God's will, I would rather be taken away than to see the misery that would follow. Some thought this awful afternoon would never come to a close. We knew that the Rebels were putting forth all their might, and it was a dreadful thought that they might succeed.<sup>39</sup>



*Fig. 7. The Troxell house. Just to its right (or east) is the home of Sarah Broadhead and the rest of the Warren Block. (Photo by author.)*



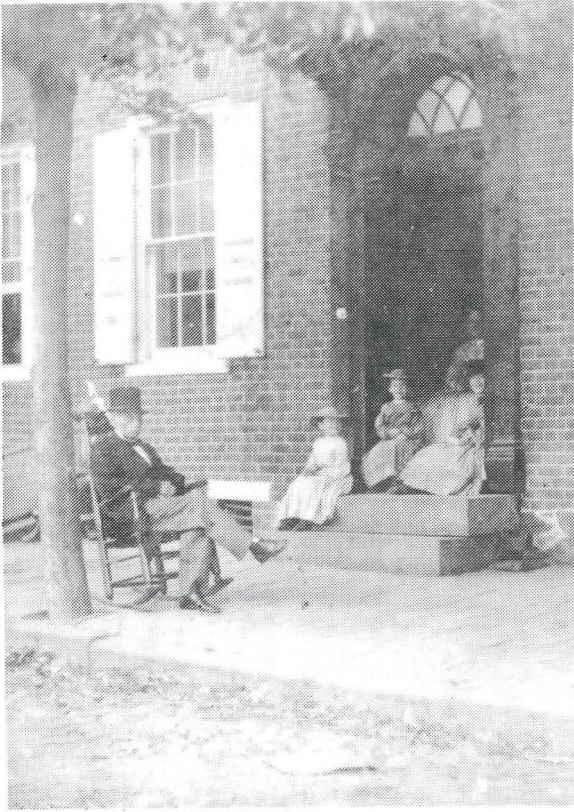
As can be seen by the modern photograph, the house has been changed considerably from its 1863 appearance. Although I have been unable to locate a photograph that clearly shows the front of the house before it was remodeled, I think it safe to assume the shell protruded from the original structure. At the time of the battle, the house was a two-story structure sitting back from the street. Sometime after 1912, a more elaborate façade was incorporated onto the front of the house. When this was done, the artillery shell was apparently moved from the older section to the front of the new addition.<sup>40</sup> In a letter dated 1945, a descendant of Sarah Broadhead stated that the shell in the Troxell House “is still to be seen lodged in the brick near the roof. This house she [Sarah Broadhead] refers to when seeking shelter in the cellar.”<sup>41</sup> Today, the rear of the projectile is sticking out of the building, and can be identified as a Schenkl Shell. As one reads stories such as those of Sarah Broadhead and Elizabeth Gilbert, it is amazing to consider that not one civilian casualty due to artillery fire was reported during the entire three days of battle.

### **The McClean House**

(11 Baltimore Street; 20-Pounder Parrott Shell)

Of the nine buildings in this study, the McClean house has probably the best documentation concerning its artillery shell. It is, however, one of the least talked about of the battle damaged buildings in town. Today, it is the site of Zerfing's Hardware store and bears little resemblance to a Civil War structure. At the time of the battle, the house was owned by a fifty-nine-year-old attorney-at-law named Moses McClean. He was born in Adams county on June 17, 1804, the son of William and Sarah Maginley McClean. As a young man, he studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1825. One year later, he established a practice in his home town of Gettysburg, and during the next forty-five years was one of its most prominent citizens. As a leading Democrat in town, he was very active in local politics. Before his death in 1870, Moses McClean would serve Adams county in several elected positions, including county commissioner, state assemblyman, and United States congressman. He was described as “a man of vigorous intellect and dauntless courage in the pursuit of his convictions.”<sup>42</sup>

In 1832 Moses was married to Hannah Mary McConaughy (sister of lawyer David McConaughy), and in 1839 he purchased the property on Baltimore Street in which his family lived during the battle. In 1863 the



*Fig. 8.* A post war photograph of **Moses McClean** seated in front of his home (the current site of Zerfing's Hardware). (ACHS.)

McClellan household consisted of Moses (59), his wife Hannah (52), their three daughters, Maggie (26), Sallie (21), Elizabeth (15), two of their sons, Robert (18), Colin (13), and their maid. William McClellan (30), another of Moses's sons, had married in 1855 and was living with his wife Fannie (28), and two daughters, Hannah Mary (5), and Olivia (4), on West Middle Street.<sup>43</sup> It should be noted that at the time of the Civil War, Moses McClellan was also the owner of a farm situated about a mile northwest of town along the Mummasburg Road. This farm, occupied by a tenant, would be the scene of heavy fighting on July 1, 1863.<sup>44</sup>

As stated previously, documentation concerning the McClellan family is substantial. Around the turn of the century, one of Moses's grandsons, William Archibald McClellan, became editor of the *Gettysburg Compiler*, and as it became more and more popular to publish accounts of the battle from the older townspeople, he solicited recollections from his father William, his uncle Robert, and his aunt Elizabeth. Today, copies of these accounts can be found at the Adams County Historical Society.<sup>45</sup>

During the battle, the McClellan family suffered like many others in Gettysburg. They stared in disbelief on June 26 when Rebels entered town for the first time, and they peered out their windows as General Jubal Early wrote a requisition for supplies in front of their house. They were spectators to the arrival of General Buford's cavalry on June 30th, and of General Reynolds and his staff on July 1st. And they watched in horror on the afternoon of that day, when the Union Army was driven



back through the streets of Gettysburg. On the second and third days of the battle, the family stayed in their house and tried to protect their property against the looting of the Rebels. On the evening of the second day's fighting, William brought his family to his father's house where he thought they might be safer.<sup>46</sup> Although their property was not badly damaged during the battle, an event would occur on the morning of July 3, 1863, that would profoundly affect their views on the horrors of war. Robert McClean, eighteen years old at the time, described the battle in a letter to one of his cousins on July 17, 1863:

Occasionally a shell would come into town, one of which entered our garret through the side wall, did some slight damage but did not explode, and rolled down the steps, through the open door to the first landing, where my niece, little M. [Hannah Mary, age 5], had been but a few moments before. Ma narrowly escaped injury from the same missile, as she had been on the garret only a few minutes before.<sup>47</sup>

In 1908 Elizabeth McClean (fifteen years old in 1863) wrote her account of the battle. Very detailed in content, it is one of the best civilian accounts of the battle ever set down. She also described the events that transpired on that fateful morning:

[On] . . . Friday [July 3rd], my mother said she would take the feather bed to the garret where the others were neatly packed away. She went up to get the place ready for it and came down to get some one to help carry it up; while she was down there was a loud crash and a shell came tearing through a fifteen inch brick wall, striking a beam that supported the roof, split it in two, broke out a rung from the crib in which we had slept when children, and having spent its force rolled down the stairs to the first landing. The garret was filled with a cloud of brick dust and we thought it was on fire, but the shell did not explode.<sup>48</sup>

In 1909 her brother Robert added that it was "a round shell [that] entered the gable of our house on the garret." His account, also published in the *Gettysburg Compiler*, describes the path of the shell after it entered the house:

I was lying on the floor of the room directly below. The racket caused may be imagined, the impact on the wall, the crashing of the brick on the garret floor, and of the sundered timber, the rolling along of the shell till it reached the open door, and then the thumping down the first flight of stairs, step by step, till it reached the landing where our

oldest little niece had been but a few moments previous to that time. A broken piece of timber struck out by the shell on its course through the garret was driven through the side of a crib standing there, leaving an opening unrepaired to this day, as a memorial of the battle.<sup>49</sup>

Soon after the incident, a Union soldier who had been across the street nursing his wounded captain came running into the house to see if everyone was all right. Elizabeth remembered that everyone was "afraid to touch the shell," and they asked the soldier to take it away, "but afterwards we asked him for it and still have it in our possession."<sup>50</sup> One of the most interesting items included in Elizabeth's account of the artillery shell is a comment that she made in passing near the end of the article: "The man who afterwards bought our house had another shell put in the wall where the first one came through."<sup>51</sup>

On September 30, 1870, Moses McClean died and was buried in the Evergreen Cemetery. His widow Hannah died in 1873, and in October 1877 the house was sold to a man named George E. Stock, who opened a cigar factory on the first floor of the building. According to Elizabeth's 1908 account, it was Stock who mortared the present shell into the building to mark the spot which was struck by a shell during the battle. Inaccurately, the shell he had embedded into the wall is 20-pounder Parrott shell from a rifled cannon, while Robert McClean's account mentions that it was "a round shell" that struck the wall. Today, the whereabouts of the original shell is unknown.<sup>52</sup>

Over the years, the McClean house has been severely altered. A third story was added to the original two-and-a-half-story structure, and the brickwork on the front of the building has been totally renovated, but the shell, placed there sometime after 1877, still rests in the south side of the structure, bearing silent witness to an event that has long been forgotten.

## **The Sheads House**

(331 Buford Avenue; Built in 1862; 10-Pounder Parrott Shell)

The 10-pounder Parrott shell today embedded in the Sheads house is probably the best-known of the shells in this study. For years it has been speculated that during the battle it entered the rear of the building, passed completely through it, and became lodged in its front wall, where it has remained ever since. But what do we really know about the story concerning this shell?

In 1859 Miss Caroline S. Sheads, at that time a teacher of music and French at Cottage Hall College in York, Pennsylvania, purchased from





*Fig. 9.* The 10-pound Parrott shell protruding from the south side of the **Sheads house**. (Photo by author.)

Edward McPherson three acres of ground at the base of Oak Ridge along the north side of the Chambersburg Pike.<sup>53</sup> In April of 1862, it was reported that her father Elias, a coachmaker by trade, was erecting a twelve-room Gothic style “brick cottage” on the property for his family to live in.<sup>54</sup> When it was completed, Carrie, who by this time had opened her own private school in Gettysburg, moved into the building and named it the Oak Ridge Seminary.<sup>55</sup> Designating it as a boarding-and-day school for young ladies, Carrie enrolled students from as far away as Baltimore, Maryland.

In 1863 the Sheads family consisted of Elias (55), his wife Mary C. McBride Sheads (52), and their seven children, Elizabeth Anna (30), Louisa M. (28), Carrie S. (23), David M. (23), Elias Jr. (21), Robert E. (19), and Jacob James (16). It is uncertain whether all of the Sheads children lived with Carrie and her parents or had other residences in town, but it is known that during the Civil War, all four of Elias’s sons served in the Union Army and were apparently away from home at the time of the battle.<sup>56</sup>

On July 1, 1863, the Sheads house was caught in the middle of some of the heaviest fighting of the war. Carrie wrote that "early on Wednesday morning [July 1st] the signs of the approaching tempest were so numerous and unmistakable" that some of her students were prevented from attending the school.<sup>57</sup> "So suddenly and unexpectedly had war unfurled its'gorgeous but bloody panorama" that the "cluster of girls" in her care, had no time to withdraw to a place of safety.<sup>58</sup> According to one source, "the sole students in the seminary" during the great battle were the two daughters of William Callow from Baltimore, "young ladies of fifteen and sixteen."<sup>59</sup> During the first day's battle, fighting raged for hours just a few hundred feet west and north of the house. "So near the line of battle, and situated on the turnpike, the buildings of Oakridge Seminary were soon used as a hospital; and, with that amazing suddenness which can happen only in a time of active and invasive warfare, Miss Sheads found herself converted from the principal of a young ladies seminary into the lady superintendent of an army hospital."<sup>60</sup> One soldier remembered that at least 72 wounded were carried into the house from the battlefield.<sup>61</sup>

Late in the afternoon, the Union First Army Corps made a desperate stand on the very ridge from which Carrie's school had taken its name. At 4:30 P.M. the lines crumbled, and Union troops were literally driven past the Sheads house in a "Vortex of fire."<sup>62</sup> One soldier described it as "running the gauntlet in the strict sense of the word." The air was so thick with bullets that "it seemed almost impossible to breathe without inhaling them."<sup>63</sup> As Carrie and her family huddled in the safety of their basement, hundreds of Northern soldiers, cut off from town, were captured within feet of the Sheads home. Among the more famous of these was Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Wheelock of the 97th New York, taken prisoner in their very presence. In what must be one of Gettysburg's most famous "human interest stories," Elias Sheads is given credit for defusing a situation that may have saved the colonel's life, and his daughter Carrie for saving the colonel's sword from capture.<sup>64</sup> During the next few days, the Sheads house sat behind the Confederate lines, filled with wounded. In 1867 Frank Moore recounted Carrie's heroism in a book entitled *Women of the War*.

As the battle raged, Miss Sheads and her little flock continued unterrified in the midst of the awful cannonade, she soothing and cheering the girls, and they learning from her that noble calmness in danger which, under all circumstances, and in either sex, stamps the character with an air of true nobility, and indicates genuine heroism.



The seminary was hit in more than sixty places, and two shells passed entirely through it. At length Miss Sheads and her young ladies became accustomed, as it were, to the situation, and in intervals of the uproar would walk out in the grounds, and watch the magnificent yet fearful sight, that the slopes of Cemetery Hill presented. All devoted themselves to the great number of wounded with whom their halls and large rooms were crowded.<sup>65</sup>

Asa Sleath Hardman of Company F, 3rd Indiana Cavalry, also wrote of the Sheads family and their experiences during the battle. Taken prisoner during the retreat on the first day's battle, he was allowed to remain at the house to tend to the wounded. During the second day's battle, he remembered a shell fired by a Northern battery:

[It] was not so well aimed, and falling short, bounded with terrible force against the foundation very close to the window of the basement room, in which seven women who belonged to the house had sought refuge. If a shell should burst in that room, only a miracle could save those trembling, fainting women from death. With the help of some students, we moved the heaviest stones we could handle, and barricaded their windows to make the hiding place secure against accident. During the preceding night, Lee's men had planted a battery in the rear of this seminary building on the crest of the ridge. When firing opened at noon the next day, the shells from our battery searching for the Rebel battery were uncomfortably thick, and any projectile falling a little short would be very likely to strike the house. Several did crash through it and caused the wildest alarm, lest by bursting in the garret they would set fire to the house.<sup>66</sup>

Along with these recollections that describe the shelling of the house during the battle, the author was fortunate to uncover an account that may shed some light on the 10-pounder Parrott shell protruding from its front wall. On November 18, 1863, a correspondent of the *New York Herald* who was in town for the dedication of the National Cemetery, visited the Sheads house while on a battlefield tour and recorded the following:

The Ladies' schoolhouse of Miss Carrie Shead [sic] presents a momento of the fight in a large aperture made near the roof. This lady and her pupils busied themselves during the fight in attending some sixty wounded Union soldiers. The two Misses Callow, of Baltimore, are spoken of as earnest and gentle ministers in this good work.<sup>67</sup>

It seems that when the brickwork was repaired, the shell we see today, was embedded into the wall. In an 1867 view of the house taken by the Tyson Brothers, one can barely distinguish a black object just to the left of the attic window.<sup>68</sup>

Unfortunately, the trials of the Sheads family would not end with the battle. Tragically, as a result of their Civil War service, all four of Elias's sons would die. Elias Jr., a member of Co. F, 87th Pennsylvania, was killed on July 9, 1864, at the Battle of Monocacy.<sup>69</sup> The youngest son Jacob, whom Elias forbade to enlist in the army, ran away and joined Co. B, 21st Pennsylvania Cavalry. He contracted mumps and died at a hospital in City Point, Virginia, on October 25, 1864.<sup>70</sup> Robert, a member of Co. A, 1st Pennsylvania Reserves, was seriously wounded in the neck at the Battle of White Oak Swamp on June 13, 1864, and for the rest of his life "never spoke a loud word." Making himself understood chiefly by motions, he lingered until October 31, 1868.<sup>71</sup> David, also a member of Co. F, 87th Pennsylvania, lived the longest. Contracting tuberculosis during his service, he was discharged, and died ten years later on June 8, 1874.<sup>72</sup>

A romance also blossomed out of this story, however. Asa Hardman of the 3rd Indiana returned and on February 28, 1866, married Louisa Sheads, but shortly after, on April 1, 1866, she died.<sup>73</sup> On February 17, 1870, Elias's wife Mary also died. It was said that Louisa and her mother were, over the years, literally "worn out with hard work, anxiety and sorrow."<sup>74</sup> For the rest of his life, Mr. Elias Sheads was remembered "as a lonely, broken hearted old man." As a result of his family's service and losses, Elias was awarded a pension in 1886, and his daughters Carrie and Elizabeth were given clerkships in Washington, D.C.<sup>75</sup>

Unfortunately, when pointing out the shell to visitors to the battlefield, the story of this family's sacrifice is seldom mentioned. Today, with the exception of the dormers added to its roof, the house looks very much as it did in 1863. On December 8, 1976, the Sheads house was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>76</sup>

## Other Battle Damage

The five buildings in Gettysburg that still show signs of battle damage other than artillery shells are all on the southern end of town. This makes perfect sense, since that area was the scene of a constant sharpshooters' battle on July 2 and 3, 1863. The Harvey Sweney house (better known





*Fig. 10.* The south side of the **Jacob Stock house** (407 South Washington Street) showing battle damage caused by Union soldiers on Cemetery Hill during the battle. (Photo by author.)

as the Farnsworth house), the McClellan house (today the Jennie Wade House Museum), the Henry Garlach house, and John Winebrenner's tannery (also known as Twin Oaks), all on Baltimore Street, all have bullet holes in them. The Jacob Stock house on South Washington Street also has visible battle damage on its southern wall. There is some evidence, however, that these marks were the result of Northern artillery fire (case shot or canister) directed toward Confed-erate sharpshooters at an attic window.

\* \* \* \*

*In preparing this article, the author fully realizes that it does not present a complete list of the damaged buildings in town. Rather, what the author has provided is a base of information on which others may build. It is my hope that many readers will identify evidence of battle damage that, at the time of this article, we are as of yet unaware of. At present, the historical society is compiling a thorough archives of civilian-related accounts of the battle, as well as of the Gettysburg campaign. The story of battle damage still evident in the town, and in all of Adams County, is a very important part of this story. If anyone has accounts, diaries, photographs or other information he or she would like to share with us, please write or pay a visit to the Adams County Historical Society.*



## Notes

1. Elwood Christ, Pennsylvania Historical Resource Survey (cited hereafter as PHRS), 221 North Stratton Street, Gettysburg Historic Building Survey Committee (cited hereafter as GHBS) (1988; copy at the Adams County Historical Society, hereafter cited as ACHS); 1860 United States Census, Gettysburg, Adams County, Pennsylvania, p. 209; Kuhn Family File, ACHS; obituary of John Kuhn, *Gettysburg Compiler* (February 28, 1899).
2. For more information concerning the "Brickyard Fight," see Mark H. Dunkelman and Michael J. Winey, *The Hardtack Regiment* (London and Toronto, 1981), pp. 65-81.
3. Alex Bird, "At Gettysburg," *Ellicottville Post* (September 16, 1908), cited in Mark H. Dunkelman and Michael J. Winey, "The Hardtack Regiment in the Brickyard Fight," *Gettysburg Magazine*, No. 8 (January, 1993), p. 20.
4. Christ, PHRS, 218 North Stratton Street, GHBS Committee (1988; copy in ACHS).
5. 1860 Census, Hamiltonban Township, p. 266; Tombstone Inscriptions, Evergreen Cemetery, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, ACHS. In the 1860 census George Crass was living near Fairfield. I believe he moved to Gettysburg, and this is the same family.
6. Letter in Barbehenn Family File, ACHS.
7. *Ibid.*
8. William Long, *Gettysburg Lot Owners* (unpublished manuscript in the 105-File, ACHS), Lots #112, #113.
9. Tyson Brothers' Photographic Gallery File, ACHS; advertisement in *Gettysburg Compiler* (July 28, 1862). For a biography of Charles Tyson, see the *1886 History of Adams County Pennsylvania* (Warner, Beers and Co., Chicago, 1886), pp. 478-479. See also William A. Frassanito, *Early Photography at Gettysburg* (Gettysburg, 1995).
10. Tyson Family File, ACHS.
11. Noble Preston, *Philadelphia Weekly Times* (March 29, 1884; copy in Civilian Account Files, ACHS).
12. *Ibid.*
13. William A. Frassanito, *The Gettysburg Bicentennial Album* (Gettysburg, 1987), pp. 21-22; Robert L. Bloom, *A History of Adams County, Pennsylvania, 1700-1990* (Gettysburg, 1992), pp. 154-160; *1886 History*, p. 124.
14. *1886 History of Adams County*, p. 124.
15. *Ibid.*; "Memorial of the Late Rev. D. Eyster," *The Lutheran Observer* (January 10, 1862); Eyster Family File ACHS.
16. Elizabeth McClean, "The Rebels Are Coming!" *Gettysburg Compiler* (July 8, 1908).
17. Tillie Pierce Alleman, *At Gettysburg or What a Girl Saw and Heard of the Battle* (New York, 1889), p. 14.
18. Eyster Family File, ACHS; 1860 Census, Gettysburg, p. 175.
19. "Methodism in Adams County," *Gettysburg Compiler* (February 19, 1880); 1860 United States Census, Shrewsbury Township, York County, Pennsylvania, p. 731. In 1862 and 1863, R. Watson Bergstresser was enrolled in Gettysburg College but did not graduate.
20. Alleman, pp. 96-98. See also the Pierce Family File, ACHS.
21. C. T. Dunning, "Rev. George Berkstresser," *Minutes of the Central Pennsylvania Conference, 29th Session* (Clearfield, PA, 1897), pp. 93-94.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Frassanito, *Bicentennial Album*, pp. 11, 55.
24. Abdel Ross Wentz, "A Biography of the Schmucker House," *Lutheran Theological Seminary Bulletin*, 36 (1956), 10-15.
25. *Ibid.* See also Abdel Ross Wentz, *Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary* (Harrisburg, 1965), vol. 1.
26. Wentz, "Biography of the Schmucker House," p. 10.
27. *Ibid.*; Bloom, *History of Adams County*, p. 159; Schmucker Family File, ACHS. For a biography of Rev. Schmucker see, *1886 History*, p. 371, and obituary of Rev. Schmucker, *Star and Sentinel* (July 30, 1873).

28. Wentz, "Biography of the Schmucker House," p. 11. It must be pointed out that although Wentz firmly believed that the Schmucker House was used as a station on the Underground Railroad, there is no solid evidence to back up this claim.

29. 1860 Census, Gettysburg, p. 210; Schmucker Family File, ACHS.

30. Wentz, "A Biography of the Schmucker House," p. 12; Wentz, *Gettysburg Seminary*, p. 212.

31. *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*

33. 1860 Census, Gettysburg, p. 186; Troxell Family File and Warren Family File, ACHS.

34. Sarah M. Broadhead, *The Diary of a Lady, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania* (ca. 1864; copy in Civilian Accounts Files, ACHS).

35. Mrs. Gilbert's Story, *Gettysburg Compiler* (September 6, 1905); 1860 Census, Gettysburg, pp. 158, 186; Troxell Family File, Broadhead Family File, Gilbert Family File, Myers Family File, ACHS.

36. Broadhead, *Diary*.

37. Gilbert, *Compiler*.

38. Broadhead, *Diary*.

39. *Ibid.*

40. Calvin Gilbert, *Gettysburg Compiler* (April 9, 1927); *Fire Insurance Maps of Gettysburg*, Sanborn Map Company (New York, June, 1912), p. 8, and (July 1924), p. 9 (copies of these can be found on microfilm at the ACHS). On the 1912 map, the house is still shown set back off the street, but on the 1924 map the house is represented as it now appears. The building, therefore, was remodeled sometime between 1912 and 1924. There are actually at least two distant views that show the Troxell house as it appeared before the addition. One is the "Birdseye view of Gettysburg," a map published in 1888 by Fowler and Downs of Boston Massachusetts (a copy of this map hangs at the ACHS). The other is a view taken from Seminary Ridge by the Tyson brothers in August, 1863, a blowup of which can be seen in William Frassanito, *Early Photography at Gettysburg*, p. 75.

41. Broadhead Family File, ACHS.

42. 1886 *History*, pp. 101, 362; Bloom,

*History of Adams County*, p. 108; McClean Papers, ACHS; McClean Family File, ACHS; obituary of Moses McClean, *Gettysburg Compiler* (October 7, 1870).

43. McClean Family File, ACHS; Long, Lot #5; 1860 Census, Gettysburg, p. 178.

44. McClean Farm File, Gettysburg National Military Park.

45. McClean Family File, ACHS. (William Archibald McClean became editor of the *Gettysburg Compiler* in 1902).

46. William McClean, "The Days of Terror in 1863," *Gettysburg Compiler* (June 1, 1908).

47. Robert McClean, "A Boy in Gettysburg—1863," *Gettysburg Compiler* (June 30, 1909).

48. Elizabeth McClean, "The Rebels Are Coming," *Gettysburg Compiler* (July 8, 1908).

49. Robert McClean, *Compiler*.

50. Elizabeth McClean, *Compiler*.

51. *Ibid.*

52. Obituary of Moses McClean, *Gettysburg Compiler* (October 7, 1870); McClean Family File, ACHS; Long, #5; Robert McClean, *Compiler*; Elizabeth McClean, *Compiler*. A photograph of George Stock's Cigar Store appears in Cary A. Moore, *A Glimpse into Adams County, 1860-1914: A Photographic Record* (Gettysburg, 1977). In 1908 Elizabeth McClean stated that the family was still in possession of the original shell.

53. Sheads Family File, ACHS; *Adams Sentinel* (July 18, 1859).

54. *Adams Sentinel* (April 9, 1862).

55. The advertisements for her school appear in the local papers as early as 1861 (see for example, *Adams Sentinel*, August 28, 1861).

56. Census, Gettysburg, p. 207, Sheads Family File, ACHS; Tombstone Inscriptions, Evergreen Cemetery, ACHS. Carrie's age was established through the 1860 Census. At that time she taught in York, Pennsylvania (see York County Census, York Borough, p. 1053).

57. "Scenes of the Battle of Gettysburg," *National Republican* (November 28, 1863). This is a reprint of part of a letter written



by Carrie Sheads. The author has never seen the letter in its entirety.

58. Frank Moore, *Women of the War* (Hartford, 1867), p. 239.

59. *Adams Sentinel* (December 1, 1863). Mr. William Callow is listed in Woods' 1868 Baltimore city directory as the president of the Bankers and Merchants Telegraph Company, located on West Baltimore St. Even after an extensive search of the 1850 and 1860 Baltimore city census records, I was still unable to identify the girls' names.

60. Frank Moore, p. 239.

61. Asa Sleath Hardman, "As a Union Prisoner Saw the Battle of Gettysburg," *Civil War Times Illustrated* (July, 1962), p. 49 (the date this manuscript was written is unknown). Another early account put the number at "some sixty wounded" (see New York *Herald* article on the dedication of the National Cemetery, November 20, 1863).

62. Hardman, p. 48; Frank Moore, p. 240. The "vortex of fire" quotation appears in both accounts. This, along with other similarities, suggests that Asa Hardman referred to Moore's account before he wrote his own.

63. Wilber Judd, "Herkimer County Journal" (July 25, 1863). Judd was a member of the 97th New York Regiment.

64. Frank Moore, pp. 240-43. An altered version of the story is told by General John C. Robinson in "The First Corps: Its Important Services at the Battle of Gettysburg," *National Tribune* (April 14, 1887).

65. Frank Moore, p. 243. See also: Lavina C. Wierick, "When The Rebels Came," *Gettysburg Compiler* (June 26, 1907), and "Gen. Lee's Headquarters," *Gettysburg Compiler* (August 3, 1910).

66. Hardman, pp. 48-49; Pension Records of Asa Hardman, National Archives (cited hereafter as NA), Washington, D.C. Hardman mentioned seven women in the house. Four of them would have been members of the Sheads family; two were the Callow sisters; and the last is unknown, possibly a neighbor.

67. New York *Herald* (November 20, 1863).

68. See William A. Frassanito, *Gettysburg: A Journey in Time* (New York, 1975), pp. 66-67. For the dating of the photo, see Frassanito, *Early Photography at Gettysburg*, pp. 29-36.

69. The Battle of Monocacy," *Adams Sentinel* (July 19, 1864).

70. Sheads Family File, ACHS; Tombstone Inscriptions, Evergreen Cemetery; Pension Records of Elias Sheads, NA. The Funerals of both Elias and Jacob took place on the same day in Gettysburg's Evergreen Cemetery ("Out of the Past, 100 Years Ago," *Gettysburg Times*, November 23, 1964).

71. Pension Records, NA; Sheads Family File, ACHS; Clifton Johnson, *Battleground Adventures* (Boston and New York, 1915), pp. 181-182.

72. Sheads Family File, ACHS; Pension Records, NA.

73. *Ibid.* They were married by a Rev. Chester in Washington, D.C. Oral tradition tells us that Louisa was working in a hospital at the time of her death which was caused by chloroform overdose.

74. Death of Miss Sheads," "Fifteen Years Ago" column, *Gettysburg Times* (April 6, 1929). Elizabeth A. Sheads died on March 5, 1914.

75. *Ibid.* Today, no direct descendants of the Elias Sheads family survive. Robert was the only one of Elias and Mary's offspring to marry and have children. He married Sally E. Knouse and had two girls before his death. Caroline Louisa died in infancy, and Mary E. Sheads, born in 1865, never married and lived until 1934, when she was mysteriously murdered in her Washington, D.C., apartment. Because of these facts, no papers or photographs from this family are known to exist (Sheds Family File, ACHS).

76. Sheads Family File, ACHS. For more information concerning the house itself, see Elizabeth A. Sheffer, "The Sheads House," *Gettysburg Times* (January 23-24, 1988), and Christ, PHRS, 331 Buford Avenue, GHBSC (1988; copy at ACHS).

**William and Isabel:  
Parallels Between  
The Life and Times of the William Bliss Family,  
Transplanted New Englanders at Gettysburg,  
and  
A Nineteenth-Century Novel,  
*Isabel Carrollton: A Personal Retrospect* by Kneller Glen**

by Elwood W. Christ

**I**t was the best of times, it was the worst of times”—so wrote Charles Dickens in his *Tale of Two Cities*. When many people are faced with adversity, they seek solace in their own particular ways. For some, it may be the nuclear family, sticking together in the foul weather of life; for others, it may be the Bible or other religious solace—the popular Twenty-third Psalm, for example. No matter what the outlet, many can restore their outlook on life through personal and family relationships or worship. However, for some adversity permeates their lives, as if, like Job, God is testing their faith.

By 3 July 1863, Union troops under the command of General George G. Meade and elements of General Robert E. Lee's Confederate army had struggled for two days over the rolling farm lands, ridges, and rocky crags around a small farming community and county seat known as Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Within the encompassing whirlpool of battle, however, smaller dramas had unfolded, and one of them is of interest to us here. The soldiers had been fighting for the possession of a house and barn situated equidistant between the battle lines about one and one-quarter miles south-southwest of the town square. During a thirty-one hour period, the farmstead had changed hands ten times, but by mid-morning of the third day, Federal troops along Cemetery Ridge could no longer tolerate the harassing sharpshooters' fire originating from the barn. After men of the 14th Connecticut Regiment recaptured the farmstead, a courier was sent out to the besieged "Nutmeggers" with orders to torch the buildings and withdraw. Shortly before the noon, the farmstead was engulfed in flames. Later, a two-hour cannonade was followed by a massed Confederate infantry assault on the Union center, the famous "Pickett's Charge." Men in butternut-and-grey again traversed the same farmstead, but by that time the earlier actions there



had become anticlimactic. By 5 July the armies had withdrawn, but they had left behind a devastated landscape.

However, more was destroyed the morning of the third than a refuge for the skirmishers and sharpshooters: a secure family setting and livelihood were also consumed in the fires. The lives of the farmer, William Bliss, his wife Adeline, and their daughters Sarah and Frances had been immeasurably altered. But there is one major difference between the Bliss's situation and that of other noncombatants: during Lee's Gettysburg campaign, William and his family were the only civilians to lose *everything* except the clothes on their backs and that which was most dear to them—their lives.

Refusing to be shaken by adversity, within three weeks of the holocaust, and at the age of sixty-three and probably with his wife and daughters in attendance, William sat down and began to assess the damages. On 29 July, Bliss filed a damage claim consisting of an inventory of property (personal, real estate, crops, and farm machinery) that had been obliterated by the infernos.<sup>1</sup>

By documenting their charred lives, the Bliss family left modern scholars with one shred of evidence that gives us a few tantalizing pieces of data which belong to the enormous jigsaw puzzle known as the Bliss Farm. At least for one family, a list exists of what material culture was contained within one small farm unit at the time of the battle. Bliss's legacy, spawned by his financial adversity, has provided scholars a unique peek at mid-nineteenth-century farm life at Gettysburg.<sup>2</sup> The Bliss inventory, moreover, is more than a list of inanimate objects. Some items had some psychological significance to members of the family. Today, people have favorite clothes, save old photographs and baby shoes, and they often have a favorite book; the Blisses, too, listed similar sentimental items.

For our purposes, the Bliss inventory shows that they had acquired a considerable library for a modest farm family. Although recording the loss of their hundred volumes and a Bible and testaments, they did not recall any titles except one. Near the end of their inventory was written "Book Isabella Carrollton," probably *Isabell Carrolltown: A Personal Retrospect*, a 340-page novel by Kneller Glen, published in 1854 by Phillips, Sampson and Company in Boston, and by J. C. Derby in New York City.<sup>3</sup>

Certainly, the novel had some significative meaning; otherwise the Blisses would not have singled it out for special mention in their inventory. Unfortunately, their reasons for the novel's special mention cannot be firmly established, for there are no known letters, diaries or account

books that might identify *Isabel Carrollton*'s importance. The Blisses' rationale for the book's listing died along with William's last child in 1921.

Without any firm documentation as to its listing by title, the possible meanings of *Isabel Carrollton* to Bliss or his family are limited only by our own imaginations. For examples, the book might have been a gift from a relative or a dear friend, a presentation copy from the writer, or it might have contained some special recipe or romantic poem, written on a fly leaf, that was cherished by some member of the Bliss family. Moreover, neither do we know to whom in the family the book was significant nor when and where it was acquired.

Secondly, the author's identity may be of significance, but if so, it cannot be firmly established; it is as mysterious as the rationale for the book's listing. Kneller Glen probably was not a voluminous writer. Apparently, the novelist published only one book and as a result little is known about the author.<sup>4</sup> The style of writing and several references and philosophies expounded within *Isabel Carrollton*, especially concerning the battle of the sexes, suggest that the author was a woman and that Kneller Glen was a pen name, a common practice during the nineteenth century. The possibility also exists that Glen may have been a friend of the Bliss family or a relative. Conceivably, as we will hypothesize, Glen may have been one of William's daughters.

A further hindrance to the unraveling of *Isabel Carrollton*'s significance relates to its obscure publication history. The sparse information on Glen and the novel suggests that it was not a popular book and did not sell many copies; probably, it was not read by a broad contemporary audience. Nevertheless, the editors at Phillips, Sampson and Company believed it had some merit. Likely, *Isabel Carrollton* contains a generic story line for a mid-nineteenth century novel, filled with stock characters and settings and situations with which contemporary readers could identify. Glen's book is possibly analogous to the inexpensive paperback romance novel of today, available in pharmacies, department stores and groceries.

Nonetheless, *Isabel Carrollton* was especially important to at least one member of the Bliss family; otherwise, it would not have been mentioned in the inventory. With the lack of crucial information on the book, we find ourselves haunted by the nagging question: Why was the novel singled out and listed by title in the inventory? Upon reading the book, and researching the life of William Bliss, some intriguing parallels between the latter and the book and several coincidences were found.



## The Fiction

The story of *Isabel Carrollton* is set in rural Massachusetts and the Green Mountains of Vermont. It recounts a six-year period of the trials and tribulations of a young woman, Isabel or "Bel" Carrollton, who is orphaned at the tender age of sixteen by the death of her mother. With her parents gone, Isabel lives with her cousin Mary and aunt and uncle Otis, who own "the most prettiest cottage and the most flourishing store" in a rural Massachusetts town.<sup>5</sup>

However, tragedy strikes the Otis family. Mary, a close confidant of Isabel, is crippled in a bad carriage accident and her beau leaves her and moves to the West. Isabel is there to pull her through her depression. However, "Misfortunes never come singly."<sup>6</sup> Uncle Otis, who had invested in two stone mills, is nearly whiped out in a sheriff's sale. The receipts did not cover all of the debts, so the family home and store also had to be sold.

Bel decides "to acquire a situation" where she could raise the needed funds for an operation that would enable Mary to walk normally. With the assistance of the Otis family physician, Isabel moves in with the doctor's sister and her husband, the Gunnersons, and enters the teaching profession. Isabel meets several new characters including Arthur Livingston who operates a store in town.

As summer passes, Mr. Livingston falls in love with Bel. Although at first she is disinterested, an incident at a rural picnic changes her attitude. Livingston reveals his romantic interest in her, and after Bel's initial rejection, he continues to pursue her affections.

But tragedy again strikes Bel and the Gunnerson family. The same night of a tea social, a spark from Mr. Gunnerson's pipe ignites a fire that totally destroys the Gunnerson home, and in which Isabel, overcome by smoke, is saved by Mr. Livingston. For his bravery, however, he nearly dies from typhus.

During her beau's convalescence, Bel becomes apprehensive concerning Livingston's marriage proposal. Melodramatically, Bel's dream of marital bliss is shattered at a tender moment by the arrival of Cornelia, Livingston's wife! Overcome with horror, disbelief and embarrassment, Bel hurriedly packs her bags and returns to the Otis home.

Misery follows. After her return, Isabel's constitution wanes, and she is diagnosed as having a "brain fever." Bel's condition necessitates the shaving of her head, the application of leeches, and the administration of opiates. Fortunately before she becomes addicted, Isabel is weaned off the narcotic. As she recovers, a letter from Mr. Livingston arrives, which she returns to the sender unopened.

Nonetheless, the luck of the Otis family and Mary changes. A letter arrives from Mr. Otis's ex-business partner in California, with a draft for \$1,000. Eventually, Mary undergoes the corrective surgery and walks normally again, and her beau returns and proposes marriage. Later, another friend, Blanche Glenmore, tells Bel of her betrothal.

But Bel's luck does not change. She discovers that her Uncle Otis had resolved to "pull up stakes," as the country phrase goes, and build for himself a new home near [Mary's] future abode,"<sup>7</sup> and later, Blanche writes to Bel stating that her husband also has decided to move away.

By "May-day," and on the verge of being abandoned by family and friends, Bel receives a letter from an admirer. Although she does not love him, she contemplates his proposal: "It was, that this might be my last chance matrimonial."<sup>8</sup>

At the deepest part of her depression and isolation, Mr. Livingston re-enters Bel's life. Although she is torn between her love and revulsion for the man, Isabel listens to his story of woe, and he reveals his troubled childhood, and the annulment of his marriage. With these disclosures, Isabel and Mary and their respective beaux are married during a double ceremony.

Writing three years later, Isabel reports that her years of marriage, which included the birth of little Arthur, were the happiest in her life. Concluding the narrative, Isabel writes, "Not that I have been entirely exempt from pain and sorrow, for all that time; - who that is mortal suffereth not? - but my pathway has been constantly smoothed by the hand of affection, and a strong arm has been ever ready to aid me in passing through life's unavoidable trials."<sup>9</sup>

Isabel's last statement may offer the attitude or the words of encouragement that the Bliss family member recalled as the entry "Isabella Carrollton" was added to the battle-loss inventory. Nonetheless, could other events, characters, settings and philosophies of life expounded in the novel have been biographical of the Bliss family?

## **The Reality**

William Bliss, the youngest of four boys and seven girls, was born in the fall of 1799 to Doctor James and Hannah Guild Bliss of Rehoboth, Bristol county, Massachusetts. His father, a veteran of the Revolution, served the community not only as a competent physician but also as a farmer and innkeeper.<sup>10</sup>

Tragedy struck William's life early, for at the age of seventeen his mother passed away in the fall of 1816. Dr. Bliss, remarried a short time



thereafter, and although William was a teenager at the time, an additional seven years passed before Cupid's arrow speared the young man. In the spring of 1823, he married Adeline Carpenter on her twenty-third birthday. Within two years, the newly weds were blessed with two daughters, Amanda and Sarah.<sup>11</sup>

By 1826 William decided to lead his young family to greener pastures, and hearing of virgin farm lands in north-central Pennsylvania, the Bliss family moved west to Bradford county by March 1828. Their third daughter, Adeline Elizabeth Bliss, was born at Warren Center on the 23rd. A week before that Christmas, William purchased a modest farm within the old Rhode Island Tract in what would become Warren township. Two years later, William and Adeline were blessed with their first son, James William.<sup>12</sup>

Wanderlust again struck the Bliss family, for they decided to continue the migration westward. In the spring of 1831, William sold his farm, and sometime before 8 June 1832, they moved to the town\* of Gerry (pronounced Geary), Chautauqua county, New York: their fourth daughter, France, was born there that day.<sup>13</sup>

In 1835, William received word that his father had passed away at the ripe, old age of seventy-eight. We suspect that William left his family in New York and returned to Massachusetts to claim part of his father's estate which had been assessed at approximately \$25,400 and included an interest in a mill. Possibly a short time after William's return from Massachusetts, he purchased a 100-acre farm just southeast of the village of Sinclairville, located near the northern border of Gerry town. There, the Bliss family resided for the next twenty and a half years, during which William twice served as a township supervisor.<sup>14</sup>

But death continued to stalk the Bliss household: James died at the age of five in 1835; two years later, an infant son, born 23 February 1837, passed away seventeen days later; and in 1846 their oldest child, Amanda, died. Despite these personal tragedies, the remaining family members persevered, working their farm in central Chautauqua county.<sup>15</sup>

By the 1850s life in upstate New York, for some reason, no longer appealed to Bliss and his family, and they decided to move once more. Selling his farm on 2 July 1856, and probably following the marriage of daughter Adeline (aged twenty-eight years) to a Daniel B. Harris of Union

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\* What is referred to in Chautauqua and Bristol counties as a "town," actually represents a governmental entity known in Pennsylvania as a township. In some cases a village within a town may have the same name, such as Rehoboth, Massachusetts.

City, Erie county, Pennsylvania, on 21 October, the Bliss family migrated to the bustling market town of Gettysburg. In April 1857, he purchased a fifty-three-acre farm south of town, buying an additional seven acres the following year.<sup>16</sup>

Sometime in 1859, their daughter Adeline made an extended visit, for on 11 January 1860, Bliss's second grandchild, Esther *Isabel* Harris, was born, probably on the family farm. Thus, at the age of sixty, William and his family had established roots in Pennsylvania. But they had no way of knowing that three years thence the grand course of human events would leave them practically destitute.<sup>17</sup>

### Comparative Analysis

Possibly, the book was written by William Bliss or even by one of his daughters. But even if it had not been, as the family prepared its damage claim during the latter part of July 1863, they would have been stupefied at the irony of how a fiction, written (and possibly written by one of them) a decade earlier, seemed to predict the fortunes of the Bliss family.

The author's name, *Kneller Glenn*, could well allude to the Bliss family and its trials. Professor James P. Myers, Jr., of Gettysburg College speculates that the name of the novel's principal character, *Isabel*, might be an anagram, or rearrangement, of the letters of William Bliss's daughter's name, *A. E. Bliss*. And, indeed, with possible significance, Adeline and Daniel's child, born at Gettysburg, was given the same middle name, *Isabel*. *Carollton* may express a punning combination of the words *carol* and *tune* or *tone*. A "carol" is a joyful or *bliss*-ful tune; and a tune may be an ode, a story set to music. The author's first name *Kneller* might suggest the opposite of *bliss*: a *kneller* is one who sounds or rings a *knell*, that is, a tolling of bells or sounding of a tune announcing death, failure, or tribulation. The word *glen* denotes a secluded and narrow mountain valley. This combining the words and their meanings may suggest, then, the sad and joyous story of William (or A. E.) Bliss in the secluded mountain glen wherein Sinclairsville and the Bliss family farm nestled in upstate New York. Moreover, William or Adeline E. might have also relied on Bliss family stories to embellish the plot and develop characters. Unfortunately, we have no other corroborative documentation to confirm that one of the Blisses, William or A. E., wrote *Isabel Carrolton*.

The prominent event that ties fact and fiction together is the loss of possessions in a devastating fire. When Isabel Carollton moved to the Gunnerson home, Mr. Gunnerson indicated that the school where she was to teach had been housed in an old doctor's office which had "burnt



down.”<sup>18</sup> Later, when Isabel barely escaped death in a house fire, Mr. Gunnerson commented to her as they watched their happy home being engulfed in flames: “There, now you can have a fair view on’t . . . and I hope you’ll never see your own home in the same sitewation [sic]; for it makes a man feel blue as a whetstone to see the fire a-eatin’ up all his property, an’ no knowin’ where any more’s to come from.”<sup>19</sup>

Though house fires were a common threat in that era before safer, more efficient means of heating and cooking had been developed, undoubtedly, the novel’s emotions anticipated those of the Bliss family when their eyes beheld the smoldering ruins of their Gettysburg farm. However, we do not know if the destruction of their farm in 1863 was the only trial by fire the Bliss family had endured.

The passage where Uncle Otis realized that many of his material possessions had to be sold to cover the debt incurred by the mill failures may have sparked memories in William or his family members as they sat preparing their inventory:

Every article of furniture, not absolutely essential to our comfort, every painting, pier-table, lounge, and even my aunt’s gold watch and chain, had been disposed of [or is the case of the Bliss family, destroyed in the fire at Gettysburg]. Not a single luxury . . . was retained.<sup>20</sup>

Indeed, the Bliss family lost articles of furniture, clothing, and family memorabilia such as a “county map, Profiles, and Six Ambyotypes [sic] and Tintypes” in the flames that muggy July morning.<sup>21</sup>

A second close tie between fact and fiction involves the character of Uncle Otis. To the Blisses, Uncle Otis may have resembled (or was patterned after?) Dr. James Bliss, with a family of eleven children:

one of the most kind-hearted and good-tempered men. [William may have] found in him a willing listener to all [his children’s] little grievances . . . who acted as umpire, in matters of dispute . . . ; so skillfully adjusting [their] difficulties, as not to effect an amicable settlement, but leaving both parties satisfied with each other and with the result of his arbitration. He was much respected and *looked up* to by the residents of [his] village. [Uncle Otis] was now justice of the peace, and had been for several successive years elected senator to the [Massachusetts] state legislature, until he had declined a further nomination; his business having been gradually extending itself until it left him little time for the performance of his public duties.<sup>22</sup> [Glen’s Emphasis]

Besides being an innkeeper and one of the leading physicians in Rehoboth, Dr. Bliss was prominent in the First Congressional Society, serving as the clerk for the trustees for many years, and was Rehoboth's representative to the General Court of Massachusetts during 1815, 1816, and 1820. During one stormy session, Dr. Bliss was one of the more compromising and calmer mediators. As Leonard Bliss, Jr., wrote of his late grandfather in 1836, James "was a man of sound judgement, strict integrity, and great industry and economy."<sup>23</sup>

Further parallels between *Isabel Carollton* and the lives and experiences of the Bliss family members are more tenuous and possibly coincidental. Personalities, events and settings in the novel probably were commonplace during the nineteenth-century, as they could be today. However, as seen through the eyes of the Blisses to whom the book held some significance, the following characterizations, events and settings—though generic—may have had some socio-psychological significance, and coupled with the house fire and the Uncle Otis character in the book, these 'coincidences' may have reenforced *Isabel Carollton's* significative meaning.

As Isabel's dear, departed mother lay on her death bed, Dr. Smythe comforted Bel by stating that "This earthen casket is no longer valuable, excepting as a memento of the priceless jewel it once contained."<sup>24</sup> Later, as her mother was "laid beneath the cold, damp soil of the village churchyard, [Isabel] thought, in [her] youthful inexperience, that [she] should never be happy again; that [her] whole life would be filled with grief for [her] irreparable loss."<sup>25</sup> These emotions may have been identical to those of William, when at the age of seventeen (fifteen for Isabel) standing at the village cemetery in Rehoboth, he witnessed the burial of his own dear, departed mother, Hannah. She possibly "had been to [William] everything, — teacher, companion guide."<sup>26</sup> These same emotions may have been rekindled at the Evergreen Cemetery in Sinclairsville, New York, where William and his wife buried three of their six children over an eleven-year period.

When Uncle Otis is forced to sell the "cottage" after the mill failures, Bel reminisces over the fifteen years of memories that were to be left behind. The following passage may have rekindled memories in William and Adeline of the Bliss homestead in Rehoboth:

. . . I remember still the sadness of my parting from my childhood home. The room where my mother had breathed her last words of undying tenderness, seemed ever haunted by her presence. The very garden, trees, and shrubs, I had learned to look upon as friends. Even the little limpid brook, that flowed at the foot of the sloping lawn



behind the house where my cousin and myself . . . had caught tiny "pin-fish" and placed in artificial ponds of our own construction. . . . , murmured regretfully, and a passing cloud overshadowed its face as it reflected my tearful, farewell glance.<sup>27</sup>

Indeed, today behind the suspected site of the Bliss house, which is surrounded by forest, a lawn gently slopes down to a stream that is deep enough to support small fish.<sup>28</sup> Further reinforcing Glen's imagery, the Bliss's farmhouses in Gerry and Gettysburg were situated on rises of ground surrounded by open meadows and farm fields. At Gettysburg, however, the lawn in front of their home sloped down to the headwaters of Stevens Run, and nearby were shrubs, a garden, and a ten-acre orchard of apple, cherry and peach trees.<sup>29</sup>

The setting of the Gunnerson home in Vermont, though Glen's description probably suggests an infinite number of locales, also describes the setting in Bradford county, Pennsylvania, or Sinclairsville, New York, at the site of William Bliss's farm:

The situation [there, is] elevated and airy. . . . [T]he eye [sweeps] over an extensive prospect, bounded in the distance by irregular summits. Beautiful little mossy dells, almost hidden by their verdant banks and overhanging shrubbery; deep, sheltered woodlands, here and there seen through budding branches of the trees, and illuminated by light as soft and as pure as that shining through alabaster, - all combin[ing] to form a varied landscape whose beauty delighted [Isabel].<sup>30</sup>

When she arrived at the Gunnerson home, Bel . . .

hurried to the windows of [her] room, hoping to be greeted by a prospect of gently undulating fields, green and grassy meadows, or graceful waving woodlands. [She] could not refrain from an exclamation of disappointment, as [her] eyes rested upon a huge woodpile, shutting out the charming *utopian* landscape beyond. [Glen's Emphasis]<sup>31</sup>

This may well have been the reaction of the Bliss children as they viewed their new home in New York or at Gettysburg. Though woodpiles would be common around any messuage during the nineteenth century, several Union troops who fought about the Bliss house near Gettysburg recalled a sizable woodpile in the farmyard.<sup>32</sup> When the Bliss family moved into their new home during the spring of 1857, a similar wood pile may have been located in front of one of the windows, blocking the

“utopian landscape” of Seminary Ridge and the South Mountain off to the west.

The rural picnic in the novel may have held some special meaning to the Bliss family. As Livingston waited for Isabel, he examined her portfolio of pencil-sketches and requested that she make one

of a most romantically-situated cottage, in a secluded mountain glen, not far from where [they] were going . . .

Half and hour’s rapid drive brought [them] to the festive scene, a thickly-wooded grove of trees, where hundreds were already assembled. Music from an invisible band floated on the air, or reverberated from the lofty brows of grim old rocks, among the trembling leaves of the stunted trees, that clung trustingly to the flinty protectors whence they derived their scant sustenance . . .

Nearly at the foot of the gently sloping glen . . . stood a small rustic cottage, whose smoke-wreaths were curling in fantastic cloud-shapes through the thick foliage that screened it from the fiercer rays of the noontide sun. A narrow limpid stream still further down, wound, with soft liquid murmurs, through the alders and fern that sometimes entirely concealed it from [their] view. Groups of cows reclined lazily in the shady nooks of the pasture, while, occasionally, one stood quietly ruminating in the pellucid waters. On the opposite hill-side a flock of sheep were nibbling their accustomed herbage.<sup>33</sup>

Though this rustic scene may have been reminiscent of many rural areas, the description also generally fits that of the Spangler’s Spring and meadow area, historically one of the popular picnic spots near Gettysburg in the nineteenth-century, about two miles (or a half an hour’s drive) from the Bliss Farm. However, during the 1860s the spring area was mostly open pasture. Nevertheless, across Rock Creek and within sight of Spangler’s Spring stood the Zachariah Tawney farm, situated low on the mostly wooded western slope of Wolf Hill.

Another local attraction, about two miles south of the Bliss farmstead was Devil’s Den. The large rocks, tree-covered summits of the Round Tops, Plum Run meandering down the valley between the hills and rocky crags, and the not-so-romantic Slyder farmstead—situated in a glen a short distance from the den along the stream—parallels Isabel’s description. Until recently, the National Park Service permitted local farmers to graze cows and occasionally sheep on the hillsides, lapping the waters of the famous “Bloody Run” in the “Valley of Death.” Although the western face of Little Round Top has been cleared of trees, as it was at the time of the battle, until the early months of 1863 the western face was covered with trees, where “Groups of cows [could recline] lazily in



the shady nooks of the pasture.” Moreover, someone in the Bliss family may have been an artist, for a descendant of William Bliss has a photograph of a water-color painting of the Bliss Farm at Gettysburg allegedly found in a relative’s attic.<sup>34</sup>

Possible reasons for the Bliss’s migratory wanderings may also be found in the novel. When Blanche Glenmore spent the summer at the Otis home, her condition was described as being

very delicate, and seem[ed] to be constantly becoming more so. Her physician [told Mr. Glenmore] that it [was] of vital importance that she should leave the city, for the present, to escape the east winds and the chill, bracing sea-air so frequently prejudicial to health.<sup>35</sup>

Though the Blisses possibly moved to acquire better farm lands and opportunities, they may have migrated because of the adverse effects that the damp sea air of Rehoboth or the cold winters in upstate Pennsylvania and New York had on the health of a family member. Indeed, in escorting descendents of Daniel and Adeline E. (Bliss) Harris around the battlefield during the summer of 1990, the author recalls Robert C. Harris showing him a photocopy of a photograph of Frances Bliss, on the backside of which was an inscription claiming that Bliss moved his family from New York due to the cold weather. In *Isabel Carrollton*, Livingston’s life hung in the balance for twenty-two days before he recovered from typhus; William and Adeline’s unnamed son was not as fortunate: he lived only seventeen days, dying during some of the coldest weather in Chautauqua county, New York, history.<sup>36</sup> Could someone in the Bliss family, after reading about Livingston’s recovery, have pondered: if only our son (or brother) could have survived five more days, he may have survived altogether?

Fatal illnesses were common during the nineteenth-century, although the mortality rate was declining. Many contemporary novels alluded to the “Grim Reaper” and offered words of encouragement and renewed faith. *Isabel Carrollton* may also have served the Blisses as a therapeutic, self-help book, ‘a bridge over troubled waters.’

After Mary’s crippling carriage accident and her beau’s, Charles Merritt’s, moving to the far west, her depression threatened to overwhelm her. Isabel rejuvenated her outlook on life:

“Do cheer up . . . ; you know it is always darkest before daybreak . . . Don’t give way so to sorrow. . . [God] loves us and would not needlessly afflict us. . . . Think, too, how tenderly youth father and mother love you, and how unhappy every sorrow you endure makes them. . . .”<sup>37</sup>

However, May replied with darker, foreboding thoughts:

“Why should I wish to live? I shall never be happy myself, or make any one else so. . . . I remember . . . Plato’s opinion about confirmed invalids — ‘Let them die, the sooner, the better.’”

“Pray stop Mary! [exclaimed Isabel] no wonder you are unhappy, with your heart full of such bitter thoughts. Why should you go back to an old heathen philosopher, when we have the Bible to guide us? . . .”

After contemplating Isabel’s words, Mary joined her friend in the parlor, where Isabel read aloud from *Paradise Lost*.<sup>38</sup>

When Minna Lee’s mother lay dying, she philosophized to Isabel on her approaching death:

“Our divine father . . . never permits our trials to exceed our powers of endurance. I do not believe any one can view, at a distance, the mysterious ‘king of terrors’ [death?] without shrinking in dread and awe, from his nearer approach; but have gone through the last great conflict, not only without fear, but filled with joy at the prospect of a *blissful* immortality.” [Emphasis added]<sup>39</sup>

With the deaths of William’s parents and three children, the financial and emotional consequences resulting from the obliteration of his farmstead at Gettysburg and other previous crises, these passage might have eased the weary minds of William and his family. The author’s inspirational philosophy expounded in the novel, coupled with the biographical events and personalities contained therein, might have established a psychological bond between the Blissess and Isabel and other characters in the fiction. As the Bliss family prepared their inventory, during that hot, depressing July of 1863, possibly they recalled the title because of psychological affinities and similarities between the novel’s and their own situations. We can speculate further: was a birth defect, a crippling accident, or a disastrous love affair the reason why Frances and Sarah Bliss never married? Without solid documentation to the contrary, they remain possibilities.

We can correlate some character names in the novel to actual contemporary personalities, though the Blissess probably never have any connections, for the personalities are post-novel. Nevertheless, the coincidences tease us today like *déjà vu*. The author created in Isabel’s world an Uncle Rehoboan (Rehoboth) and a Sally Mudgit (Sally or Sarah being the name of William’s stepmother, one of his sisters, and a daughter). The names of William’s daughter Amanda and his brother George also appeared in the story. Character names also seem to allude



to contemporary military commanders. There is Minna Lee (Robert E. Lee), Miss Howard (Oliver *Otis* Howard, commander of the Union 11th Corps at Gettysburg and Uncle Otis), Mrs. Grant (Ulysses S. Grant), Charles Merritt (Wesley Merritt, commander of a Union cavalry brigade that fought on the southern end of the Gettysburg battlefield), and Miss Welles (Major *William* Wells, of the 1st *Vermont* Cavalry, involved in the ill-fated Farnsworth's Charge on the *Slyder Farm near Devil's Den*. Probably the most suggestive and ironic coincidence between fact and fiction was the naming of the Carrollton and Otis family physician, kindly old Dr. Smythe who tried his best to help those in need. As a twist of "Fate," it was men of the 14th Connecticut Regiment who torched the Bliss Farm at Gettysburg, and their brigade commander was a native-born Irishman, Colonel Thomas A. *Smyth*.

These are but a few possible psychological significant meanings, parallels and coincidences found between, on the one hand, Kneller Glen's fiction, the trials and tribulations of a young nineteenth-century girl, and on the other, fact, the life and times of the Bliss family. By comparing the story line, characterizations and settings of *Isabel Carrollton* with the little information that has been uncovered concerning the Blisses, the possible socio-psychological parallels tease the modern reader. Although we may never know the true importance of *Isabel Carrollton* to the Blisses, the foregoing comparisons raise several searching questions, taunting us over a century of time.

Apart from these possibilities, the comparative analysis has given us a small personal peek into the day-to-day life of the Bliss family and their possible inter-family relationships. We can almost feel their anguish and despair as they prepared their damage claim. Estimating their library at one hundred volumes, they recalled the one book that perhaps may have helped them through earlier troubled times, and perhaps they marveled how the fiction was as real as anything in their lives, as though two separate universes had become one. Perhaps astonished at the similarities between fact and fiction, they may have prayed to a divine spirit, asking why such adversity had befallen the family, wishing they could read *Isabel Carrollton* once more to help them through another tragic chapter of life.

## Notes

1. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of the Auditor-General, Damage Claims under the Acts of April 23, 1863, April 9, 1869, and May 27, 1871, Adams County Historical Society (cited hereafter as ACHS). On microfilm, Gettysburg, Pa. (ACHS). See claim filed by William Bliss dated July 29, 1863.

2. See Elwood W. Christ, "A Study of the Historic William Bliss Farm Destroyed During the Battle at Gettysburg July 3, 1863: An Overview of his Family, A Hypothetical Description of Farm Buildings and A Preliminary Analysis of the Material Culture of An Atypical Adams County Farmer," an unpublished paper submitted to Dr. Simon Bronner for credit in the Masters Program in American Studies, Pennsylvania State University, Capitol College, December 14, 1987.

3. Kneller Glen, *Isabel Carrollton: A Personal Retrospect* (Sampson and Company, 1854).

4. National Union Catalogue Pre-1956 Imprints (London, 1972), 202:240. Only one book is listed under the name, "Kneller Glen."

5. *Isabel Carrollton*., p. 8.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 295.2

8. *Ibid.*, p. 299.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 339-40.

10. James N. Arnold, *Vital Records of Rehoboth, 1642-1896: Marriages, Intentions, Births, Deaths, Deaths With Supplements Containing the Records of 1896, Colonial Returns, Lists of the Early Settlers, Purchases, Freeman Inhabitants, the Soldiers Serving in Phillip's War and the Revolution* (Providence, R.I., 1897), p. 539; Leonard Bliss, Jr., *History of Rehoboth, Bristol County, Massachusetts: Comprising a History of the Present Towns of Rehoboth, Seekonk, and Pawtucket from Their Settlement to the Present Time, together with Sketches of Attleborough, Cumberland and Part of Swansey and Barrington to the Time that They Separated from the Original Town* (Boston, 1836), p. 274; and Richard LeBaron Bowen, *Early Rehoboth: Documented Historical Studies of Families and Events in Plymouth Township*, 4 Volumes (Concord, Mass., 1945), 1:48f,

2:122, 4:21, 24, 32, 145. A twelfth child was born after William, but died unnamed. See Aaron Tyler Bliss, compiler, *Genealogy of the Bliss Family in America*. 3 Vols. (Midland, MI., 1982), 1:244.

11. Aaron Bliss, *Bliss Family in America*, 1:243; Leonard Bliss, Jr., *History of Rehoboth*, p. 274; and Arnold, *Vital Records*, pp. 37 and 543.

12. Aaron Bliss, *Bliss Family in America*, 1:243 & 494; Bradford County, Pennsylvania, Office of the Register and Recorder, Towanda, Deeds Records, Deed Book 8:178; and *Map of the Providence, Rhode Island Tract, circa 1830*, Copy in possession (1987) of Jeffrey W. Geiss, land surveyor, George K. Jones Associates, 1 Popular Street., Towanda, Pa. William may have learned of farming opportunities in Pennsylvania from his sister, Hannah, and her husband, William Bullock, who also moved to Warren Center, Bradford County. However, it is not known whether the Bullocks moved before, with or after William Bliss and his family.

13. Aaron Bliss, *Bliss Family in America*, 1:494; and Bradford County, Deed Book 9:325.

14. Dr. James Bliss tombstone, Village Cemetery, Bay State Road, Rehoboth, Bristol County, Massachusetts; Bristol County, Probate Registry, Books 74:434 & 479, and 75:343; 3rd U.S. Census, 1830, Warren Township, Bradford County, Pennsylvania. Also see Bristol County, Deed Book 146:413 & 485. The deed found on page 413 implies that William Bliss was physically present in Massachusetts; and Chautaugua County, New York (Deed Records, Mayville, Deed Book 16:428). It should be noted here that the governmental bodies referred to as "Towns" in Massachusetts and upstate New York are usually called townships in other locales. They are not to be confused with "Villages" by the same name.

15. *William Bliss Family Memorial*, Evergreen Cemetery, Sinclairville, Town of Charlotte, Chautaugua County, New York and Aaron Bliss, *Bliss Family in America*, 1:494.

16. Chautaugua County, Deed Book 82:477; Aaron Bliss, *Bliss Family in*



America, 1:494; and Adams County, Pennsylvania, Office of the Register and Recorder, Gettysburg, Deed Book U:80 (52.99 acres) and U:218 (7.30 acres).

17. Aaron Bliss, *Bliss Family in America*, 1:494.

18. Glen, *Isabel Carrollton*, p. 148.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 143.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 132.

21. Bliss Damage Claims.

22. Glen, *Isabel Carrollton*, pp. 7-8.

23. Rev. George F. Tilton, A. M., *A History of Rehoboth, Massachusetts: Its History For 215 Years, 1643-1918 in Which Is Incorporated the Vital Parts of the Original History of the Town, Published in 1836, and Written By Leonard Bliss, Jr.* (Boston, 1918), pp. 322-3; and Bliss, *History of Rehoboth*, pp. 169, 274.

24. Glen, *Isabel Carrollton*, p. 6.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

26. *Ibid.*

27. Glen, *Isabel Carrollton*, p. 132.

28. Arnold, *Vital Records*, p. 539; Leonard Bliss, Jr., *History of Rehoboth*, p. 274; and Bowen, *Early Rehoboth*, 1:48f, 2:122, 4:21, 24, 32, & 145. The author visited Rehoboth, Massachusetts in April, 1986 and located the site of the James Bliss home, the old Timothy Redaway Farm. Today, the site is situated 200 yards west of Route 44 on Bay State Road, half a mile west of old Rehoboth center and the Village Cemetery. It is not known whether the structure on site is the original Bliss home or tavern.

29. George D. Bowen, "Diary of Captain George D. Bowen," *Valley Forge Journal*:

*A Record of Patriotism and Culture* (Valley Forge, June 1984), 11:128-129, and *Gettysburg Republican Compiler*, Monday, August 11, 1856, p. 3, col. 4.

30. Glen, *Isabel Carrollton*, p. 48.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

32. Henry S. Stevens, *Souvenir of Excursions to the Battlefields by the Society of the Fourteenth Connecticut Regiment and Reunion at Antietam September 1891: With History and Reminiscences of Battles and Campaigns of the Regiment on the Fields Revisited* (Washington, D.C., 1893), pp. 19-20, 21.

33. Glen, *Isabel Carrollton*, pp. 77-8.

34. Photographic of a water color painting of the William Bliss Farm at Gettysburg. (Photo on file, Gettysburg National Military Park Library.) In a conversation with the park historian, Kathy Georg Harrison in March 1989, the author learned that the photograph was donated by a Mr. David Harris, 50 Duane Road, Doylestown, Pa. 18901, who claimed he was a descendant of Bliss. Allegedly, a photograph of the original painting was found in his aunt's attic ca. 1979.

35. Glen, *Isabel Carrollton*, p. 12.

36. *History of Chautauqua County, New York and Its People*, John P. Downs and Fenwick Y. Hedley, eds. (Boston, 1921), 2 Volumes, 1:51 and Andrew W. Young, *History of Chautauqua County, New York: From Its First Settlement to the Present Time* (Buffalo, 1875), p. 400.

37. Glen, *Isabel Carrollton*, p. 26.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-8.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

# **World War II: On the Home Front—**

## **M. Francis Coulson Interviewed**

### **by Jenny Sonnenberg**

#### **Introduction**

*Americans love anniversaries. The fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War has afforded citizens an opportunity to remember with pride the great men and events of a war that saved the world from totalitarian tyranny. Happily, memories of World War II have not been restricted to recalling battlefield heroics or diplomatic intrigues. Across the United States, public libraries and local historical societies have commemorated the Home Front during the war years with exhibits that recapture the texture of life on farms, factories, in classrooms, and at home during what Studs Terkel has labeled "the Good War." These exhibits remind us what we know instinctively: that experiencing wartime is not simply the province of men and women in uniform. Anyone over the age of fifty-five has some vivid memories of America at war from 1941-1945. Millions of Americans who never put on a military uniform made their own contributions to the war effort. Their contributions mattered, and so do their memories.*

*At Gettysburg College, in recognition of this basic truth, students in Historical Methods courses have for several years been interviewing senior citizens about their wartime memories. Perhaps two dozen or more of these interviews were conducted with Adams countians, across a broad spectrum of experience. Among the interview subjects were farmers, housewives, nurses, schoolteachers, businessmen, college students, and seminarians. One subject, a conscientious objector, provided a most distinctive perspective on a war that mythology suggests was supported fervently by all Americans.*

*In fact, most Americans did enthusiastically support the war effort, as testimony from Adams countians suggests. In the following interview, conducted by Gettysburg College student Jenny Sonnenberg with Francis Coulson, readers will learn some of the ways that average citizens were affected by the war and contributed to a remarkable home-front effort to support the boys overseas. A teacher in a one-room school in the county for much of the war, Mr. Coulson recounts his experiences with rationing and civil defense, and offers a persuasive picture of a populace that was willing to make sacrifices in order to help American soldiers bring the war to a quicker end. It is an important story, not because Francis*



*Coulson's experiences were spectacular, much less unique, but rather, because they were commonplace. As the interview itself suggests, the war years marked a time when Americans had much less materially than they would in the boom times following the war. It was still a time of simple habits and old fashioned values. In bringing to life the experiences of these years and the habits of everyday life, oral histories like those Ms. Sonnenberg conducted with Francis Coulson make an important contribution to local history and can help spark other conversations with individuals who had their own distinctive experiences during the war years. What follows is an edited transcription of a taped interview that is available in its entirety at the Adams County Historical Society Library.*

—Michael J. Birkner\*

(The following interview was conducted at M. Francis Coulson's home on 29 March 1995.)

**Sonnenberg:** How old were you when war broke out in 1939?

**Coulson:** I was 20 years old.

**Sonnenberg:** Were you living in Adams county at the time?

**Coulson:** I was living near York Springs, Adams county.

**Sonnenberg:** Were you married?

**Coulson:** No [smile], not at that time.

**Sonnenberg:** Did you go to college?

**Coulson:** I went to Shippensburg State Teachers College, and at that time I was teaching a one-room country school in 1939. I began teaching in 1938.

**Sonnenberg:** And how long did you teach there?

**Coulson:** In the one-room school—I taught for six years [pause] in the one-room country school. Then I went on to other education assignments.

**Sonnenberg:** Can you describe a little bit about your experiences teaching in the one-room schoolhouse?

**Coulson:** It was a very interesting assignment, to say the least. I, I had—I taught all grades, one through eight, and so I had students that were ages six to maybe sixteen or more, and I had all the subjects to teach. Of course, in addition to that, I needed to fire the furnace, and sweep the floor, and do all those things [smile]—

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**Sonnenberg:**—that must have been a very interesting experience—

**Coulson:**—teaching music, and all the accompanying subjects that you try to incorporate into the curriculum.

**Sonnenberg:** Was it just a school day that might go from 8:00 until 3:00?

**Coulson:** Our school day was 8:30 to 3:30, and we had a morning recess of 15 minutes. We had a noon period—everyone carried their lunch you know—and we ate our lunch, and we had an hour at noontime. And then in the afternoon, another 15-minute recess, but other than that. . . . And of course we, you know, just the one-room classroom, one room in the building, and if the weather was at all permissible, everybody went out for recess or played at noontime and so forth.

**Sonnenberg:** Were the parents of many of the children involved in the war effort, or were they serving overseas?

**Coulson:** Some of the students did have older brothers and sisters who had, you know, been drafted into the military forces. I had one student whose father was an officer in the military, and she had the opportunity to live in different places, which is typical for officers' children. And, of course, during the war, when he was involved in service, I guess overseas, when she attended the school I taught, she was living with her grandparents.

**Sonnenberg:** Do you think that the war affected the behavior or the attitudes of the children?

**Coulson:** I would say, yes, very much, in an indirect manner. Of course, not being subject to any attack in this part of the country, you know, they weren't conscious of the booming of canon or that sort of thing, BUT, there was rationing going on, and so their parents were very much conscious of the war effort from that standpoint. Certain foodstuffs, sugar particularly, wheat products, and so forth, were rationed. Automobiles were not being manufactured; automobile tires were rationed very closely, as is true with gasoline. And, of course, depending upon what one did, the gasoline ration allowance was pro-rated accordingly. You had maybe an A-card, or a B-card, or a C-card. Now, an A-card was someone who probably got the smallest amount of gasoline—

**Sonnenberg:**—an A card got the smallest amount of gasoline?

**Coulson:** That's right, pro-rated. And a C-card would be someone who needed to use their car in their livelihood, their work. And of course, driving was restricted. We were permitted, perhaps, to drive to church on Sunday, but if you went out sightseeing or to some place, you're driving on a Sunday afternoon, one could be, you know, pulled in.



**Sonnenberg:** Did you drive to school then?

**Coulson:** Oh yes, I commuted at that time from my home, which was just near York Springs, to where I was teaching.

**Sonnenberg:** Where was the school located?

**Coulson:** I really taught in three different schools, but for the most part, the school was located at Heidlersburg. It's a little village up the way, north of Gettysburg. And so, that was where most of my teaching took place—in the one-room school at Heidlersburg.

**Sonnenberg:** I guess you would say that rationing did affect your daily activities in the school then?

**Coulson:** Oh yes, oh yes.

**Sonnenberg:** So, did you teach patriotism in the school?

**Coulson:** Oh, that was always a part of it. We had a subject we called Civics, and it was part of the social studies program, of course—History, Geography, Civics—and naturally, we taught patriotism, and just the form that our government was organized in and all of those things.

**Sonnenberg:** Did you enjoy teaching all eight grades in one room?

**Coulson:** Oh yes [*laughs*], I did. It was quite challenging, and all that, but it was a typical type of school that was found in rural areas during the early periods of history here in Pennsylvania, or throughout the nation, for that matter.

**Sonnenberg:** Just before I leave that topic, how many students were in your class?

**Coulson:** The size of the school ranged from 19 students in all eight grades, to as high as 48 in one room. And, of course, in that one room, we had—it wasn't a large room—we had what is known as double-desks, and there could be two students sitting side-by-side on a desk. And you had the little shelf under the top of the desk—That's where they kept the books and all that.

**Sonnenberg:** That sound really interesting.

**Coulson:** And, of course, the typical school had the black board across the front of the room. The teacher's desk was up there, sort of like a little platform up there, and students would come forward from their desks to the front of the room when I was having a particular class that directly pertained to them. And when class was finished, they'd go back to their seats, and another group would come forward.

**Sonnenberg:** So, did you know many people working in the war industries?

**Coulson:** Oh yes, many, many people would work in the war effort, in the defense plants, in perhaps Harrisburg and York, and areas like that. And then, of course, too, beginning in about 1939 and 1940, there

were several military establishments created in the vicinity that drew employees from the area where we lived—for instance, the Mechanicsburg Naval Supply Depot. And there was a depot, ordinance plant in York, and the New Cumberland Army Depot, and also, the Middletown air depot. All of those were within range of people commuting to those places for working. And, of course, in Harrisburg you had steel mills and railroad yards, and different things of that sort.

**Sonnenberg:** So, were there any industries, say, in the Gettysburg area?

**Coulson:** Of course, the fruit processing plants at Biglerville and at Peach Glen and Gardners . . . because they were processing foodstuffs, they were considered a related defense operation too. And, of course, too, in some nearby towns, there were clothing factories, small plants, and shoe plants and shoe factories. There were quite a few shoe manufacturing plants in the Hanover, Littlestown, and other small town areas.

**Sonnenberg:** Did you have many friends who actually fought in the war?

**Coulson:** Of yes, many of them.

**Sonnenberg:** How did you feel to see them going overseas?

**Coulson:** Well, naturally, there was a great concern expressed because you knew the exposure they would have to the hazards and dangers of war. I did not personally get involved until very late in the war period. I was not drafted, really, until about 1946. So the war was pretty much over by the time I went into the service, and I was only in there a short time.

**Sonnenberg:** Were you sent overseas then?

**Coulson:** No, no, I wasn't. I didn't get overseas.

**Sonnenberg:** How did you feel to be drafted, though?

**Coulson:** *[laughs]* Well, I had a physical handicap that prevented my being drafted earlier, and of course, then, as the war continued—and remember draftees became very scarce—I guess they scraped the bottom of the barrel and I was taken.

**Sonnenberg:** Being on the home front, would you say there were any other ways your life was affected by the war besides rationing?

**Coulson:** Well, as a schoolteacher, the schoolteachers were recruited to volunteer their efforts and time to register the citizens for some of these draft situations. So, we were involved in that respect. At some points in time, even the schoolchildren themselves got involved by collecting such things as milkweed pods. Now, milkweed is a plant that grows wild in the fields and the fence rows. And this plant gets, as



it matures, a pod on it. Inside of that pod is something that is of the nature of little seeds, and then it's like a blossom in there. Some of those milkweed pods were used in the filling of life rafts and some of those kinds of things. But it was an opportunity to [help], and children would be encouraged to collect them. They brought them into the schools, and then, of course, the county superintendent of schools and others would collect those, and they were shipped off someplace to a factory where they would be used in manufacturing as substitutes for certain fibers that were used as insulation for lifejackets and some things like that. The children were likewise encouraged to collect tin cans and parts of rubber from tires, and the newspapers, items of that sort, that the children would collect and bring into the school.

**Sonnenberg:** So everyone was basically helping out?

**Coulson:** They had the same opportunity there, yes.

**Sonnenberg:** Were you influenced by advertisements and propaganda of the war effort? Were magazine and radio advertisements influential in forming peoples' opinions of the war?

**Coulson:** Well, of course, advertising was more or less encouraging people to cooperate with the war effort. Naturally, too, everyone was very much concerned, from the standpoint of the news broadcasts, of what was going on in one theater of operation or another—you know, whether it was the European theater or the Pacific area, or Southeast Asia, or wherever it might be—so naturally that had its effect, too.

**Sonnenberg:** Were people able to be updated on the war then, daily?

**Coulson:** Radio and newspaper, yes.

**Sonnenberg:** So, did you have a radio in your home?

**Coulson:** Yes, we had a radio in the home, and I had one in the car at that time too.

**Sonnenberg:** What were some of the more popular programs that you might have listened to on the radio?

**Coulson:** Of well, of course, everyone listened to Lowell Thomas in the news; Gabriel Heater was another news commentator that everyone would listen to the news from his broadcast. And of course, then, too, there were the typical songs of that era that were popular in the forties and all that. I would say this, however, that the children and the families in the rural areas of the country, particularly those families that lived on farms, they did not feel the pressures of the war effort quite so greatly because they had foodstuffs that they raised in their gardens and fields, and they had their poultry, you know; they had plenty of things to eat. They were not affected by the rationing of certain foods. The only thing that they were, you might say, affected by, from the

standpoint of rationing, might be sugar and some of those kinds of things. Sure, shoes were a scarcity, a scarce item. As I mentioned before, the rubber, the tires were, and gasoline . . . they couldn't travel too much, but they were, in that respect, in some respects, further removed from the war effort, those living in the country, you know, the children.

**Sonnenberg:** Did you ever listen to the Fireside Chats by Franklin Roosevelt?

**Coulson:** Oh yes, that was a very prominent part. Of course, that started earlier than during the war period. I mean, his assuming office in 1933, and he started his Fireside Chats at that time. Yes.

**Sonnenberg:** Looking back, do you think Roosevelt was a good leader?

**Coulson:** I think he was a good leader for that period of time. He stepped in and tackled some problems that existed during the Great Depression, which I think was the type of leadership needed for that period, yes.

**Sonnenberg:** At the time, did you think he was a good leader, or is it more looking back that you think this?

**Coulson:** *[laughs]* Well, I have to make a confession. My family, my parents, and I, too, have been staunch Republicans, and, of course, I doubt whether my father ever voted for Roosevelt, and I'm not sure whether I did myself. But, nevertheless, I still would agree that he and his administrative staff and so forth—it was the type of leadership that was necessary. I do feel that he reached a period of time in the later years of the war, that he was maybe not as effective because of the failing health which he was experiencing. But aside from that, I would still give him credit.

**Sonnenberg:** Do you remember where you were when you heard the news that Pearl Harbor had been attacked on December 7th, 1941?

**Coulson:** Very well. Going back to that one-room schoolhouse in which I was teaching . . . it was December, it was cold weather, and when we had cold weather, I had to fire the furnace, you know, so in order to have a building that would be warm on Monday morning. I would go to the school building on Sunday afternoon and build the fire because from Friday night 'til then, the fire would be burned out. I was out firing the stove, and it always took about two hours to build a fire and let it catch the coals—and then you bank it off and be ready for the next morning. So, on my way home, I stopped at a service station to get some gasoline, and they said Pearl Harbor was attacked, and that was the news—I would say, about four o'clock that day, Sunday afternoon *[laughs]*. Yes, I remember that.

**Sonnenberg:** How did you react when you heard the news?

**Coulson:** Well, I knew some young people, some men, who were actually



at Pearl Harbor at the time. And of course, they escaped, I mean from the initial bombing, but at that moment, knowing they were there and that Pearl Harbor was bombed, you either didn't know what the news or what you might hear about these people whom I knew rather closely. It was definitely a concern, always.

**Sonnenberg:** Did your views of the Japanese change, then, after Pearl Harbor?

**Coulson:** Well, I would have to confess that prior to Pearl Harbor, our associations with them and contacts with the Japanese were pretty much non-existent. And, of course, not knowing them, and from what you would hear of their type of warfare that they staged during the war, your opinion of them would be pretty negative. I mean, you would hear about the suicide type of warfare that they staged and all the suicide pilots. It was something in which they were indoctrinated. It was something that they had to do, you know, and they did it. So, recognizing, too, [that] the handicap of a different language was another factor, that made it a little difficult to have a great degree of respect for the Japanese.

**Sonnenberg:** What did you think of Hitler at the time?

**Coulson:** Well, he was a bad guy as far as we were concerned in that period.

**Sonnenberg:** Did you hear a lot about him?

**Coulson:** We would hear about him; we would read news accounts of him, yes; and again, it was not a favorable impression that one would get from reading that. The atrocities that we would hear about, that were being performed on the prisoners of war, and things like that, and the things done to Jews. . . .

**Sonnenberg:** So people were knowledgeable of that?

**Coulson:** You would read about it, yes; you would hear about it in news broadcasts and news accounts.

**Sonnenberg:** Do you think most Americans did support the war?

**Coulson:** Oh yes; yes, I do. It was an all-out effort, and I just have to say that even the people on the home front, they were very loyal because most of them had someone, a relative or a close friend or someone that was involved, and so they worked hard, they made sacrifices, and I think it was pretty much an all-out effort.

**Sonnenberg:** So basically everyone was affected by the war in some small way?

**Coulson:** That's right, that's right.

**Sonnenberg:** I would suppose that you were very supportive of the war?

**Coulson:** Oh yes, we did.

**Sonnenberg:** Now, did you meet your wife while you were teaching?

**Coulson:** No, I met her after the war was over. She, in fact, was very, very much involved in the war effort. She was a nurse, and she joined a hospital unit. She was a graduate of the School of Nursing at the University of Pennsylvania, and there was a unit formed pretty much of officers and nurses and all staff from that area, the University, plus some staff members from other hospitals, but it was a hospital unit. And they left Broad Street Station in 1941, whatever, and then she was over in Burma, and so she spent about two-and-a-half years in the China-Burma-India theater of war. No, I didn't meet her until after the war.

**Sonnenberg:** In what ways was Adams county affected or changed by the war effort?

**Coulson:** Well, . . . I will say this interesting line, which I might interject here. There were local civil defense organizations established throughout the rural areas, including Adams county. It was sort of like, you might call it, the home guard. In case something should occur, there were certain people that were organized to form volunteers. One thing that we did, we had an airplane-spotting network that functioned through Adams county. Individuals would take their turn, and there were what they call spotter stations established at different points. And you would go into your period of time, maybe three or four hours at a spot; and maybe once or more a week, an individual would accept a volunteer assignment. You would go there, and if an airplane flew over, you would go straight to the telephone. Each spotter station had a telephone, and you'd call a certain number, and reported the presence of that airplane. If it was at night, you'd try to judge in what direction it might be flying, and my volunteer period was mostly at night because I was working through the day, but if you were volunteering for daytime duty, then you would try to describe the plane—you know, was it one-motor or two-motors, or what have you. I mean, maybe you could identify what type of plane it was, whether it was a fighter plan or a passenger-type plane. We were given certain training in spotting planes and so forth. And then that information would be called to a certain spot, and in the event that a raid might have occurred, it was intended to be part of the defense effort, tracing the flight of the planes like that.

**Sonnenberg:** Did anyone ever spot anything suspicious?

**Coulson:** Well, I don't know if they did or not. Fortunately, I don't know that there were any planes that reached this far inland. And I guess there would have been some along the coast; there might have been



flights that were a little suspicious, but that was one thing that took place even this distance inland you might say.

**Sonnenberg:** Now, do you remember there being any race riots with the African-Americans in this area?

**Coulson:** No.

**Sonnenberg:** So you didn't really notice many minorities migrating North at that time?

**Coulson:** No, we didn't. In fact, we did not have . . . the only racial minorities that perhaps would be in existence in Adams county at that time would probably be a few that lived in Gettysburg. That was before the period when the Puerto Rican or the Spanish and the Black people would come into this area to harvest fruit. During the war period, the fruit workers were mostly our own local residents, mainly high-school students and so forth.

**Sonnenberg:** Really? Did they have to get out of school to do that?

**Coulson:** There were some times when the school might delay the opening in order that students could respond to the need for fruit pickers.

**Sonnenberg:** Did any of your students have to do that?

**Coulson:** No, not too many of those because I was teaching elementary school, but high school level . . . in the summertime, large numbers of local residents, both children and adults would pick cherries during the summer months, and pick other types of fruit, tomatoes, and peaches, and apples, and so forth.

**Sonnenberg:** Was the fruit that people were picking sent overseas?

**Coulson:** Well, it was for the most part packaged either as fresh fruit, or most of it was processed in the factories in Biglerville and Peach Glen and those areas, for canning and processing that way.

**Sonnenberg:** How did you feel when you heard the news that the United States had dropped the atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima?

**Coulson:** Well, I think there was a certain degree of alarm, initially, but as one learned more and more about it, it seemed like the practical thing to do. It was horrible to hear about the number of lives that were lost and the degree of damage that was inflicted; however, in order to terminate the war, the loss of lives of American soldiers and others as well, and possibly the Japanese civilians as well, would have been far greater if the Japanese empire would have had to have been invaded and brought them to their knees by that means. So even as horrible as the atomic bomb sounded, and as it really was, I think that it was soon recognized that it was the humane and practical thing to do, because in the long run, there would have been many lives saved by doing it

that way. And that is still an open question of discussion. And only the people who remember and knew something about the war effort even today, do they appreciate the fact that it was the thing to do.

**Sonnenberg:** I think it's hard for those who lived through this, when many people probably look back and say that this was so terrible, but when you live through it, you can judge better.

**Coulson:** Yes, that's right. I mean it was something horrible to hear about and so forth at that time, but as you analyze the situation and hear more of the circumstances and the nature of the warfare that took place on the islands of the Pacific and the mainland of Southeast Asia and all that. . . . It was soon recognized that it was the thing to do.

**Sonnenberg:** Do you think most Americans were generally in favor of this action that was taken?

**Coulson:** Yes, I believe they were, after they recognized or knew the circumstances.

**Sonnenberg:** You didn't see many people protesting what happened?

**Coulson:** In those day, we seemed to have a different respect for leadership, and there was not the tendency for people to resort to demonstrations and the like to the degree that we seem to have today. I mean, we felt that it was a decision made by the government and the military leadership, and we accepted that. So I don't recall, I don't know that I could say I remember any of the demonstration, any form of demonstration for that matter.

**Sonnenberg:** Was it a relief for you knowing that the war was over?

**Coulson:** Oh yes, yes. Of course, V-J Day—I mean Victory Day in Europe, that was about June, I guess it was—and that was a signal for great celebration, and a lot of people did celebrate [*laughs*], and that was V-E Day. V-J Day, which was when Japan surrendered, was again a time for celebration and rejoicing. Everybody felt a great sigh of relief.

**Sonnenberg:** Were you still teaching in the one-room schoolhouse at the time that this was going on?

**Coulson:** I had taken a position as a teaching elementary school principal in Biglerville, and so from 1944 on, I was with the schools in Biglerville.

**Sonnenberg:** Do you think that the children were aware of the totality of all the things that were going on: in Japan, the bombing, and everything that was going on in Europe?

**Coulson:** I think they were because they heard about it on the radio, and their parents read about it in the paper. They heard the discussion of it at home. They probably had uncles and aunts, cousins and other relatives who were in the service, and so they were very much concerned about that.



**Sonnenberg:** So, your service to the war movement as a teacher was definitely an essential role to Adams county. Were you happier that you were able to serve more on the home front than having to be sent overseas?

**Coulson:** Well, I was very happy about it, yes [*laughs*]. I was willing to go, but I felt that there was a need for people here, too. I mean, teachers were very scarce. I was telling an incident here earlier today, as I say . . . I was with the schools in Biglerville then—many, many teachers were drafted into the service, and coaches—there was a period about 1944, when the coaches were drafted—they couldn't find a football coach for Biglerville High School, and the supervising principal [Leslie Stock] said, "I guess we're going to just have to discontinue our football program." And the then head coach at Gettysburg College, Henry Bream—"Hen" Bream whom everyone knew and probably still remembers—he coached basketball and baseball, too—he said, "Mr. Stock, . . . whatever you do, don't discontinue your football program in your high school." He said, "Before you do that, I will come and coach," and he did. For two years, Mr. Bream came out and coached that high school football team, and they had their schedules and so forth for that period. So, the schools were quite affected by the loss of a lot of staffing that, you know, were taken by the draft.

**Sonnenberg:** Just a sidenote, did Mr. Bream coach both schools, Gettysburg College and Biglerville High School?

**Coulson:** Gettysburg College had no football team during the war. He was teaching Physical Education classes and so forth on the campus . . . but, then, at the end of his college teaching day, he went out to Biglerville and trained the football team, and they played their games then on Saturdays or whatever.

**Sonnenberg:** So, if you had to say one thing that is your most impressive memory of the entire period of the war, or your teaching in the one-room schoolhouse . . . could you describe that?

**Coulson:** Well, I don't know how to summarize it in a few words.

**Sonnenberg:** Well, you can expand. You can say whatever you want [*smiles*].

**Coulson:** But it was . . . I appreciated the opportunity. Another little side issue in those days during the war—we were not permitted to use our school buses to take an athletic team away to another school for competition. And so, loyal people would volunteer their own vehicles and take these students to where they needed to go. One night, I was volunteering my services and my car to take some basketball players to meet a scheduled game near York—and, of course, as I say, tires

were rationed, gasoline was rationed, and I was using my precious gasoline and my precious tires—and on route, I had a tire blowout. So, of course, I resorted to the spare tire that I had, not knowing whether I would ever get another tire again. But, we got by. We got home that night. I had about five big, tall basketball players in the car, but we got help. But, we were glad to do those things. We volunteered our efforts. We never got any extra pay or the extra duties, you know, that we did beyond your schoolday and beyond your labor assignment.

**Sonnenberg:** It seems that you were very happy to do a lot of extra little things for the war effort.

**Coulson:** Oh yes, right.

**Sonnenberg:** Do you think your life would have been totally changed had the war never occurred? Do you think a lot of things would have been different?

**Coulson:** I don't know that it would have been too different. No.

**Sonnenberg:** Do you think you still would have taught in the one-room country school?

**Coulson:** Oh yes. I mean, after graduation from high school, I went to college, and that was my ambition—to be a teacher. And that's what I did.

**Sonnenberg:** I'd like to thank you for sharing your story with me today. It's really helped a lot, and I'm sure it will be useful for future generations to understand the lives of men and women on the home front during World War II.



