

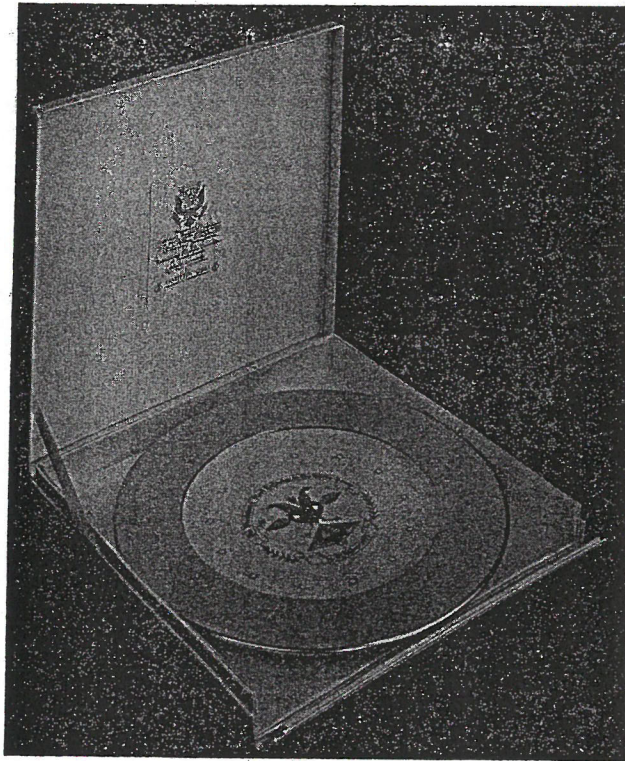
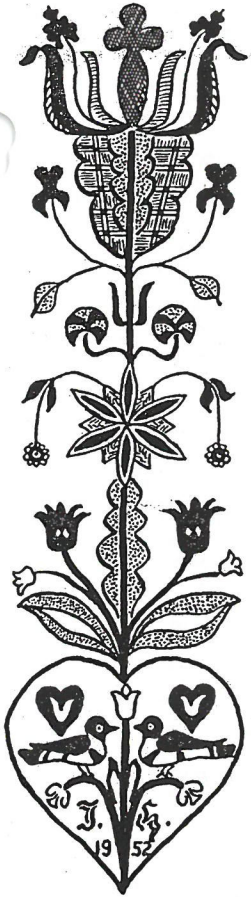
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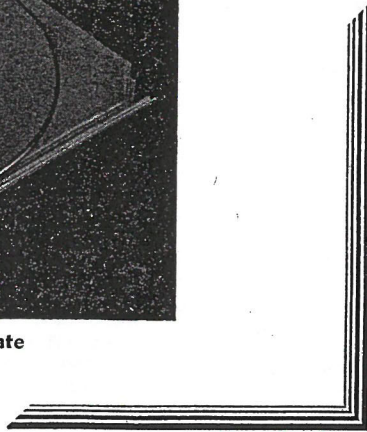
The Pennsylvania Dutchman

Vol. V, No. 7
November, 1953

Devoted to Pennsylvania Dutch Folk-Culture



The Eisenhower Birthday Plate



THE GHOST OF CHEW'S WALL

A Legend of Germantown

A Nineteenth Century short story about the Pennsylvania Dutch

When a man becomes so far lost to a sense of self-importance, as not only to tell, but actually to write stories—thus recording his turpitude in black and white—it is not to be presumed that slight consequences will deter him from his purpose. Indeed, it is rather to be supposed that he has made up his mind to despise public opinion, and to brave all indignation. His hand is sure to follow as his pen may lead, and whatever he may resolve, when the story is written, it is, somehow or other, sure to find its way into print. The best motives of a writer may therefore be mistaken, or his strongest resolves puffed to the winds by a single breath, so that it may well be supposed in what a predicament we were, when we found our best intentions frustrated, and had to encounter the wrath and tobacco smoke of our German neighbors, and were obliged to write this apologetic introduction, and all through a villainous blunder of our greedy devil.

The facts are these. We sat down, a few evenings since, after enjoying a comfortable cup of pure Java—which we still continue to enjoy, notwithstanding the anathemas of a fellow with a villainous name, of "bran bread" repute—to commit to paper a few notes of a conversation which we had with a relative long since. Having unluckily fallen into a doze, our devil, who had been going about for more than an hour roaring for copy, took a peep into the sanctum, and, seeing how matters stood, slipped off the following article, "in the crack o' a thumg," by way of filling up an odd form, which, in an unlucky fit of liberality, we had resolved to squeeze into the present number. It may well be supposed that, before we had fairly rubbed our eyes open, the matter was blown to the world, and a whole avalanche of country cousins, who hail from Germantown, were down upon us. Of course we said at once that the article was not ours, as no man can be expected to acknowledge his guilt until it is proved upon him. This, however, did not satisfy them, although they professed to have no difficulty in believing it, for they continued to smoke their pipes with such fury, and swore so stoutly in real jaw-breaking Dutch—for every mother's son is German, even to the cut of his pantaloons—that we were glad to get off upon the condition of making a handsome apology, which we think we have now fully done.

Among the many delightful villages in Pennsylvania, which owe their origin to German settlers, and maintain, amid surrounding improvements, the unchanged marks of ancestry, there is none more prominent than Germantown. It is but half an hour's drive from Philadelphia, extending along the main road for more than two miles, with, for the most part, old-fashioned stone houses, which date prior to the revolution, sprinkled plenteously on both sides of the road, forming a village of most unconscionable length, but—like the pockets of most dandies of the present day—with no depth or body to support its extensive pretensions. It is famous in history, as being the ground of a battle during the struggle for independence, in which victory, though for a time doubtful, declared for the enemy, in consequence of the incompetency of an American officer. The present inhabitants are mostly the descendants of German families—true sprigs of the old branches, imitating most of the virtues of

their forefathers, indulging in no luxuries, pursuing a rigid economy, and clinging with an unyielding regard to the money bequeathed them. Nor is this regard in any degree weakened by the devices of those who have recently settled in the village, and who vainly hope by improving their houses, fitting up their grounds, and clipping and beautifying their shrubbery, to induce an imitation of their example. The old-roof tree stands, as it stood half a century ago, and the very stones of the building, from between which the mortar has in many cases long since dropped, grin defiance on the passer by, who dares to harbor a thought of improvement or repair. The owner is content to live as his ancestors lived, but would like to die a little richer. The patrimony, amassed by the hand of unceasing toil, is religiously bequeathed from sire to son, together with the peculiar habits of thought and the superstitious sentiments of an age gone by. In many cases no education has been suffered to weaken or invade, and in others has been so slight as only to harmonize the mind with the general character of the place, which at best seems to belong more to a past generation than to a present. From these causes, things which better tutored minds scout with scorn, in the one case, are held as true as matters of religious belief, and in the other are only doubted, nor disbelieved. In fact so thoroughly does superstition, and the gross follies which an intercourse with the world and education always dispel, prevail, that many of the inhabitants can tell you to a nicety when there will be a change of weather, by the belligerent attitude in which the moon turns up her horns when she grows restive, and that there will be company when the cat licks her paws, when a fork sticks up in the floor, or when the old cock brushes up his feathers and crows in the door-way. There are others who go still deeper into mysteries of this sort, and can predict to you a birth, a marriage, or a death, by the kinks of a cow's tail; but as they are entirely beyond our depth, and seem to have this knowledge all to themselves, it may be well not to disturb them in their profound wisdom. Nevertheless, let no young man, who values the affections of any fair Dutch damsel in Germantown, venture to present her with a pair of scissors, unless he wishes to cut the sentimental cord that binds her to him. Thus much we feel in duty bound to record as a warning to young gentlemen, as many a man has lost the confidences and affections of his lady love in consequence of less matters than a pair of scissors. PURPOSE

It might be expected that a village so contiguous to a great city, would soon lose these distinctive marks of character, and that the extravagance, follies and vices of the metropolis would be generally imitated. No so, however. With very little exception, the place is as entirely distinct as if it were miles in the interior. The moral mantle of Germanism seems to hang like a cloud over the place, and, blended with the superstition of the portion of inhabitants spoken of, there is a high-toned morality so imbedded in the hearts of the people, that honesty and a strict regard to truth, next to making money and keeping it, may be considered the great texts by which they live.

It will easily be understood that among a

people thus constituted, a ghost has but to be seen by one of their number, and his appearance announced, to be generally dreaded. If he has been seen, there is an end of all doubting, and the only thing thereafter to be done, is to keep out of his way. There will be no use, in such a case, to multiply arguments about him, but every man must take care of himself. And, what may seem a little singular, a good sound-minded, rational apparition will, in all cases, most delight to visit a people who pay him so much deference; taking special care to show himself frequently, and in all manner of ways, that there may be no doubt that he does exist in one shape or another, and having established the matter to his own satisfaction, that it is better to range the upper world, where he can be seen, than to dwell below in the dark, damp ground of the tomb, where he cannot be seen, where his very existence may be doubted, and where, at the best, the quarters are most uncomfortably chilly—we say a sane ghost, under such circumstances, would naturally grow familiar—or rather attempt to—and having sought out and established himself in comfortable quarters, and having enjoyed an oblivious nap during the day, would seek to regale himself in the evening, after his own will and pleasure, by little trips by moonlight, over the fields, around the old barns, and especially on the tops of the stone fences—if any there be—of the neighborhood. A ghost certainly has the right, if any body has, of doing pretty much as he pleases, and of keeping out of the dust and gravel of a country side-walk, and of cutting up his antics, by way of recreation, on the top of a stone wall. At least these were the sentiments entertained by the ghost in question, and he took the liberty—unlike most politicians—of acting them out without regard to consequences.

One morning, early in November, [18..], the inhabitants of the goodly village of Germantown, were thrown into great consternation and dismay, by the important intelligence that a ghost had been seen the previous evening, perched upon Chew's wall, dressed in white, and rattling a heavy chain, which some maintained he had been hung in, in consequence of some great crime. Some said that it was only a log-chain, which he intended to use, after his own fashion, on the first man he got in his clutches, while others, with a great show of reason, maintained that the chain was fastened around his own ankle, and that he was no less a personage than the ghost of the dead soldier who had deserted from the British during the revolution, and was accidentally shot during the battle of Germantown, while a prisoner in a baggage-wagon, as had been said, but who, it was very likely, had been murdered during the heat of the fray, by some enemy in his own ranks—a rival in love, perhaps, or an heir to some estate, who wished him out of the way. Be all this as it may, the ghost had been seen upon the wall, and he had a chain about him in some way, and some unheard of atrocity might confidently be looked for. The greatest mystery of the affair was that as soon as the rumor got on the wind, the man who had seen him was nowhere to be found, nor could anybody tell who he was. Somebody had seen him,

THE PENNSYLVANIA DUTCHMAN

however, and that was enough, and any inhabitant of Germantown would as soon have doubted the existence of sour-kroust—a belief of which substantial proof was given daily—as to have felt least incredulity in regard to the ghost.

Of course all the inhabitants put on the gravest looks possible, and kept a sharp look-out, but still nearly a week passed and no tidings of a renewal of the visit of his ghostship occurred. Sunday morning came, and the matter was duly canvassed before the church door, prior to the arrival of the minister. A great many solemn shakes of the head and knowing winks were given on the subject. It was formally resolved that fires had better be kept burning in all the ovens for a fortnight, though it was pretty generally agreed that the ghost had been taken unawares, and that, whatever his business to that place might be, by keeping off the wall for a week, it was a pretty good sign that he did not want to show himself, and therefore he would be more cautious in future.

The ghost, notwithstanding all these sage conclusions, resolved to have his own way in the matter, and accordingly make his appearance that very evening—not in white, nor in the form of a man, but in black, and running on all fours, like a hyena, on the top of the wall, and even proceeded so far as to throttle a very inoffensive person, and one who never could have had any thing to do with the murder—if indeed the apparition was the ghost of the murdered soldier. The facts of this encounter are these.

Christopher Burger (such was the name of the person throttled) or "Stoffel Burger," as his German friends delighted to dub him in abbreviation, was a stout, square-built young fellow, of about twenty-two, who could do his day's work, and dance the whole night through in the bargain, without thinking of fatigue. He had fallen in love, at a quilting party, with Miss Susan Hanz, blooming Dutch damsel of seventeen summers, like a straightforward business-like German, he was, he resolved to make her his wife. She was, in fact, just the girl to inspire Christopher with the sentimental. Short, thin, and as elegantly shaped as a churn, with a full, round, saucy face, lighted up with a pair of brilliant black eyes, and with a foot, which, if it was not one of the smallest, could go through "a straight four," or, for that matter, if occasion required it, a regular "hoedown," with a grace that actually made Christopher's heart leap, as if it was going to jump out of his mouth. Nor were these her only claims to regard. The fair Susan was an only child, and her father had the reputation of possessing more than one stocking full of the real currency, carefully stowed away in a large walnut chest under the bed. Two or three broad farms also claimed 'Squire Hanz as owner, and spread themselves out very temptingly before the eager eyes of "Stoffel." And then, what a hand at baking hot cakes!—his mouth actually watered at the thought. Added to all this, he well knew that if he succeeded in winning the heart of the fair Susan, no obstacle would be placed in the way of his happiness by the 'Squire. In this matter the 'Squire was exceedingly liberal; he imposed but one condition upon his daughter in relation to the man of her choice, and that was, that "he must be of a good German family." To "Stoffel" there could be no objection on this score. His very name carried the recommendation with it. Moreover, the 'Squire had never had brother or sister, and therefore there were no rascally cousins to be mining the fortress in his absence. Had there been any, with stout

purses in their fists, the matter would not have been quite so positive; for, as an arrangement of convenience, and to keep the money from the hands of grasping strangers, every man in the village of which we write made it a point to marry his cousin—if he could get her—and, if the truth must be told, the strong voice of parental command was seldom wanting to strengthen his suit.

Let it not be supposed, however, that a lady with such substantial claims had never been besieged with lovers. Such had been the case. But "Stoffel" having so far outstripped his rivals as to attain the honor of smoking a pipe alone with the 'Squire a few Sunday evenings previous to the time of which we write, the business was looked on as settled, and the whole bevy of Dutch beaux were off in the twinkling of an eye, like a flock of partridges when they have been shot at.

Christopher, thus having "a fair field and all the favor," was not the man to neglect the advantage; so that, on the Sunday night in question, if an inquisitive eye had been placed at the key-hole of the 'Squire's parlor door, he might have been seen, or heard, actually (we hope the ladies will skip this passage)—we say he might have been seen kissing Susan in the dark. Atrocious as this conduct was, however, on the part of "Stoffel," we are bound, in recording a true narrative, to say that the lady was not to be frightened at trifles; so, instead of screaming out, and thus rousing the 'Squire and his blunderbuss, she took the matter coolly, and, resolving not to be outdone in civilities, gave him as good as he sent, and, throwing her arms around his neck, kissed him! These, of course, are little attentions, on the part of lovers, which should not be wantonly, and without purpose, revealed to "the cold and heartless world," and we only mention them to show that Christopher was a fellow with a pretty stout heart, and thus prepare our readers for the horrible outrage upon a brave man we are about to record. And considering, too, that all our lady readers have skipped the last passage, and we waiting breathlessly, we proceed.

It was now past twelve o'clock—we are ashamed to record it—for Christopher, whatever wrong he committed in going to the 'Squire's every Sunday evening, when he returned, his conscience, on that score, was generally clear enough, as it was Sabbath no longer. We say it was past twelve, and Christopher set out for home. He had feasted on the best the 'Squire's cellar afforded, and had made way with more than one mug of his best cider. The parting scene, on the part of Christopher, had been unusually tender. He was naturally an ardent lover, and the cider by no means decreased the strength of his attachment. He had used every argument to bring Susan to the point of acceptance—still she was coy. Yet Christopher was a man of discernment, and thought that a lady who would throw her arms around his neck and kiss him in the dark (bless us! what will the ladies say to this?) could have no serious objection to him at bottom, and so, on the whole, he was in a very pleasant mood with himself, and with all mankind and womankind in the bargain, as gentlemen usually are when the lady has been kind, and the parting kiss has been freely given. He felt unusually happy, and could not restrain the kind feelings which bubbled up to his very lips and found vent in snatches of songs. He was rapidly approaching the wall—still he thought nothing of ghosts or hobgoblins, but was ruminating very intently upon the charms of the substantial little Dutch beauty, and was going

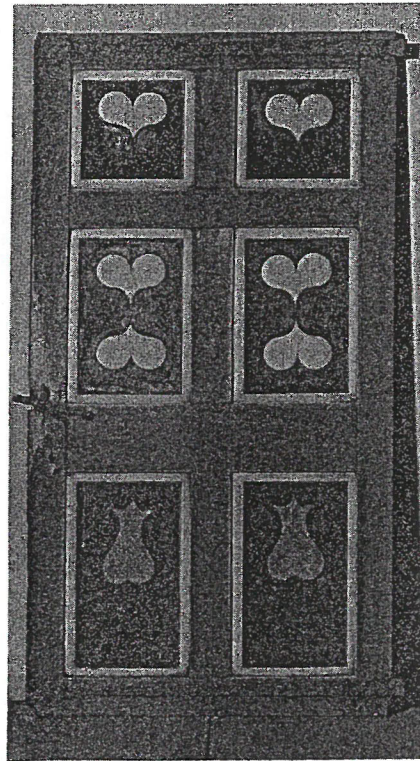
over in his mind, very pleasantly, her qualifications to make him a happy man. He might be said to be in that state, when a man is walking yet dreaming. He was picturing a near stone house, with every useful article of furniture bought and paid for, and with a horse and cow that he could call his own. Milk punch, too, naturally enough popped into his head, and then out again, to make room for thoughts of hot cakes swimming in butter. His song, however, still went on, as the music was not so difficult of execution as to require much thought in its performance—when the conclusion of a stanza seemed suddenly to have been frozen on his lips, and he started back with the ejaculation—

"Mine Got! vat ish dat? der spooke—der dive!!"

The cause of his alarm the reader will understand, and so did "Stoffel." He had heard it rumored that a ghost in white had been seen airing himself upon Chew's wall, and he was not the man to scoff at rumor, and, even if he had been, there was the identical thing before him, slightly changed in appearance, it is true, not in white, nor sitting erect, but in black, running along the wall towards him, like a hyena or a bear; and, sure enough, as if to establish his character beyond the possibility of a doubt, rattling his chain with a clangor truly appalling.

In any other situation Christopher, perhaps, would have run, but in the present instance his limbs refused to do their work, his knees knocked together, his teeth set to chattering, and he seemed rooted to the spot. Nor can it be supposed that he was a coward, as we think the contrary has been clearly demonstrated in his valiant exploits in courting. The ghost, however, as if to settle the difficulty, to clear all doubt in the mind of Christopher, and to prevent any more profane exclamations, coolly descended from the

(Continued on Page 4)



Pennsylvania Dutch Door from Titus C. Geesey collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

may have wanted
her father's money

The Pennsylvania Dutchman

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"The Ghost"

(Continued from Page 3)

wall, and before he knew where he was, knocked him down "with one blow of his tail," as was afterwards affirmed.

"So," said the ghost, "your time has come to die!"

"Mine Got, nay—I be's—so young—and pin-tink—to git—marry," chattered the horror-stricken Dutchman.

"You are going to get married; hal who do you think will have you?"

"Squire—Hanz—Sus, me tinks."

"When you marry her you will be a dead man," said the ghost in a hollow, sepulchral voice, "and unless you stay away from 'Squire Hanz's two months from this time, remember I have warned you! you are a dead man! Beware!" and having released his throat from a loving squeeze, vanished, as Christopher asserted, "in de ground."

When he arose, his brain whirled, and his memory was confused; the sun was just peeping over the hills, and a group of astonished neighbors were around him. Christopher told his story, and related the adventure exactly as it had occurred, excepting what related to Susan, that he kept close in his own bosom—why? we cannot say. Some believed him, but others, of the most knowing, shook their heads—guessed he had drank too freely of the 'Squire's cider, and wondered how he knew "the ghost vanished in the ground when he was lying on his face in the dirt."

Christopher asserted, and swore Dutch to substantiate it, that he "had been choked on the back of his neck until he saw stars," and that after that the ghost disappeared, and he knew nothing more of the matter until he found the mob around him.

This was conclusive! And as the contagion spread, it was ascertained that the ghost had been exceedingly obliging, and had appeared in a variety of forms and costumes "to suit customers." A stout troop of good wives roundly asserted that he had crossed the road in the form of a white calf, as they were proceeding to meeting, and that when they screamed out he disappeared. One had seen him in the habit of an old woman, dangling a great bunch of keys at her girdle, but it was plain he was no old woman at all from the whiskers on one side of his face, which proved him to be the dead soldier. Moreover, he kept rattling the keys with tremendous fury, and held up his forefinger significantly; as

much as to say "if you disturb me I'll knock you down."

Another averred that as she was walking along, she heard a terrible flapping of wings, and looking up she saw, what at first appeared to be a flock of wild geese, but they quickly changed into boys, and in an instant all vanished but one, and he was a man with a long white flowing robe, with which he took good care to cover his head, so that she could not see whether he had whiskers or no, and therefore could not say whether it was the dead soldier or not. In short, nearly all the old women had seen him, or had a ghost story to tell, which answered the same purpose, so that the good Dutchmen shook their heads to no purpose, for the more they shook them the more confused they became.

The consequence was, that after the existence of the ghost was thus substantiated, he resolved to confirm the testimony by taking up his quarters for the winter at once. This he did by establishing himself in a neat two story brick house, which was formerly located at a place now called "The Seven Oaks." Thus having made himself perfectly at home, and we presume feeling himself so, for nobody pretended to disturb him in selected quarters, he took his recreations in various ways. Sometimes he would appear with a winding sheet around him, and a flame of fire coming out of his mouth, then he would walk inhabited like a bear, or he might be seen in the form of a dragon with a huge tail. To vary the entertainments, he would appear with horrible horns on his head, and a tail like a fish, and would go sweeping over the ground as if he were gliding in water. He appeared, too, at various places, though his favorite resort was the top of the stone wall, which he would often bestride, as if it were a full-blooded charger, and would go whistling down the wind—stone wall and all. What rendered this last feat the more surprising was, that when morning came the wall looked as unmoved as if nothing had happened, but the ghost was nowhere to be found.

It could not be supposed that things should continue in this state forever. Accordingly a number of the more aged inhabitants having put their heads together, it was thought advisable to devise some energetic measures to relieve themselves of his ghostship. Whereupon every man stuck his pipe in his mouth, and set to smoking and thinking with great energy and decision. After due reflection, various measures were proposed, but none so feasible as that proposed by 'Squire Hanz, who having a pipe about a foot longer than any of the others, came to the sagest conclusion.

His proposal was in substance, that a meeting be called on the next evening, and that a committee should be appointed to watch the ghost, and if possible, to shoot through him with silver bullets; when, it was affirmed, he would dissolve into thin air at once. And lest the ghost should be aroused to commit some deed of dire interest, as soon as the news of these hostile proceedings reached his ears, it was thought advisable that all the inhabitants should close their doors at sundown, nail horse shoes over them, and, to save candles if not their necks, they should go to bed at dark.

A large meeting of the indignant inhabitants, in accordance with this decision, assembled at "The Green Tree," when, after calling "Stoffel Burger" to the chair, the following resolutions, which had been drawn up with great care and precision for the occasion, were unanimously adopted.—

"Resolved, That a committee of eight be appointed to shoot the ghost."

"Resolved, That Stoffel Burger be chairman of the committee to point him out, so that the silver bullets be not thrown away, and also, save powder, that nobody shall shoot the ghost till they see him."

To the first branch of this resolution Stoffel felt inclined to demur, and said that as he had already been choked by the ghost, he would rather not get in his clutches again. The meeting, however, had made up their minds—as most town meetings generally do—before hand, and would hear of no excuse. It was therefore further

"Resolved, That the meeting defray the expenses of the committee, provided they follow instructions, and that all the inhabitants be commanded to nail horse shoes over their doors, so that the ghost may be shot down without mercy."

We said the resolutions were unanimously adopted, but there was one gentleman who, in the outset, stoutly opposed them, but who, nevertheless, afterwards gave them his hearty support. He was a good looking fellow, about five feet ten in height, with a piercing black eye, a most intelligent face, and a whisker trimmed with such exquisite taste that every girl in the village would take a peep out of the corner of her eye and admire them while passing. His tongue, too, was slippery as an eel, and he could say the softest and most honied words in a way that actually put the stout Dutch phrases completely out of tune. Nevertheless, he spoke German like a book, and no man could exceed him in driving a bargain, so that, having come from a German settlement in the east, he went by the name of "The Dutch Yankee." He never obtruded his advice in any case, and only suggested in this, "whether these hostile proceedings might not inflame the anger of the ghost, and lead to hot work?"

The valor of the meeting, however, was too highly inflamed to listen for a moment to prudential hints, when they had the iron argument of horse shoes ready in case of danger, so that after selecting the committee and charging them to "be true to their country in this sudden and trying emergency, and to meet promptly the next evening and perform their duty," the meeting adjourned.

On the following evening the committee accordingly met at "Green Tree," armed to the teeth, each man having, in addition to his musket charged with the fatal bullet, a long butcher knife to be ready for extremities. The host of "The Green Tree" was in excellent spirits, and the committee resolved at once to be so too if it could be done by dint of good liquor. So in order to be prepared for the fierce encounter, and to strengthen his nerves, each man knocked off his half-pint at the outset. And as the generous inhabitants had agreed to pay expenses, there could be no harm, so thought both the committee and the host, in drinking another, and as each felt braver the more he drank, the experiment was repeated in homeopathic doses until the hour of twelve, when, we will venture to assert, a stouter hearted set of men never set out on a perilous expedition.

It is strange, however, how soon the cold wind of a winter night will unstring the nerves and set the teeth to chattering, for no sooner were the valiant committee within sight of Chew's wall, and had been a little chilled through with the night breeze, than each man was seized with a tremendous shivering of cold, and each feeling weaker than the other, it was with great difficulty that they could get on, for want of a leader.

(Continued on Page 6)

THE PENNSYLVANIA DUTCHMAN

"Place Names"

(Continued from Page 5)

"The Ghost"

(Continued from Page 4)

- Hummelstown**
Founded about 1740 by Frederick Hummel, a German settler.
- Intercourse**
Known as Cross-Keys (a tavern name) from 1754 to 1813 when it was renamed.
- King of Prussia**
Named after a local tavern whose owner, a native of Prussia, named it for Frederick I of Prussia (the father of Frederick the Great).
- Kintnersville**
Named after George Gintner, a native of Wuerttemberg, Germany, who settled here in 1789.
- Kutztown**
Named after George Kutz, an early settler and founded in 1771.
- Lititz**
Named by the Moravians in 1775 after a Bohemian village from which the originators of the Order had emigrated.
- Lobachsville**
Named after Peter Lobach who settled here about 1745.
- Lower Alsace**
Separated from Alsace in 1888. See Alsace.
- Lower Heidelberg** See Heidelberg.
- Manheim**
Named by "Baron" Stiegel circa 1741 after his native city in Germany. Another story has it that it was named at a meeting of June 9th, 1729, after Mannheim from which city many settlers came.
- Muhlenberg**
Formed out of the western part of Alsace township in 1851 and named after the Rev. Henry A. Muhlenberg.
- Myerstown**
Founded by Isaac Myer in 1768 and named after him.
- New Holland**
Originally known as Saeue Schwamm (pigs' wallow). No one seems to know how it got its present name for there are few, if any, Netherland Dutch there. One can understand, through, why the first name was dropped.
- North Heidelberg** Derived from Heidelberg. See Heidelberg.
- Palmyra**
Named after John Palm, a German, who came to the colonies in 1749.
- Reamstown**
Named after the first settler, Eberhard Ream, who took up some 400 acres there.
- Strasburg**
Named by Matthias Schleimacher (Slaymaker) who came from that city on the Rhine about 1710. In early days it was popularly known as Peddlehausie (beggar town).
- Schellsburg**
Named for the Schell family. Founded in 1808.
- Schnecksville**
Named after Adam Schneck who bought land here in 1766.
- Somerset**
First known as Brunerstown after Ulrich Bruner who settled here about 1787.
- Trappe**
"The origin of the name is uncertain,

It was stoutly maintained that "Stoffel" should go before, as he was commissioned by the meeting to point out the ghost. To this Stoffel agreed, but maintained that he could not show him to the committee, unless they were with him. It was finally settled that no man should have the honor of going alone, but that they should all march up abreast, and at the signal given fire a platoon into him. So they set up at once a terrible yelling, in order that the ghost might see that they were in earnest and prepare for the consequences.

Whether it was that the ghost heartily despised their bullying mode of procedure, and determined to show that there was no flinching on his part, by meeting them more than half way, or that the heads of the committee were rather giddy with having been confined in the close air of a bar-room for so many hours, and had thus caused them to miscalculate distances; certain it was, that before they were aware of their position, Stoffel espied the ghost and pointed him out at not more than thirty yards distance. Every man instantly cocked his musket, and affirmed that it was moving, and that owing to the dreadful proximity of the ghost, everything else was dancing around them. Accordingly they instantly poured a dreadful volley into the offender and took to their heels.

Whether the ghost was hit or not, it was clearly ascertained the next morning that the committee had succeeded in putting two silver balls into a great ugly old post, which had long been a serious annoyance, and had split the rails of a contiguous fence most shockingly. There were not wanting

though many historians declare that an early tavern's high stoop caused it to be called 'treppe' (steps) by the German settlers, and that a corrupted form of the word came into popular use as the village name. Another explanation is that the tavern's high steps often became a 'trap' for the unsteady feet of steady patrons." Pennsylvania, A Guide to the Keystone State, p. 429.

- Upper Bern**
Separated from Bern Township in 1789. See Bern.
- Womelsdorf**
Called Middletown until 1762. Renamed for John Womelsdorf, emigrant leader from the "Pfalz" (Palatinate), Germany.

Other Pennsylvania Dutch Place Names

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Arendsville | Maytown |
| Beartown | Mertztown |
| Bloserville | Millbach |
| Brunnerville | Neffsville |
| East Berlin | New Germantown |
| Emigsville | Reinholds |
| Freysville | Roedersville |
| Fritztown | Rossville |
| Heidlersburg | Rohrerstown |
| Hinkletown | Reistville |
| Kleinfeltersville | Rothsville |
| Knauertown | Shoemakerstown |
| Ludwigs Corner | |

Information is lacking concerning the origin of these names, although most of them appear to be based on family names.

those who were severe and uncharitable enough to say that the committee had got a little drunk, and had fired at the post. This, however, was deemed a gross slander, and it was unanimously agreed that if the ghost had stood where the post was, he would have had a ball through him to a certainty.

As for "Stoffel" having done this daring deed, nobody caught him passing the wall for some weeks after, and he gave people pretty clearly to understand that he did not intend to for some weeks to come. What tended to confirm the inhabitants in the opinion that the vigilant committee had extirpated the dreaded visitant, and that there was nothing like silver bullets and horse shoes to quiet ghosts, whether in doors or out was, he did not appear on the wall—when, unluckily for our friend "Stoffel" and his milk punch and hot cakes, "The Dutch Yankee," who possessed the true blood, succeeded in winning the heart of the fair Susan and actually eloped with the bouncing little Dutch beauty, much to the amazement of the 'Squire, and the horror of the astounded "Stoffel," and actually carried the enormity so far, as to write "Stoffel" an invitation to the "home-bringing," a month or so afterward; coupling the request with a promise that the ghost should not be allowed to disturb him either in passing or repassing Chew's wall without due revenge. "Stoffel" did not like the tone of the invitation, or considered that his valor in courting and shooting ghosts was established, so he declined.

That the ghost still held his quarters privately somewhere in the neighborhood, and enjoyed many a pleasant little trip by moonlight for his own private gratification after that, was not doubted by the good people of the village, although he only condescended to show himself to particular favorites, by occasional glimpses when passing the wall. Lately, however, he has been more chary of his visits, and it is supposed that the railroad interfered with his calculations, and that the eternal whizzing of steam and the ringing



of bells, rendered his quarters uncomfortable—particularly since his house has rudely been pulled down over his head, and a new one erected on the same site, without regard to his convenience.

There were not wanting people who pretended to laugh at the whole affair after the elopement and marriage of the fair Susan, and it was maintained that the Yankee was often seen to twist his face and laugh to himself, when he was ploughing up the old 'Squire's ground. Yet nobody in Germantown, who had heard the clanking of the chain, ever ventured to doubt the existence of the ghost, and if any of our readers are inclined to disbelieve the story, the horse shoes can yet be seen nailed over some of the doors, and the bullet holes can yet be shown in the posts by the road side—some of the inhabitants having dug the bullets out with the characteristic reflection, "that it was a pity that good silver should be thrown away, even after ghosts."

THE PENNSYLVANIA DUTCHMAN