

# CUMBERLAND County History

2012

Volume Twenty-nine

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The editor invites articles, notes, or documents on the history of Cumberland County and its people. Such articles may deal with new areas of research or may review what has been written and published in the past.

Manuscripts should be submitted in digital form, either on a CD or by email. Citations in the form of endnotes should be placed at the end of the text. Authors should follow the rules set out in the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

Queries concerning the content and form of contributions may be sent to the Editor at the Society.

### Membership and Subscription

The basic annual membership fee of the Cumberland County Historical Society is \$40. All members receive Cumberland County History as part of their membership. Individual issues may be purchased for \$7 each.

Correspondence concerning membership and subscriptions should be addressed to the Executive Director at the Society.

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# CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORY

*Cumberland County Historical  
Society and Hamilton Library  
Association: Carlisle*



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Volume Twenty-nine

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ANDRÉ WELTMAN has lived in Cooke Township near Pine Grove Furnace since 1997. He is vice-chair of the Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park, and does charcoal-making reenactments there. When not pursuing local history in his spare time, he is a physician-epidemiologist at the Pennsylvania Department of Health in Harrisburg. This is his first contribution to the Journal.

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CARA HOLTRY CURTIS has been librarian at Cumberland County Historical Society since August 2008. She is a 2009 graduate of the University of Pittsburgh with a master's degree in Library and Information Science. She is a Cumberland County native and graduate of Cumberland Valley High School.

## Editor's Introduction

The 2012 issue of *Cumberland County History* is an eclectic mix of articles spanning from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. It has been a pleasure to review the numerous articles submitted over the past year. They have included a wide variety of topics and have been extremely well written and researched. Sufficient articles were submitted to warrant two issues. A number of submissions are being held for publication in 2013. I am certain that the eight articles published in this issue will be of interest to our readers.

The first article by Jessica Sheets provides an analysis of the life and career of James A. Wilson, the soldier (not the Declaration signer). Daniel Heisey presents an interesting analysis on the use of tea and arsenic in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and examines the criminal use of the two items together through the eyes of Charles Nisbet, Presbyterian minister and first president of Dickinson College.

Derek Weis' article takes us to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century with his analysis of the political ramifications of wearing the wrong colored cockade in the local militia. With the current observation of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the War of 1812, Steven Hatton explores county records to determine the effects of this war on local families.

André Weltman explores the effects of forest fires on South Mountain during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and solves a long-term mystery regarding the Iron Master's Mansion at Pine Grove Furnace. His article is particularly timely given the current Pine Grove area museum exhibit. Randy Watts, a frequent contributor to the Journal, has provided a detailed analysis of the Indian School Fire Brigade during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The article by Paul Hoch is a unique look at mid-20<sup>th</sup> century Carlisle and the importance of baseball to the young men of the town at that time. Finally Barbara Barton, County Archivist, again updates progress on organizing Cumberland County Government Records that are housed at the Society.

The 2011 issue of *Cumberland County History* introduced a new feature in the Journal entitled "Focus on the Collections." However, in the interest of space, that feature will not be included in this issue since the articles themselves utilize the Society's collections effectively. A Museum artifact, the James A. Wilson Chair, is featured in the article about his life, a significant newly acquired Library Archives document is the basis for the article about the military court martial, and the photographs used in the Indian School Fire Brigade article are from the Photo Archives.

David L. Smith  
Editor

## An “Inflexible Patriot”:

### Major James Armstrong Wilson and the Home He Left Behind

*Jessica J. Sheets*

Northeast of Carlisle borough near the intersection of Cavalry Road and Route 11 sits a distinguished, white-washed, brick home known as the Wilson House. That impressive structure bore witness to a part of the compelling story of Revolutionary War officer Major James Armstrong Wilson. He has frequently been confused with another James Wilson (1742–1798) who signed the Declaration of Independence and was a resident of Carlisle for a time. The life of James A. Wilson began in 1752 in Cumberland County. He was the son of Thomas Wilson, a provincial justice, and Jean Armstrong Wilson.<sup>1</sup>



The Wilson House, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, Pennsylvania

*Photograph by Jeffrey L. Caton*

On January 9, 1776, James Wilson was commissioned a captain in the 6th Pennsylvania Battalion. That spring, the unit marched to Canada and was involved in Brigadier General John Sullivan's attack on Trois Rivières, Quebec, on June 8. After a disastrous defeat in which many men, including the commander of the 6th Battalion, were captured, Sullivan and his men began a retreat to Crown Point, New York. Wilson survived Trois Rivières and was part of a later reconnaissance mission. According to British Lieutenant William Digby, a British "party of observation....fell in with a party of the enemy, and, after some firing [*sic*], brought them to us prisoners, with the loss only of one Indian and a few wounded. The captains [*sic*] name was Wilson." A footnote in Digby's published journal states that Wilson was leading thirty men and that "Wilson's men fought so well as to excite the admiration of their foes." Two of Wilson's men died due to the encounter.<sup>2</sup>

General James Wilkinson, a captain in the Continental Army at the time, wrote later in his memoir that he had proposed "a little enterprize" [*sic*] to capture enemy scouts. "Captain Wilson of Carlisle....impatient of success, adventured too far, and was intercepted in the river Sorel, near the Isle aux Noix, by Captain James H. Craig, of the 47th British infantry, who had just embarked on a similar enterprise, with a superior force." Sources disagree on when and exactly where Wilson was captured, but it was between the end of June and late July 1776.<sup>3</sup> The Canadian Campaign also ended at that time. The Continental Army's attempt to disrupt British operations in the north and bring the French into the fold failed.

It is also unclear when Wilson was paroled and exchanged, but he and Margaret Miller of Carlisle, daughter of Robert Miller, reportedly married in March 1777.<sup>4</sup> In testimony given in 1840, Margaret's cousin Sarah Miller related Wilson's return to Carlisle:

I remember being taken when a child by the then Margaret Miller afterward married to Major Ja<sup>s</sup> A Wilson to a Mr. White's tavern in Carlisle to see Mrs. White. [A]nd while there, there came men riding to the front door. [O]ne of them was Major Wilson returning from being a prisoner in Canada[.] [O]n hearing his voice Margaret took me by the hand and went out at the back door & we ran home[.] [S]oon after either that day or next day he came to see the family and continued to come very frequently untill [*sic*] Margaret & him were married....I have always understood that she was about Eighteen Years old when Wilson & her were married.<sup>5</sup>

A building used as a tavern by a Robert White during that time still stands, at 137 East High Street in Carlisle.<sup>6</sup>

In early 1777, members of the 6th Pennsylvania Battalion who reenlisted were placed into the 7th Pennsylvania Regiment. At that time, Wilson was a "prisoner on parole and left out of the arrangement."<sup>7</sup> As he put it, "I still waited with an expectation of being reinstated....I was superseded [*sic*] before my exchange." Wilson was later given back pay, 40 dollars per month, to cover what he was owed from when he was excluded to when he was promoted to major.<sup>8</sup>

On October 6, 1777, Congress determined "that two companies be raised on continental establishment for the purpose of guarding the stores at Carlisle... that they shall not be removed from Carlisle, nor be ordered on any other service. That James Armstrong Wilson be appointed to one of the said companies, with the rank and pay of a major, and that Samuel Postlethwaite be appointed captain of the other company." The independent companies were to serve one year unless Congress shortened the term.<sup>9</sup>

A Carlisle Barracks historian noted that "the assignment of these two companies naturally increased the strength and the importance of the post." That same source listed Wilson as the first commander of Continental troops at the post.<sup>10</sup> Considering that Carlisle Barracks at that time consisted of Public Works producing artillery materiel for the Army and a branch of the Department of the Commissary General of Military Stores, Wilson probably was the first American line officer to command troops there.

Correspondence explained Wilson's position. On November 18, 1777, a month after being assigned to Carlisle, the Board of War wrote to him, "You are to have the entire direction of all guards and continental troops at Carlisle, (the corps of artificers excepted)."<sup>11</sup> (Artificers "cast cannon, bore guns, and prepare[d] ammunition for the army."<sup>12</sup>) Two days later, the Board wrote to Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Flower, the commissary general of military stores. Flower had a "detachment" at Carlisle and a deputy there, Major Charles Lukens, was in charge of the stores and artificers. The Board wrote that Wilson "is to take all garrison command...your Artificers are to have no avocations from their duty as workmen, and your Officers be not called out to exercise any military command but such as is necessary for the regulation and discipline of their own men."<sup>13</sup>

Other documents indicated the positions of Wilson and Lukens. On November 11, 1777, Congress discussed the subject of officers of the Department of the Commissary General of Military Stores not having received their commissions yet. Lukens was listed among them, as "major, commissary military stores and pay master to the commissary general of military stores in the department at Carlisle."<sup>14</sup> In correspondence to Lukens on November 29, Wilson referred to him as "D.C.G.M.S."—noting his position as the deputy commissary general of military stores under Flower.<sup>15</sup> Lukens held a *staff* position over the artificers,

representing and subordinate to Flower, while Wilson commanded the independent Continental soldiers guarding the stores. In addition to commanding the guards, Wilson was “to summon all general court martials [*sic*] and direct their proceedings.”<sup>16</sup> He also requested arms and supplies as his guards needed them and determined with Lukens where new barracks should be built.

Wilson’s time as commander was not without trouble, however. The historian who noted Wilson’s companies were an asset to the post also mentioned that their arrival “proved to be the cause of considerable dissension among the artillery artificers who had been on duty there from the very beginning.”<sup>17</sup> Officials apparently foresaw the tension. In the same letter giving Wilson his new duties, the Board of War told him, “You will cultivate all possible harmony with the officers of the corps of Artificers, who although they have no other military commands but such, as is necessary for the government of their own corps, yet have a right to every respect you can pay them.”<sup>18</sup>

Dissension did occur. A May 6, 1778, letter by Timothy Pickering Jr. of the War Office noted that “disputes and difficulties have sometimes arisen at places, where the public military stores are kept, between the Commissaries of those stores, & the officers of the troops or militia appointed to guard them.” Pickering gave clear instructions for their future interaction and the duties of the guards in order “to prevent any further inconveniences on this head, & for the more safe\_keeping [*sic*] of such stores.”<sup>19</sup>

A few days later, on May 15, Pickering wrote to Wilson about an ongoing dispute between Wilson and Flower regarding a certain store of ammunition remaining unguarded. Pickering wrote, “Instead of cultivating the harmony so strongly and repeatedly recommended by the board, there seems rather to have been an endeavor to foment disputes.” Pickering continued: “Flower informs us that with the addition of nine men to Capt. Coren’s company, all necessary sentries can be furnished to the public stores. If this be the case, it will be our duty to represent to Congress the expediency of disbanding your corps which creates a considerable expence [*sic*].” (Captain Isaac Coren was an instructor at the artillery school that had started at the post in 1778.) The board would give Wilson and Flower a week to respond, and “if your corps should be found of real utility, and necessary, it will be continued; but effectual measures must be taken to prevent its usefulness being destroyed, by a constant bickering about rank and matters of form.”<sup>20</sup>

Pickering wrote to Flower the same day regarding the “keen animosities” and “feuds.” Pickering said the response Wilson gave to Flower’s request for a guard at a particular location “appears highly improper. However, it is right he [Wilson] should be heard.” Pickering also told Flower, “Your prudence will

suggest to you the propriety of cautioning your corps to avoid all expressions of incivility, much more of reproach, towards Major Willson [*sic*] or any of his corps." If the guards were not disbanded, "nothing should be said or done which can have a tendency to widen the breach between you."<sup>21</sup>

Whatever the internal problem might have been—simple miscommunication, firmly holding to proper procedures, stubbornness, or something else—Congress decided on June 2, 1778, after "the Board of War having represented, 'that the corps of artificers is sufficient for the protection of the magazines and stores at Carlisle'" that Wilson's guards "be dismissed [from] the service of the United States."<sup>22</sup> Two and a half years after his commission and eight months after being assigned to Carlisle, Wilson's time in the Army concluded. Apparently it did not take too long for him to get involved in another occupation. Books on Cumberland County history state that his name appeared in court records as an attorney beginning in 1778.

The Wilson House was constructed soon after, around 1780 or 1781.<sup>23</sup> Maps indicate it was built on property once owned by Wilson's father.<sup>24</sup> An October 1780 road docket noted the presence of "the Dwelling House of James Wilson" along "the great road [Route 11] Leading from Carlisle...to Harris's Ferry [Harrisburg]."<sup>25</sup> The home was built over large rocks still visible in the basement. (Many early features remain—glass window panes, paneled doors and hardware, carved mantles, fireplaces, worn stairs to the basement, and a cooking hearth in the basement.)

Wilson first appeared in Middleton Township tax records in 1773 with a grist mill. Small numbers of horses, cows, and sometimes sheep were recorded throughout the years, and the first time both the grist mill and a saw mill were listed as the property of Wilson was 1785.<sup>26</sup> A grist mill stands today just beyond the house toward town. An essay from 1921 indicated that particular mill was built between 1828 and 1837, long after Wilson's time, and suffered an interior fire in 1852.<sup>27</sup> An August 1852 *Carlisle American Democrat* article stated that "the extensive grist and flouring Mill...was a mass of smoking ruins."<sup>28</sup>

A couple years after Wilson began running two mills, a political riot, or "affray," took place in Carlisle, on December 26, 1787.<sup>29</sup> Citizens gathered at the square that evening to celebrate Pennsylvania's adoption of the new United States Constitution. Wilson was among the citizens gathered to celebrate. Not all of the population favored the Constitution, however. The *Carlisle Gazette*, reporting the story on January 2, 1788, said that "a number of men armed with bludgeons, came in regular order....Major James A. Wilson, (having been appointed with two other gentlemen, to make the necessary arrangements for the occasion) was preparing to have the gun loaded [a cannon brought for celebra-

To the Honorable the Justices of the Court of General Quarter Sessions of the peace held at Carlisle for the County of Cumberland

The Petition of Several of the Inhabitants of the Town of Carlisle and Middleton Townships  
Most Humbly Sheweth

That the great road Leading from Carlisle to the Dwelling House of James Wilson, from thence to the Dwelling House of William Chambers and from <sup>thence</sup> thence to the Dwelling House of James Wilson, both not being laid out as the Law Directs upon which account it hath not been kept in proper repair. And as the said road is very beneficial both to your petitioners and the public in general therefore your petitioners pray your Honors would grant an order of Court appointing six proper persons to view and if they see proper to lay out a road according to the above Purposes and your petitioners as in duty bound shall pray &c

M. Hummingham	Sam. Williamson	Henry Clayton
Thos. Foster	Wm. Blakings	Jam. Adams
Joseph Welch	John Keape	Robert Smith
Ralph Stewart	Jm. Pardon	William Smith
George Sanderson	Robert Tomney	Richard Egan
William Brown	John Cross	Hugh Smith
And. Holars	Jacob Bait	James Bell
Charles McClure	Jacob Bait	Henry Miskinly
James Palferson	Jacob Bait	James Douglas
Robert Peterson	Robert Gibson	Wm. Brown
James Kenney	John Adams	Wm. Eiken
Re. C. Morton	John Morrison	Alexander Brown
Re. J. J. J.	Thomas Davis	Thomas Armstrong
James Hamilton	Wm. Moore	William Johnson
Donald Holm	Wm. Moore	

This Cumberland County Road Docket, (2-112) mentions "the Dwelling House of James Wilson" as a reference point, October 1780.

tion], when he was ordered by many of the armed party to disist [*sic*]." Wilson asked the dissenters to allow them to celebrate peacefully. "Immediately after a number of barrels and staves were thrown at him, one of which struck him in the breast, he then sprung forward to the persons who threw at him, and struck one of them with a small pine stick...he was then beat down by a number of blows from six or seven persons with bludgeons, who continued beating him after he fell. They would have taken his life had not a trusty old soldier thrown himself on the Major, and received the blows aimed at him."<sup>30</sup> That particular account of the riot was reprinted in newspapers across the country. Such dissension about the federal Constitution was not limited to Pennsylvania.

A later account of the riot indicated Wilson was well respected. According to a report in the January 9, 1788, *Carlisle Gazette*, the pro-Constitution group was well equipped and "all the preparation they wanted was spirit and courage (Major James A. Wilson excepted) for they had weapons and numbers more than sufficient."<sup>31</sup> In the end, the anti-Constitution rioters were never sentenced for their deeds. Some who had been briefly imprisoned were allowed to go free on March 1. Their release appeared to be an attempt to dispel rising tensions.

Not long after the rioters were freed, Wilson passed away—on March 17, 1788. He was thirty-six. The injuries sustained at the riot, and perhaps also the after effects from his time as a prisoner of war, had taken their toll. His wife, Margaret, was probably twenty-nine years old. They had five children—Elizabeth (born March 1778), James (age unknown), Jane (age unknown), Rebecca (five months), and a fifth unnamed child who had died.<sup>32</sup>

Wilson obviously had been failing in health. He had his will written on March 11, 1788 while "on his death bed" and appearing "anxious to make some disposition of his estate, & to direct the mode in which his Children should be Supported." According to the will, "The Plantation and Mills in Middleton Township he leaves to his son James when he arrives at the age of Twenty one. [H]is other property he allows to be divided among his Daughters equally. [H]e allows Mrs. Wilson and the Children to live on the farm and have all that can be made on it untill [*sic*] his son comes of age... [H]e allows the mills to be kept a going. [N]o other repairs or Buildings to be made." It strongly appears he was thinking of his daughters—"Mr. Wilson expressed his regret, that it was not in his power to make such distribution of his estate as he wished. [H]is father's will having made the whole of the Plantation in Middleton to his heirs male, which he thought was too much considering the smallness of what he had to leave the rest of his Children."<sup>33</sup>

Wilson's obituary in the *Carlisle Gazette* noted that "the many virtues of this good and amiable man, endeared him in a particular manner to all who knew him.—In him his wife has lost an affectionate husband, his children a

tender and indulgent father—the poor a charitable and benevolent man—his acquaintances a sincere friend—and his country a disinterested and inflexible patriot.”<sup>34</sup>

The next year, Margaret appeared in the tax records as “Willson [*sic*] Widow,” with both mills.<sup>35</sup> She reportedly had a new channel built from the Letort Creek for one of the mills.<sup>36</sup> In 1794, Margaret married Mathew Henderson. They lived in a brick house (still standing at 1007 Harrisburg Pike) just up the road away from town. Margaret and James’ son served on the USS *Essex* during the War of 1812 and died while a prisoner of war. Margaret, who endured the tragic death of her first husband, lost two children, and outlived her second husband, passed away in 1841 at the age of eighty-two or eighty-three.<sup>37</sup>

The Wilson House remained in the family. An 1858 map of the Carlisle area has “Alex’ McDowal” identified as the owner of it.<sup>38</sup> Alexander McDowell was a grandson of the Wilsons, the son of Andrew and Rebecca Wilson McDowell. Ironically, Alexander suffered a beating in his backyard in September 1856. Soldiers from Carlisle Barracks had been “plundering him of his property,” so he expressed frustration to their commander. Soon after, McDowell’s dog bit the leg of a soldier in his orchard, and troops came to kill the dog. McDowell went out to disperse the men, but instead “they assailed him with a shower of heavy stones with which they were prepared.” One hit his head, exposing his brain, and his right arm was paralyzed.<sup>39</sup> He died four years later, in his forties, perhaps due to his injuries.



The McDowell graves at Old Carlisle Cemetery.

*Photograph by author*

McDowell was buried at Old Carlisle Cemetery on East South Street. The end of the inscription on his stone indicated a life cut short—"From midst of Life's unfinished plan / With sudden hand it [death] severs him."<sup>40</sup> His wife, Margaret A. McDowell (1816–1897), was buried there, as well as his parents, Rebecca Wilson McDowell (died 1851) and Andrew McDowell (died 1844).<sup>41</sup> Elizabeth Denison McDowell was buried among them (died 1840).<sup>42</sup> Also interred at that cemetery were one of Rebecca and Andrew McDowell's daughters, Sarah Lydia Virginia (Lydia V. Newsham, 1828–1907), and her husband, Henry Newsham (1819–1893). Their son, William Henry Newsham (1860–1946), and his wife, Rebecca F. Wetzel Newsham (1858–1920), were buried there too.<sup>43</sup> At this point, it is not known where James Armstrong Wilson and Margaret Miller Wilson Henderson are buried.<sup>44</sup>

Around 1930, John Cappiello, who appears not to be a part of the Wilson family line, purchased the home, made renovations, and added the two-story wing. In 1959, the U.S. Army purchased the Wilson House and property and has used it as quarters.



This chair belonged to Major James Armstrong Wilson and is on permanent display in the museum at the Cumberland County Historical Society.

In preserving the home, a part of Wilson's life story survives. Other sites also remain, including Mr. White's tavern and the creek and spring in the backyard. In addition, a chair at the Cumberland County Historical Society is attributed to Wilson.<sup>45</sup> Though we do not know where Wilson is buried, we know where he lived, served, and took a stand for what he believed. We must call attention to the life of a nearly forgotten soldier, who served his country well in its infancy. Both as an officer and as a civilian, Major James Armstrong Wilson stood strongly—"inflexible" and unyielding—as his home does today.<sup>46</sup>

(If any readers have additional information on Major James Armstrong Wilson or the Wilson house, please contact the author at [jessica.j.sheets.civ@mail.mil](mailto:jessica.j.sheets.civ@mail.mil) or 717-245-4038.)

## Endnotes

1. The only reference to a birth year this author found was in a footnote in the following: James Phinney Baxter, *The British Invasion from the North, The Campaigns of Generals Carleton and Burgoyne from Canada, 1776–1777, With the Journal of Lieut. William Digby, of the 53D, or Shropshire Regiment of Foot* (Albany: Joel Munsell's Sons, 1887), 126. Several sources mention Wilson's father and a few his mother. One gives Thomas's wife as "Mary." Perhaps he remarried later in life.  
One secondary source [James Armstrong genealogy (rootsweb.com, accessed June 25, 2010); available from archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/PACUMBER/2003-07/1059343055] indicates Wilson's mother, Jean, daughter of a James Armstrong, may have been a niece of General John Armstrong of Carlisle. However, a monograph [Raymond Martin Bell, "The Brothers and Sisters of Colonel John Armstrong 1717–1795 and of His Wife Rebecca 1717–1797 of Carlisle, Pennsylvania" (monograph, Washington, Penn., 1990)] does not support that.  
Several books on Cumberland County history state that James A. Wilson graduated from Princeton. However, no primary documentation has been found, and Princeton does not have a record.
2. Baxter, 122, 125–6.
3. General [James] Wilkinson, *Memoirs of My Own Times*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Abraham Small, 1816), 67.
4. In 1839 while attempting to claim a pension, eighty-one-year-old Margaret Miller Wilson Henderson stated that she and Wilson married in March 1775 (footnote.com/image/28136333, accessed September 30, 2009). However, Wilson's pension record (cited in endnote 35) gives March 1777, the next source quoted in this article (endnote 5) points to March 1777, and a deposition in 1840 by her daughter Elizabeth Denison mentions a family Bible listing March 1777 as the date (footnote.com/image/28136337, accessed September 30, 2009).
5. Sarah Miller, handwritten transcription of her statement given before Justice of the Peace William Irvine on August 17, 1840 (footnote.com, accessed May 3, 2010); available from www.footnote.com/image/28136446.
6. Merri Lou Scribner Schaumann, *Taverns of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, 1750–1840* (W & M Printing, Inc.: Lewisberry, Penn., 1994), 60. This author searched the book for evidence of a "Mr. White's tavern." From 1774–1779, Robert White was tavern keeper of the tavern (built in 1773) at 137 East High Street. The incident of Margaret seeing Wilson return was in 1776 or 1777.
7. Thomas Lynch Montgomery, ed., *Pennsylvania Archives*, Fifth Series, vol. 3 (Harrisburg: Harrisburg Publishing Company, 1906), 226.
8. Major James A. Wilson, extract of letter to the Honorable Cornelius Harriet, Esq., written December 23, 1777 (footnote.com, accessed September 30, 2010); available from www.footnote.com/image/28126453.
9. Worthington Chauncey Ford, ed., *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789*, vol. 9, 1777, *October 3–December 31* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1907), 774 (www.memory.loc.gov).

10. Lieutenant Paul E. Zuver, *A Short History of Carlisle Barracks* (n.p.: Carlisle Barracks, 1934), 39, 147.
11. Jean Hays Horner, ed., *Carlisle Barracks Orderly Book* (Microfilm Corporation of Penna.: Pittsburgh, n.d.), Board of War letter to Major J. A. Wilson written November 18, 1777.
12. John B. Linn and William H. Egle, eds., *Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, vol. 11 (Harrisburg: Clarence M. Busch, State Printer of Pennsylvania, 1896), 249.
13. Horner, extract of Board of War letter to Colonel Benjamin Flowers [*sic*] written November 18, 1777.
14. Ford, 892.
15. Horner, Major James A. Wilson letter to Major Charles Lukens written November 29, 1777.
16. Horner, Board of War letter to Major J. A. Wilson written November 18, 1777.
17. Zuver, 39.
18. Horner, Board of War letter to Major J. A. Wilson written November 18, 1777.
19. Horner, "Tim" Pickering Jr., War Office, letter to Major James A. Wilson written May 6, 1778.
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21. Horner, "Tim" Pickering Jr. letter to Colonel Benjamin Flower written May 15, 1778.
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23. Conran A. Hay, Christopher E. Hamilton, and Christina Schmidlapp, *A Cultural Resource Overview and Management Plan for The United States Army, Carlisle Barracks, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania* (n.p.: Archaeological and Historical Consultants, Inc., September 1988), "Building #259" inventory. "Historic Carlisle Barracks" (n.p., n.d.), 33, Carlisle Barracks Collection, Box 58, Folder 27, U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Donald W. Rich Jr., ed., "John Cappiello Home, R. D. 1," *The Shuttle*, vol. 23, book 7 (October 1956): 7.
24. Land Records at the Pennsylvania State Archives, Survey Book D-18, p. 223 ([www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/land\\_records/3184](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/land_records/3184), accessed July 13, 2010); available from [www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17-114CopiedSurveyBooks/Books%20D1-D90/Book%20D18/Book%20D-18%20pg%20445.pdf](http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17-114CopiedSurveyBooks/Books%20D1-D90/Book%20D18/Book%20D-18%20pg%20445.pdf). "Plat of Carlisle Barracks (Engles 1820)" in *Cultural Resource Management Plan, Carlisle Barracks, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania*, Charles D. Cheek and others (West Chester: John Milner Associates, Inc., 1991), Figure 15.
25. Road docket 2-112, October 1780, Cumberland County Historical Society (CCHS).
26. This author examined 1771-1789 Middleton Township, Cumberland County tax rates on microfilm at the CCHS. Houses did not seem to be recorded in those tax rates.
27. Richard C. Steck, "The Henderson Mill," in *Lamberton & Hamilton Library Association, Prize Essays* (Carlisle: Baker & Gussman, Printers, 1921), 4-5.
28. "Destructive Fire," *Carlisle American Democrat*, August 19, 1852, p. 2. This author has not been able to dig extensively into the subject of Wilson's original mills.

29. Anonymous letter from Carlisle to the editor, *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*, February 7, 1788, n.p. (This author received as a photocopy from Lehigh University, which did not provide a page number.)
30. "Carlisle, January 2," *Carlisle Gazette*, January 2, 1788, p. 3.
31. "Carlisle, January 9," *Carlisle Gazette*, January 9, 1788, p. 3.
32. Henry Northup, letter to unknown recipient written on April 27, 1840 (footnote.com, accessed April 30, 2010); available from footnote.com/image/28136439. This letter stated that James and Margaret had two children who died. Other documents simply stated they had five children, and this author could only find four named. (One child living at his death died fairly young, as noted later in this article.)
33. Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, Wills, vol. E, 1785 to 1795 (filmed by the Genealogical Society of Salt Lake City, Utah: Cumberland County Courthouse, Carlisle, 1950), 123. (At the CCHS in box labeled "5-15" and "1st set.")
34. *Carlisle Gazette*, March 19, 1788, p. 3.
35. Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, Tax Rates, 1789 (filmed by the Genealogical Society of Salt Lake City, Utah: Cumberland County Courthouse, Carlisle, 1950), n.p.
36. Steck, 5.
37. Virgil D. White, *Genealogical Abstracts of Revolutionary War Pension Files*, vol. III, N-Z (Waynesboro, Tennessee: National Historical Pub. Co., 1992), 3889.
38. Henry F. Bridgens, *Atlas of Cumberland County, Penna., 1858* (Camp Hill: Planks Suburban Press, 1987), 16.
39. Wm. H. Miller, "To the People of Carlisle and its vicinity," October 1, 1856, Carlisle Barracks Collection, Box 5, Folder 4, U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.
40. The gravestone is illegible but other sources provided the inscription.
41. Birth years are not known for all; some stones only have death dates.
42. Though her stone says "Our Sister," Elizabeth's connection is unclear. Rebecca's and Andrew's stones say "Our Mother" and "Our Father." They had daughters, but none named Elizabeth. The Wilson's daughter Elizabeth married an Edward Denison of Baltimore; perhaps that is her, sister to Rebecca, and later married to a McDowell too.
43. This author learned of the Newsham line via the following paper: Bill Veale, "The Story of an Old House," (photocopy) December 23, 1959, p. 3, in possession of the author.
44. After searching numerous cemetery listings and plots (McDowell plot at Old Carlisle Cemetery and Henderson plot at Meeting House Springs Cemetery), the current conclusion is perhaps they are at an unmarked family plot on their property or simply an unknown location. Margaret and Mathew Henderson's only child, William M. Henderson, and his wife, Elizabeth Parker, were buried at Meeting House Springs Cemetery.
45. The chair is on display in the exhibit area on the second floor of the museum, as of the publication of this article. The caption that accompanies the chair indicates it was owned by Major James Armstrong Wilson. This author was told it was initially believed the chair belonged to the James Wilson who signed the Declaration of Independence.
46. *Carlisle Gazette*, March 19, 1788, p. 3.

## “Arsenic in the Tea,” Nisbet Wrote

Daniel J. Heisey

It was an early summer day in 1792, and a gloomy man was in a bad mood. Charles Nisbet, a Presbyterian minister in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, wrote a letter to his bookseller, William Young, in Philadelphia. The two had been corresponding about twice a year since 1790; Nisbet was beginning his sixth letter to Young. Nisbet's half of the exchange is in the archives of Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania; Young's letters to Nisbet seem not to have survived. Nisbet had come with his family to Carlisle from Montrose, Scotland, in 1785, when he became the first principal (president) of Dickinson College and also assisted with preaching at the Presbyterian Church on the Square in Carlisle.<sup>1</sup> A month before this letter to Young, Nisbet had presided at Dickinson's graduation of twenty-five seniors.<sup>2</sup>

As Nisbet sat down to write to Young on that June day, 1792, he saw only bleak horizons. “I often ask my self [*sic*],” Nisbet wrote, “*What dost thou here?*” The question was that heard by the prophet Elijah (1 Kings 19:13, KJV). Nisbet's answer to himself offered scant encouragement. “I can scarcely discover,” he confessed, “that I have done any good,” with the exception, he added, of teaching “a few young men to preach the Doctrine of Justification by the Righteousness of Christ, & the Necessity of Holiness in order to Salvation, in this Infidel Country.”<sup>3</sup> Thus Nisbet, consoled himself.

Nisbet was fifty-six, and he had been licensed to preach for thirty-two years. At age sixteen he had entered the University of Edinburgh, his bookish home life preparing Nisbet with wide reading in Latin and Greek. He soon added French and Italian as well. Nisbet had begun his ministry with high hopes and higher praise; his admirers considered him “among the most learned men in Scotland.”<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, as he neared sixty, Nisbet saw his ministry as a failure, and his new country seemed barbaric. “A Spirit of Madness & Riot,” he wrote, “seems to have taken Possession of this place lately.”<sup>5</sup> As a Christian minister, he meant what he said about spirits possessing the place, and this demonic possession extended beyond Carlisle. Nisbet saw around him a lack of order and discipline, and he

believed that criminals were blatant because the state had no moral authority. "Evil Doers here," he wrote, "have no Punishment to dread."<sup>6</sup>



Charles Nisbet

*CCHS Photo Archives*

For Nisbet, a simple glance at current events would prove that last point. The local newspaper, *The Carlisle Gazette*, carried dispatches from foreign capitals and then interspersed advertisements and legal notices with news from around town. Aside from international news that left Nisbet in dark moods, namely the French Revolution, domestic crimes also depressed him. Nisbet referred to a recent case of attempted matricide in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Here we let Nisbet speak at length in his own words:

Last week a Woman at Lancaster was convicted of having endeavored to poison her own Mother, by sending her a Present of half a Pound of Tea, mingled with Arsenic. The Tea was suspected by some who came up with the Bearer on the Road, & knew that the Woman had lived in Enmity with her Mother, & had taken the very Bed from under her. She was condemned by the Court to one Month's Imprisonment, & to pay a fine of thirty Pounds, & even this Punishment, it was hoped, would be remitted.<sup>7</sup>

Nisbet then blamed the current belief, much publicized by the French revolutionaries, that each person should be at liberty to act as one's conscience directed. "Such are the blessed Effects," he mocked, "of Liberality of Sentiment, & acting according to one's Conscience!"<sup>8</sup> His sarcasm waxed. "It can not be doubted," he continued, "that this Woman was a person of Liberal Sentiments, nor that she acted in this Matter according to her Conscience."<sup>9</sup> As a scholar, Nisbet was careful to cite his sources, and so here he gave his indignant gossip solid authority. Nisbet told Young:

I was informed by an Eyewitness that she [the accused] appeared in the Court with all the Serenity of Innocence, & listened to her Indictment & the Pleadings against her, with as much Indifference as if it had been a Piece of common Conversation. How happy must evil Doers be, in a Country where they have so little to fear!<sup>10</sup>

Nisbet closed his letter with complaints about feeling trapped at the college, arrearages in his salary making return to Scotland impossible. "The Cup of Slavery," he sighed, "is a bitter one, but I must drink it."<sup>11</sup>

It is clear from other surviving letters of Nisbet that tea was part of his daily life, although his correspondence makes no further mention of arsenic, an element we will consider below. In much of his surviving correspondence, Nisbet appears as a cranky old man, full of criticism of himself and others; his pen flows, however, with eloquence and wit. Of course, the picture may be distorted: some people tend to seek out friendly ears only when in a blue funk. Still, whereas another man could grow tiresome and tedious with his frets and fulminations, Nisbet manages to charm. Best of all for the student of history, he gives glimpses into the everyday life of educated, eighteenth-century Europeans on what was in many ways still the American frontier. With Nisbet as its point of reference, this paper will focus on tea in post-colonial Pennsylvania, while keeping in view the local use of arsenic.

## Tea and British Culture

Before stepping further into the house of Nisbet, it will help to get a wider perspective and see how tea was thought of more than two hundred years ago.

The famous Tea Party in Boston had occurred in 1773, nearly twenty years before Nisbet wrote of arsenic in the tea in Lancaster; Nisbet was still in Scotland when Samuel Adams and others vandalized private property in Boston harbor. The tea Adams and friends destroyed was subject to a new tax, and the tax became the pretext for rebellion against what many in the colonies still saw as lawful authority. Again, though, what concerns us here is not the tax, but the tea. Almost twenty years after the Boston Tea Party, a Scottish immigrant could expect to have his daily cup of tea. Moreover, a lady in Lancaster could see a cup of tea placed before her and not think it special or that anything was amiss.

To start from the ground up, archaeologists have found evidence of such regular use of tea. Although "porcelain is quite unusual in archaeological sites before 1800," as early as "the 1780s, complete services of porcelain... appear in some inventories."<sup>12</sup> These porcelain services are "largely limited to tea sets," thus giving documentary evidence of "the adoption of the full-blown English tea ceremony for the first time."<sup>13</sup> Thus, records and artifacts combine to provide "a good indicator of the re-Anglicization process that was at work at the time."<sup>14</sup> This process of "re-Anglicization" faced the test of the native born.

In April, 1796, a young Englishman returning home from India by way of the United States stayed in Philadelphia, the new nation's capital at the time. He boarded in the house of a Mr. Francis, also called the Francis Hotel, the same home where several Members of Congress as well as the Vice President, John Adams, lodged. The Englishman was Thomas Twining, part of a family of tea merchants. Since 1706, the Twining family had been selling tea from its London shop; in 1749, it began shipping tea to North America. As young Twining sat down to the morning meal, he noted that, "It appeared [to be] the English breakfast of former days, with tea and its accompaniments added to it."<sup>15</sup> His observation can be taken as authoritative.

To get tea into these porcelain tea settings in American homes and hotels, a "remarkably complex economic exchange"<sup>16</sup> spanned the globe. Despite the popularity of coffee, western Europeans had a craving for tea, especially the strong black tea they called "bohea." Adam Smith noted in *The Wealth of Nations* that tea "was a drug very little used in Europe before the middle of the last century."<sup>17</sup> Samuel Johnson, author of one of the first English dictionaries, defined tea as "a Chinese plant, of which the infusion has lately been much drunk in Europe."<sup>18</sup> Johnson was a master of laconic precision.

As Johnson indicated, tea first came to Europe from China. Tea's European debut came in the seventeenth century by means of Dutch merchants, and to compete with them, the British East India Company emerged; until its demise in 1833, for reasons beyond our scope, the East India Company had a monopoly

on shipping tea from China.<sup>19</sup> For more than two centuries, it dominated the economy of England. "The company that had been signed into being by Queen Elizabeth I," wrote Pico Iyer, "was signed into extinction by Queen Victoria."<sup>20</sup> Without deliberate plans to do so, the East India Company changed the culture of the English-speaking peoples.

Whether in his native Scotland or in his adopted America, Charles Nisbet was a sensitive, if often unsympathetic, register of such changes. Nisbet had grumbled to Lord Buchan (David Erskine), a friend in Scotland, about the utilitarian approach to education in America, explaining that "nothing except Money is in the least respected among us."<sup>21</sup> He thought "perhaps the Inundation of East India Nabobs of late" had "produced a parallel Effect in Great Britain."<sup>22</sup> Nisbet meant the British planters and colonial officials who had made their millions in India and had returned to Britain to set themselves up as new nobility, called by the Indian term *nabob*.

While tea had created new money, tea itself was drunk by rich and poor. "By 1784 tea was part of the diet of all classes of English society," and twenty years later "Englishmen were consuming more than two pounds per person a year."<sup>23</sup> Demand was high, making supply a priority for the East India Company. Behind each cup of tea was not some impersonal corporation but myriad individuals. One must keep in view the Chinese who picked the tea, as well as the British and Dutch accountants, bankers, and insurers, the shipbuilders, sailors, and merchants. Each of these people, whether planters in the tropics or office boys in the capital, had their own circle of family and friends, their favorite haunts and amusements. As one historian has summed it up, "A truly international trading network was taking shape, from the Caribbean to Ceylon and Canton, and all converging in London."<sup>24</sup>

In London, tea was a mania. Since the 1650s, when a grocer named Daniel Rowlinson first sold his fellow Londoners tea, tea had been a staple at the coffee houses that dotted the city.<sup>25</sup> Moralists warned against the evils of excessive tea drinking, and tea gardens gained names as dens of ill-fame. Few men in London then were more devout or more eloquent than Samuel Johnson, and few seem to have matched his love of tea, steaming and creamed.

On Good Friday, 1783, James Boswell, an acquaintance of Nisbet, found Johnson having a pious breakfast, a hot cross bun and tea without milk; thus, Johnson's fast on that holy and solemn day.<sup>26</sup> As early as 1757 Johnson had declared himself to be "a hardened and shameless Tea-drinker," one having "for twenty years diluted his meals with only the infusion of this fascinating plant," and he emphasized that his "kettle scarcely has time to cool," and that he "with Tea amuses the evening, with Tea solaces the midnight, and with Tea welcomes

the morning."<sup>27</sup> He describes a portrait of the lexicographer as an addict, a noun not appearing in his dictionary.

Beyond London, tea was as certain beneath the Union Jack as was the Book of Common Prayer, if not more so. For instance, Sir William Hamilton, the ambassador of King George III to the Kingdom of Naples entertained numerous English visitors, including at various times the Duke of Cumberland, Edward Gibbon, and Horatio Nelson, and the embassy could assure its guests of a familiar routine. "We live in so English a Stile [*sic*]," wrote the ambassador's wife, "that you need not fear any of the Italian ceremonies and nonsense with us."<sup>28</sup> Lady Hamilton described the ambassador's day hunting with the King of Naples, saying that the ambassador "comes home just to drink tea."<sup>29</sup>

With this cursory survey of the role of tea in English-speaking territories, two points emerge. One, within a century, tea had become for people influenced by British culture a defining and indispensable beverage. Two, tea stood for a global economy. The proverbial "all the tea in China" is, after all, an English saying.

### Tea and Post-colonial America

So, Nisbet, it must be remembered, whatever his eccentricities, was not alone in his drinking of tea. Within ten years of Nisbet's letter to Young, another Calvinist minister, Abiel Holmes of Boston, was writing what would become the first history of America, from Christopher Columbus to what was then the present day. Inspired by Tacitus, Holmes set down year by year the memorable events that shaped the country, and he took notice of matters great and small, including the founding of towns and colleges, the building of churches and the lives of pastors. It makes for fascinating reading, at times simply for what it does not record, such as the founding of Dickinson College or the death of Charles Nisbet. In any case, Holmes was a widower, and one day he took a break from his history, *The Annals of America*, to have tea with the Wendell family, whose daughter he would in due course take as his new wife.<sup>30</sup>

Along with many other details, Holmes's *Annals* records the history of tea in America. According to Holmes, around 1720, "Tea began to be used in New England,"<sup>31</sup> and in 1770, "The tea plant was introduced into Georgia."<sup>32</sup> It was in April, 1770, that King George III approved an Act of Parliament repealing certain taxes, but not the tax on tea. American colonists enjoyed their tea, but many resented paying tax on it, especially when they had no vote in Parliament.

In 1783 and 1784 a thirty-one year-old German physician toured in round-about fashion the eastern seaboard, from Pennsylvania to eastern Florida, ending up in the Bahamas. Johann David Schoepf of Bayreuth kept a diary of his

travels, punctuated as they were by tea. His first taste of tea on his tour was in North Carolina, a kind locally called Japan, and he noted that the residents "not only make use of it for breakfast instead of the common Bohea [*sic*], but in almost every kind of sickness as well."<sup>33</sup> Once north of the Mason-Dixon Line, Schoepf also visited Carlisle. He described the "pretty little town," with its straight streets and "genteel houses," its "German Lutheran church, a Presbyterian Meeting-house, a Town-hall, and a gaol."<sup>34</sup> Although he did not see it, Schoepf mentioned the capacious cave north of town along the Conodoguinet Creek, where "the ladies of Carlisle are accustomed to resort...to drink tea."<sup>35</sup>

In Carlisle, the Nisbet family were also tea drinkers. In the winter of 1792, Nisbet wrote to his daughter, by then married and living elsewhere, about life at the old homestead. Nisbet mentioned his wife's domestic work, assuring their daughter that, "Having likewise been making some Quilts for her Tea-Kettle, she has put one up for you."<sup>36</sup> It seems tea cozies were in short supply.

The supply of tea itself was also a matter of self-reliance. Nisbet imported his own tea, and in 1799 he complained to his daughter about a recent shipment. "The tea was so ill-packed," Nisbet wrote her, "that much of it was lost," although, he reported, "The Mustard came safe."<sup>37</sup> Nisbet's ordering tea in hand-packed containers was common practice; all tea then was sold in bulk, measured to the customer's specifications. Tea in ready-made "pound, half-pound, and quarter-pound packets"<sup>38</sup> made its debut after 1889, when Thomas Lipton bought tea plantations in Ceylon and added his own brand of tea to his growing chain of grocery stores. Here we see how easy it would have been in the 1790s for a daughter, feeling uncomfortable around her mother, to mix some arsenic in a half-pound of tea for Mother to drink.

## Tea and Arsenic

Although this paper has discussed tea in post-colonial Pennsylvania, it is worth a digression to ask about arsenic. Nisbet seems not to have been shocked by the availability of arsenic; it is the cool lack of contrition of the would-be murderer that outrages him. Until 1836 and the development of a test to discover traces of arsenic in food, drink, or human remains, arsenic was nearly a foolproof murder weapon. As an element, it derives from nature, cannot break down into other chemicals, and needs no special chemical skill to produce. "It is almost an ideal poison," wrote one twentieth-century forensic pathologist, "since it has no colour, no smell, and no taste."<sup>39</sup> He added that, "It can be used in powder form or in solution, and can be given in any form of food or drink without making any alteration that could be detected by the victim."<sup>40</sup> He then noted, though, the drawback of its easy detection since the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

As an element, arsenic is no secret formula. Although it is best known from fiction for its role in murders, arsenic has shown real-life versatility. For example, in addition to use in cosmetics, it has found practical and beneficial use in preserving medieval codices from being eaten by bookworms. A Benedictine monk who was prefect (director) of the Vatican Library, speaking in 1959, once explained that the flour-based glue used in bookbinding in the Middle Ages "offered to these insects a *pasta* which they found extremely appetizing."<sup>41</sup> The remedy was, he said, in the days before DDT, "a large supply of Paris Green," another name for arsenic.

Moreover, arsenic was long held to have medicinal properties. Samuel Johnson offered in his dictionary a long definition of arsenic, "a violent and corrosive poison," but he noted that some people had been experimenting with it. "There are several chymical [*sic*] preparations of arsenick [*sic*]," Johnson informed the reader, "intended to blunt its corrosive salts, and render it a safe medicine; but experience proves that it should not be used inwardly, in any form."<sup>42</sup> Still, some medical doctors persisted.

In the 1780s, an English doctor of medicine, Thomas Fowler, happened upon a patent medicine called Thomas Wilson's Tasteless Ague and Fever Drops.<sup>43</sup> Fowler and an apothecary, a Mr. Hughes, tested the drops and found the active ingredient to be arsenic. Fowler made his own medicine based on arsenic; marketed as Fowler's Solution, it was a popular remedy well into the nineteenth century. A mixture of potassium arsenite and lavender water, twelve drops three times a day for one week could be taken in water or wine. Promoters of Fowler's Solution claimed it could treat problems ranging from lumbago to syphilis, epilepsy to skin conditions; it also had devotees who insisted it served as an aphrodisiac. Reputable physicians endorsed Fowler's Solution, although they warned that taking doses for more than a week could have harmful side effects, such as vomiting and intestinal distress. While these symptoms are the usual results of arsenic poisoning, prolonged consumption of small amounts could also cause cancer.

It was an attempt to cure cancer with arsenic that got the attention of Philadelphia's Benjamin Rush.<sup>44</sup> With the co-operation of John Dickinson, Rush had founded Dickinson College, and although Nisbet and Dickinson were on cordial terms, Rush and Nisbet had rarely seen eye to eye. Nevertheless, Nisbet would have been aware of Rush's medical research. In February, 1786, Rush addressed the American Philosophical Society on his analysis of a concoction of one of his former students. Rush later published his address in *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, a leading newspaper, and eventually included it in his collected medical papers.

In this address, Rush explained that this former student, Dr. Hugh Martin, had served as an army surgeon at Fort Pitt during the War for Independence. Martin had then gone to Philadelphia, where he demonstrated for Rush his medicinal powder, and it did seem to improve if not cure certain sores then associated with cancer. Martin claimed that his powder was an old Indian remedy made from native roots. Martin died in 1784, and after his death Rush acquired a sample of this wonder drug. Rush discovered that it consisted of arsenic and deadly nightshade. Rush concluded his paper before the Society with observations about other recent medical applications of arsenic in treating cancer. He deemed his former student's medicine to be quackery, but Rush reminded his fellow scientists that from such bogus attempts sound discoveries could be made.

Whether as a cosmetic, a pesticide, or as a medicine, arsenic in various forms featured in apothecary shops in Britain and America. The daughter in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, could have come by arsenic with ease, as easily as buying a half pound of tea. Although the attempted murderer was a woman, the scenario fits George Orwell's criteria for the perfect English murder. Orwell, writing in the 1940s, longed for the days when a man could settle into his favorite chair by the fire, enjoy "a cup of mahogany-brown tea," and read in the newspaper an account of an interesting murder.<sup>45</sup> Orwell had in mind a case of a mild-mannered man of the middle class doing away with his wife, always by poison and usually for another woman.

Of course, Nisbet may have had a cup of tea while reading the newspaper, but he did not want to see reports of murder. Nisbet lacked Orwell's taste for "the old domestic poisoning dramas," the products "of a stable society where the all-prevailing hypocrisy did at least ensure that crimes as serious as murder should have strong emotions behind them."<sup>46</sup> For Nisbet, the veneer of gentility, what Orwell called hypocrisy, kept society in order. Nisbet understood strong emotions, his letters ripple with them, and from his classical education, he knew that those wild stallions must be reined in. Nisbet makes clear that mother and daughter in Lancaster were not on good terms, but at the New World and its raw emotions on display, he "raised hands in commination."<sup>47</sup>

### Nisbet and Murder in America

Nisbet fumed that criminals could expect to escape punishment. Between 1759 and 1781 in Lancaster there were thirteen executions, all by hanging; only one of those persons hanged was a woman.<sup>48</sup> Nisbet's expectations for America, from food to capital punishment, owed everything to his life in Scotland. While Nisbet in America could expect to have tea, even if it spoiled from poor packing, he could not expect the same rule of law. To prove the spirit of

lawlessness running amok in America, Nisbet cited, among other examples, the case of the attempted poisoning in Lancaster. He linked the accused woman's lack of remorse with the low standard set by the legal system. Whatever the validity of this conclusion, it is worthwhile looking at the example of justice Nisbet had left behind.

Four years before Nisbet's letter to Young, an execution in Scotland became the stuff of legend.<sup>49</sup> William Brodie, better known as Deacon Brodie, was a forty-two year-old municipal official in Edinburgh. Like his father before him, he made his living as a cabinetmaker, their repertoire including, among other items of furniture, wooden tea chests. By day William Brodie was an austere and respectable public figure; by night, he indulged his every appetite, not limited to gambling, two mistresses, and a series of burglaries that included breaking into the university library. His double life inspired numerous writers, notably Robert Louis Stevenson, who in 1886 used the case of Deacon Brodie for the basis of his short story, "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." Brodie was caught and tried for murder; once convicted, he was hanged by the neck until dead. Brodie's defense attorney was Henry Erskine, younger brother of Nisbet's friend, Lord Buchan.

When Nisbet complained to Lord Buchan about "nabobs," he also made clear his opinion about conditions in America. "A few Scraps from Voltaire, Montesquieu, Hume & Rousseau," Nisbet told Lord Buchan, "are reckoned a complete Education here."<sup>50</sup> He added that any man who can speak in public for an hour, whatever the topic, "if he only mentions Liberty, Independency & the Rights of Mankind, he will be reckoned a prodigious Scholar."<sup>51</sup> Nisbet then referred to himself in the context of Seneca and Saint Paul, thereby showing his roots in the tradition of Christian humanism.

Around the time Nisbet was writing to William Young, *The Carlisle Gazette* advertised books for sale; among them was Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, first published in London in 1790.<sup>52</sup> In a letter to Lord Buchan, Nisbet makes a reference to Burke's "Calculations," and Nisbet would have approved of Burke's eloquent defense of civilization resting upon "the spirit of a gentleman, and the spirit of religion."<sup>53</sup> For Nisbet, a land that did not execute someone who put arsenic in her mother's tea had kicked away both pillars of civilization; it was a land giving free rein to the world's Deacon Brodies.

## Conclusion

Each morning in London around the time Charles Nisbet was writing letters and worrying over the news in Pennsylvania, a bright young clerk rolled out of bed and trudged off to his desk at the East India Company. Charles Lamb was a classic English type, dapper and well-read, grubbing away for decades in

a dull office, liking nothing better than an evening alone with a strong cup of tea and a good book, or failing that, a pipe and a pint with friends. A stammer made him often more of a listener than a conversationalist. Witty and keenly observant, he entertained himself writing and publishing essays, two of which shed light on our theme. With irrepressible irony, Lamb describes getting awake after only a few hours' sleep and starting the daily office routine yet again, "with only a dim vista of refreshing bohea in the distance."<sup>54</sup>

Elsewhere, Lamb conveys his exasperation with any given Scotsman, saying, "he has no falterings of self-suspicion," explaining, "The twilight of dubiety never falls upon him."<sup>55</sup> Lamb and Nisbet never met, but these stereotypical words could have been inspired in Lamb by the irascible and opinionated Nisbet. "Between the affirmative and the negative there is no border-land with him," Lamb said of his representative Scot, adding that, "he cannot compromise, or understand middle actions."<sup>56</sup> It wearied Lamb, fond of puns and double meanings, that for the ironclad and irritable Scotsmen of his acquaintance, "There can but be a right and a wrong."<sup>57</sup> Nisbet, in any case, lived in a stark world, crisply free of the ambiguities and ironies bemusing Lamb.

As the eighteenth century drew to its close, Americans regardless of status enjoyed tea as part of their daily life. Neither the vivid scene of folklore that is the Boston Tea Party nor the ensuing war changed habits of consumption. Tea was served in porcelain teapots and tea cups, and thus life was returning to normal. A son of London's Twining family of tea merchants could stay in Philadelphia, then the nation's capital, and find a standard English breakfast, complete with tea. As Russell Kirk reminds us, the presence of German Mennonites and French Huguenots notwithstanding, the prevailing culture of early America was British.<sup>58</sup> Within that culture had developed revolutionary discontent over whether the King was respecting the colonists' rights as Englishmen. A symbol of that discontent was tea and its tax. Not long after the war resulting from the discontent, Abiel Holmes in Boston, Charles Nisbet in Carlisle, and the unfortunate lady in Lancaster, near victim of matricide, all took tea for granted. Only Nisbet, it seems, also took it as a sign of the times that an American, child of an uncivilized tribe, would with impunity lace her mother's tea with arsenic.

## Endnotes

1. For Nisbet, see Charles Coleman Sellers, *Dickinson College: A History* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), 64–65 and 80–81; Boyd Lee Spahr, “Charles Nisbet, Portrait in Miniature” *Bulwark of Liberty: Early Years at Dickinson*. The Boyd Lee Spahr Lectures in Americana 1 (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1950), 55–73.
2. “Carlisle, May 9,” *The Carlisle Gazette* (9 May, 1792), 1. Commencement exercises were held on 3 May, 1792.
3. Charles Nisbet to William Young, Carlisle, 9 June, 1792, MC 2001.5, William Young Papers, Archives and Special Collections, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA. Hereafter, DCA=Dickinson College Archives.
4. Samuel Miller, *Memoir of the Rev. Charles Nisbet, D. D., Late President of Dickinson College, Carlisle* (New York: Robert Carter, 1840), 28.
5. Nisbet to Young, 9 June, 1792, MC 2001.5, Young Papers, DCA.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.* I have been unable to trace the woman’s name.
8. Nisbet to Young, 9 June, 1792, MC 2001.5, Young Papers, DCA.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.* While still in Scotland, Nisbet had looked favorably upon America: See Whitfield J. Bell, Jr., “Scottish Emigration to America: A Letter of Dr. Charles Nisbet to Dr. John Witherspoon, 1784,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 11 (April, 1954): 276–289.
12. James Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten: The Archaeology of Early America* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1977), 60; cf. Jonathan Goldstein, *Philadelphia and the China Trade, 1682–1846: Commercial, Cultural, and Attitudinal Effects* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978), 33.
13. Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten*, 60.
14. *Ibid.* See Judson Hale, *Inside New England* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), 41: “At a proper New England tea party, the tea must be served in a pot of china or pottery, never a metal pot (unless, of course, the metal is silver).” See also Hilary Young, “Western Europe,” in *Tea: East and West*, ed. Rupert Faulkner (London: V & A Publications, 2003), 93–98.
15. Thomas Twining, *Travels in India a Hundred Years Ago, with a Visit to the United States*, ed. Thomas Twining and William H. G. Twining (London: James R. Osgood, McIlvaine, and Co., 1893), 366. See David McCullough, *John Adams* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001), 455; Robert C. Alberts, “Protégé of Cornwallis, Guest of Washington,” *American Heritage* (August, 1973): 59–61 and 98–99.
16. James Walvin, “A Taste of Empire, 1600–1800,” *History Today* 47 (January, 1997): 16. See also Niall Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 13–14.

17. Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, ed. Edwin Cannan (New York: Modern Library, 1937), 205. The first edition of Smith's classic work appeared in 1776. See William H. Peterson, "The Other Revolution of '76," *Modern Age* 17 (Fall, 1973): 378–386. Regarding tea as a drug, see Ferguson, *Empire*, 15: "Taken together, the new drugs gave English society an almighty hit; the Empire, it might be said, was built on a huge sugar, caffeine, and nicotine rush."
18. Samuel Johnson, "Tea," *A Dictionary of the English Language*, vol. 2 (London: W. Strahan, 1755), n. p. Johnson defined "bohea" as, "A species of tea, of higher colour, and more astringent taste, than green tea."
19. See John Griffiths, *Tea: The Drink that Changed the World* (London: André Deutsch, 2007), 18–23; Alan Macfarlane and Iris Macfarlane, *The Empire of Tea: The Remarkable History of the Plant that Took Over the World* (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 2003), 73; cf. John Keay, *The Honourable Company: A History of the English East India Company* (New York: Macmillan, 1994), 348–50. See also John Weatherstone, *The Pioneers, 1825–1900: The Early British Tea and Coffee Planters and Their Way of Life* (London: Quiller Press, 1986), 14; Agnes Repplier, *To Think of Tea!* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1932), 12–13.
20. Pico Iyer, "A Whole Subcontinent Was Picked Up Without Half Trying," *Smithsonian* 18 (January, 1988): 56.
21. Charles Nisbet to David Erskine, Lord Buchan, Carlisle, 22 June, 1791, MC 2001.7, Charles Family Nisbet Papers, DCA.
22. *Ibid.* For nabobs, see Niall Ferguson, *Empire*, 43–44; Pico Iyer, "A Whole Subcontinent Was Picked Up Without Half Trying," *Smithsonian* 18 (January, 1988): 43–56.
23. Arthur Herman, *To Rule the Waves: How the British Navy Shaped the Modern World* (New York: Harper Collins, 2004), 403; Hilary Young, "Western Europe," *Tea: East and West*, 105.
24. Herman, *To Rule the Waves*, 403.
25. Roy Porter, *London: A Social History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 170–171; Francis Sheppard, *London: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 199 and 247; Peter Ackroyd, *London: The Biography* (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 347–348.
26. James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (New York: Modern Library, n. d.), 1041.
27. Samuel Johnson, "On Tea," *Selections from Samuel Johnson, 1709–1784*, ed. R. W. Chapman (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 187; cf. Agnes Repplier, *To Think of Tea!*, 59–77. Johnson nearly met Nisbet: See Robert D. Ness, Jr., "A Case of Alleged Simony in the Parish of Marykirk: The Boswell-Johnson-Nisbet Connection," *John & Mary's Journal* 9 (Winter, 1984): 3–10.
28. Catherine Hamilton, quoted in David Constantine, *Fields of Fire: A Life of Sir William Hamilton* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2001), 27; *ibid.*, 109: "We live as English a life as we can make it."
29. *Ibid.*, 97.

30. See Catherine Drinker Bowen, *Yankee from Olympus: Justice Holmes and His Family* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1944), 11.
31. Abiel Holmes, *The Annals of America: From the Discovery by Columbus in the Year 1492 to the Year 1826*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Hilliard and Brown, 1829), 524.
32. Holmes, *Annals of America*, vol. 2, 174; cf. Donovan Webster, "Two for Tea," *Smithsonian* 30 (March, 2000): 25.
33. Johann David Schoepf, *Travels in the Confederation*, trans. Alfred J. Morrison (Philadelphia: William J. Campbell, 1911), 113.
34. *Ibid.*, 214–215.
35. *Ibid.*, 215. The Conodoguinet cave is described in Conway P. Wing, *History of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: James D. Scott, 1879), 10; also, *History of Cumberland and Adams Counties, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Warner, Beers, and Co., 1886), Part 2, p. 6 and 330–331.
36. Charles Nisbet to Mary Nisbet Turnbull, Carlisle, 15 November, 1792, MC 2001.7, Nisbet Papers, DCA.
37. Charles Nisbet to Mary Nisbet Turnbull, Carlisle, 16 November, 1799, MC 2001.7, Nisbet Papers, DCA. From this letter we also learn that by 1799, Nisbet had stopped receiving the newspapers he was accustomed to read: "I get no News Papers...I have therefore the more Need of receiving frequent Letters from my Friends."
38. Thomas Lipton, *Lipton's Autobiography* (New York: Duffield and Green, 1932), 170; cf. James Mackay, *The Man Who Invented Himself: A Life of Sir Thomas Lipton* (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 1998), 131.
39. Sydney Smith, *Mostly Murder* (New York: David McKay Co., 1959), 166.
40. *Ibid.*; cf. Serita Deborah Stevens and Anne Klarner, *Deadly Doses: A Writer's Guide to Poisons* (Cincinnati: Writer's Digest Books, 1990), 10–13.
41. Anselm M. Albareda, "The Preservation and Reproduction of the Manuscripts of the Vatican Library through the Centuries," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 104 (1960): 416. For Albareda, see "Cardinal Albareda," *The Tablet* (30 July, 1966): 879–880.
42. Samuel Johnson, "Arsenick," *A Dictionary of the English Language*, vol. 1 (London: W. Strahan, 1755), n.p.
43. For this point and what follows, see John Emsley, *The Elements of Murder* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 105.
44. See Benjamin Rush, "An Account of the Late Dr. Hugh Martin's Cancer Powder, with Brief Observations on Cancers," *The Pennsylvania Gazette* (30 August, 1786): 1; reprinted, Benjamin Rush, "An Account of the External Use of Arsenic, in the Cure of Cancer," *Medical Inquiries and Observations*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Hopkins and Earle, 1809), 375–384.
45. George Orwell, "Decline of the English Murder," in *Decline of the English Murder and Other Essays* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1965), 9.
46. *Ibid.*, 13.

47. Originally said of Edmund Burke and the impending nineteenth century: Philip Guedalla, *Fathers of the Revolution* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1926), 133.
48. In 1779 in Lancaster, Catherine Fisher was hanged for murder: John Ward Willson, "Criminal Executions In and From Lancaster County, PA, 1682-1951," *The Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society* 105 (Fall, 2003): 134.
49. See William Roughead, "Deacon Brodie, or The Dyer's Hand," in *Knave's Looking-Glass* (London: Cassell and Co., 1935), 147-186; reprinted in *Classic Crimes: A Selection from the Works of William Roughead*, ed. W. N. Roughead (New York: New York Review Books, 2000), 35-84.
50. Charles Nisbet to David Erskine, Lord Buchan, Carlisle, 22 June, 1791, MC 2001.7, Nisbet Papers, DCA.
51. *Ibid.*
52. "Catalogue of Books," *The Carlisle Gazette* (2 May, 1792): 1. This advertisement appeared in several subsequent issues.
53. Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. Conor Cruise O'Brien (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 173; for Burke's *Reflections* in America, see Russell Kirk, *The Roots of American Order*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1991), 389-90. Nisbet refers to Burke in his letter of 22 June, 1791, to Lord Buchan, MC 2001.7, Nisbet Papers, DCA.
54. Charles Lamb, "Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago," in *The Complete Works and Letters of Charles Lamb* (New York: Modern Library, 1935), 198. For a recent sketch of Charles Lamb's quirks, see Susan Tyler Hitchcock, *Mad Mary Lamb: Lunacy and Murder in Literary London* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005), 77-78 and 81-82.
55. Charles Lamb, "Imperfect Sympathies," in *The Complete Works and Letters of Charles Lamb*, 52.
56. *Ibid.*, 52-53.
57. *Ibid.*, 53.
58. Russell Kirk, *The Roots of American Order*, 332; Russell Kirk, *America's British Culture* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1993), 9.

## “Insulting Marks of Distinction”:

### The Case of the Black Cockade and the Court-Martial

By *Derek Weis*

In 2011 CCHS acquired an 1813 petition to the state legislature that sheds light on an intriguing yet little known episode in the County's history. The document reveals that Carlisle Constable James Hutton petitioned the General Assembly on January 28, 1813, in an effort to reverse the decision of two lawsuits against him that threatened to take away his property and leave him homeless. According to his petition, two militia officers, Captain James Blaine and Captain William Miller, were court-martialed “for disobedience of orders in wearing the black Cockade instead of the Blue and Red as ordered by his Excellency Thomas McKean then Governor of this State.” Acting as Constable, Hutton served the warrant for the court-martial of the two officers, seized some of their property, and sold it to pay their fines. They in turn successfully sued Hutton for doing so. Since he could not afford to pay the sum required by the suits against him, his house and lot were to be put up for sale instead. More than one hundred men signed the petition in support of Hutton, many of whom were among Carlisle's most prominent citizens, including attorney James Hamilton and printers Archibald Loudon and George Kline.<sup>1</sup>

Although fairly brief, Hutton's petition raises a number of questions. Why would the color of a cockade be so important as to warrant a court-martial? Why did these officers insist on wearing a black cockade? Did James Hutton actually lose his home, or was his petition successful? While complete answers prove elusive, an investigation of the story behind this short document reveals Carlisle's connection to the wider controversy over cockades in the early nineteenth century and suggests that James Hutton's predicament was likely the result of the militia's partisanship, as Blaine's and Miller's refusals to wear the red and blue cockade coincided with a larger backlash against Governor McKean's order.

At first glance it may seem odd that something so seemingly trivial as a cockade, a cloth rosette most often worn in a hat, would be taken so seriously.

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the  
State of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met

The petition of the  
Subscriber an Inhabitant of the Borough of Carlisle County of  
Cumberland and State of said Respectfully sheweth

That a warrant was put into the hands of your petitioner ~~under~~  
by virtue of his office as ~~Comptroller~~ <sup>of the County of Carlisle</sup> ~~under~~  
the hand and Seal of Captain John Underwood President  
of a Regimental Court Martial composed of Officers attached  
to the 79th Regiment Pennsylvania Militia commanding him  
to levy and recover from Captain James Blair and Captain  
William Miller certain fines imposed on them by said Court  
Martial for disobedience of orders in wearing the black cockade  
instead of the Blue and Red as ordered by his Excellency Thomas  
McKean then Governor of this State, that by virtue of the  
warrant aforesaid your petitioner levied personal property of said  
Officers and sold it for the fines aforesaid <sup>and the</sup> money arising  
from such sales to the paymaster of the Regiment <sup>and two</sup> suits  
were afterwards instituted by said Officers in the Court of Common  
Pleas of Cumberland County against your petitioner which suits  
were finally determined against him at an Adjourned Court  
of Common Pleas in October AD 1812 as will appear by docu-  
ments accompanying this memorial since which time two  
executions have been issued to the Sheriff of Cumberland County  
against your petitioner and he has taken in execution all his  
real property being a small House and lot in said Borough  
he not having sufficient personal property to satisfy said executions  
which if sold will unjustly deprive your petitioner in his old  
age of the property which he has by many years industry honestly  
acquired, & therefore prays your Honorable body to take  
the premises into your serious Consideration and grant him  
such relief as you shall think proper And he as in duty  
bound will ever pray

Ja<sup>s</sup>. Hut<sup>n</sup>

That the Subscriber do recommend that the prayer of the petitioner  
may be granted he having a large Family dependant on him  
for support and he being advanced in years and having always  
supported a good Character, it is further understood by this recom-  
mendation that if these Judgments be reversed and restitution awarded the  
said restitution to inure to the Commonwealth

James G. Smith  
J. G. Smith

Petition of James Hutton, 1813, Manuscript Collection, L2011.113.001

CCHS Library Archives

Yet cockades played an important role in the contentious politics of the early republic. During the 1790s, the first American political parties used the European custom of wearing a cockade to show loyalty to one's country as a way to identify themselves and signify support for either Britain or France in foreign affairs. Federalists adopted as their emblem the British black cockade, which had been worn by George Washington and officers of the Continental Army, while the tri-color embraced by the Democratic Republicans, with its red, white, and blue colors denoted sympathies for revolutionary France. In the words of historian Simon P. Newman, the cockade thus served as a type of political badge, "and to wear a black or a red, white, and blue cockade was to make a public statement of support for one or other political party."<sup>2</sup> At the height of the tensions with France during the Quasi-War it was evidently not unheard of for soldiers seen donning the French colors to be court-martialed. Meanwhile, continuing debate over the black cockade's British origins near the decade's end led Washington to join Alexander Hamilton in recommending that the "American Cockade" be black with an eagle in the center to set it apart, which became a U.S. Army regulation in 1799.<sup>3</sup>

By the beginning of the new century the power of the Federalist party was waning, as many had been swept out of office when Jefferson emerged victorious in the 1800 presidential election. Debate over the color of the cockade seems to have cooled off until October of that year, when the erstwhile Federalist turned Democratic Republican, Thomas McKean, as the new Governor of Pennsylvania, ordered that the blue and red cockade be adopted by the state militia. According to his Executive Minutes, McKean noticed that, unlike the militia's uniforms, "no regulation has been made by law respecting the Cockade." Thus McKean's order aimed to "establish some mark for distinguishing the Militia of this State from other Corps of Militia" while having the cockade's colors match the men's uniforms, and it appears that it officially became law in 1802.<sup>4</sup> Newman points out that the blue and red "harkened back to the tri-color," a fact not lost on members of the Federalist party. In Philadelphia the move "enraged Federalists," who in the pages of the *Gazette of the United States* "argued McKean had abandoned the 'Patriotic Badge' worn by American soldiers when they 'fought [for] and gained our Independence.'" Bruce S. Bazelon, the former Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Chief of the Western Division of Historic Sites, has recently observed that even a New Hampshire newspaper, the *United States Oracle*, condemned McKean in November 1800, stating that "It is unnecessary to make any other remark on this ridiculous and democratic measure, than just to observe that the American Cockade, Recommended to be worn by General Washington and President Adams, is BLACK, With an eagle in the Center."<sup>5</sup>



Cabinet card of a bust portrait of James Blaine

*CCHS Photo Archives*

This discontent was not isolated, and the disobedience demonstrated by Blaine and Miller in Carlisle was apparently not uncommon in the region. Nor was the punishment in the form of a court-martial out of the ordinary. An early history of Franklin County notes that especially in counties where Federalist sentiment was strong the cockade order “created in some places almost riots” in which many openly denounced it, and that “many court-martials of militia officers occurred.” Further, “Companies would put on the required cockade while in the ranks of drilling, but, the moment the commanding officer would say ‘dismiss,’ they would tear off the regular cockades and trample them under foot, and from their pockets produce and place in their hats the other color cockade, and thus boisterously parade the town.”<sup>6</sup> Indeed, the response was particularly strong in newly created Adams County, named after President John Adams and reflective of the area’s political sympathies. Here Federalists “held to the old black cockade” and “refused to mount the other,” resulting in court-martial cases in which some had “horses and other property seized to pay fines and costs of prosecution.”<sup>7</sup> McKean’s action “literally raised a *furor* in Gettysburg,” where “The Federalists regarded it as verging on treason.” In one such instance, a Captain Alexander Cobean was reportedly court-martialed after leading his company to disobey orders as they “hurrahed for the black cockade” while on duty wearing the new red and blue, and after being dismissed “put on black cockades, and

with cheers thus paraded the streets.”<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, many others were apparently delighted, as seen in artist Lewis Miller’s retrospective depiction of militia in York laying the black cockade to rest with a funeral procession while cheering for the red and blue. In Allegheny County, Democratic Republican militia commander Alexander Fowler’s “advocacy of the red and blue cockade and his disparagement of the black cockade were incessant,” though at least two Pittsburgh regiments are reported to have rejected the state’s official blue and red emblem in favor of the black cockade.<sup>9</sup>

It is within this context that the actions of the Carlisle militia officers must be seen, as their insubordination and subsequent court-martial took place at roughly the same time. Although James Hutton would go on to petition the state legislature in early 1813, his problems began nearly ten years earlier, in the summer of 1803, when Blaine and Miller alongside four other members of the Carlisle militia were court-martialed by the 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment. Fortunately, *Kline’s Carlisle Weekly Gazette* provides a detailed account of the case, as both the court-martial proceedings and Governor McKean’s statement of approval were published.

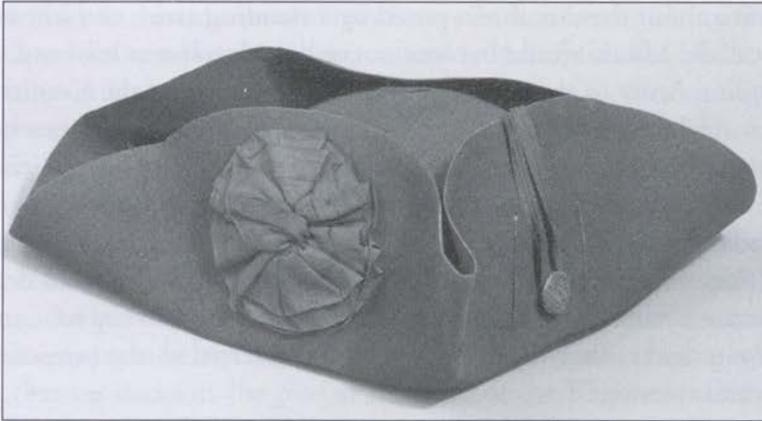
According to the proceedings, Captain James Blaine, First Lieutenant Hugh Smith, Second Lieutenant Robert D. Guthrie, and Cornet Richard Craighead, all of the 1<sup>st</sup> Troop of Light Horse of the 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment, along with Captain William Miller and Ensign Jacob Hendel of the Light Infantry Company of the 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment were on trial at the house of John Pope on June 17<sup>th</sup>, 1803, on order of Lieutenant Colonel Charles Bovard. John Underwood was chosen to preside as President and Robert Kenny as Judge Advocate. As Captains and the apparent ringleaders, James Blaine and William Miller received the harshest punishments out of the group. The following charges were read against Blaine:

- 1<sup>st</sup>. For disobedience of Orders from the Commander in Chief of this Commonwealth.
- 2<sup>d</sup>. For disobedience of Brigade Orders.
- 3<sup>d</sup>. For disobedience of Regimental Orders, in not appearing on Parade in due time.
- 4<sup>th</sup>. For leaving Parade before being dismissed, contrary to Orders.
- 5<sup>th</sup>. For not publicly wearing the Cockade established by Law.
- 6<sup>th</sup>. For Training his Men knowing them to have Cockades different from that established by Law.
- 7<sup>th</sup>. For suffering a vote to be taken in his Company, thereby to know whether they would or would not act agreeably to Law and Orders.

8<sup>th</sup>. For ordering his Men not to wear the Cockade established by Law.

9<sup>th</sup>. For using ungentlemanly and un-officer-like language when arrested.

The proceedings further note Blaine's continued defiance, as when asked about his culpability, he "refused to answer, protesting against the authority and jurisdiction of the said Court." He was then found guilty of charges one through five as well as the ninth, and as a result was fined fifty dollars in addition to being degraded and banned from serving in the militia for a period of four and a half years.<sup>10</sup>



Revolutionary War era black cockade on a tricorn hat.

*Used with the permission of the New York Historical Society*

William Miller was brought up on six nearly identical charges, save for the fifth charge against him, which was "For Training his Men after being Arrested, contrary to Militia Law and Militia Rules, and knowing them to have up Cockades different from that established by Law, thereby not only dispensing with but encouraging them in such unprecedented flagrant and contemptible acts as would naturally tend to alienate their minds from paying a due respect to Law and Superiors." Like Blaine, Miller also refused to answer to the charges against him, "alleging the Court so called was no legal Court," and was found guilty of the aforementioned charge in addition to three others. His punishment was the same as Blaine's, except he was fined forty dollars instead of fifty.

Hugh Smith, Robert D. Guthrie, and Richard Craighead possibly shared Blaine and Miller's sentiments, as all three failed to appear before the court, despite having been notified. They were also found guilty but received lighter punishments in comparison, with Smith receiving a twenty-five dollar fine,

demotion, and one and a half year service ban, while Guthrie and Craighead were merely sentenced to pay one dollar. Jacob Hendel, best known today as one of Carlisle's premier artisans, did appear and pleaded not guilty, and though he faced similar charges to those of Blaine and Miller, his only punishment was a fine of ten dollars.<sup>11</sup>

Upon the conclusion of the Regimental court-martial, the proceedings were submitted to Governor McKean, who made a final decision in late August. McKean's statement that accompanied his decision reflects a Jeffersonian mistrust of large standing armies and goes so far as to argue that insubordination like that seen among the militia in Carlisle could lead directly to the loss of the nation's liberty. Indeed, the Governor apparently saw an opportunity to make a larger point about the dire threat posed by a standing army, as without proper obedience "the Militia would become not only useless but at least as dangerous as a Standing Army to the Community, and the liberty of the Country might be lost by relying upon those to defend it who for want of a proper system of subordination and discipline, would be incapable of employing their natural strength in resistance of an assailing enemy." McKean further noted that if commanding officers fail to carry out their duties and adequately punish misconduct "disorder and confusion would follow; the Militia would degenerate into a factious rabble; and a Standing Army would be resorted to...and when the necessity had ceased, it would easily be converted to the purposes of oppression and tyranny."<sup>12</sup>

Interestingly, James Blaine is the only one out of the group to be singled out by name. This may be due in part to the fact that he was undoubtedly the most prominent and well connected among them. As an affluent son of former Commissary General of the Continental Army, Ephraim Blaine, James had helped his father play host to George Washington when the President came to Carlisle in 1794 during the Whiskey Rebellion, and according to local historian Willis Kocher, he and his father then accompanied troops on their way from Carlisle to Bedford. Blaine is also credited as having served as an attaché to the U.S. embassy in Paris in the early 1790s and as the "bearer to this country of the celebrated Jay's Treaty" of 1794-1795. Of course, at the time those more likely to view the Jay Treaty with Great Britain as worthy of celebration were the pro-British Federalists, as it was initially met with strong opposition from Democratic Republicans.<sup>13</sup> A laudatory family history notes that, in what was an apparent favor to his father, Blaine was then nominated Captain in the U.S. Infantry by the Federalist President John Adams, a commission he eventually resigned in 1807.<sup>14</sup> It is not surprising then that he would refuse to do away with the black cockade, for as Bazelon notes, "The Army officer corps, a Federalist

institution, continued to wear the black cockade" at the time of his nomination. Notably, in boasting of Blaine's election to the militia, the same family history reports that Governor McKean had appointed his commission and even reprints the original document, though it fails to mention the court-martial.<sup>15</sup>

Blaine was also no stranger to local controversy, as he served as a second for John Duncan in his fatal 1793 duel with James Lamberton and was indicted more than once prior to the 1803 court-martial. In October 1789, Blaine was charged with assault and battery on John Miller, who was also charged and apparently retaliated the following year. Later, in early 1798, Blaine was again indicted for the same infraction against Charles Steinike, and along with several others, he was charged with rioting and assault and battery at the courthouse in July 1800.<sup>16</sup> While this information may be overly sketchy, the nature of Blaine's apparent loyalties combined with his refusal to relinquish the black cockade strongly hints at his political affiliation being Federalist.

Near the end of his didactic sermon, McKean declared that "The conduct of Captain Blaine, by wearing himself, and by his example in tolerating and authorizing the Troops under his command to wear, insulting marks of distinction in direct violation and contempt of the Laws of the State, and the Orders of the Commander in Chief, was calculated to introduce insubordination and disorder, and if permitted, would lead to those consequences which every reflecting Citizen must be anxious to prevent." The Governor then concludes by ordering that his decision "be read at the head of the Regiment when it shall be lawfully assembled." It would thus appear that McKean came down hard on Blaine and attempted to make something of an example of him. Yet for reasons unexpressed, the Governor approved the court-martial of the officers insofar as the fines were concerned but did not approve of the demotions or the bans on service.<sup>17</sup>

The fact that the *Gazette* published McKean's statements along with the proceedings also appears significant when one considers the paper's political leanings. Its printer, George Kline, was at the time a Democratic Republican supporter of McKean. The same month that the court martial appeared in his paper, Kline held office as the County's Register and Recorder and was the "chairman of the Democratic Republican meeting which selected the county ticket."<sup>18</sup> The editor's note introducing the court-martial states that "we publish the following Proceedings, &c. at the request of Col. Bovard, handed us by Capt. Underwood," suggesting that perhaps Kline was doing more than merely reporting the local news when publishing the facts of the court-martial. Indeed, Kline and Bovard had prior political dealings with each other, as both were among delegates from Cumberland County at a September 1800 meeting of Democratic Republicans in Millerstown.<sup>19</sup>

Kline's new competitor, the Federalist *Carlisle Herald*, was silent about the matter, printing nothing about the case. However, Blaine and Miller each placed militia muster notices for their respective units in the pages of the *Carlisle Herald* and not in the Democratic Republican *Gazette*. These notices announced muster dates for Blaine's Carlisle Troop of Horse and Miller's Carlisle Infantry that were to take place both before and after the June 1803 court-martial. Thus, even if their precise motives are difficult to assess with complete accuracy, the fact that Blaine and Miller placed notices exclusively in the *Herald* further suggests that they were at least strongly sympathetic to Federalist views.<sup>20</sup>

Given that Blaine and Miller refused to recognize the legitimacy of the court-martial, it is not surprising that they then proceeded to sue Constable James Hutton after he confiscated and sold their property to pay their fines. They wasted little time, as the suits were brought against him in the Cumberland County Court of Common Pleas in December 1803. In contrast to the plaintiffs, Hutton was a man of limited means struggling to support his fairly large family. The 1798 Direct Tax lists show that both Blaine's and Miller's wealth was more than ten times greater, as the value of their homes and outbuildings easily eclipsed that of Hutton's small wooden house, which was worth a total of only \$110. The Continuance Docket entries note that the cases were ultimately moved to the following December after Hutton pleaded "non Cul with leave to justify." However, this is the last reference to the suits that appear in any available County court records.<sup>21</sup> The corresponding case papers are currently unaccounted for, as are the documents that accompanied Hutton's 1813 petition. Although the petition makes clear that the law suits were ultimately decided in Blaine and Miller's favor at "an Adjourned Court of Common Pleas in Oct. AD 1812," the question of how and why they were successful will remain unanswered, as the case does not appear in the records for this date either.<sup>22</sup>

By the time James Hutton petitioned the state legislature in early 1813, James Blaine was no longer in the Carlisle area, having left shortly after his father's death in 1804 to eventually settle in Washington County.<sup>23</sup> Hutton's petition was considered in the Senate from January until March 1813, yet whether or not he was successful is uncertain. Initially presented for consideration "with documents accompanying" by Senator Isaiah Graham on January 28, a committee then issued a report several days later. In reviewing the matter, the report notes that "there were two warrants put into the petitioners hands, as constable, bearing date, August 31, 1803, signed, John Underwood, president" against Miller and Blaine for the sums of forty and fifty dollars, respectively, "for which sums he levied on and sold property to an amount sufficient to satisfy the same, which he paid over to the paymaster of the regiment, on the 2d and 3d days of

October, 1803." It further notes that Blaine and Miller's ensuing lawsuits were determined against Hutton in October 1812, and that his "property has since been levied on, which if sold, will deprive him of his living in his old age. Your committee consider his case as extremely hard, and worthy Legislative aid; they therefore offer the following resolution. *Resolved*, that a committee be appointed to bring in a bill granting the petitioner the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ Dollars."<sup>24</sup>

It would thus seem that Hutton was to be granted relief, the sum of which had yet to be determined. Yet seven days later, on February 10, the report was read again and consideration of the resolution was postponed to the following week. No further reference to Hutton's case appears until March 22, 1813, when Senator Graham withdrew the petition and documents from the files of the Senate.<sup>25</sup> What happened after this is uncertain, as the matter does not appear to have been taken up again by either the Senate or the House.

Yet Hutton evidently did not lose his home as a result of the lawsuits. For instance, Hutton's petition mentions his "small House and Lot," which appears to be the same house and lot listed later in his 1820 Revolutionary War pension application. In fact, records show that Hutton continued to own the same lot from 1786 until 1835.<sup>26</sup> While Hutton's property was apparently not sold, it is also a possibility that the case was eventually dropped altogether, as Blaine had moved away from Carlisle and Miller had at some point moved to York County, where he died in October 1815.<sup>27</sup> It actually looks as though Miller may have been the one to lose his property, for his stone house, tan yard, and outbuildings appear in a notice of a Sheriff's sale in 1809, and his name again appears in another notice of sales in late 1814.<sup>28</sup>

Although it is unclear exactly how Hutton avoided a substantial loss of property, it is possible that he was seen as wrongfully penalized for carrying out his duty and was ultimately granted some kind of relief, if not from the state then perhaps elsewhere, as it appears the Senate committee was sympathetic and the large number of signatures on the petition itself shows strong support for him. Even Jacob Hendel and Richard Craighead, who had been court-martialed alongside Blaine and Miller, were among the signers of the petition who prayed for his relief by noting that Hutton had a large family to support, was "advanced in years" and had "always supported good character."<sup>29</sup> Indeed, Hutton appears to have been viewed favorably based also on his continual reelection as Constable. For instance, in March 1804, Hutton received 195 votes, while his opponent John Underwood tallied a meager thirty-four. Similar tallies were recorded for the March 1810 election for Constable, and in the March 19, 1813 election Hutton received a landslide 243 votes to John Spotwood's fifty-four.<sup>30</sup> This large victory shortly after Hutton's petition was circulated may be purely

coincidental, though it could also suggest a sort of sympathy vote if people were aware of his troubles. His 1820 pension application also notes that at some point the state granted him land in Beaver County, but it is not specific about when and why.<sup>31</sup>

Though in the end Hutton seems to have avoided the worst outcome of the case, his personal troubles were far from over. In the two years following his petition to the state Hutton suffered the tragic loss of several members of his family to an unidentified "lingering illness," all within a relatively short time in 1814 and 1815. The death of his son John in late June 1815 marked the fifth death in the family in ten months, while seventeen year old Rachel died several months later in early 1816 and James Jr. joined them a year later.<sup>32</sup>

The story behind James Hutton's petition thus alerts us to the continued squabbles over the cockade resulting from McKean's order that, in this case, had an unexpected negative impact on Carlisle's Constable. It therefore offers a glimpse into the partisan nature of the Carlisle militia at this time that also impels us to better recognize Hutton's standing in the community. Although it is perhaps too strong of a statement to say that the community rallied to support him, it is clear that though Hutton certainly occupied a "humble status" outside the circles of Carlisle's leading gentlemen, he was also seen as more than just another one of the town's "lower sorts."<sup>33</sup> Upon his death at the age of about 87 in 1843, the public servant and Revolutionary War veteran who had weathered difficult circumstances and personal tragedy was credited in his obituaries as the last soldier of the Revolution in Cumberland County who was "respected and esteemed by all of his acquaintances" and had throughout his many years "maintained the character of an upright and honorable citizen."<sup>34</sup>



Nineteenth century Pennsylvania folk artist Lewis Miller depicted militia members in York holding a mock funeral procession for the black cockade. The man to the right is holding up the red and blue cockade in celebration.

*Used with the permission of the York County Heritage Trust, York, PA.*

## Endnotes

1. Petition of James Hutton to the Senate and House of Representatives of Pennsylvania, 13 January, 1813, Manuscript Collection, L2011.113.001, Cumberland County Historical Society, Carlisle, PA.
2. Bruce S. Bazelon, "The American Cockade," *Military Collector & Historian* 62:1 (Spring 2010), 72, 73; Simon P. Newman, *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 154, 161 (quote). On the cockade and its role in the politics of the late eighteenth century see also, e.g., Albrecht Koschnik, *"Let a Common Interest Bind Us Together": Associations, Partisanship, and Culture in Philadelphia, 1775–1840* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 115–118. In the interest of clarity it should be noted that the alliance with France during the Revolution led American officers to wear the white on black "Union Cockade," though only temporarily. See Bazelon, 72.
3. Bazelon, 76. Bazelon reports that it was likely a New Jersey artisan who first made the metal eagles for the black cockade, which caught on and became a tradition of the U.S. Army on into the nineteenth century. See Bazelon, 74, 78.
4. *Ibid.*, 77, 78; Executive Minutes of Governor Thomas McKean, Tuesday October 7<sup>th</sup> 1800, in Gertrude McKinney ed., *Pennsylvania Archives*, 9th Series, III, 1673; An Act for the Regulation of the Militia of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Sect. V, 6 April 1802, *Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, From the Fourteenth Day of October, One Thousand Seven Hundred, to the Sixth Day of April, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Two, Vol. VI*. (Philadelphia: J. Bioren, 1803), 298. For the cockade order see also *Kline's Carlisle Weekly Gazette*, November 19, 1800, 3. The *Gazette* merely prints the text of the Governor's "General Orders" without comment, though there is a subtle difference from the version that appears in the *Pennsylvania Archives*. The latter says that the Governor wanted to distinguish "the Militia of this State from other Corps of Militia," while the version printed in the *Gazette* reads that McKean was "desirous of distinguishing the Militia of this State from other Corps," leaving off the terms "of Militia."
5. Newman, 163, 238n42; Bazelon, 78. The use of the term "democratic" by the New Hampshire paper was possibly meant to be insulting by associating McKean with the radical Jacobins of the French Revolution.
6. Samuel P. Bates et al., *History of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Warner, Beers & Co., 1887), Part II, 222. The author(s) here misrepresents the cockade order. According to this source, the state required a white cockade to be worn by the militia and "the two political parties for a while were the 'white cockades' and the 'black cockades.'"
7. Sherman Day, *Historical Collections of the State of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: George W. Gorton, 1843), 57.
8. Samuel P. Bates et al., *History of Cumberland and Adams Counties, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Warner, Beers & Co., 1886), Part III, 108. One notes here the erroneous attribution of McKean's initial order to "the early part of 1805."

9. *Lewis Miller: Sketches and Chronicles* (York, PA: Historical Society of York County, 1966), 76; Charles W. Dahlinger, *Pittsburgh: A Sketch of Its Early Social Life* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1916), 75, 76.
10. *Kline's Carlisle Weekly Gazette*, September 7, 1803, 2.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*, August 31, 1803, 3.
13. Willis Kocher, "Ephraim Blaine," *Cumberland County History* 3:2 (Winter 1986), 13; Conway P. Wing, *History of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: James D. Scott, 1879), 111; John Ewing Blaine ed., *The Blaine Family: James Blaine, Emigrant and His Children Ephraim, Alexander, William, Eleanor* (Cincinnati: The Ebbert and Richardson Co., 1920), 44 (quote); Koschnik, "Let a Common Interest Bind Us Together," 104–105. As Koschnik reports, Democratic Republicans in Philadelphia burned an effigy of the Federalist John Jay who had negotiated the agreement with Britain dealing with maritime rights and related commercial and territorial issues.
14. Blaine, 45.
15. Bazelon, 75; Blaine, 45. The facsimile of McKean's approval is on 46–47 and includes a statement saying that Blaine's term will last seven years "if you shall so long behave yourself."
16. Wing, 117; Merri Lou Scribner Schaumann, *Indictments 1750–1800, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania* (Dover, PA: Merri Lou Scribner Schaumann, 1989), 103, 102, 106, 137, 156.
17. *Kline's Carlisle Weekly Gazette*, August 31, 1803, 3–4, 4.
18. David Wilson Thompson, *Early Publications of Carlisle, Pennsylvania 1785–1835* (Carlisle, PA: The Sentinel, 1932), 2.
19. *Kline's Carlisle Weekly Gazette*, September 7, 1803, 2; *ibid.*, September 24, 1800, 3.
20. For Blaine's notices see *Carlisle Herald*, August 24, 1803, 3; *ibid.*, May 25, 1803, 3; *ibid.*, May 18, 1803, 3. For Miller's notices for the Carlisle Infantry see *Carlisle Herald*, May 4, 1803, 3; *ibid.*, April 27, 1803, 3; *ibid.*, August 4, 1802, 3. On the front page of its earliest issues the printer of the *Herald*, William Alexander, stated that "The political creed of the Editor is openly and unequivocally Federal." See, e.g., *Carlisle Herald*, July 7, 1802. For a sample of the partisan bickering between the *Gazette* and the *Herald* see *Carlisle Herald*, January 5, 1803, 3.
21. Wilbur J. McElwain, *United States Direct Tax of 1798: Tax Lists for Cumberland County, Pennsylvania* (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1994), 20, 30, 38. James Blaine vs. James Hutton, Case No. 36, and William Miller vs. The Same, Case No. 37, December Term 1803, Continuance Docket Book, August Term 1798 – April Term 1809, Cumberland County, Office of the Prothonotary, Cumberland County Historical Society; *ibid.*, Appearance Docket Book 1803–1807.
22. Petition of James Hutton.

23. Wing, 111. Although he eventually ended up in Washington County, Blaine was living in Brownsville, Fayette County by 1809. See Merri Lou Scribner Schaumann, *A History and Genealogy of Carlisle, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, 1751–1835* (Dover, PA: Merri Lou Scribner Schaumann, 1987), 40.
24. *Journal of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1812–13* (Harrisburg, PA: William Greer, 1813), 208, 237. An underline was added here to signify that the dollar amount was apparently just left blank. See *ibid.*, 237.
25. *Ibid.*, 267–268, 505.
26. Petition of James Hutton; Pension Application of James Hutton, June 20, 1820, Revolutionary War Pension Applications, 1820–1834, Cumberland County, Clerk of Orphan's Court, Cumberland County Historical Society, Carlisle, PA; Deeds indicate that Hutton continued to own lot 120 until 1835. See Godfrey and Elizabeth Lutz to James Hutton, June 14, 1786, Deed Book 1, Vol. L, 582, Cumberland County Courthouse, Carlisle, PA; James Hutton to John Keller, May 25, 1835, Deed Book 1, Vol. QQ, 200, Cumberland County Courthouse.
27. *Kline's Weekly Carlisle Gazette*, October 18, 1815, 3. The paper had slightly changed its name by this time.
28. *Ibid.*, April 21, 1809, 2; *Ibid.*, December 16, 1814, 2.
29. Petition of James Hutton. Jacob Hendel's brother, George Hendel, also signed the petition.
30. Carlisle Borough Constable Returns, March 17, 1804, Cumberland County, Clerk of Courts, Election Returns Municipal, 1804.03.02; *ibid.*, March 16, 1810, 1810.03; *ibid.*, March 19, 1813, 1813.03.
31. Pension Application of James Hutton, June 20, 1820, Revolutionary War Pension Applications, 1820–1834, Cumberland County, Clerk of Orphan's Court, Cumberland County Historical Society.
32. Notices of the deaths in Hutton's family were printed in both the *Gazette* and the *Herald*. See *Carlisle Herald*, August 19, 1814, 3 (George Hutton); *ibid.*, May 11, 1815, 3 (Mrs. Hutton); *ibid.*, June 1, 1815, 3 (William Hutton); *ibid.*, June 8, 1815, 3 (Elizabeth Hutton); *ibid.*, June 22, 1815, 3 (John Hutton); *ibid.*, February 1, 1816, 3 (Rachel Hutton); *Die Freyheits Fahne*, January 23, 1817, 1 (James Hutton Jr.). The newspapers mention nothing about the Hutton family being victims of a possible epidemic, and the causes of death for Mrs. Hutton, Rachel Hutton, and James Jr. are not given.
33. Judith Ridner, *A Town In-Between: Carlisle, Pennsylvania and the Early Mid-Atlantic Interior* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 180, 181.
34. "Another Patriot Gone!" *American Volunteer*, March 2, 1843, 3 (first quote); *Pennsylvania Statesmen*, March 1, 1843, 3 (second quote).

## Insolvency and the War of 1812

*Stephen B. Hatton*

Most studies of the economic impact of the War of 1812 focus on early economic growth including manufacturing, shipbuilding, and canal and road improvements, and later issues of economic decline including the failure of the First Bank, decline of specie supply, and issuance of Treasury Notes. These macroeconomic studies target such things as the inadequacy of the banking system, depreciation, inflation, the depression beginning in 1815, the Panic of 1819, and subsequent recessions of the 1820s. Those recessions led to business failures, unemployment, trade imbalance, and a stock crash.

Certainly the British blockade that preceded the outbreak of hostilities was an important impetus for early growth. Pennsylvania experienced prosperity based on turnpike and canal building, overseas trade of farm crops, and military spending. The military spending resulted from army supply routes that ran from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, and from supplies purchased in the state. The problems of financing the War led to increased debt at large discounts, defaulting on the national debt, a suspension of specie payments, shortage of real money, and distrust within the banking system.<sup>1</sup> But what economic impact did the War of 1812 have on the local economy, and in particular, on Cumberland County individuals? The challenge is to separate the impact of the War from the depression and Panic of 1819. Impact analysis is here limited to insolvency evidence as shown by the debtors insolvency documents from Cumberland County Records. It begins by examining veterans of the War, and then non-veterans.

### Veteran soldiers of the War of 1812

For this study, the population of War of 1812 veterans includes two groups. The first group consists of those who served in companies formed in Cumberland County. Company captains were William Alexander (Carlisle Light Infantry), John Creigh (Landisburg Volunteer Infantry), Joseph Halbert (Carlisle Guards), George Hendel (Volunteer Riflemen from Carlisle and Mechanicsburg), Joseph McKinney (Shippensburg unit that went to Baltimore), Andrew Mitchell,

David Moreland (Volunteer Riflemen), James Piper (Light Infantry), and John Roberts (Volunteer Riflemen).<sup>2</sup> The company led by Jacob Squier, called the Patriotic Blues, which marched to Baltimore, is not included in this study.<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that not all soldiers in these companies resided in Cumberland County. Some came from neighboring counties including Franklin, Adams, York, and Dauphin.

The second group consists of soldiers who resided in Cumberland County before and/or after the War, but who served in companies formed in another county. Those included are found in the Cumberland County insolvency files.

Between 1816 and 1821, fourteen insolvent debtors listed the War of 1812 as a cause for insolvency. One of those, Joseph Humes, Jr., petitioned for insolvency twice during that period.

The first veteran to cite the War of 1812 as a cause for insolvency was George Mills,<sup>4</sup> who began the insolvency process in February of 1816, and ended the process in March of 1816. Instituted at the suit of William Bryson, Mills, a cordwainer,<sup>5</sup> stated that he was in the army for sixteen months during the War of 1812. He served under the command of Captain John Fulmer in a company largely from Berks County.<sup>6</sup> The War's contributing factor was that Mills loaned money to comrades after discharge to enable them to return home. Those loans were not repaid. Often, the government's precarious financial situation prevented it from paying soldiers immediately upon discharge.

William M. Baxter also became insolvent in 1816<sup>7</sup> at the suit of John Scott, another veteran. Baxter was a Shippensburg printer who did business with printers in Carlisle, Lancaster, and Harrisburg. He served four months under the command of George Henry in a Harrisburg rifle company. He did not receive pay for this service. He also received no pay for three months' duty as a member of a Baltimore mounted rifle company.

Joseph Humes, Jr. became insolvent twice in this period, in 1816<sup>8</sup> and in 1819.<sup>9</sup> He became one of the more experienced insolvent debtor applicants, filing for insolvency a third time in 1821,<sup>10</sup> and a fourth time in 1822.<sup>11</sup> Humes, another cordwainer, was from Carlisle, and served in Robert's company that marched to the Niagara frontier in the Spring of 1814. He was already in debt before he volunteered, so his six-month tour of duty exacerbated his financial situation. While he fought in the army, his family accumulated debts for their necessary subsistence. It did not help his financial situation that he was sick for three months before he volunteered for the army.

Patrick/Peter McNaughton<sup>12</sup> was a soldier in Hendel's company. His insolvency occurred in 1814 at the suit of merchant Robert McClan. McNaughton marched to the enemy lines under Hendel's command. His exposure to cold and fatigue during the War led to sickness and inability to work as a laborer.

No. 214.

Petition of  
George Mills  
an  
Insolvent Debtor

15<sup>th</sup> February 1816 Read  
 & 23<sup>rd</sup> March appointed  
 for a hearing of the  
 Petition & his Creditors  
 to sit to be sworn in Allen and  
 Gazette of the American  
 & October 15 Day of  
 the term of Hearing of Petitions  
 called by creditors 27<sup>th</sup> Day of  
 March 1816. value hereof  
 7000 as directed and petition  
 brought up and heard by the  
 court Presided by Lewis in  
 the court of the said of assembly  
 By the Court

1816

George Mills  
Cumberland County

George Mills 1816 insolvent debtor petition, page one of seven page petition.

*Cumberland County Government Archives*

Samuel Scott<sup>13</sup> served three months under John McMillan's command. Scott was in debt when he volunteered. He served his tour of duty on the Oneida lines. When he returned to Allen Township as a laborer, he was sued by creditors, and the costs of the suits took most of his earnings.

Samuel Blake<sup>14</sup> served in the army for five years. When he was discharged, he loaned all his money to one person who did not repay him. This Dickinson Township stonemason declared that if the one debt owed to him had been repaid, he would have been solvent. He filed for insolvency in December 1818, and the last hearing date was in January 1819.

Martin Weibley,<sup>15</sup> a Carlisle blacksmith,<sup>16</sup> became insolvent in 1819. Weibley served a tour of six months in Alexander's company that marched to the Canadian frontier. The expenses for his family's sustenance in his absence were key factors contributing to his insolvency.

George Wilson also became insolvent in 1819.<sup>17</sup> He served as a soldier for three months under William Holdgate.<sup>18</sup> He returned from Washington with money earned during the War. It seems from the petition that the War was a minor contributing cause, however, the key one being his imprisonment and fines from three indictments, about which "he could not say he was not guilty."

Alexander Galbreath became insolvent in 1819.<sup>19</sup> A South Middleton Township blacksmith, his petition stated he was an old soldier and impaired. He served in the Cumberland County militia in the 1790s but he is not included in the lists of War of 1812 veterans, and so is not counted in the group of fourteen noted above.

Benjamin Gamble, a Newville stonemason, also became insolvent in 1819.<sup>20</sup> He served in Piper's company on the Niagara frontier in the Summer of 1814. He became very sick with fever, and was unable to work when he returned from the War.

John L. Hays<sup>21</sup> served in Alexander's company. He contracted debts for support of himself and his family while in the War, and as of 1820 when he petitioned for insolvency, had not been able to repay those debts.

1820.399d

**L I S T**

Of Petitioner's Creditors, with the Nature and Amount of their Debts.

Thompson Worsaw	18.00
Henry Fetter	40.00
Patrick Taylor	1.00
2 <sup>d</sup> J. W. Rogers	5.00
Geo Gray	1.00
James Bond	0.30
James Bond	5.00
Joseph Knore	4.00
James Fetter	8.20
Cameron D. D.	1820.399e

SCHEDULES of Petitioner's Property

John L. Hays insolvent debtor petition, page three of five page petition.

Page 3 lists the debts owed by Hays.

Cumberland County Government Archives

James Spottswood became insolvent in 1821.<sup>22</sup> Another Alexander soldier, he became indebted for the support of his family while he fought on the Canada lines.

James Gourley<sup>23</sup> was the last veteran to cite the War of 1812 as a cause for his insolvency. This West Pennsborough Township carpenter served for 18 months. His 1821 petition states that he got sick several times after his return.

Notably, two captains became insolvent during this time. John Roberts became insolvent in 1819,<sup>24</sup> and William Alexander in 1821.<sup>25</sup>

John Roberts told a remarkable story. His clothing and bedding were taken by the British at Queenstown Heights. He was in the battle of Chippewa, and on July 25, 1814, was taken prisoner at the Battle of Bridgewater. He remained a prisoner during the War, and it appears he may have been presumed dead.<sup>26</sup> He was exposed to "hardships and privations," and did not return to his family until April 7, 1815. During the War, he lost three horses and two cows.

In the year 1819, I was taken by the British and the several charges of the Court of Sessions, this of the County of Cumberland.

The petition of John Roberts, Captain, is as follows: I was taken by the British in the year 1814, and was exposed to hardships and privations, and did not return to my family until April 7, 1815. During the War, I lost three horses and two cows. I was taken prisoner at the Battle of Bridgewater, and remained a prisoner during the War. My clothing and bedding were taken by the British at Queenstown Heights. I was in the battle of Chippewa, and on July 25, 1814, was taken prisoner at the Battle of Bridgewater. He remained a prisoner during the War, and it appears he may have been presumed dead. He was exposed to "hardships and privations," and did not return to his family until April 7, 1815. During the War, he lost three horses and two cows.

John Roberts, Captain

Wages for 18 months	100	Wages for 18 months	100
Expenses for 18 months	50	Expenses for 18 months	50
Loss of property	200	Loss of property	200
Loss of horses	150	Loss of horses	150
Loss of cows	100	Loss of cows	100
Loss of clothing	50	Loss of clothing	50
Loss of bedding	50	Loss of bedding	50
Loss of tools	50	Loss of tools	50
Loss of other property	50	Loss of other property	50
Total	700	Total	700

Insolvent debtor petition for Captain John Roberts, one of two officers who filed for relief. This is page two of the three page petition.

Cumberland County Government Archives

William Alexander paid the large sum of \$500 for clothing and music for the War, but was not refunded. It may be that he clothed and provided music supplies for men in his company.

### Insolvent veterans who did not state war as a cause

There were thirty<sup>27</sup> additional insolvency petitions filed by War of 1812 veterans between 1814 and 1821, and many others after 1821. It might be thought that because those cases did not cite the War of 1812 as a contributing cause, the War of 1812 did not play a role. However, the cases in which the War was cited have shown that sickness, previous debts, debts accumulated by family for survival while the soldier served in the War, underpayment by the Army, and the urge to help fellow soldiers monetarily were contributing factors for veterans filing insolvency petitions. Whether some soldiers did not mention the War of 1812 in their debtor petitions because of pride, forgetfulness, failure to see the connection between the War and their financial state, or attorney neglect to ask appropriate questions, it is likely that some of them became insolvent at least partly because of the War of 1812.

To determine whether service in the War of 1812 might be associated with insolvency, it would be interesting to know if the frequency of insolvency petitions during this period was higher for War of 1812 veterans than for non-veterans.

To estimate the Cumberland County population eligible for insolvency from 1814 to 1821 (1814 was the year of the first veteran's debtor petition, and 1821 was the final year of a veteran citing the War as a cause of insolvency), males 21 and over during that period will be counted. There were very few women insolvent debtors, and no female War of 1812 soldiers from the County. The starting point is the population schedule by township for the counties of Cumberland and Perry listed in the 1820 census.<sup>28</sup> Perry County was split from Cumberland County in 1820 and thus this area was part of Cumberland County during the War. Adding males 26-45, over 45, and an appropriate proportion of those 18-25 gives a total of 7,230. There are 748 War of 1812 soldiers whose service in the War is accepted with some confidence,<sup>29</sup> leaving 6,482, which is 18.9% of the total Cumberland County population (both genders, adults, and children). The death rate is estimated to be 2% per year,<sup>30</sup> adding 680 (about 600 per year times 6 years times 18.9%) to the demographically eligible non-veteran population. A conservative estimate of the migration out<sup>31</sup> of the county is one-half the death rate, or 340, for a total of 7502, rounded to 7,500. During this period, 247<sup>32</sup> non-War of 1812 veterans filed for insolvency, or 3.3%. This is a rather high percentage but it must be remembered that this historic period included a depression and the Panic of 1819.

To make a preliminary estimate of veterans, recall that there were 748 positively identified War of 1812 veterans. This is an approximation that takes account of spelling variations among the various lists, movement of a few soldiers from one company to another, the great difficulty of proving identities among people with so little data, and the deaths of soldiers during the War. Also, as mentioned, not all men who volunteered for a predominantly Cumberland County company were Cumberland County residents. Men from neighboring counties joined ranks with those from Cumberland County. This is at least partially offset by Cumberland County residents volunteering into companies organized outside Cumberland County, as was seen with veterans such as George Mills. Some of these later relocated to Cumberland County after the War but before petitioning for insolvency, and others simply enrolled in extra-Cumberland County companies for one reason or another. For this study, consider the Cumberland County War of 1812 veteran population to be 748. Of these, 42<sup>33</sup> petitioned for insolvency between 1814 and 1821, which calculates to 5.6%.

War of 1812 veterans became insolvent at the rate of 5.6%, while non-veterans became insolvent at the rate of 3.3%, so a War of 1812 veteran was 70% more likely to become insolvent. This is a significant statistic. This does not prove that service in the War of 1812 caused insolvency, as there may be other explanations for this correlation, including a tendency for some of these men to take risks personally and financially. This association calls for more research, but it certainly raises an interesting possibility that may lead to a better understanding of the economic impact of the War.

### Affect on non-veterans

People who did not militarily participate in the War of 1812 were affected by the financial predicaments of those who did. Given the ripple effect of financial problems, this should not be surprising. Again, this can be observed both from insolvency petitions in which this was explicitly stated, and from those in which it was not.

Five debtors who were not soldiers in the War of 1812 stated some facet of the War as a contributing cause. Each will be briefly discussed.

In his 1814 petition, Frederick Kantz,<sup>34</sup> a baker, stated that his debtors included soldiers, the names of whose commanders he knew, other soldiers, and officers. A total of \$109 worth of debt belonged to privates from companies not from Cumberland County under the command of captains Biddle, Bowie, Irvine, Hammick, Johnston, Wallace. Lieutenant Champany owed Kantz between \$17 and \$27 as stipulated in the application, Sergeant Bindle owed between \$40 and \$50, and other soldiers whose names Kantz could not remember owed between \$20 and \$30. The total amount owed to Kantz by his soldier debtors

at the time of his insolvency was about \$201, or 40.6% of the total of about \$495 owed by all his debtors.

George Myers,<sup>35</sup> a South Middleton Township tavern keeper, petitioned for insolvency in 1815. Among the causes he listed is that he was unable to make as much money during the war, perhaps because many of his drinking customers were away fighting the British.

William Blackwood,<sup>36</sup> a South Middleton Township farmer, entered the insolvency process in 1816. Among the causes he listed is that he held a note of Jonathan Thompson for \$25. Thompson went to the Army and did not return.

Jacob Hunker,<sup>37</sup> another baker, sold many of his baked goods to wives of militia volunteers who said their husbands would pay when they returned. Some did not pay those debts when they returned. Also, some officers from Carlisle Barracks bought from Hunker on credit but left the area without paying.

In Jacob Fought's petition of 1819,<sup>38</sup> he cited several causes related to the War of 1812. In one case he lost \$40 when Robert Dougherty marched to the lines and failed to return. Dougherty was a private in Moreland's and then Hendel's company.<sup>39</sup> In a similar case he lost \$90 (detailed register has \$80) when Andrew Armstrong marched to the lines and failed to return; Armstrong was a private in Alexander's company.<sup>40</sup> In a third instance he lost \$86 (detailed register has \$90) when James Mullin also marched to the line and did not return. Mullin was a private in Hendel's company,<sup>41</sup> and was killed on July 5, 1814,<sup>42</sup> so someone else accepted his pay in 1816.<sup>43</sup>

The War of 1812, therefore, had an impact on non-military citizens primarily in four ways. First, some soldiers who owed debts prior to the War left for the War without satisfying those debts, and did not repay them after the War. Some could not repay because they were killed or died, while others did not return to Cumberland County, and yet others returned but could not or did not repay. Second, families of departed soldiers accumulated debts for necessary sustenance, and those debts were not later satisfied. Third, soldiers had been customers, and their departure reduced business. Fourth, soldiers bought on credit during the War and did not repay.

It is reasonable to assume that some non-veteran insolvent debtors who did not explicitly state a War-related cause were nevertheless affected by the War, for example, by veterans who experienced financial difficulties being indebted to non-veterans who became insolvent.

Restricting the scope of this kind of impact to the debts owed by the 14 veterans who cited the War as a cause for their dire financial straights, one begins to see the relationship among themselves as well as the impact on others.

Insolvent veterans Samuel Blake and Benjamin Gamble owed John Roberts, the insolvent captain, money.<sup>44</sup> Non-veteran insolvent Francis Noble was owed money by veteran insolvents Martin Weibley, John Roberts, and James Spottswood.<sup>45</sup> Insolvent veterans William Alexander and James Spottswood owed non-veteran insolvent Matthew Gould money.<sup>46</sup> Insolvent veterans Samuel Blake and James Spottswood owed non-veteran insolvent Jacob Fought money.<sup>47</sup> Non-veteran insolvent Archibald Loudon was owed money by insolvent captains John Roberts and William Alexander.<sup>48</sup> Non-veteran insolvent Samuel Brumbaugh was owed money by veteran insolvent Martin Weibley.<sup>49</sup> Non-veteran insolvent Archibald Savage was owed money by insolvent captain John Roberts.<sup>50</sup> Non-veteran insolvent Nathaniel Boey was owed money by insolvent Captain William Alexander.<sup>51</sup> Non-veteran insolvents Ernst Wittich, Henry Horner, and John Graham were all owed money by veteran insolvent James Spottswood.<sup>52</sup> In these cases, the debtors were all War of 1812 veterans who themselves petitioned for insolvency; the insolvents named above were owed money by these same debtors, and therefore, there was an indirect War cause for those "secondary" insolvents.

## Conclusion

The War of 1812 had an adverse economic impact on individuals living in Cumberland County from 1814 to 1821. Though undoubtedly the depression and Panic that occurred during this period bore heavily on family finances, War-related causes for economic hardship may be observed in insolvency petitions of the period. The War impacted veterans' finances through debts accumulated by their families, sicknesses contracted during the War that limited their ability to work when they returned, poor pay for military service, and other causes. A War of 1812 veteran was more likely to be driven to insolvency than a non-veteran.

Non-veterans were also affected by the War through not having debts repaid by veterans, by families of soldiers running up debts not later repaid, and by a loss of business due to the departure of soldier-customers. There was a web of secondary and interacting debts that rippled through the local Cumberland County economy.

## Endnotes

1. For a good overview of the military and economic aspects of the War of 1812, see Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989).
2. Several lists of Cumberland County companies exist. *History of Cumberland and Adams Counties* (Chicago: Warner, Beers & Co, 1886) lists Alexander, Hendel, and Squier (pp. 105-107). Conway P. Wing, et. al., *History of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: James D. Scott, 1879) lists Alexander and Hendel ( p. 118). Others may be inferred from a study of the various lists included in the *Pennsylvania Archives* (hereafter PA), 6<sup>th</sup> series (Harrisburg: Harrisburg Publishing Company, 1907), and 2<sup>nd</sup> series (Harrisburg: Lane S. Hart, 1890).
3. Jacob Squier, sometimes Squire, led a company of about 90 men, but no muster list could be located. This may be because Captain Squier marched toward Baltimore before he received official orders, and also because the tour of duty was only 30 days (PA, 6th series, vol. 9, pp. 118-19).
4. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0204. Insolvent debtor petitions are Prothonotary Office documents now located at the Cumberland County Government Archives, and are also available online at HYPERLINK "<http://www.ccpa.net/archives/listings.aspx>" [www.ccpa.net/archives/listings.aspx](http://www.ccpa.net/archives/listings.aspx) and then clicking "Prothonotary" also see Barbara Bartos "Insolvent Debtor Petitions of Cumberland County," *Cumberland County History*, vol. 26 (Cumberland County Historical Society, 2009). Those interested in the insolvency process and its legal and financial meanings may consult Bruce H. Mann, *Republic of Debtors: Bankruptcy in the Age of American Independence* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), and Peter J. Coleman, *Debtors and Creditors in America: Insolvency, Imprisonment for Debt, and Bankruptcy 1607-1900* (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1974).
5. A cordwainer was a shoemaker of fine soft leather shoes.
6. Index of muster rolls of the War of 1812, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, R2.61 (hereafter PHMC), vol. 3, p. 49.
7. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0211.2 (the Prothonotary clerk mistakenly numbered two petitions 211).
8. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0217.
9. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0300.
10. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0445.
11. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0552.
12. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0229. His given name appears as Patrick throughout his petition, including his signature. However, several lists in PA have Peter (PA, 6<sup>th</sup> series, vol. 7, p. 425; receipt roll, 6<sup>th</sup> series, vol. 7, p. 446; 6<sup>th</sup> series, vol. 8, p. 9; 6<sup>th</sup> series, vol. 8, p. 10; PHMC, vol. 3, p. 54).

13. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0235.
14. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document file 0281.
15. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0294.
16. 1820 tax list per Merri Lou Scribner Schaumann, *A History & Genealogy of Carlisle Cumberland County, Pennsylvania 1751–1835* (Dover: author, 1987), p. 143.
17. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0312.
18. PHMC, vol. 5, p. 44.
19. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0337.
20. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0344.
21. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0399.
22. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0446.
23. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0486.
24. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0316.
25. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0441.
26. The muster roll of 24 August 1814 marked him as deceased (PA, 6<sup>th</sup> series, vol. 8, p. 31).
27. Two of these were additional petitions submitted by veterans already listed, i.e., James Spottswood and Joseph Humes, so the number of distinct veterans is 28.
28. 1820 U.S. census, Cumberland Co., Pennsylvania, NARA M33, roll 102, and Perry Co., Pennsylvania, NARA M33, roll 104.
29. Determining who was a soldier in the War of 1812 is no simple matter. There are a myriad of issues to deal with including poor handwriting, variations in name spelling, identity confirmation, conflicts among the extant lists of muster, receipt, pay, and discharge rolls, transfers between companies, appearance on only one or a few of the multiple rolls of a given company, and incomplete and missing lists. I have chosen to include only those who appear on at least half of each company's extant lists, after rationalizing name spelling variations.
30. According to Michael R. Haines, "The Population of the United States, 1790–1920," Cambridge Histories Online, Cambridge University Press, 2008, the death rates varied from 2% to 4%, but was at the lower end of this range for Pennsylvania (p. 146).
31. Migration out refers to the movement of a person who at one time during the period 1814–1819 lived in Cumberland County but who moved to another area before the 1820 census was taken. No known study of migrations out or in exists for Cumberland County for this period.
32. There were 259 insolvency petitions, but 12 were of people who petitioned more than once during this period.
33. Fourteen cited a War-related cause, and 28 did not.
34. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0195.
35. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0201.
36. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0207.
37. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0211.1.

38. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0295.
39. PA, 6<sup>th</sup> series, vol. 7, p. 426; 6<sup>th</sup> series, vol. 8, p. 13.
40. PA, 6<sup>th</sup> series, vol. 7, p. 423.
41. PA, 6<sup>th</sup> series, vol. 7, p. 425.
42. PA, 6<sup>th</sup> series, vol. 8, p. 13.
43. PA, 6<sup>th</sup> series, vol. 7, p. 447.
44. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0316.
45. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0364.
46. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0230.
47. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0295.
48. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0261.
49. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0339.
50. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0216.
51. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, document 0418.
52. Prothonotary, Insolvent Debtor Series 3, documents 0330, 0259, 0332, respectively.

## The Mystery of the Unburned Mansion

### The Loss of the Ege "Big House"

#### and Other Fires at Pine Grove Furnace and Laurel Forge

*André Weltman*

Lenore Embick Flower's *History of Pine Grove Furnace* was first presented in 1933 and is now in a 4<sup>th</sup> edition printed by the Cumberland County Historical Society.<sup>1</sup> This seminal history of the local iron industry contains an apparent error: Flower's confusion about the destruction of the ironmaster's mansion at Pine Grove Furnace.

In her text, Flower discussed the various sales of the Pine Grove Furnace business as fortunes in the iron industry waxed and waned. After describing an 1864 sale of the "Pine Grove Iron Works,' buildings and improvements," she commented that:

No mention is ever made specifically of the "Big House" which was the name always used at the iron works for the mansion house in which the owner or manager lived. Some years later the original Big House of Pine Grove Furnace was destroyed by fire caught from a spark from a mountain conflagration. It was rebuilt — the present structure.<sup>2</sup>

Note the context in which she mentions the mansion fire. By first describing an event in 1864 and then saying the fire occurred "some years later," she must mean a fire in the years after the Civil War. Further, she specifies a *forest* fire as the proximate cause of the mansion's destruction.

The Society's current edition adds the following endnote:

The property was surveyed in the 1970s when state commissioners were considering abolishing (this is the word used in the original source) the building. Ed LaFond, head of the Historic Site Survey, John Tyler and others determined that the building was erected between 1827–1829 and that there was no evidence that the building ever burned.<sup>3</sup>

Why does Flower err in reporting that the mansion at Pine Grove Furnace burned during a forest fire some time after the Civil War? I suggest Flower confused two different fires: the loss of the Big House at Pine Grove Furnace in 1819, and a forest fire which burned the manager's residence (also sometimes called a "Big House") at nearby Laurel Forge in 1872.

### The 1819 Mansion Fire at Pine Grove Furnace

Prominent ironmaster Michael Ege died in August 1815. His children spent months disputing who would inherit the four local iron operations he owned (the Carlisle Ironworks in Boiling Springs, the Mount Holly Ironworks, the Cumberland Furnace at Huntsdale, and Pine Grove Furnace). When the legal dust settled in 1816, Peter Ege emerged as sole owner of the operation at Pine Grove.<sup>4</sup>

At the time Peter Ege became owner of Pine Grove, the ironmaster's residence was presumably the same one listed in a 1795 business ledger. As detailed by Nancy Van Dolsen, the ledger describes a "two-story wood house either 32 feet by 24½ feet or 28 feet by 22 feet, not including the kitchen" which is "large by the period's standards" and "very well furnished for the late eighteenth century."<sup>5</sup> While we cannot say with certainty that the large wood house in the 1795 ledger was the same one occupied two decades later by Peter Ege, his wife Jane Arthur Ege, and their growing family, it seems the simplest explanation.

Van Dolsen does not note the ultimate fate of this wood building. The documentary evidence does not help us determine whether it was at the exact same location as the current brick mansion or somewhere else along the hill above the furnace stack. (Ironmaster mansions were typically built atop a hill where the proprietor or manager could readily observe ironmaking operations, but not too close to the roaring combustion of the furnace stack.)

Three years after Peter became sole owner in 1816, disaster struck. From the *American Volunteer* in Carlisle, February 4, 1819:

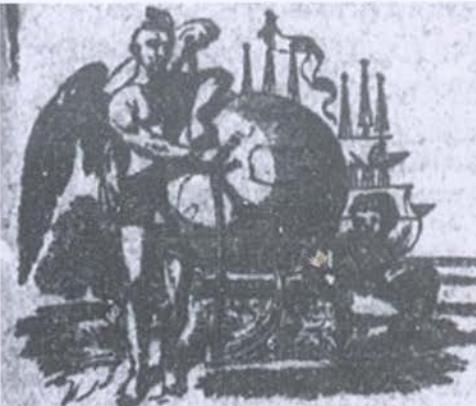
FIRE! — We are informed, that the dwelling house of Mr. Peter Ege, at *Pine Grove*, was entirely consumed, by fire, on Friday night last; and that the greater part of his furniture was thereby lost. We have not heard any particulars.<sup>6</sup>

Other newspapers carried nearly identical statements. In the *Spirit of the Times and Carlisle Gazette* on February 9:

Distressing Accident, The dwelling house of Mr. Peter Ege, at *Pine Grove*, was entirely consumed, by fire, on the night of Friday the 29<sup>th</sup> ult all the greater part of his furniture was thereby lost.<sup>7</sup>

And in *The Republican Compiler* in Gettysburg the next day:

**FIRE.** We are informed, (says the Carlisle Volunteer) that the dwelling house of Mr. Peter Ege, at *Pine Grove*, was entirely consumed by fire, on Friday night, the 29th ultimo, and that the greater part of his furniture was thereby lost.<sup>8</sup>



**Spirit of the Times,  
AND  
Carlisle Gazette.**

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**NOTATION IN OFFICE.**

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**Tuesday, February 9, 1819.**

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Having exhausted our stock of medium paper, we this week resume the publication of the Gazette, in its original dress.

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**Distressing Accident,**  
The dwelling house of Mr. Peter Ege, at Pine Grove, was entirely consumed, by fire, on the night of Friday the 29th ult the greater part of his furniture was thereby lost.

Newspaper account of the 1819 Ege mansion fire at Pine Grove Furnace, from *Spirit of the Times and Carlisle Gazette*, February 9, 1819

No further discussion of this January 29 fire, nor about plans for a replacement structure for the destroyed Big House, was carried by these newspapers in the following months.<sup>9</sup>

The cause of the nighttime disaster is not stated. It was likely an isolated structure fire, perhaps a domestic mishap arising from a hot stove, a chimney fire or a dropped candle. I offer several reasons for this speculation. First, the *Gazette* article is titled “Distressing Accident” which suggests but does not prove the fire did not arise from a forest fire or malicious act. Alternatively, the article’s title may simply be an editor’s assumption in the absence of details. Second, the iron furnace would typically be “out of blast” in the depths of winter and therefore an accident at the furnace that extended to the Big House, while not impossible, is less likely (as noted above, the ironmaster’s residence was typically near but not immediately next to the stack). And finally, no local newspaper mentions a forest fire at that time, and late January would be an unusual time of year for a forest fire.

This brings us to another mystery. Where did the Ege family live after the loss of their residence? It is tempting to think they found temporary quarters at Pine Grove for the winter and as soon as possible rebuilt the Big House. There was another large house at Pine Grove, according to a "1798 Direct Tax" list for Dickinson Township described by Van Dolsen: "...there were two houses (with kitchen and spring house) worth \$380 and \$500..." included separately in the tax list, unlike workers' houses "valued at less than \$100."<sup>10</sup> In 1798 the larger of these houses was occupied by John Arthur, the smaller house by Benjamin Blackford.<sup>11</sup> By 1819 under Peter Ege's ownership, it is unclear who was using the smaller house described in 1798 (assuming it was still present). It seems plausible that the smaller house is where the Ege family would have moved in the immediate aftermath of the fire, but confirming evidence is lacking.

Van Dolsen proposed that the current brick mansion could date to around 1815–1820 on the basis of architectural comparisons with other buildings in Cumberland County.<sup>12</sup> It is intriguing to note that construction of a new mansion around 1820 would dovetail with the loss in 1819, and that the Ege family made temporary living arrangements while a new larger structure was constructed as soon as possible.

However, there is specific evidence that the currently existing brick mansion was built years later, from 1827 to 1829. A survey nominating Pine Grove Furnace for the National Register of Historic Places in 1976 summarized the steps in building the brick mansion:

The Pine Grove Papers indicate the following sequence of work:

April 1827 – Brickmakers arrived and manufactured brick into July.

June 1827 – Masons began work, presumably laying brick into October.

June 1827 – Carpenters began work and were finished by July 1828.

September 1827 – Painters began work through March 1829.

June 1828 – Plastering began and continued through August 1828.<sup>13</sup>

The mystery of an almost decade-long gap between the loss of the old wood mansion and construction of a new brick mansion is unsolved. My speculative explanation is that either the Eges stayed in the second house described in the 1798 tax list, or the wood structure lost to fire was simply rebuilt, which could be accomplished relatively quickly and cheaply compared to building a large brick house.

I further suggest this intermediate Big House, where the Ege family lived from circa 1819 until the completion of the fancy new brick mansion in 1829, was probably not on the same foundation as the subsequent brick mansion.



Pine Grove Furnace Ironmaster's Mansion, circa 1872. This is the currently standing structure, built by Peter Ege 1827–1829, and shows no evidence of fire.

Photograph from Ellis Oberholtzer, *Jay Cooke: Financier of the Civil War (vol. II)*, 1907

If the intermediate residence had been on the same site as the prolonged construction beginning in 1827, we are again left with the problem of where they lived during the three years until the new house was ready. Moreover, the house that burned was perhaps not on the same foundation as the current brick mansion; this would explain why an investigation in the 1970s did not find evidence of loss by fire at the site of the brick mansion.<sup>3</sup>

With a pressing need for a place to live, why would Peter Ege wait many years to build the magnificent brick building that still stands today? The answer might be financial. The fire in January 1819 happened at a particularly unfortunate moment: not only was it winter, but the economy was entering a cyclical downturn. The economic pressure resulting in the "Panic of 1819" was felt nationally by the summer of 1818, if not earlier, culminating when the "Bank of the United States began a painful contraction...a series of deflationary moves."<sup>14</sup> In Cumberland County, according to a series of questions and answers heard by a Pennsylvania State Senate committee in 1820, the monetary contraction hit business owners especially hard:

17. Has a scarcity of money been felt by men who are rich in property, as well as by the labouring classes?

*Ans.* By those who hold property especially.<sup>15</sup>

The economic stress almost certainly included local iron making operations. "Manufacturers suffered from the general decline in prices as well as from the contraction in credit, and the panic served to intensify their generally depressed condition since the end of the war [of 1812]," and in parts of the mid-Atlantic "[v]ery drastic declines in employment took place in the cotton, woolen, and iron industries."<sup>16</sup>

Thus, in 1819 and over the following few years, Peter Ege may not have been in a financial position to spend money on a fancy new house. The impact of the national economic crisis on Peter Ege in particular needs further scholarship.

Continuing this line of reasoning, by the later years of the 1820s perhaps Peter Ege's fortune was improving along with the nation's. He was able to make two considerable investments: not only did he start construction of the brick mansion in 1827, but soon afterwards in 1830 he built Laurel Forge.

#### **Fire at Pine Grove.**

We learn that the casting-house, and some other buildings, at Pine Grove Furnace, were destroyed by fire on Wednesday night last—loss between \$2000 and \$3000.

Newspaper account of the 1847 casting house fire at Pine Grove Furnace, from *Adams Sentinel and General Adviser* [Gettysburg], February 15, 1847.

### The 1872 Forest Fire at Laurel Forge

Flower states that Peter Ege founded Laurel Forge in 1830 with "six fires, a runout, and a trip hammer."<sup>17</sup> Turning out much more remunerative bar iron, a forge was a logical investment to add to the pig-iron operation 2 miles to the west. The forge community included workers' houses and a "mansion" serving as the residence of the forge manager. These structures were lost to a wildfire in 1872.

May 1872 was a time of high fire danger. The *Carlisle Herald* did not mention a South Mountain fire in particular, but briefly observed in late May that mountain fires throughout the state were "without parallel."<sup>18</sup> Other local newspapers that month also noted various large fires elsewhere in Pennsylvania and in the Midwest.

A Shippensburg newspaper on May 11 specifically stated that "disastrous fires are raging on South Mountain."<sup>19</sup> A follow-up report one week later noted the fires "raged with intense fury and immense destruction of young timber is reported."<sup>20</sup>

The relevant details about a burning mansion were in a Carlisle newspaper on May 16:

FIRE IN THE MOUNTAIN. — For the last four or five days a most destructive fire has been raging in the South Mountain, West of Mount Holly. The fire commenced near Bendersville, Adams County, and spread rapidly for miles in every direction, reaching the Cumberland side in a few hours. An immense amount of live timber has been destroyed, together with some twenty-five or thirty thousand cords of dry wood. The mansion house at Laurel Forge, occupied by Mr. Woodward, with all its contents, we learn, was consumed on Saturday, together with scores of cabins, fences, &c. The fire at this writing extends ten or twelve miles, running east and west, and should it reach Mount Holly, would prove very destructive.<sup>21</sup>

After a brief mention of a different fire at the “east end of North Mountain” the editor lamented “Oh, for a good soaking rain.”

A more terse description came from Newville:

Further news from the fires on the South Mountain states, that the old Mansion House of Peter Ege was destroyed, together with other houses. Our informant also states the citizens of Mt. Holly were fearful of the fire reaching that place before it can be checked.<sup>22</sup>

Note this last newspaper’s statement about “the old Mansion House of Peter Ege.” In the context of accounts in other newspapers, this must refer to the Laurel Forge manager’s house and not to the brick mansion at Pine Grove. It seems likely that Flower confused the two “mansions” — both built by Peter Ege — when writing some six decades after the 1872 fire.

No additional information about the final extent of the May 1872 fire was recorded in area newspapers, although it is apparent that it did not reach Mount Holly Springs. One editor simply wrote on June 6 that “Thursday of last week witnessed the anxiously awaited, long looked for showers.”<sup>23</sup> We may infer that the wildfire was ultimately extinguished by Mother Nature.

In comparison to Pine Grove Furnace, relatively scarce information survives about the structures at Laurel Forge, all of which are gone today. Photographs of the original “old Mansion House of Peter Ege” at Laurel Forge are lacking. The only information I can glean about the original Laurel Forge manager’s house is that it perhaps was made of brick, just like the Big House at Pine Grove Furnace, based on a description of “brick mansion houses” (note plural) included in an 1838 sale of the entire property including both the furnace and forge.<sup>24</sup> A two-story wood structure that must be the *rebuilt* Laurel Forge mansion house can be glimpsed at the rear of a photograph circa 1890, in the current edition of Flower.<sup>25</sup> It is likely but unproven that the manager’s house seen in that photograph sits on the same site as the previous manager’s residence lost in 1872.



© Culture and Heritage, photograph of the coal house at Laurel Forge, c. 1890

Teamsters unloading charcoal at the Laurel Forge coal house, circa 1890.

Note the two-story building at the rear, the rebuilt Forge Mansion (replacing the one lost to a forest fire in 1872).

Rebuilt Forge Mansions were in turn destroyed by a forest fire in 1900 and 1915.

*Photograph from Lenore Flower, History of Pine Grove Furnace, 1933 (4<sup>th</sup> ed., 2003).*

## Other Fires at Laurel Forge

Fires on the mountain were (and are!) a recurrent danger. In his memoir about a period just a few years later, Horace Andrew Keefer described taking over the Superintendency of “The South Mountain Mining and Iron Company’s properties at Pine Grove” in 1879:

Water, pestilence and famine are dreadful scourges, but nothing at Pine Grove filled us with such terror as an alarm of fire in the mountains. The year before I came there over 2,000 cords of wood had been burned and many acres of growing timber.

He went on to describe the system of firefighting he devised:

...after the first fire I saw that the failure lay in having too many bosses with cross purposes. There should be one director whom all must obey. Dan Leeper the wood boss mapped out the various wood and coal jobs. The bosses of the different jobs were instructed that at the given signal from the furnace whistle all hands were to report to me. The six carpenters were furnished with brush hooks, who, under Leeper, were to cut away brush for a fire line following them with torches and forks,

backfiring was begun and patrols followed for keeping the fire line clear. I never lost a cord of wood, though we had many stubborn fires. Meals were conveyed to the fire fighters who were kept on the line until all danger was past.<sup>24</sup>

Although this organizational improvement was instituted several years after the fire of May 1872, it is not apparent that any technique of the time could have stopped such a large fire extending "ten or twelve miles." Even today, fighting mountain fires is very difficult despite the advantage of the internal combustion engine to run pumps, fire trucks and airplanes.

The Laurel Forge area experienced many other devastating fires. As noted by Keefer above, much timber was lost in 1878. In April 1900, a forest fire destroyed the John S. Low Ice Company's insulated storage barns on the south side of Laurel Forge Pond (now called Laurel Lake), as well as fourteen dwellings and two barns. Newspaper accounts do not specify that the manager's residence burned, but it probably did given the extent of the fire. The damage to the ice company alone was estimated at \$40,000.<sup>26, 27</sup> Although a fire at an ice storage facility seems paradoxical, such structures were well known to be at risk because flammable sawdust was used as insulation.<sup>28</sup>

A large wildfire in 1903 again threatened the "large ice houses located at Laurel Dam and belonging to the United Ice Company." Though this fire did not destroy the ice storage facilities, "several buildings were also consumed" presumably near Laurel Lake but not at Pine Grove Furnace two miles to the west.<sup>29</sup>

In April 1915 a forest fire again destroyed the ice industry's rebuilt ice storage facilities. The *Star and Sentinel* described the size of this particularly severe event with the headline "Big Forest Fire Covers 10,000 acres; Kills Deer Camps." The fire was believed to have started at the farm of Asbury Heller north of Bendersville in Menallen Township, Adams County, but most of the burned land was in Cumberland County. "Back fires" were built to protect the village of Pine Grove "so that the main fire would not reach the settlement. The entire population participated in this effort to stave off the on-coming blaze and late Wednesday night it was learned no damage had been done to any property" at the village of Pine Grove.<sup>30</sup>

That fire also destroyed the rebuilt mansion at Laurel Forge, according to Keefer:

A terrific forest fire occurred April 20, 1915, on these lands, and destroyed many acres of fine young timber, and burned the Forge Farm house, barn and all out buildings, burned the Forge Mansion then occupied by Joseph Fuller, and several summer cabins, and also burned

the immense ice house that stood at the edge of Laurel Lake filled with hundreds of tons of pure ice that had been harvested from Laurel Lake for use in Carlisle and Harrisburg by the United Ice and Coal Company of Harrisburg. It was a wonderfully destructive sight to watch the glistening ice while the wooden house around it burned fiercely.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, there were several "mansions" (manager's residences) lost to fires at Laurel Forge, in 1872 and 1915 and perhaps 1900, plus the Big House fire two miles away at Pine Grove Furnace in 1819. The potential for confusion by historians about these multiple losses is obvious.

### Other Fires at Pine Grove Furnace

In contrast to the repeated effect of forest fires on Laurel Forge no record has been found of a forest fire destroying major structures at Pine Grove Furnace during the iron-making era through 1895, when the furnace went out of blast for the last time; the machinery was dismantled in 1902.<sup>31, 32</sup>

However, in addition to the 1819 fire, there was another significant structure fire during the iron-making era. On February 10, 1847, during the ownership of William Watts, the casting house and associated machinery burned. From a Gettysburg newspaper five days after the event:

Fire at Pine Grove. We learn that the casting-house and some other buildings, at Pine Grove Furnace, were destroyed by fire on Wednesday night last — loss between \$2000 and \$3000.<sup>33</sup>

But two days later, a lower damage estimate was given in a Carlisle newspaper:

Fire. — A fire broke out in the Pine Grove Iron Works, in Dickinson Township, in this county, on Wednesday night last, which destroyed the Furnace buildings and a portion of the machinery, causing a loss, we regret to learn, of about \$1500.<sup>34</sup>

As with the 1819 fire, newspapers at that time do not mention a forest fire that could have been the cause of the Furnace building's fire and a forest fire in February would have been unusual. Hence I speculate this fire may have been an isolated accident, though there is no information to support this.<sup>35</sup>

Fortunately, in contrast to Laurel Forge, it does not seem that the entirety of the operation was ever lost to fire at Pine Grove Furnace. Fire was a regular threat to iron operations, whether arising from forest fires or from industrial accidents — including the inherently dangerous process of smelting iron at temperatures approaching 3000°F, the storage of newly made charcoal which could catch on fire, or in later years the sparks from steam locomotives.

All-consuming fires or explosions were not unknown at other sites. For example, just in the South Mountain region in the waning years of the industry, there were two very large fires. On May 21, 1880, the newly renovated iron works at Big Pond in Southampton Township were completely destroyed when a fire broke out in the just-filled charcoal house. Ironmaking was never restarted at Big Pond Furnace. The furnace stack today lies in ruins, with no buildings around it.<sup>36, 37</sup> At the Mont Alto Iron Works, “[i]n 1889 the furnace, foundry, engine rooms with all the machinery, boiler house and all the old patterns were destroyed by fire” but were “immediately rebuilt.”<sup>38, 39</sup> The cause of the Mont Alto fire is not stated but does not seem to have been a forest fire.

In the waning years of old Pine Grove, forest fires in 1902 and 1903 did heavy damage to the public park established by Jackson Fuller along Mountain Creek east of the industrial area:

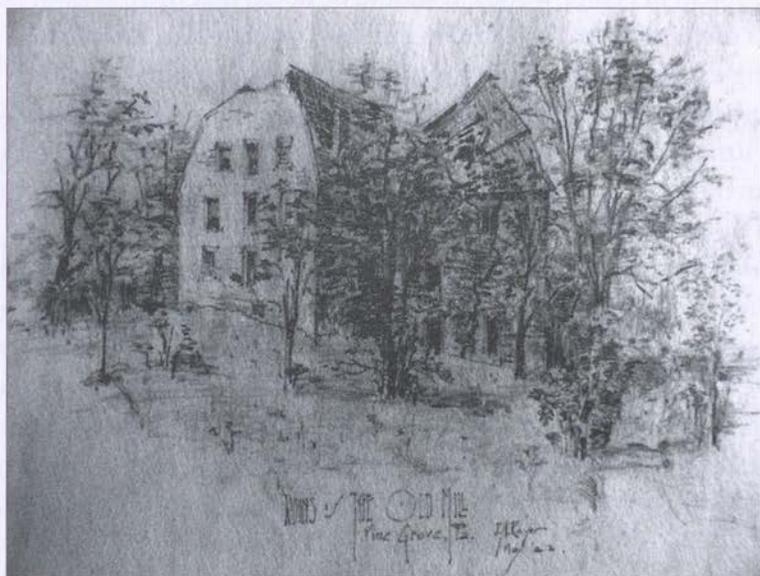
Pine Grove Park no More. The vast mountain fires of the past summer and that before have wrought considerable damage to the once beautiful and popular Pine Grove Park and now it is in a deplorable state. It has not been in use for several years and before many months more the woodmen will have felled all the trees about the place. Much wood in that vicinity is being cleared for lumber.<sup>40</sup>

The extensive facilities at Fuller’s 30-acre park, including a 60-foot-long pavilion, a children’s carousel turned by water power, and two bowling alleys<sup>41</sup> were not rebuilt, though the area continued to be used for scouting and camping activities with much simpler pavilions and other amenities.

After iron-making ended at Pine Grove Furnace, a few other structure fires damaged or destroyed individual buildings. Not including cabins, a notable loss was “a wood-frame building containing the Pine Grove village store and proprietor’s residence, plus a garage” destroyed by a “blaze of mysterious origin” in October 1915.<sup>42</sup> The owner, Charles H. Cobean, was awakened at 3:30 in the morning by barking dogs he had left in the retail area to deter thieves. The store was located adjacent to the brick mansion, and can be seen in a photograph in the current edition of *Flower*.<sup>43</sup> It was apparently not rebuilt. Cobean had been a retailer in Gettysburg several years earlier and sold his store there to run the business at Pine Grove. He was also village Postmaster, a job which he continued despite the fire until being replaced at the start of 1916.<sup>44</sup>

The upper floors and roof of the former grist mill (currently the Appalachian Trail Museum) may have been damaged by an isolated structure fire in the early 1920s, but no documentary evidence has been found. A drawing showing the mills’ roof collapsed, dated May 1922, was made by an architect who frequently visited the area. Whether this damage was due to fire is uncertain.<sup>45</sup> Photographs

of the mill taken the next year show the roof and a gable end removed, but there is no evidence of fire visible in the pictures. It is unclear whether they reveal direct damage from a fire, or removal of material prior to renovation.



“Ruins of the Old Mill, Pine Grove, Pa.” Pencil drawing by James A. Royer, Sr., dated May 1922. From the personal collection of his granddaughter, Georgia R. Freet. This building currently serves as the Appalachian Trail Museum.

## The Persistent Risk of Forest Fires

Large forest fires seem to have been particularly frequent in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>46</sup> There were many reasons for this, including the lack of a systematic way to detect fires when they were small, and limitations in getting to them quickly despite the best efforts of the iron companies to organize their workers for this purpose.

Fires were often attributed in newspapers of the time to arson by huckleberry pickers. Picking wild berries was done for both personal and commercial purposes. To a modern reader it may seem hard to understand why people burned the forests just for a few mouthfuls of fruit. However, selling wild berries was big business for some rural folks during this time when transport of fruit from across the country had not yet begun. Though the wildfires devastated timber, the newly opened areas grew profuse berry bushes.<sup>47</sup>

Commissioner of Forestry, and then Governor, Gifford Pinchot eventually turned this situation around beginning in the 1920s with “new detection sys-

tems, better fire fighting technology, telephone communications, and improved staffing” especially including a system of fire watch-towers.<sup>48</sup>

Both before and after Pinchot, unfortunately, large forest fires remained a major problem in Penn’s Woods. It should be noted that then, as now, newspaper accounts often refer to “Pine Grove Furnace” or the “Pine Grove area” without specifying exact locations. From the viewpoint of a reporter or editor based in the Cumberland Valley, the distance of several miles — such as between Pine Grove Furnace and Laurel Forge — may seem small. Hence, it is hard to be sure from most of the contemporary newspaper accounts what area was actually burning or threatened by flames.

Additional large forest fires in the South Mountains in May 1909 destroyed 1000 acres from Hunter’s Run west and north into the Cameron (King’s Gap) estate, but did not reach Laurel Lake nor Pine Grove.<sup>49</sup> Yet another two fires in August 1909 (one near Mount Holly, the other southeast from Shippensburg) similarly destroyed vast amounts of timber but did not directly threaten Pine Grove.<sup>50</sup> More forest fires occurred the following Spring “in the vicinity of Pine Grove Furnace” as well as other mountain areas to the north and west, but apparently did not threaten the village nor industrial areas.<sup>51</sup> A forest fire in 1911 south of Pine Grove on Piney Mountain Ridge covered six miles of timberland. It was started by a burning rubbish pile.<sup>52</sup>

Other notable forest fires in 1917, 1924 and 1926 similarly threatened but did not destroy the village at Pine Grove Furnace.<sup>53-55</sup> Yet another fire in 1930 was particularly large, so much so it was reported in a national newspaper under the headline “FIRE MENACES RESORT; Pennsylvania National Guard Aids Fight on Flames.”<sup>56</sup> The fire came “within inches” of buildings at Camp Rothrock, a boy scout facility near Laurel Lake, and at least one cabin in the area was lost.<sup>57</sup> Another notable series of blazes in 1942 ranged over 8 miles of the South Mountains and destroyed more than 2,000 acres, apparently due to arson.<sup>58</sup> It is possible some of these forest fires destroyed individual remote cabins or other structures that were not mentioned in newspaper accounts.

The list of major forest fires could continue, but by the middle to late 20<sup>th</sup> century the size of the fires in this region of Pennsylvania tended to be much smaller than in earlier times, and rarely destroyed buildings. Pinchot’s investment in fire prevention and control was finally paying off. By the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, a relatively large fire for this area of Pennsylvania covered 200 acres.<sup>59</sup> Compared to the massive forest fires of yesteryear with conflagrations extending for miles across the mountains, the fires of today are tiny. Appreciation and support should be extended to the firefighters who help keep it that way.

## Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the assistance and encouragement of the staff of the Hamilton Library of the Cumberland County Historical Society, especially Rob Schwartz and Richard Tritt.

## Endnotes

1. Flower, Lenore Embick. *History of Pine Grove Furnace*, 1933. Cumberland County Historical Society, Carlisle. Fourth edition, 2003. Preface by Sandy Mader.
2. Flower, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
3. Flower, *op. cit.*, end note 4 on p. 31.
4. Ege, Thompson. *History and Genealogy of the Ege Family in the United States 1738–1911*. Star Printing Co., Harrisburg, PA, 1911, p. 94.
5. Van Dolsen, Nancy. *Cumberland County: An Architectural Survey*. Cumberland County Historical Society, Carlisle, PA, 1990, pp. 89–90.
6. *American Volunteer* [Carlisle], February 4, 1819. All newspapers cited were accessed via microfilm at the Hamilton Library in 2005–2012, or online via *Heritage Archives* and *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers* in 2012.
7. *Spirit of the Times and Carlisle Gazette*, February 9, 1819.
8. *The Republican Compiler* [Gettysburg], February 10, 1819.
9. There is no direct mention of the 1819 fire in the Pine Grove Furnace business records stored at the Pennsylvania State Archives in Harrisburg (Manuscript Group 175: Day Book, Ledger, Journal and Cash Book for intervals that include the year 1819). Nor can I find any *indirect* indication of the fire, *i.e.*, no obvious change in purchases and charges recorded in those documents in the ensuing months.
10. Van Dolsen, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
11. Tyler, Lyon Gardiner. *Encyclopedia of Virginia Biography, Volume 5*. Lewis Historical Publishing Co., New York, NY, 1915, p. 845. John Arthur was an early co-owner of Pine Grove. Benjamin Blackford's role in 1798 is unclear, but in 1792 he had married one of Arthur's daughters (Peter Ege married another of Arthur's daughters, Jane). By 1816 when Peter Ege became owner, it appears that John Arthur and Benjamin Blackford had left Pine Grove and were operating ironworks in Maryland and Virginia.
12. Van Dolsen, *op. cit.*, p. 92.
13. Berman, David. *National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form*, 1976. Typewritten document prepared by the Office of Historic Preservation, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission on a National Park Service generic form. Available in a three-ring binder at the Hamilton Library main reading room. The document states that the mansion trim was "fashioned after patterns in" *The American builder's companion: or, A system of architecture, particularly adapted to the present style of building* by Asher Benjamin (R. P. & C. Williams, 1816). If an 1816 stylebook were used, this might contribute to

- Van Dolsen's observation that the building completed in 1829 closely resembled others in Cumberland County built a decade earlier.
14. Rothbard, Murray. *The Panic of 1819: Reactions and Policies*. Columbia University Press, NY, 1962 (reprinted 2007 by Ludwig von Mises Institute, Auburn, AL), p. 17.
  15. A Contributor. "Cumberland County in the Panic of 1819," *Cumberland County History*, Volume 13 Number 6, Summer 1996. The article describes a table in the Senate committee report showing a dramatic increase in "actions for debt" and "judgments confessed" in Cumberland County when the year 1809 was compared to 1819. Consistent with that tally, my own casual perusal of Carlisle and Gettysburg newspapers from the spring and summer of 1819 suggests an increased number of sheriffs' sales and bankruptcies compared to those same newspapers in 1818.
  16. Rothbard, *op.cit.*, pp. 23-24.
  17. Flower, *op.cit.*, p. 11. However, there may have been an earlier forge at or near the same site. The 1911 Ege genealogy cited above suggests (p. 91) that "An early forge was built in the vicinity, before any legal grant of land, thought to be on the site of the later forges built and rebuilt there and known as Laurel Forge, some distance below the furnace site on the Mountain Creek"; Ege goes on to propose that a forge owned by Robert Thornburgh with 1200 acres of land on a tax list in Carlisle was located near Pine Grove Furnace. Also, as early as 1787 the Furnace day books repeatedly mention bar iron in addition to pig iron and castware (Weltman, personal observation). "Bar iron" typically referred to wrought iron produced at a finery forge by heating and hammering pig iron. Furnaces made pig iron and castware such as stove plates; forges turned the pig iron into bar iron for resale for blacksmithing or other manufacturing. The implication is that a forge, perhaps small, existed in connection with Pine Grove Furnace long before 1830.
  18. *Carlisle Herald*, May 23, 1872.
  19. *Shippensburg News*, May 11, 1872.
  20. *Shippensburg News*, May 18, 1872.
  21. *American Volunteer* [Carlisle], May 16, 1872.
  22. *Star of the Valley* [Newville], May 16, 1872.
  23. *American Volunteer* [Carlisle], June 6, 1872. The lack of detailed coverage of this huge fire is curious, but seems typical of the newspapers of the day. The press was largely concerned with other matters such as the upcoming presidential election.
  24. Keefer, Horace Andrew. "Recollections, Historical And Otherwise, Relating To Old Pine Grove Furnace" in the *Bulletin* of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, October 1934, n.p. Available at [www.patc.us/history/archive/pine\\_grv.html](http://www.patc.us/history/archive/pine_grv.html). Accessed March 20, 2012.
  25. Flower, *op. cit.*, photograph on p. 23.
  26. *Lebanon Semi-weekly News*, April 20, 1900.
  27. *Gettysburg Compiler*, May 1, 1900.
  28. Spaulding, Ralph. "Experimental Tests of Fireproof and Non-fireproof Ice House Construction." *Refrigeration World*, Volume 49 Number 6, June 1915, p. 43.

29. *Star and Sentinel* [Gettysburg], May 6, 1903. By the turn of the century there were apparently two ice storage barns at Laurel Lake, per various newspaper articles.
30. *Star and Sentinel* [Gettysburg], April 22, 1915.
31. Watts, Randy. *Railroads to Pine Grove Furnace. Book Two in a Series: Railroads of the Cumberland Valley*. Keystone Computer Services, Carlisle PA, 1991, p. 27.
32. The American Iron and Steel Institute. "Long Inactive, Abandoned or Dismantled Iron and Steel Works" in *Directory of Iron and Steel Works of the United States and Canada*. Allen Lane and Scott, Philadelphia PA, 1904, p. 362. This national review says Pine Grove Furnace was "dismantled" in 1902 but photographs circa 1915 show the stone stack still standing with a brick building directly adjoining; thus in 1902 the machinery was presumably sold to other furnaces or as scrap, but the stack was not razed. (The current stack at the State Park reflects cosmetic repairs made in subsequent decades.)
33. *Adams Sentinel and General Adviser* [Gettysburg], February 15, 1847.
34. *Herald & Expositor* [Carlisle], February 17, 1847.
35. As with the 1819 fire, Pine Grove Furnace business records (Manuscript Group 175) stored at the Pennsylvania State Archives in Harrisburg do not mention the 1847 fire. Unfortunately, the archives contain only a single ledger for the period 1845–1847; there is a multi-year gap in the available documents and no other types (such as Day Books) are preserved that cover 1847.
36. Goodyear, Benjamin. *Blast furnaces of Cumberland County*. Paper read before the Hamilton Library Association, Carlisle, October 23, 1903, p. 19.
37. Moss, Isaac. *Report of the Receivers of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company and of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal & Iron Company of the Operations for the Year Ending November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1880*. J.B. Lippincott and Co., Philadelphia, 1881, p. 36.
38. Wiestling, Edward. *Old Iron Works of the Cumberland Valley*. Paper read before the Kittochtinny Historical Society, Chambersburg, May 25, 1922, p. 11. His statement about Mont Alto, describing in detail what was lost to fire (but not the cause), is no doubt correct as he was a manager. Separately, on p. 7 he says of Pine Grove Furnace that "[t]he original 'big house' was burned about 35 years ago, having caught from a mountain fire" which corresponds roughly to 1887 and does not quite match with fires in 1872 and 1915. Whether Wiestling's account informed Flower's 11 years later is unclear.
39. HYPERLINK "<http://newspaperarchive.com/the-star-and-sentinel/>" *The Star and Sentinel* [Gettysburg] on HYPERLINK "<http://newspaperarchive.com/the-star-and-sentinel/1889-05-07/>" May 7, 1889. As with Big Pond Furnace, the fire at Mont Alto occurred just after the ironworks had been extensively renovated.
40. *Star and Sentinel* [Gettysburg], December 10, 1903.
41. Watts, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
42. *Star and Sentinel* [Gettysburg], October 5, 1915.
43. Flower, *op. cit.*, photograph on p. 22. Also demonstrating the location, a building labeled "Store" is shown just to the northeast of the mansion on a site map dated April 1914 (one

- year before the fire) prepared by the Pennsylvania Department of Forestry, on display in a kiosk outside the Pine Grove Furnace paymaster's building, March 2012.
44. *Star and Sentinel* [Gettysburg], January 1, 1916.
  45. Numerous people assisted in my attempt to learn more about this elusive event. Betty Landis Carson, whose family used the mill as a summer residence in the 1920s, kindly provided photographs showing the roof removed; memories of the family are that the damage was indeed from fire. Special thanks is also owed to nearby cabin owner Georgia R. Freet, whose grandfather James A. Royer, Sr., an architect, produced several beautiful sketches of Pine Grove Furnace buildings including the old mill, reproduced here with her permission. Finally, I am grateful to David Heath, a Penn State student working with the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy at the Ironmaster's Mansion, for first pointing out to me that the top of the mill had suffered significant damage.
  46. DeCoster, Lester. *The Legacy of Penn's Woods: A History of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry*. PA Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg PA, 1995, pp. 16–18.
  47. Curren, Robert and Art Becker. *Pennsylvania Lumber Museum: Pennsylvania Trail Of History Guide*. Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg PA, 2005, p. 37.
  48. DeCoster, *op. cit.*, p. 61.
  49. *Gettysburg Times*, May 8, 1909.
  50. *Gettysburg Times*, August 12, 1909.
  51. *Gettysburg Times*, March 29, April 11, and April 16, 1910.
  52. *Adams County News*, May 13, 1911.
  53. *Gettysburg Times* and *Star and Sentinel* [Gettysburg], both of May 17, 1917.
  54. *Gettysburg Times*, April 28, 1924.
  55. *Gettysburg Times*, April 4 and April 20, 1926.
  56. *New York Times*, May 4, 1930.
  57. *Gettysburg Times*, May 5, 1930.
  58. *Gettysburg Times*, April 17, 1942.
  59. *The Sentinel* [Carlisle], May 2, 2011.

## The Indian School Fire Brigade

*Randy Watts*

The Indian Industrial School operated on the site of what is now known as Carlisle Barracks from 1879 to 1918. The school has been extensively documented and its best known student, Jim Thorpe, put Carlisle in the international spotlight for his performance at the Olympic Games in 1912.

One aspect of the Carlisle Indian School that has not been documented is the Fire Brigade operated by the students. The brigade was organized to protect the school's facilities from fire and it also provided fire protection to the surrounding area and assisted at a number of fires in Carlisle in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was not the first, nor the last, fire department to operate at the facility but is certainly one of the more interesting.

Over the years Carlisle has received firefighting assistance from the various tenants of Carlisle Barracks. The first documented reference to a fire department on post is in a newspaper article in March 1845. The night of the Town Hall fire the Barracks, as it was referred to then, sent an engine and crew to assist and was credited with helping to save the town as noted in the account published in the *Volunteer*:

The sparks and flakes of fire were carried by the wind down to the extreme lower end of town, and we understand one stable roof caught within a short distance of the spring. In preventing the further spread of the fire we must not forget to mention the timely and effective assistance rendered by a detachment of the US troops from the Barracks, who were dispatched by Captain Washington, with their fire apparatus, to the aid of the citizens.<sup>1</sup>

Carlisle experienced another major fire in 1851 that destroyed dozens of buildings in the block to the rear of North Hanover Street between Louthier and High Streets. At this fire "the soldiers from the barracks marched into town and rendered most valuable aid."<sup>2</sup>

Little has surfaced regarding fire protection at the Barracks after the 1851 conflagration until the establishment of the Indian School. The town provided assistance to the 'garrison' as it was known in 1857. Based on the newspaper account of that fire it does not appear that they had any fire apparatus of their own at that time:

On Thursday afternoon last a fire broke out in one of the U.S. Garrison buildings near our borough. On hearing the alarm our citizens hastened to the scene and the firemen got out their engines and hose carriages with all possible speed. The cold, however, was intense, (the thermometer standing at about zero) and the road to the garrison (today's East North Street and Garrison Lane) being banked up with snow drifts it was at a very slow rate, and with great difficulty, that the firemen succeeded in dragging their machines to the ground. Before they arrived the fire had attained good headway. One end of the building was completely enveloped in flames and the fire was insidiously making its way under the tin roof along the whole extent of the building. The garrison is well supplied with water from the Carlisle water works, but unfortunately one or two of the fire plugs were frozen, and a limited supply only was to be obtained from the others. The hose was speedily attached and the machines put in operation, but great difficulty was experienced in keeping them at work, owing to the almost instant freezing of the water as it was supplied to the engines. Col. May, with his junior officers and private soldiers exerted every effort and rendered all the assistance in their power to the firemen, who labored zealously for several hours, under the most trying circumstances, to check the progress of the fire. But the intense coldness of the weather made the handling of the hose and engine apparatus almost impossible, and completely frustrated the labors of the firemen. The whole building had finally to be given up to the flames, but the spread of the fire to other quarters was effectually prevented.

The suffering endured by the firemen and soldiers who were actively engaged in managing the engine and hose, was very great. Two of the soldiers were so nearly frozen that they had to be carried off the ground to the hospital, and many others had their ears, hands or feet frost bitten.<sup>3</sup>

There is no evidence of any attempt at firefighting when the 'post' was burned by the confederates in July 1863. Until it was clearly established that southern troops had left both the barracks and the area of the gas works to the east of town which was also burned, those areas would have still been considered an

active combat zone. As most of the town's volunteer firemen had been under arms they would not have risked capture by the enemy. By the time it was established that the rebels were gone the fires had likely burned out.

When the Empire Fire Company moved into their new West Pomfret Street firehouse on Washington's Birthday (February 22) 1869 they held a parade to commemorate the occasion. The lead position in the procession was assigned to the Carlisle Barracks brigade with their "beautiful hand engine handsomely decorated with the national colors."<sup>4</sup>

The Carlisle Indian School opened on the site of Carlisle Barracks in 1879. At some point in time the school organized a fire brigade, operated by the students, however, the exact date of its formation is unknown. The first indication of the presence of the fire brigade appears in a report of income generated by the facility's shops. The report, published in 1881, includes an entry for income of \$60 from the sale of a hose carriage made by the wagon shop and 'sold' to the school.<sup>5</sup> The facility was provided with fire hydrants supplied by Carlisle's water system and the brigade would have been able to operate a hose line from the hydrants even without an engine. This was commonly done in Carlisle at the time and a 'plug stream' was used in town as late as the early 1970's.

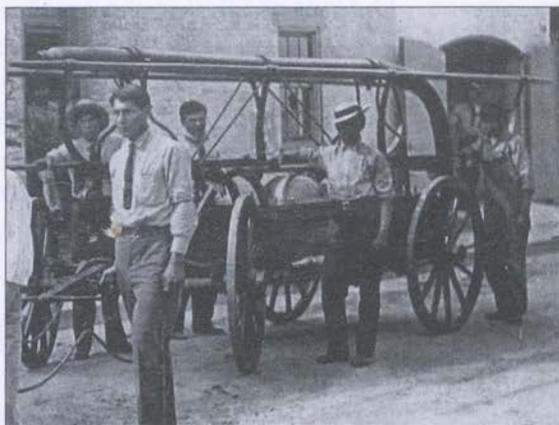
The first fire on the campus occurred in February 1883 and was covered in the school paper:

"Fire! Fire! Fire!" rung loud and clear over our grounds the other night just as the pupils were marching to chapel. The oil in the tube of a student's lamp in one of the teacher's rooms had ignited and in an effort to smother the flames, the lamp upset. The burning table cover and chair with the lamp were caught and tossed out into the snow and order was soon restored; while all were filled with wonder and thankfulness that this was the first cry of the kind that had been heard on the grounds during the three years and a half of the life of this school.<sup>6</sup>

No other information has surfaced until 1888. In that year the school purchased a side brake, hand fire engine which was named "Uncle Sam" by the school. It arrived in Carlisle at noon on January 21, 1888 and was unloaded at 'the junction'. (Gettysburg Junction, near Estep Electric on East Louthier Street in Carlisle.) A few days later the school paper recorded the events of the day:

Last Saturday there was a grand procession from the Junction to the School. The new engine marked 'Uncle Sam, Indian School, Carlisle Pa.' had come and it took forty boys to draw it to its new quarters. This seems a good many, even for a first class hand engine. But when one comes to think of it they must be very remarkable boys to have it take only forty of them to run 'Uncle Sam'. The business has never been done so cheaply before.

It is a very pretty engine resplendent with red and gilt, but the important thing about it is that it will do good work. It is soon to be taken out and tried. It was made in Brockton, a town in Massachusetts where they turn a great deal of iron into gold. How do they do this? By manufacturing machinery, selling it and making money on it.<sup>7</sup>



A close up from a larger photo showing several students with "Uncle Sam" taken circa 1908. The 'brakes' are shown folded up in the stowed position. When the engine arrived on the scene they would be lowered to the side of the engine where they would be operated by up to 52 men.

*CCHS Photo Archives*

The engine, which was actually manufactured by Button of Waterford, New York, was originally owned by the Columbia Fire Company No. 5 of North Bridgewater, Massachusetts. North Bridgewater became Brockton in the 1870's and that town sold the hand engine when it was replaced by a steam pumper. Richard Pratt, the school's administrator, had ties to Brockton which would account for the school's purchase. Carlisle had disposed of all its hand engines at least fifteen years earlier.

Built in 1870 the engine was a No. 2 size and was capable of flowing over 200 gallons of water per minute. The pump, equipped with two 9¼ inch diameter cylinders, was operated manually by men operating the brakes (handles) on the sides of the engine. The engine could be supplied by a stream from a fire hydrant or by drafting water from a static source such as a stream or pond. The brakes were 22½ feet long and could accommodate a maximum of 52 men. The engine, which was always hand pulled while at the school, weighed 2,600 pounds.<sup>8</sup>

A widely published photo, taken around 1903 shows no less than 34 male students pulling the engine. While this may seem like a large number they

would have been needed to achieve any speed while responding to the fire and then they were needed to operate the pumps. Operating the pumps for any length of time would have required rotating crews as the work was very tiring – a typical pace would be 60 or more strokes of the brakes per minute. At 200 gallons per minute, a moderate pace, the pump would move nearly a ton of water per minute.

From the start the Indian School established ties with the community and the students frequently visited the town. The fire brigade took part in the July 4<sup>th</sup> parade in 1888:

The fourth at our school passed off very quietly. In town there was a parade in which our boys took part. In their part of the procession first came the band, then the trade boys, each carrying some tool used at his trade. Back of this was a float on which were the productions of our different industries, tastefully arranged. After this the wee boys came drawing the fire hose and were followed by a party of large boys drawing the fire engine.<sup>9</sup>

No documentation of how the brigade operated has been found but based on a review of all the papers published by the school it appears to have been a very utilitarian operation with none of the organization or operations of an actual fire company. Other Indian schools suffered major fires and the government took steps to provide fire protection. At Carlisle they provided a hose cart and the hand engine. Until 1905, the engine was kept in a storage area referred to as the 'coal shed'. There would have been no day room and no reason for the brigade to be in the area in their free time. When the alarm was sounded the boys who were assigned to the duty would respond and bring the hose cart and engine to the fire. The brigade was under the overall command of the Maintenance Director.

Although there appears to have been no formal organization of the brigade (it was not a recognized group or club), it rated mention in the school papers very infrequently. There is no evidence that the members thought of themselves as a fire company and they were not a social organization like a typical volunteer fire company. They came together when there was a fire drill or parade but spent the rest of their time engaged in school work or other leisure-time activities. The membership would have changed continuously throughout the life of the school as new students were assigned to fill the places of those who graduated or dropped out. Nonetheless the brigade proved popular in the town's newspapers and was welcomed by the other fire companies.

The first documented report about the brigade was published in the *Daily Herald* in October of 1888:

### Slight Fire – Extinguished by Indians

At about half past ten o'clock this morning a fire broke out in the creamery on Judge Henderson's property north of town (present day Route 11) which is operated by the Messrs. Forward. It caught from the smoke stack. The fire was in the inside and did not break out upon the exterior of the building. Those employed about the creamery worked hard to put out the flames and although the fire was a slight one it soon got beyond their control.

But the Indian Training School is but a short distance from the creamery and at this stage of the conflagration they came to the rescue and by hard work succeeded in extinguishing it. Those present say the Indians worked with all the skill and order of veteran firemen and for their efforts they deserve much credit and praise.<sup>10</sup>

In January 1889 there was a close call at the school reported in *The Indian Helper*:

#### Almost a Fire

There might have been a mob, Sunday evening before Christmas had not our Commander been on hand.

While he was in the act of speaking to the school screams of children were heard in the distance. It was the little girls, and their cries meant that the girl's quarters were on fire and they were frightened. Every boy and girl of the five hundred present fixed himself or herself in the attitude of springing and running for the door.

The loud command "Halt" was most admirably obeyed. An officer was quietly dispatched to discover the cause of the alarm. He returned, called out Company A. In the meantime Mr. Mason Pratt was on the spot doing active service alone.

The large boys who soon reached there kept cool heads and the flames were out even before 'Uncle Sam', our fire engine was ready to pump. It is thought that a girl must have gone to the closet sometime in the evening for an article of clothing and held the lamp where it made a spark. The closet was completely charred. In three minutes more the whole room would have been in flames.

The same evening a lamp exploded in the dining hall which caused great excitement, but little damage.<sup>11</sup>

As a side note the school used the terms *small* and *large* rather than *young* and *old* to describe their students.

For the first year or so after the engine arrived it was a novelty and the school paper reported on even the smallest details. In February the engine was used to pump out a cistern and they noted "Twenty or thirty boys pumping the strong arms of the engine can make the water fly."<sup>12</sup> In March they noted: "Our engine (not injun) got a thump (not hump) in its back, and had to be doctored, by the Manufacturing Co."<sup>13</sup>

About a year later in August of 1889 the *Daily Evening Sentinel* reported that a barn owned by Mr. Houston near the "poor house" (current site of the County Home) caught fire and the Indian School brigade came to the rescue:

The Indian School company was the first to respond. They were within about a half mile of the place by a private road through their farm, and with their hand engine "Uncle Sam" they made good time and got there just as the barn was all ablaze, and the fire at its hottest. They got to the spring near the barn and threw two streams on the side nearest the house keeping the heat down very much and probably saving the house, they were working some time before any town company got there and they kept at it about an hour.<sup>14</sup>

The brigade would come to enjoy a good working relationship with the Carlisle Fire Department and especially the Union Fire Company. As the town prepared for the Centennial of the Union Fire Company and the related State Firemen's Convention in September of 1889 the *Daily Herald* wrote of the Indian School's brigade:

One of the attractions in the firemen's parade in September will be the fire brigade from the Indian Training School with their Button hand engine. This will be a chance for the Indian boys to display their fine machinery behind their own band of 20 pieces, and as this will be the first appearance of the boys in a regular fireman's parade (and in fact we might say the first appearance of a thoroughly organized and fully equipped fire company composed entirely of Indian boys in any parade in this country) they will no doubt parade a large number and make a fine display. While in the town they will be the guests of the Union Fire Company.<sup>15</sup>

The brigade, hosted by the Union Fire Company while in town, subsequently marched in the Centennial parade and was described in an article in the *Herald*:

The largest body in the parade on Saturday was the Indian School Fire Brigade. They comprised 100 able body young men and they were headed by the Indian School Band. They drew after them the engine

"Uncle Sam" and truly made a fine appearance. They were a great credit to the parade.<sup>16</sup>

The school newspaper wrote of the Union's Centennial:

We were obliged to go to press without giving the particulars of the Great Parade which occurred in town last Thursday afternoon. The occasion was the Centennial of the Union Fire Company, and the annual meeting of the State Fireman's Association. The parade was a magnificent spectacle, and the largest the town ever experienced, consisting of four divisions and requiring an hour to pass a given point. The fireman as a class was a fine body of men. Mr. Goodyear aided in marshaling the Third Division. A hundred of our boys commanded by Mr. Campbell, and headed by the school band, with our 'Uncle Sam' fire engine in the rear, marched in the First Division. It being such a great occasion the whole school was given a half-holiday.<sup>17</sup>

Not long after the Centennial the school's paper noted "the Union Fire Company band presented Dennison Wheelock, our cornetist, with a very fine centennial badge as a token of friendship."<sup>18</sup> The Union at this time had their own band and admired Wheelock's abilities.

Things were quiet until the fall of 1890 when two barns burned near the school.

#### Fire

At about eleven o'clock on Monday night the school was startled by the ringing of bells and the cry of 'fire!' Looking out from the teacher's quarters over the boy's quarters the flames seemed to dart up from the printing office, and the chief clerk might have been seen wending her way in some haste at that midnight hour to save the subscription books and what else she could, but it was soon discovered that the fire was from the barn on the farm a quarter of a mile beyond, on the pike. The Indian boys, always on the alert and ready for such emergencies were out in a surprisingly quick time, and had two streams of water playing upon the flames with their reliable hand-engine 'Uncle Sam' but the flames had acquired too much headway, however, to be stopped, and the barn was utterly consumed, although some adjoining sheds were saved. The town papers say:

When the Empire Hook and Ladder Company and the crowd arrived on the scene the Indian boys, with their fire department were already there and throwing two streams of water and doing noble work in extinguishing the flames. (Republican)

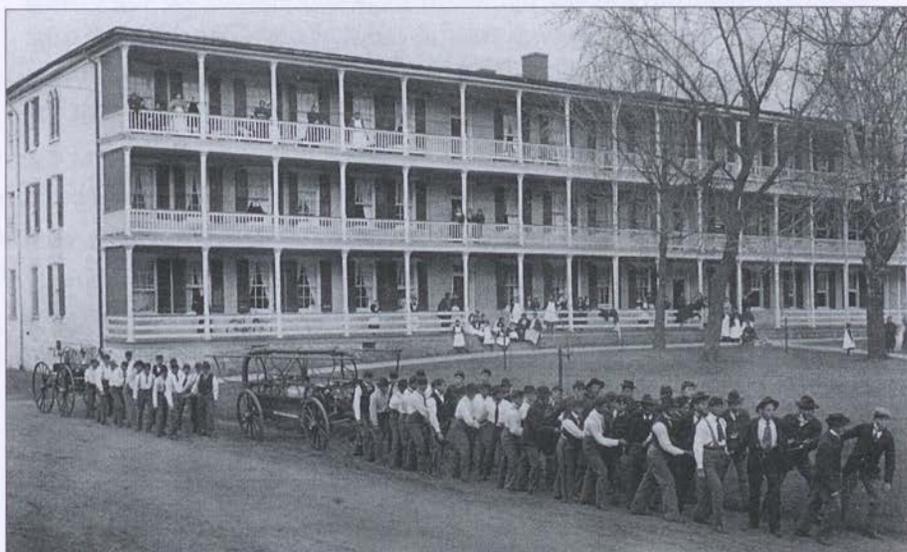
The fire company at the Indian School turned out and did good work, throwing several streams on the fire. The Indian boys worked very hard to save the building, and Mrs. Miller desires to express her thanks for their noble efforts. (Sentinel)<sup>19</sup>

Just a week later:

The burning of a large barn on the edge of town again called out our fire department on Tuesday night. The boys did excellent work and have the thanks of the town's people. We hope the fire bugs who are setting the barns in this vicinity on fire will be caught and rightly punished for such dastardly business. Detectives have their eyes on one or two people whom they suspect.

Our boys were rewarded for their work at the fire on the 3<sup>rd</sup> by a treat of bananas, grapes and other fruits, from Mrs. Miller, the owner of the barn they tried to save. With the box of fruit came the following card.

"Mrs. Miller desires to return thanks to the Indian firemen who so kindly came with 'Uncle Sam' to the fire, and hopes they will accept the accompanying box with her sincere gratitude."<sup>20</sup>



A widely published photo of the fire brigade pulling "Uncle Sam" and the hose cart while the female students watched from their dormitory. The photograph was taken around 1903. The hose carriage was purchased from the Union Fire Company.

The 'girl's dorm' would be destroyed in a spectacular fire in the 1920's.

*CCHS Photo Archives*

The Indian School brigade provided assistance at larger fires in Carlisle for many years. In December of 1890 they responded to a major fire at the Manufacturing Company.<sup>21</sup> From all indications the students were welcomed by the firemen of Carlisle. The school paper reprinted the following article from the *Herald*:

#### Intrepid Firemen

The Indian boys are making a reputation as firemen along with many other accomplishments common in the new life for which they are preparing. They have aided very materially at several fires of recent occurrence in town and vicinity and show a promptness and efficiency which always makes their presence welcome in the hour of danger. This morning they came upon the scene of the fire with a rush. On either side of the road through which they must pass to take position was burning material, the flames from which overlapped and made it decidedly uncomfortable and unsafe to pass, but they did not hesitate. Dashing through with their apparatus 'Uncle Sam' was placed in position and rendered all the service which a limited supply of water admitted.

In September 1891 the *Sentinel* reported on a stable fire on Walnut Street:

The Indian boys heard the alarm bells and started for town with "Uncle Sam". They made such good speed that they "got there" in time to be of considerable service. They had a water fight with the Union, and made the latter "take water" too. They were plucky fellows at the nozzle.<sup>22</sup>

On May 11, 1892 the Troy Steam Laundry, at the time a large frame building, was destroyed in a spectacular fire and the Indian School was called to assist. *The Herald* noted: "The Indian boys applied plenty of muscle to their hand engine." The school paper wrote:

The *Carlisle Herald* says of the work of the Indian firemen in town Tuesday night at the burning of the Troy Steam Laundry: An organization which also did effective work was the Indian School Fire Company, arrived upon the scene with their hand engine "Uncle Sam" which they stationed at the corner of North and Pitt streets. The huge apparatus was manned by at least sixty stalwart Indian boys who worked at the pumps vigorously and speedily brought to bear an effective stream upon the flames. The Indians worked with ardor, and too much credit cannot be given them for their labor at last night's conflagration as well as for their assistance rendered the local department upon similar occasions in the past.<sup>23</sup>

During this period the school had no fires but the school's newspaper commenting on a minor fire that took place on one of their farms when oil from a lamp was ignited noted "At any rate the fright will make us all the more careful. There being so many lamps in use at our school it is a great wonder that there have not been more fires. We have been greatly blessed in this respect, but long for the day when electric lights may be placed in all the buildings, as in the school building at present, when there will be no more danger of fire."<sup>24</sup>

The Indian School brigade provided valuable assistance at a major fire in 1895. A fire broke out to the rear of a large brewery in the first block of East North Street and quickly spread to involve buildings on Penn Street, Kerr's Avenue and North Hanover Street, eventually spreading to the fairgrounds that later became the Masland plant on Spring Road. The *Carlisle Daily Herald* provides a stirring account of the spread of the fire storm and the role played by the students:

So many fires had broken out on Penn street when the firemen were unable to work as yet that the excitement on this narrow thoroughfare was intense. Buildings on both sides were burning, families removing the furniture, women screaming and men half frantic, the breeze filled the yards, roofs and streets with red hot ashes and burning shingles. It looked as if that entire section of the town was doomed, when, as if in answer to the prayers, the wind suddenly ceased and the sparks no longer flew. It seemed as if the hand of Providence interfered when the danger seemed greatest. Without much difficulty the bucket brigades put out the fires on this street and the firemen proceeded out North Hanover Street to the Henderson residence which was a mass of flames.

This house was owned by Hon. R. M. Henderson and was formerly owned by Alfred Rinehart. It was occupied by William Henderson, the insurance agent, who also conducted a cigar store. The fire was caused by sparks falling upon the roof and could not be extinguished in time to prevent the blaze from spreading. The Indians, who were located on North Hanover Street with the Cumberland and Good Will, which had been taken from the brewery fire, threw streams on the roof and put it out.

The house of G.T.B. Herman ignited from this house and the cornice and portion of the roof were burned. The house of Mrs. Mary Arney, occupied by John Shaeffer and family, caught fire and was in great danger of complete destruction; so great was the danger that the furniture and household goods were carried out and taken to the opposite side of the street. This house was saved by the Indians.<sup>25</sup>

An undated excerpt from the collection of the Union Fire Company from approximately 1895 reads:

The School is provided with an excellent hand fire engine, and the boys are trained in its use, so that within three minutes it is possible to throw water from two sets of hose upon any building in the School grounds. During the sixteen years of the School's existence, only one threatening fire incident has occurred, and that was caused by tramps firing a stack of fodder adjoining the School barn. Although more than half a mile distant, the boys were so prompt with the engine that the fire was suppressed before the barn was materially damaged.<sup>26</sup>

The brigade performed more mundane service at the school in February 1896:

"Uncle Sam" the fire engine had an unusual work to perform last week. After the thaw and heavy rain the water from the spring in the meadow backed up and poured into the boiler house. Several times during the day and night it had to be pumped out, which made a sort of picnic for the boys, for didn't they have coffee and bread for refreshments? Mr. Weber knows how to look out for his boys.<sup>27</sup>

In 1896 the Union Fire Company sold a used hose carriage to Capt. Pratt at the Indian School for \$50.00.<sup>28</sup> This would have allowed them to carry at least 1,000 feet of 2½ inch fire hose.

Based on the good relationship with the Indian School and in recognition of their contribution to the town's fire protection, Carlisle's borough council decided to donate the Cumberland Fire Companies old steamer to them in 1902. There was, however, some dispute as to the ownership and value of the engine. An article in the *Sentinel* in 1902 states:

Mr. Humrich (Solicitor) submitted correspondence with the American Steam Fire Engine company relative to the price the borough must pay for the old Cumberland engine, which was given in part payment on the new engine and later given to the Indian school by the town. The Engine company's agent stated when here that he would sell the old machine for \$255 and now they demand \$275. Mr. Humrich was ordered to continue negotiations and explain further.<sup>29</sup>

In November 1903 council received bids from two individuals for the old Cumberland engine and the Indian School never received it.<sup>30</sup> Who, if anyone, finally took possession of the steamer is not known. The Cumberland's old engine remained in town for some time and was stored at the sewage treatment plant. Its final disposition is not known.

While relations between the town and school seem amicable based on the preceding article some change, or changes, seem to have taken place between the town fire department and the school's fire brigade during this period. The 1895 conflagration is the last time there is any record of the Indians assisting Carlisle at fires. Carlisle created the position of Fire Marshal (actually Fire Chief but the term could not be used politically) and also established a Fire Patrol (forerunner of the Fire Police) to rope off fires and isolate the public from fires in 1896. No change in attitude toward the school was noted in the papers but informally this may have impacted the relationship. Written histories of the school also note friction between the Administrator (Pratt) and the Indian Bureau. These issues may have resulted in procedural changes that kept the brigade on the grounds.

The school's founder and long term leader was forced to retire from his position in 1904 and he was replaced by Major W. A. Mercer.<sup>31</sup> A number of changes took place in the operation of the school as a result.

In June 1905 the school paper reported that excavations were being made for a new lumber house to the rear of the stone building then in use for that purpose and that the building would then be converted into a fire house in which the fire engine, hose carts and hook and ladder truck would be stored. The building being referred to was the former Blacksmith Shop. It had subsequently been used as the Y.M.C.A. and was then converted to store lumber. No photos have been found of the building after it was converted to the firehouse.<sup>32</sup> So far as is known the school never owned a hook and ladder truck and the reference to same was probably a misunderstanding when describing the hooks and ladders used by the brigade.



The former Blacksmith Shop, shown here used as the Y.M.C.A. that was converted to house the fire apparatus in 1905. It remained in use until 1908.

*CCHS Photo Archives*

The work was complete in September and *The Arrow* noted:

The fire apparatus has been transferred from the old, dingy and dusty coal house where they have been housed for years, to the new firehouse which is located directly in the rear of the large boys' quarters. 500 feet of new hose, pike poles and crow bars have been added to the equipment.<sup>33</sup>

In 1906 "Uncle Sam" was thoroughly overhauled by Mr. Weber and his boys. "The test made after the work was done demonstrated that "Uncle Sam" will do better work than he has done in years."<sup>34</sup> Mr. Harry Weber was the school's Engineer and worked there from 1899 to 1917.<sup>35</sup>



The hose carriage and hand pumper posed for the photographer. The 'fire house' was located in the one story portion of the building in the right of the photograph. This would be the 1908 addition to the boiler house and the third 'fire house' at the school.

*CCHS Photo Archives*

The Indians marched in Carlisle's 1907 Thanksgiving Parade and the *Herald* described their participation:

Director Claude M. Stouffer and Carlisle Indian band, 38 pieces. Carlisle Indian color flag 'Old Glory', and 'Uncle Sam', the Indian school's hand engine, drawn by 66 Indian students. Indian hose carriage, drawn by 14 students.

The school paper reported that 83 'large boys' attended the parade and that "The boys were very tired after they got back from the parade."<sup>36</sup>

In 1908 Moses Friedman became the School's administrator and again the fire brigade received attention.<sup>37</sup> In May 1908 the school paper published an article titled New Fire Protection:

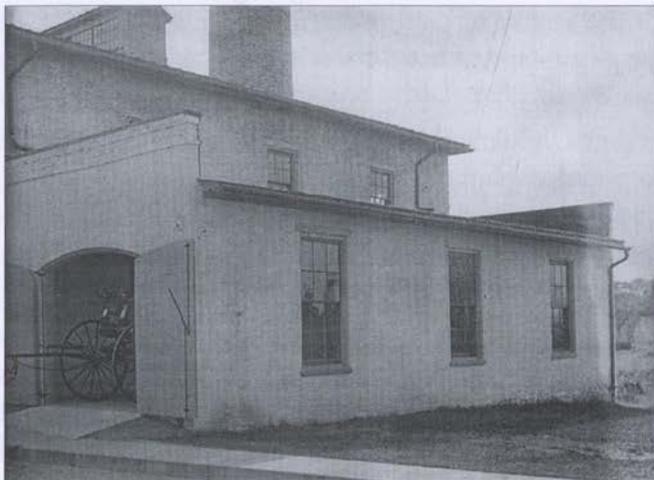
On account of the recent disasters due from fires in schools and public places throughout the country, institutions everywhere are awakening to the need for fire protection. Workmen are engaged at present in putting the girls' building in such shape that in case of a dangerous conflagration the students can get out in the shortest possible time. Unique fire escapes are being constructed in the court of the building and also on the outside porches. A new fire house is being built alongside the boiler house for the exclusive housing of the fire apparatus – the fire engine, hose cart, ladders, etc. This is a very central location, and the apparatus can be moved without the loss of time in case of necessity. The building is of brick.<sup>38</sup>

The project was completed in June:

The new home for the hose cart, hook and ladder truck, etc., has been completed. It makes a much needed addition to our school and assures us of better protection against fire. It is near the large boys' quarters and handy to the shops, so that the apparatus can be reached easily and quickly.<sup>39</sup>

The brigade marched in Carlisle's 1909 Old Home Week parade and a Philadelphia paper noted "The fire department of the Carlisle Indian School, with its military training, was one of the finest features of the parade, and one of the most popular."<sup>40</sup>

An article published by the *New York Times* in 1911 provides a detailed description of fire protection at the school:



The 1908 fire house addition to the boiler house.

*CCHS Photo Archives*

## Fire Drill for Indians

Carlisle, Penn, April 23 – The Indian Bureau at Washington has adopted for use in all the Indian schools the system of fire protection which is originated at the Carlisle Institution. The Carlisle School Fire Department numbers seventy grown male pupils, and the apparatus consists of a hose carriage, large hand engine and pump, and complete set of ladders and salvage apparatus.

To aid the firemen the 1,200 Indian boys and girls at Carlisle are especially disciplined. The fire alarms are sounded by certain detonations, from the big siren on the boiler house, indicating in which of the twenty-five school buildings a fire has occurred, and immediately all students and employees of the school, no matter where they are on the grounds, leave what they are doing and proceed with all possible haste to their respective quarters, where all are formed into line, and a complete roll call is made to ascertain who is absent. A guard is dispatched to the room of any absentee to ascertain his or her whereabouts.

School buildings and workshops, holding from 300 to 800 students are emptied in less than a minute and a half, and in three minutes after the fire alarm all have reached their quarters, formed into a line and the roll is being called.

Fire drills of the entire school are held several times weekly. The fire brigade boys are those only excused from forming into line before their quarters, and these boys hurry for the apparatus, performing their work with the ability of paid firemen. Large water plugs are located all over the grounds, and hand chemicals placed in every building, are charged twice yearly.<sup>41</sup>

If there was ever a 'hook and ladder' or a wagon fitted with ladders and other equipment no photograph has surfaced.

The preparations reported in the New York Times article paid off when the school's paper reported the following in 1912:

Our Efficient Student Fire Department (1912)

What for a while threatened to be a very serious and disastrous fire, occurred on Thursday morning when, during his regular rounds, the night watchman saw smoke issuing from a window of one of the rooms next to the Principal Teacher's office in the school building. He immediately ran over to the Large Boys' Quarters, aroused the disciplinarian, had the alarm sounded, and called the Chief of the Fire Department, Mr. Harry F. Weber, who is employed as engineer of the school. The boys

dressed with great rapidity and were on their way to the fire without any loss of time. They had water on the flames in four minutes.

It was found that the flames emanated from a closet underneath the Auditorium and opening into the Principal Teacher's office. The fire had a good start and had it not been discovered at the time it was, or had there been any delay in the Fire Department becoming actively engaged in putting it out, there would have been very little chance to save the building, which is undoubtedly the largest and most expensive on the grounds. A conservative estimate of its value with the contents is \$75,000. The fire was under control in about twenty minutes and was entirely extinguished by 5:30. As a precaution, a call was sent in for the borough fire department of Carlisle, and the engine and hose department responded with great willingness and promptness. They were not needed, however. The students comported themselves most admirably, and there was a quiet effectiveness about their work which indicated that they understood the seriousness of the situation and the importance of putting out the fire.

The old Uncle Sam pump, which is about a hundred years old, and which is used to increase the pressure in the mains, did its work most admirably, manned as it was by relays of boys, 16 on each side. As it was, the damage done to the building was very slight, being under \$250. The stairs were injured and the window and door frames and door burned out, and part of the floor burned. The repairs will be finished in about a week.

The fire was due to the spontaneous combustion of some rags which had been used to oil floors and which were neglected to have been burned.<sup>42</sup>

This is the last documented response regarding the brigade. The Carlisle fire department units that responded would have been horse drawn at that time. It is not known which units responded but most likely would have been the Union and Cumberland. The entrance to the school had been moved to the Route 11 side of the school. While no longer in use this old entrance is now known as Pratt Lane.

A similar threatening situation occurred from the same cause in the same building in 1916 but was discovered before flames actually broke out and the fire brigade was not called.<sup>43</sup>

While the school's brigade no longer ran calls with Carlisle they still maintained a relationship with the fire departments and the town. In late 1912 the

Indian School participated in the parade that took place in conjunction with the dedication of Friendship's new fire station and brought their hose carriage and "Uncle Sam".<sup>44</sup>

The school also marched in the June 1915 parade for the arrival of the Good Will's engine with "88 Indian young men drawing the old and interesting 'Uncle Sam' hand engine".<sup>45</sup> This appears to have been their last parade with the engine. The Indian School was closed in August 1918 and the final disposition of the equipment is unknown.

In late 1919 the Carlisle Fire Chief recommended to council that a fire alarm box be installed at the "U.S. Hospital", implying that Carlisle provided fire protection for the facility at that time.<sup>46</sup>

In April 1924 there was a major fire at the barracks and the *Sentinel* reported that the Barracks Fire Department was on the scene. By this time they were operating a motorized Scagraves fire engine. While the newspaper account is not specific it appears the engine was operated by soldiers from the post.<sup>47</sup>

The Carlisle Barracks and Carlisle Fire Departments continue to provide mutual aid to each other as this is written in 2011, continuing a relationship that goes back to at least 1845. The students of the Carlisle Indian School and their fire brigade contributed to this tradition for many years, earning the admiration and thanks of Carlisle's fireman for their efforts at major fires that endangered the town.



The interior of the 1908 fire station. The hose carriage was purchased from the Union Fire Company of Carlisle in 1896.

*CCHS Photo Archives*

## Endnotes

1. *American Volunteer*, Carlisle PA, March 27, 1845.
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3. *Herald and Expositor*, Carlisle PA Wednesday January 28, 1857.
4. *Ibid*, July 26, 1869.
5. *The Morning Star*, Indian Training School, Carlisle PA October 1881.
6. *The Morning Star*, Indian Training School, Carlisle PA February 1883.
7. *The Indian Helper*, Indian Industrial School, Carlisle PA January 27, 1888.
8. *The Encyclopedia of American Hand Fire Engines*, published by Handtub Junction, USA, Fall 2001.
9. *The Indian Helper*, Indian Industrial School, Carlisle PA July 6, 1888.
10. *Daily Herald*, Wednesday, October 24, 1888.
11. *The Indian Helper*, Indian Training School, Carlisle PA January 4, 1889.
12. *Ibid*, February 15, 1889.
13. *Ibid*, March 22, 1889, The Manufacturing Company survives today as Frog Switch.
14. *Daily Evening Sentinel*, Carlisle PA Saturday, August 17, 1889.
15. *Daily Herald*, Carlisle PA Thursday August 8, 1889.
16. *Carlisle Herald*, Carlisle PA September 26, 1889.
17. *The Indian Helper*, September 27, 1889.
18. *Ibid*, October 4, 1889.
19. *Ibid*, November 7, 1890.
20. *Ibid*, November 14, 1890.
21. *Carlisle Herald*, Carlisle PA December 18, 1890.
22. *The Evening Sentinel*, Carlisle PA September 26, 1890.
23. *The Indian Helper*, May 13, 1892.
24. *Ibid*, December 4, 1892.
25. *Carlisle Daily Herald*, Carlisle PA, March 1, 1895.
26. From a clipping in the collection of the Union Fire Company, no source information available.
27. *The Indian Helper*, February 14, 1896.
28. Minute Books of the Union Fire Company, Vol. 3, June 9 and August 11, 1896.
29. *The Evening Sentinel*, March 13, 1902.
30. *Ibid*, November 13, 1903.
31. Witmer, Linda F. (1993) *The Indian Industrial School Carlisle Pennsylvania 1879-1918* Carlisle PA: Cumberland County Historical Society p. 59.
32. *The Arrow*, Indian Industrial School, Carlisle PA June 22, 1905.
33. *Ibid*, September 22, 1905.
34. *Ibid*, February 23, 1906.

35. Witmer, p. 153.
36. *The Arrow*, op. cit., December 6, 1907.
37. Witmer p. 73.
38. *The Arrow*, op. cit., May 8, 1908.
39. *Ibid*, June 19, 1908.
40. *Ibid*, September 10, 1909, quoting the Philadelphia North American.
41. *The New York Times*, published April 24, 1911.
42. *The Carlisle Arrow*, Carlisle Indian School, Carlisle PA May 17, 1912.
43. *Ibid*, January 14, 1916.
44. *The Evening Sentinel*, Carlisle PA December 12, 1912.
45. *Ibid*, June 22, 1915.
46. *Ibid*, October 10, 1919.
47. *Ibid*, April 25, 1923.

## The North End A's

*Paul D. Hoch*

In the Carlisle of 1946 with the war over, the US Army Medical Field Service School left the Barracks for Ft. Sam Houston in Texas,<sup>1</sup> the Pennsylvania Palomino Exhibitors Association was incorporated,<sup>2</sup> McCoy Brothers, Inc. construction service was established,<sup>3</sup> and BSA Troop 173 was chartered at Carlisle Barracks.<sup>4</sup> And boys played baseball all summer.

One of the best teams in Carlisle could be found nearly every day playing on the old Fifth Ward playground near Pitt and C Streets, also known as the "Masland Field."<sup>5</sup> Later, C. H. Masland & Sons built a production facility on the field, but for this group of roughly 14 and 15-year-olds, in their maroon t-shirts proudly proclaiming them as the North End A's, it was where they loved to play baseball. They played anyone that would play. Any place they wanted. Anytime. All summer.

Of course, as with every year, September meant back to school. And then it was listening to the windup of the major league baseball season on the radio, picking a favorite to win the World Series, and dreaming of their own "next summer," which they all knew would be too long in coming.

Finally the summer of 1947 burst upon them, and they could once again be found on their home field in the North End. Again playing anybody, anywhere, anytime. But this summer took a slightly different turn. Because they were so close to each other, the boys began to talk of a more structured "boys' club." Three of them, Ray Horn, George Darhower, and Dick Shearer, were the driving force behind the club which would come to be located on North Pitt Street. At this time, though, they simply met and talked about their plans on the ball field.

And so it was that an organizing meeting of the North End Boys Athletic Club of Carlisle was held on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July in the basement of the Godsey home at 154 E Street. That first meeting was called to order by the club advisor Russ Fetrow, at 7:30 PM and was opened by him with prayer.<sup>6</sup> He then explained to the sixteen boys present<sup>7</sup> that the purpose of the club was "to build

character, good sportsmanship, and teamwork thru [*sic*] its club activities and sports teams".<sup>8</sup> Fetrow was a WW II B-17 pilot who had been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.<sup>9</sup> He was a friend of the Godsey family and was living with them while attending the Dickinson School of Law. He had heard about the boys and their vision for a club and agreed to help them realize their dream. Although there would be other adult leaders later, Russ Fetrow was the club's advisor for the first two years.

Fetrow began the election process and Carl Nicholson was selected to be the club president. Nicholson immediately proceeded with the remainder of the election including the selection of vice-president, Robert Goodhart; secretary, Harry Gusler; treasurer, Ronald McKillip; chaplain, John Geiling; historian, Glenn Stull; and sergeant-at-arms, Ray Horn. They also elected Richard Shearer captain of the baseball team.

Additionally, three standing committees were formed and members appointed as follows: Social Committee – Harry Godsey, chairman, Ronald Jenkins, George Darhower; Refreshment Committee – Ed Beltzhoover, chairman, Jim Still, Dick Shearer; Membership Committee – Leroy Welsh, chairman, Jack Arbegast, Dale Hostetter.<sup>10</sup>

A series of motions then formalized the name of the club,<sup>11</sup> the name of its sports teams,<sup>12</sup> the meeting schedule,<sup>13</sup> and the meeting place.<sup>14</sup> It was also decided that the weekly dues would be ten cents and must be paid each Tuesday evening at the club meeting. Carl Nicholson, Ray Horn and Bob Goodhart were then appointed to investigate the possibility of raising funds by holding a food sale in the Market House.

Nicholson then laid out some "rules of order":

There would be no smoking by any club member before or during any club meeting in the clubhouse. Vulgar language is also to be cut out. Any persons not adhering to the rules of order will be asked to leave the meeting.<sup>15</sup>

At 9:15 PM the first meeting of the North End Boys Athletic Club of Carlisle was adjourned.<sup>16</sup>

With organizational issues out of the way, baseball was, once again on the front burner. In fact the next week's meeting was called to order at the rather late hour of 9:20 PM "because of the baseball game at Mechanicsburg."<sup>17</sup> The cost of refreshments for the meeting was \$1.20, a sum that must have been threatening to the club coffers and resulted in treasurer Ron McKillip's motion that "refreshments be served only at every other meeting." The motion carried.<sup>18</sup>

Already more boys were asking to be admitted to the club. A discussion by members revealed the following boys as "prospective" members: Richard

Calaman, Robert Jenkins, Richard Martin, Charles Lebo, Richard Darr, Robert Baish, and Arthur Keck.<sup>19</sup> At the next meeting Calaman, Jenkins, Keck and Darr were voted in after expressing their desire to belong.<sup>20</sup> Darr was a special case since he was only thirteen years old, at least two years younger than any other member. But he was such a good ball player that the unwritten age restriction was waived for him.<sup>21</sup>

Also discussed at the second meeting, held at the home of Leroy Welsh, was the sale of beans which his father said could be picked and sold by the boys. Welsh, Arbegast and Hostetter agreed to do the picking and selling. Lawn mowing was another topic discussed as a possible fundraiser. Harry Godsey, Ron Jenkins, Bob Goodhart and Carl Nicholson were appointed to organize and run the project. Although there was currently only \$6.20 in the bank, "money was appropriated...to place an ad in the town newspaper."<sup>22</sup>

While parents were generally supportive of the club, they did not always look favorably on the extensive focus on ball playing. Welsh, for instance, had to borrow his uncle's glove because "[his] dad wouldn't even buy [him] a glove for the first two years."<sup>23</sup>

Of course, the treasury was as yet in no shape to buy new bats, so a motion to purchase bats was voted down. But Jim Still and Bob Goodhart promised to "see Bob Adams, an older player with the Masland team that the boys looked up to, about getting the Masland team's bats which had broken during their games."<sup>24</sup> As with many boys' teams of that era, it was common to collect broken bats from established adult teams such as the C. H. Masland Company and Friendship Fire Company teams, glue and screw them together, wrap electrical tape around the break, and thus get additional use out of the castoffs. The balls they used, however, were new ones. The brand name was Reach, and they bought them at Cochran and Allen Sporting Goods store.

Baseball wasn't the only thing on their minds, though. It was at this second meeting that plans were made to hold a picnic at Cave Hill on Saturday, July 26<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 PM. "Girls optional."<sup>25</sup>

But the major focus continued to be baseball, although all sports were of obvious importance to the members. On July 29<sup>th</sup> "the meeting was preceded by a special talk given by Mr. Chick Kennedy, head of the physical education department at Dickinson College. Kennedy's talk focused on three words: The, Athletic, and Club. In addition to the talk, he showed some movies of college football games, always guaranteed to hold the boys' interest."<sup>26</sup>

Of course, teamwork and good sportsmanship were recurring themes in talks given to the boys. For the most part, these ideas were well received, and behavior was usually exemplary. Uncharacteristically, though, Ron McKillip was once

involved in a disagreement with an umpire. In a Junior Legion game at Masland Field, the pitcher threw a pitch that McKillip thought missed the plate. The umpire, Bill Arbegast, a good ball player in his own right, a very strict umpire, and father of Jack Arbegast, called a strike. McKillip looked back at the ump but didn't say a word. When the next pitch hit the same spot Arbegast again called "strike." McKillip turned back to the umpire and told him, "As far as I'm concerned, those two pitches were not strikes!" Arbegast looked him square in the eye and said, loud enough for the fans to hear, "Out of the game."<sup>27</sup> In another Junior Legion game, Welsh, a pretty good hitter, struck out on "three dinky curve balls" and tapped his bat on the plate at the same time he uttered "Shit!" "Sonny Welsh," Arbegast came back, "go to the bench!"<sup>28</sup>

The last item in the minutes for that week recorded that the club met "in a secret session with Shearer, Beltzhoover and the club advisor removed from the meeting. They voted to suspend Beltzhoover from the baseball team for two weeks and to take Shearer's captaincy away from him as a result of the poor sportsmanship displayed by the two players at [the] Dillsburg [game the day before].<sup>29</sup> The North End A's had won the game, and when that happened in Dillsburg they "had to be ready to win the fight that followed because there would always be one."<sup>30</sup>

In addition to Dillsburg, other teams they played against were Enola, Mechanicsburg, and New Cumberland. The games were always arranged informally through phone calls between players on the various teams.

The primary competitor of the North End A's was the Mechanicsburg team, with whom they opened each season on Memorial Day in a double header. Wins and losses were about evenly split between the two teams, and there was a great deal of respect between the two teams.<sup>31</sup> The affinity was so strong, in fact, that when Mechanicsburg called to see if the A's would play a benefit game for a local dignitary who had passed away, the A's immediately said yes. When they got to the game, the large crowd gave them a loud ovation and another when the game was finished. Did they win the game? Sixty odd years later the surviving players think so!<sup>32</sup>

Transportation to the out-of-town games was usually provided by Dale Hostetter, Ron Jenkins, and Jim Still, who didn't play baseball but had access to cars. Ed Beltzhoover and Nancy Goodyear, girlfriend and later wife of Bob Baish, also drove. They even occasionally piled into the back of Mr. Darhower's pickup truck.<sup>33</sup> Along with the players there was also usually a pretty good complement of girls, assuring support for their player-heroes.<sup>34</sup>

Beltzhoover had an old car that was always experiencing one deficiency or another. For instance, it had no windows. Following a game in New Cumber-

land, it was also discovered that it had no brakes. After carefully making their way as far as Mechanicsburg, the boys spotted a policeman on one corner of the square; about the same time they noticed the traffic light was red. While the brakes did slow the car it would not stop it. Before it got to the corner, Ron McKillip and the other passengers jumped out, ran to the front, and pushed back on the car until it came to a stop just before the intersection. The bemused policeman motioned to the boys and told them to push it to the side and leave it until the brakes were fixed. On another trip, Ed Beltzhoover lost control on a turn on Enola Road, and the car flipped over. Out piled his uninjured passengers who quickly lifted it back onto its wheels, and they continued merrily on their way.<sup>35</sup>

Over the next few meetings of the club, six new members were proposed by the membership committee, with four, Robert Winters, Carl Jumper, Wayne Arbegast, and John Miller eventually being voted in.<sup>36</sup> Winters lived on Church Avenue, which was south of High Street and therefore not in the north end of town. But because he was a strong catcher and a good all around player, and because the A's needed another catcher to back George Darhower, he became the only club member that did not live in the north end of town.<sup>37</sup>

Parties were a constant theme, right along with baseball and other sports at the meetings. Several Carlisle merchants were partners in a cabin along the Yellow Breeches Creek, east of Moore's Mill. Beltzhoover's father was one of those partners, and the cabin was a favorite spot for dances. To the club's credit, the owners often made "very favorable comments" regarding the condition in which the cabin was left after a party.<sup>38</sup> Ray Horn was appointed chair of the dance committee for the August 23, 1947 affair, and all members agreed that the dress code "would be a good pair of pants and a sports shirt."<sup>39</sup>

By now the treasury balance had grown to \$146.39, helped along by passing the hat at ball games, selling beans at Market, and by the lawn mowing team headed by Harry Godsey. The appropriation for this dance was only ten dollars, even though the refreshments would be "sandwiches and punch or lemonade."<sup>40</sup>

Meeting attendance was somewhat of a problem, and a new rule was approved "that any member missing two consecutive meetings without a very good reason would be kicked out of the club."<sup>41</sup>

About this same time a committee was formed comprised of Carl Nicholson, Dick Calaman and Glenn Stull to draw up a constitution and by-laws for the club. However, no mention of them is found in any of the subsequent minutes. It must be noted, however, that minutes for October and November, 1947 and April through mid-December, 1948 are missing.



NORTH END A's, 1947

FRONT ROW:

Ray Horn, Ed Bistline, Dick Shearer, John Geiling, Dick Calaman, Bob Baish

MIDDLE ROW:

Ed Beltzhoover, Ron McKillip, Jim Jumper, George Darhower, Harry Godsey, Dick Darr

THIRD ROW:

Hen Humeric, Bob Winters, Glenn Stull, Bob Goodhart, Leroy Welsh, John Miller,  
Red Bowermaster

*CCHS Photo Archives*

In late August, 1947 Ed Beltzhoover's father, George, a member of the Carlisle Fairgrounds Association, suggested that the club consider locating a baseball field in front of the grandstand and perhaps use space under the grandstand for a meeting room. While this appeared attractive on the surface, for one reason or another nothing ever came of it.<sup>42</sup>

On September 2, 1947 Carl Nicholson, being eighteen years old, resigned as president, and Bob Goodhart resigned as vice-president. Elected to fill their spots were Glenn Stull as president and Ray Horn as vice-president. Bob Goodhart and Dick Shearer were then elected to fill the newly vacant positions of historian and sergeant-at-arms, respectively.<sup>43</sup>

The club then voted to have a football team, although members of the high school team would not be eligible to play.<sup>44</sup> Naming themselves "Little Pota-

toes, Hard To Peel," they assembled with any equipment they could lay their hands on, usually consisting of a few shoulder pads and helmets. They played on "Mooreland Field," the part of the Dickinson College campus on the southwest corner of High and College streets. There the six-man team often played the "colored team," also from Carlisle. They also played other teams, both on the Mooreland Field and the Masland Field. None of those interviewed had memories of wins and losses, further illustrating that football was much less organized than baseball in the club.<sup>45</sup>

For a neighborhood team, the A's had some very good athletes. Ray Horn, the right-handed pitcher with a good curve, Ron McKillip, an outfielder, and Leroy Welsh, the center fielder, were perhaps the fastest with many stolen bases between them. McKillip was always the leadoff batter when he played and usually bunted. His batting average was close to .300 even though he never hit a ball out of the infield. And he could never hit Enola pitcher Ducky Walters' knuckleball that turned so slowly you "could read the brand name Reach on it."<sup>46</sup>

Dick Darr was a great hitter and played first base. When he was in twelfth grade he was taking batting practice with the high school team on the John Hays Field on the northwest corner of High and Spring Garden Streets. He was hitting ball after ball over the roof of the Carlisle Ribbon Mill, about 253 feet away and it had to be hit at least 300 feet to clear the roof. Coach Eckert asked him to start hitting to the opposite field; they couldn't afford to lose any more balls.<sup>47</sup>

John Geiling was a multi-sport athlete as were many of the other boys. On the high school football team he played left halfback on both offense and defense. In a late season game in 1950 against Chambersburg, with both teams undefeated, the game was tied 0-0 with only two minutes left in the game. Chambersburg had the ball near mid-field, and on a running play around right end Geiling stole the ball from Edward Shatzer, the Chambersburg running back, right in front of the Chambersburg bench and scampered about fifty-five yards into the end zone for a touchdown to win the game and the first South Penn Conference title in thirty years.<sup>48</sup> Glenn Stull played tackle and was captain of that team as well as the basketball and baseball teams. In both his junior and senior years he was named to the all-conference first team in football and in his senior year was named to the high school All America tackle position. Also on that 1950 high school team was Dick Darr at fullback and linebacker.

Two of the club's members were approached by major league baseball scouts. At the end of Darr's final high school game (his only stint at catcher), the plate umpire offered him a tryout with the Chicago White Sox, but he'd already received a football scholarship from Syracuse University where he was to play in

the same backfield as the legendary Jim Brown. After graduating from Syracuse where he was captain of the baseball team, he was offered another chance with the Boston Red Sox farm system. But it only paid \$250 a month for the seven months of the season, and with a new wife he just couldn't afford it. Attesting to his success at Syracuse, Dick Darr is on the all-time all-star list there.<sup>49</sup>

The summer after Glenn Stull graduated from high school, he was walking downtown when a police car pulled alongside, and the policeman driving told him to get in. He was taken to the police station, not knowing he was about to receive a prearranged phone call, and led into a small room. "When that phone rings," he was told, "you answer it." Finally it rang. It was a scout from the Cleveland Indians telling him to be at a tryout the next morning in Harrisburg and they would send him to the Wilkes-Barre Barons and pay him \$150 a month. Wisely, he chose to go to Gettysburg College instead.<sup>50</sup> Following his freshman year, he entered the Army, where he played on an unbeaten team that was named 1<sup>st</sup> Team All Army.

Bob Winters went into the Army following high school and played baseball nearly his entire service time.<sup>51</sup> He also played some semi-pro baseball which precluded his playing football (NCAA rules) when he finally entered Shippensburg State Teachers College.

It's no wonder that, with these talented club members, a rule was instituted that "No North End member may play with any other team than the School Teams."<sup>52</sup>

Even with the emphasis on sports, particularly baseball, many of the club members held other common interests. Many of the boys belonged to Boy Scout Troop 162 sponsored by St. Paul's Lutheran Church. In the summer some of the boys pitched a tent at Pine Grove Furnace State Park and stayed there all summer. It was used by whomever wanted to go and spend some time there. There was about a foot of straw on the ground inside the tent on which the boys slept. During one outing, a lighted cigarette dropped onto the straw which promptly caught fire and burned a hole in the side of the tent.<sup>53</sup> During another outing, Dick Calaman and Ron Jenkins were pretty well into a week of camping, eating the typical cold food from a can. Calaman looked down the road and spotted his mother walking toward them. His embarrassment at being visited by his mother turned to joy when he discovered she was carrying a gallon jar of warm green beans and ham that "never tasted better."<sup>54</sup>

Another activity shared by several of them was fishing. For instance Ray Horn and Leroy Welsh introduced Dick Darr to fly fishing. With flies he bought for ten cents each, Darr caught his first trout in the Letort on Carlisle Barracks, and a love affair with fishing was born. It's been said that he always knew how many

nightcrawlers were in his can when bait fishing. When he was in ninth grade and playing for the Carlisle High School varsity baseball team he once had to decide whether to attend a Saturday practice or go fishing. Coach Eckert told him he had a tough decision to make. When he chose fishing he was promptly kicked off the varsity. Fortunately the JV coach didn't hold to the same tough rules and invited him to play on that team.<sup>55</sup>

The club was gaining quite an impressive reputation, not just for sports but also for the general success of its activities. In the Fall of 1947, Bill Mouwer from the YMCA visited the club meeting and encouraged the members to consider taking part in the "leaders club" he wanted to organize at the Y.<sup>56</sup> A week later, club advisor, Russ Fetrow, talked about the club joining the Y and competing with other teams within the Y system such as the West End, South End, East End, sections of Carlisle that also had teams, although none of which were as organized or as good as the North End A's etc.<sup>57</sup> Still, another week later it was decided to remain "strictly its own club outside the Y."<sup>58</sup>

The club's football team was still not a high priority as evidenced by a vote that denied the purchase of a new football even though there was certainly enough money in the bank to do so.<sup>59</sup> During the high school football season meetings were not always held regularly. The club now had almost twenty members and some meetings were held at the Friendship Fire Company where many of the club members also belonged. Ron McKillip and Ray Horn were the first youth members to be accepted into the company. When the regular meetings resumed, attendance was evidently again becoming a problem. In early December, with ten members absent from the meeting (four arrived later because of a late basketball practice), the meeting time was changed to Sunday evening, and there was a discussion about the purchase of a "pool table and pinball machines for the club room as a means of getting members out of the Pool Room."<sup>60</sup> A week later "the club went on record as not favoring the idea of having a pool table in the club room; however, pinball machines were approved."<sup>61</sup>

The new year (1948) brought new issues. First "John Geiling asked to resign as Chaplain, but [the] resignation was not accepted by the club – insufficient reasons given for resignation."<sup>62</sup> The purchase of real baseball uniforms was discussed along with methods of funding the project. At the next meeting the discussion continued with Bob Goodhart saying he had a "backer-up" (sponsor) for his uniform.<sup>63</sup> The Carlisle Eagles Club, knowing of the successes of the A's, invited the club to a showing of the '47 World Series motion pictures at the Molly Pitcher Hotel. "Coats and ties are to be worn."<sup>64</sup>

While the rules for behavior in the club room had been clearly set forth early on, it became necessary as the boys got older to enter into the minutes under

new business that "The cellar must be kept clean; the foul language is to be stopped; cigarettes are to be put in the proper containers; and absolutely no gambling."<sup>65</sup>

By now there were twenty members of the club, although six to ten were usually absent from the meetings. At the mid-February, 1948 meeting the baseball uniform subject was again raised. Russ Fetrow, club advisor, reported that "The complete uniform, consisting of cap, blouse, trousers, sweatshirt, stockings, sweat socks, athletic supporter, and shoes will cost \$25.00 each...[and] will be purchased from Cochran and Allen."<sup>66</sup>

To pay for the uniforms, each of the players was to solicit Carlisle businesses and social organizations to find a sponsor for his uniform. In return for the \$25.00 the sponsor's name would be sewn to the back of the blouse (a suggestion from Bill Eppley of Eppley's Drug Store). Assignments for prospective sponsors were as follows: Ray Horn – Cochran and Allen, Eagles Club, Moose Lodge, Red Men's Club; Bob Baish – Rufe Chevrolet; Leroy Welsh – George E. Welsh Typewriter Sales and Service, Elks Lodge, George's Flowers, Brehm's Garage; Dick Shearer – Ray L. Eysler Pontiac; Bob Winters – Eppley's Drug Store, Troy Laundry, Kinney Shoes, Kronenberg's clothing store, Deckman's beer distributor; Carl Nicholson, – Kruger Dairy; Dick Calaman – James Wilson Hotel, Molly Pitcher Hotel, Carlisle Diner, St. Charles Café; John Miller – Carlisle Shoe, Star Cleaners; Glenn Stull – Bixler's Hardware, Mowery Construction; Bob Goodhart – Decker's Pool Room, Kokolis' Pool Room; and George Darhower-Darhower and Rhinesmith, tinsmiths.<sup>67</sup>

It is notable that several boys had a single assigned prospect, presumably one to which they had a strong connection. In fact, Bob Baish reported at the very next meeting that he had "sold" a uniform to Rufe Chevrolet where his father was a long-time employee.<sup>68</sup> While there is no mention of any uniform "sales" beyond Baish to Rufe, it is known that the following attained sponsors: Ray Horn – Cochran and Allen (this uniform is now a part of the Cumberland County Historical Society museum collection); Leroy Welsh – George E. Welsh; Dick Darr – Beauty Bazaar (wearing the name of his mother's shop, always made him a little uncomfortable); Ron McKillip – Stambaugh's Dairy.<sup>69</sup>

Inscribed on a marble monument in Milbank, South Dakota are the words "In this city on July 17, 1925, by action of the South Dakota Department of The American Legion, the nationwide organization Legion Junior Baseball was first proposed as a program of service to the youth of America."<sup>70</sup> However, it was not until 1948 that Carlisle began to participate in the Legion's Junior Baseball program. In mid-May, American Legion Post 101 contacted the North End A's regarding the opportunity to represent Carlisle in the Junior Legion League.

The boys were thrilled to be asked, especially since they could retain their team name – North End A's. Now two more patches would be added to their white and maroon uniforms, Ford on the left shoulder and American Legion Junior Baseball on the right.<sup>71</sup> During this time the Ford Motor Company supplied uniforms for Junior Legion teams, but since this team already had their uniforms Ford's only expense was the patch.

They opened the season against Mechanicsburg, as was always the custom, and played the 1948 season. Of course there were now more teams in their league and on the schedule including Marysville, Duncannon and Millerstown. Home games were played on John Hays field. The team rented a sound system from Smiley Electric for \$5.00 a game, and the announcer was a young black man in his late twenties or early thirties known to all as Bats Hall. Bats was a great announcer, always involving the crowd and always "cheering for his team." According to Ray Horn, he may have brought more people to the field than the team itself, and he was an "awful good friend." After that season they were no longer age eligible (17 or younger) for Junior Legion play. They then, still as a group, entered the County League as part of the long established Friendship Fire Company team.

The club had not been interested in recruiting younger members, and as the young men left high school and entered college, military service, or the work force there began a sharp decline, ending a golden age of baseball in the North End Fifth Ward of Carlisle that had lasted all of three years.

A fitting testimony to the story of the North End A's is the following:

"...this activity kept myself and a number of the other young men from finding trouble in other activities! It was a one in a century group of young men!"

Glenn Stull, October, 2009

Where are they now?

Name	After high school	Career	As of 3/10/10
Bob Baish	Rufe Chevrolet	Rufe Chevrolet; Baish Auto Body	Deceased
Ed Beltzhoover	Muhlenberg College	Education	Joliet, IL
Ed Bistline	US Air Force	Carlisle Cement	Carlisle, PA
Dick Calaman	US Air Force	Hunt Labs, Berg Electronics	Carlisle, PA
George Darhower	US Army	C.H. Masland and Sons	Deceased
Dick Darr	Syracuse University, US Army	Insurance	Carlisle, PA
John Geiling	San Bernardino JC	Education	Porterville, CA
Harry Godsey	A&P	Meat Department Manager	Deceased
Bob Goodhart (Gump)	US Air Force	Police Officer	Deceased
Harry Gusler	US Army	Army Medic	Deceased
Ray Hom (Junior)	US Air Force	Hunt Corp. Giant Foods	Carlisle, PA
Dale Hostetter	US Army	US Army	Deceased
Ron Jenkins (Turtle)	Marines, art school	Wildlife artist	Charlo, MT
Bob Jenkins	Marines	Welder	York PA
Carl Jumper	Unknown	Unknown	Deceased
Art Keck (Rollie)	PA Turnpike	Shoe repair	Deceased
Ron McKillip (Mac)	US Army, National Guard	Military, NG-CW04 (ret)	Carlisle, PA
John Miller	Unknown	Unknown	Deceased
Carl Nicholson	Carlisle Community College	Accounting	Deceased
Dick Shearer	US Army	Dance instructor, Civil Service	Deceased
Jim Still	US Air Force	US Air Force	Deceased
Glenn Stull (Stoop)	Gettysburg College	Banking, retired as President & CEO	Ocean View, NJ
Leroy Welsh (Sonny)	US Army	Carlisle Barracks	Shippensburg, PA
Bob Winters	US Army, Shippensburg University	Education, retired as principal	Carlisle, PA

This article is the result of a year's research. When the Friendship Fire Company was preparing to make the move to their new Headquarters Station at 177 Spring Road in Carlisle, the minute books for 1947 and part of 1948 for the North End A's were discovered in a closet. The question was then raised as to what to do with them. Jim Still, an officer of Friendship Fire Company called Ray Horn and asked him if he would like to have them.

Ray was, of course, delighted that they had been found and that he would be able to keep them. In time he had them copied and gave the originals to the Cumberland County Historical Society. He later mentioned to Earl Keller, a Society board member, that he had copies of the minutes and would like to see someone write the story of the North End A's before all the members were gone.

Earl contacted me, and thus began this project. I called Ray, and he and his wife Nancy organized a roundtable discussion that included Dick Darr, Ray Horn, Ron McKillip, Leroy Welsh, Glenn Stull, and Bob Winters. With the minutes as a basis for discussion, we met three or four times at the Horn home and once at the Society. Between times I had a couple of phone conversations with Ron Jenkins in Montana, John Geiling in California and Glenn Stull in New Jersey. The meetings and the phone calls were always delightful events as the stories unfolded. It was obvious these men had a special place in their memories for each other.

The project culminated with the writing of this paper and at the annual dinner meeting of the Historical Society in 2010, the North End A's were the featured program in place of the usual speaker. The program was organized as a free wheeling discussion led by the "roundtable group" and joined by Ed Bistline and Dick Calaman. I served as moderator of the roundtable.

It has been my privilege to have been involved with and to have gotten to know these men, over the past two years. Their stories have been an inspiration to me.

## Endnotes

1. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlisle\\_Barracks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlisle_Barracks).
2. <http://www.pennpalomino.com/about/aboutppta.html>.
3. [http://www.dexknows.com/business\\_profiles/mccoy\\_brothers\\_inc-b32897?mkt=7OSMQ](http://www.dexknows.com/business_profiles/mccoy_brothers_inc-b32897?mkt=7OSMQ).
4. <http://bsatrop173.org/>.
5. Interview with Winters, Horn, Welsh, Darr and McKillip, November 2, 2009.
6. Club minutes of July 15, 1947.
7. Carl Nicholson, Robert Goodhart, Harry Gusler, Ronald McKillip, John Geiling, Glenn Stull, Ray Horn, Harry Godsey, Ronald Jenkins, George Darhower, Ed Beltzhoover, Jim Still, Dick Shearer, Leroy Welsh, Jack Arbegast, Dale Hostetter.
8. Club minutes of July 15, 1947.
9. Interview with Winters, Horn, Welsh, Darr and McKillip, November 2, 2009.
10. *Ibid.*
11. The North End Boys Athletic Club of Carlisle.
12. The North End A's.
13. Every Tuesday at 7:00 PM.
14. Basement of the Godsey home at 154 E Street.
15. Club minutes of July 15, 1947.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Club minutes of July 22, 1947.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*
20. Club minutes of July 29, 1947.
21. Interview with Winters and Horn, Sept. 21, 2009.
22. Club minutes of July 22, 1947.
23. Interview with Horn, Darr McKillip, and Welsh, November 2, 2009.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*
26. Club minutes of July 29, 1947.
27. Interview with Winters, Horn, Darr and McKillip, September 30, 2009.
28. Interview with Winters, Horn, Welsh, Darr and McKillip, November 2, 2009.
29. Interview with Winters and Horn, Sept. 21, 2009.
30. Interview with Winters, Horn, Darr and McKillip, September 30, 2009.
31. *Ibid.*
32. Interview with Horn, Darr McKillip, and Welsh, November 2, 2009.
33. Interview with Horn, Darr, McKillip and Welsh, November 2, 2009.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*

36. Club minutes of various dates.
37. Interview with Winters, Horn, Darr, and McKillip, September 30, 2009.
38. Club minutes of various dates.
39. Club minutes of August 19, 1947.
40. Club minutes of August 5 and August 19, 1947.
41. Club minutes of August 19, 1947.
42. Club minutes of August 26, 1947.
43. Club minutes of September 2, 1947.
44. *Ibid.*
45. Interview with Winters, Horn, Darr, and McKillip.
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Ibid.*
48. *Ibid.*
49. Interview with Horn, Darr, McKillip and Welsh, November 2, 2009.
50. Telephone conversation with Stull, November 2, 2009.
51. Interview with Winters and Horn, September 21, 2009.
52. Club minutes of September 16, 1947.
53. Interview with Horn, Darr, McKillip and Welsh, November 2, 2009.
54. Phone conversation with Calaman, October 18, 2009.
55. Interview with Horn, Darr, McKillip and Welsh, November 2, 2009.
56. Club minutes of September 16, 1947.
57. Club minutes of September 23, 1947.
58. Club minutes of September 30, 1947.
59. Club minutes of September 23, 1947.
60. Club minutes of December 3, 1947.
61. Club minutes of December 7, 1947.
62. Club minutes of January 4, 1948.
63. Club minutes of January 11, 1948.
64. Club minutes of February 1, 1948.
65. Club minutes of February 8, 1948.
66. Club minutes of February 15, 1948.
67. *Ibid.*
68. Club minutes of February 22, 1948.
69. Interview with Horn, Welsh, Darr, Stull and McKillip, November 2, 2009.
70. Kent M. Krause PhD, *From Americanism To Athleticism: A History of the American Legion. Junior Baseball Program*, 1998.
71. Interview with Winters, Horn, Darr, and McKillip, September 21, 2009.

## CUMBERLAND COUNTY GOVERNMENT RECORD SERIES AT CCHS

*Compiled by Barbara Bartos*

This information regarding Cumberland County government records housed at the Society is a regular feature of the Journal. This update is about documents from the Recorder of Deeds, Treasurers and Register of Wills Offices. An \* indicates individual document images available on line. Go to <http://ccweb.ccpa.net/archives/listings.aspx> Recorder of Deeds, Treasurer, or Register of Wills. Scroll down to the Paper Series section at the bottom of the page. To view an image, click "Inventory" and then click the camera icon next to the document to be viewed. If there is not a camera icon, or page unable to be viewed, the document is missing as of June 2012.

Series Title	Date Span	Quantity (# of docs)*
RECORDER OF DEEDS Paper Series		
BRIGADE INSPECTORS' BONDS COMMISSIONS	1828...1849	
Volunteer Police Officers	1917...1946	216*
DEED INDEX Grantor	1789...1791	unbound booklet
DEEDS	1831...1908	11*
MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS	1774...1863	5*
MORTGAGES	1839...1924	14*
OFFICIALS' BONDS Sheriff	1774...1789	6*
OFFICIALS' BONDS Treasurer	1794...1865	33*
POWER OF ATTORNEY		
Mortgage Satisfactions	1885...1968	196* + 2,135
WARRENTEE TRACT MAPS	1979-1981	6
LAND WARRANTS		
West Side Applications	1766-1769	179*

## Notable Accessions January-July 2012

*Compiled by Cara Holtry Curtis*

- Kim Zeigler donated a framed blueprint of C. H. Masland & Sons factory.
- Paul Barner donated vol. 27 Meadow Grounds in the *First Family* series.
- Randy Watts donated a copy of his new booklet, "Hand Fire Engines of the Monroe Fire Company, Churchtown, Pennsylvania."
- Tad Miller donated a reference book *American Watermarks 1690-1835* by Thomas L. Gravell and George Miller.
- John Fralish donated *Selected Manuscripts of General John S. Clark Relating to the Aboriginal History of the Susquehanna* edited by Louise Welles Murray.
- Peggy Wolf donated materials on the early years of the recycling movement in Carlisle during the 1970s.
- Chip and Dee Fenton donated a series of deeds dealing with a property on South Hanover and Promfret Streets.
- William and Joanne Baker donated two Hoxie Bros: Great American Circus posters from Huntsdale, Penn Township.
- Janet Taylor donated a copy of her book *African Americans in Perry County: 1820-1925*.
- William Boldosser donated minutes from the school board (board of education) of North Middleton Township, 1930-1946.
- John Fralish donated a copy of *Lenape and Their Legends, with the Complete Text and Symbols of the Walam Olum* by Daniel G. Brinton.
- Earl Barlow donated information relating to his ancestor and CIIS student Sampson Bird including a program from his induction into the American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame.
- Dr. Noel Potter donated a map of charcoal sites in Pine Grove Furnace area.

Charles Stone donated materials relating to Vance and Geneva Magonal. These materials include Vance's letters home during WWII and a binder of minutes and other materials related to the New Cumberland Book Club.

Margaret Richardson Kanther donated a letter and record of engagements for her great grandfather, P. D. Beidel, during the Civil War.

Walter Lewis Cressler, Jr donated a copy of his book *Hans Philip Kressler of Colonial Pennsylvania and Many of His Descendants 1732–2012*.

Robin G. Lighty donated the Geology of the Carlisle Quadrangle by George W. Stose in 1953. The Department of the Interior produced this geological survey map.

Beula Mack donated a copy of *Courage and Faith: Roebuck/Hodge Family*.

Mechanicsburg Museum Association donated a copy of the *History and Ordinances of the Borough of Carlisle 1897*.

Linda Cushner donated a deed between Daniel Womelsdorff/Neidigh in East Pennsboro Township. She also donated the *Official year book of the Cumberland County Volunteer Fireman's Association 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention*. This booklet references the deed.

Rosalind Bauchum donated a copy of her book *Elias and Lucinda Parker, the Case for a Civil War Widow's Pension*.

Randy Watts donated a copy of his book *Clay, Brick, and Sand Industries in the Mountain Creek Valley of Cumberland County 1890–2012*.

## CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

### THE COUNTY HERITAGE SERIES

- The Bitter Fruits: The Civil War Comes to a Small Town in Pennsylvania*, by David G. Colwell (1998). Hardcover, \$10.00.
- In Pursuit of Pleasure: Leisure in Nineteenth Century Cumberland County*, by Clarke Garrett (1997). Hardcover, \$10.00.
- Past Receipts, Present Recipes*, by CCHS Cookbook Committee (1996). \$15.00.
- The Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania 1879–1918*, by Linda F. Witmer (2000). Paperback, \$24.95.
- Cloth and Costume*, by Tandy and Charles Hersh. Softcover, \$25.00.
- Twentieth Century Thoughts. Carlisle: The Past Hundred Years*, by Ann Kramer Hoffer (2001). Paperback, \$29.95.

### Recent Publications

- Dear Folks at Home*, transcription of the Civil War letters of Leo W. and John I. Faller, reprinted in 2011 from the original 1963 publication edited by Milton E. Flower. Softcover, \$16.95.
- Camp Michaex Self-Guided Walking Tour*, by David L. Smith (2011). Paperback, \$10.00.
- Plank Bottom Chairs and Chairmakers South Central Pennsylvania 1800–1880*, by Merri Lou Schaumann (2009). Hardcover, \$29.95.
- The Carlisle Hospital: The Most Important Building in Town*, by Susan E. Meehan for the Carlisle Area Health and Wellness Foundation (2008). Paperback, \$15.00.
- Changing Images: The Art & Artists of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School*, by Linda F. Witmer (2008). Hardback, \$20.00.
- Secret War at Home*, by John P. Bland (2006). Softcover, \$22.00.
- First Families of (Old) Cumberland County* by Hayes Eschenmann and Paul Barner. (Maps and surname indexes to 18th century land owners), Twenty-six volumes, \$18.00 each.

Recent volumes include:

- The West Shore (Harrisburg West, Lemoyne, Steelton)*  
*Saint Thomas (Franklin County)*  
*Mercersburg & Kaiesville (Clear Spring), (Franklin County)*  
*Little Cove & Big Tannery (Franklin and Fulton Counties)*  
*Fort Loudon & McConnellsburg (Franklin and Fulton Counties)*  
*Fannettsburg, (Franklin and Fulton Counties)*  
*Burnt Cabins (Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon Counties)*  
*Meadow Grounds (Fulton County)*

A complete list of publications available at CCHS, as well as information concerning ordering, sales tax, and postage and handling fees, is available at [www.historicalsociety.com](http://www.historicalsociety.com).

