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THE BULLETIN
of the
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BARNEY AND PEGGY IN WWII

By John Hagan

During World War II the United States benefitted from the leadership of politicians like Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S Truman, leaders who made the hard decisions that led to Allied victory. There were also some talented military leaders, like Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Gen. Douglas MacArthur and Adm. Chester W. Nimitz. These officers made strategic decisions that led to the ultimate defeat of the Axis Powers. However, the U.S. victory over the Axis Powers in World War II was made possible not just by the politicians, generals, admirals and diplomats. The victory was also made possible by the actions of every day citizens who elected to do their parts to support the war effort. Every soldier and sailor who trudged across the battlefields of Europe or island-hopped across the Pacific, every pilot and gunner who flew missions over the Alps or Himalayas, and every Rosie the Riveter who toiled to produce the weapons, ships and aircraft needed, helped, in their own small way, to ensure that the US would defeat the forces of Fascism, Nazism and militarism that had been unleashed upon the world. This is the story of two of those average citizens from Montgomery County who answered the call when their nation needed them the most.

Bernard J. "Barney" Hagan was born 20 January 1921 in Norristown, but he lived for most of his early life in Conshohocken. He was the fourth child of John J. and Catherine (Sturgis) Hagan, and the third of four sons. John Hagan began his working career as a railroad conductor before eventually becoming the head custodian at Conshohocken High School. Barney graduated from St. Matthew's Roman Catholic High School in 1938 before beginning his life-long career as a pipe fitter. By the time he enlisted in the army he had several years of experience as a welder, a skill that served him well in the military.

Margaret Jane "Peggy" Mansfield was born 25 July 1921 in Conshohocken, the youngest of five children born to John J. and Margaret (Corrigan) Mansfield. John Mansfield began his career in the telegraph department of the Reading Railroad and eventually rose to the position of Yard Master at Reading Terminal in Philadelphia. Whereas the Hagan family consisted of four sons and one daughter, the Mansfields featured the opposite, four daughters and one son. Both families worshipped at St. Matthew's RC Church and, like Barney, Peggy attended St. Matthew's Roman Catholic High School, graduating in 1939, after which she attended

secretarial school. When World War II began she was ready to embark on a career in business.

Barney Goes To War

Barney enlisted in the U.S. Army just four days shy of his 22nd birthday, on 16 January 1943, in Allentown, PA. Ironically, his second child, second son and namesake would be born on that same date seven years later. Why he traveled to Allentown to enlist is unknown, although he was accompanied by his future brother-in-law, James Talone. His World War II draft card describes the 21-year-old as 69" tall, 140lb., white, with blue eyes, brown hair, and a light complexion with no distinguishing marks on his face or body. His residence was listed as 610 Fayette Street, Conshohocken, Montgomery County, PA. He was employed by Welding Engineers, Inc., Bridgeport, PA, with offices at Crooked Lane & Church Road, King Manor, Montgomery County, PA. There is no explanation for why a company from Bridgeport would have their offices in King Manor, which is in Upper Merion Township, but the section of that township called King Manor is, in fact, immediately adjacent to Bridgeport.

U.S. World War II Army Enlistment Records, 1938 – 1946, show that Barney enlisted as a private. His enlistment was for the duration of the war, plus six months afterward at the discretion of the President. He was single with no dependents, was a high school graduate and his civil occupation was as a skilled welder and flame cutter. He was reported to be 69" tall and weighed 137lb. After the war, on 14 February 1950, he applied for Veteran Compensation. By then he had married Peggy, and they were the parents of two boys, the eldest 3 years old and the youngest 1 month old. He and Peggy had moved their residence across the Schuylkill River to Upper Merion Township. Their address was given as DeHaven St., RD#1, Conshohocken, Montgomery County, PA. (Although DeHaven St. was in Upper Merion, the closest post office was in Conshohocken, so their mail flowed through that borough.) The application file indicates that he was in domestic service from 16 January 1943 through 1 June 1943. He was credited with being in foreign service from 1 June 1943 through 15 October 1945. His Army serial number was 33488042. He was officially separated on 27 October 1945 from Unit B, Sep. Ctr 45/GMR, Penna. His original draft board was no. 5, Ambler, Montgomery County, PA. He listed Margaret Hagan as his beneficiary, with sons John J. Hagan, aged 3 years, and Bernard J. Hagan, aged 1 month as secondary beneficiaries. He reported that his mother, Catherine F. Hagan, and father, John J. Hagan, were alive and living at 610 Fayette St., Conshohocken,

Montgomery County, PA. His application was received 5 May 1950, and he was awarded compensation in the amount of \$485, which was made up of \$50 for domestic service and \$435 for foreign service.

There is a database titled *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Military Affairs: Record of Burial Place of Veterans* that states that Barney served in Company A of the 10th Engineering Battalion. This unit was part of the Army 3rd Division. He had achieved a rank of Tech 5 and as a skilled welder his main job was welding parts for large artillery pieces. Barney's Army Discharge papers state that Barney served in Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes and Central Europe. He was awarded a Good Conduct Medal and a Middle Eastern Service Medal with five Bronze Stars. That latter award was probably for service in North Africa. Barney never talked much about his experiences in the European Theater, so it's difficult to determine what his involvement was in any of these campaigns. His military uniform, that he brought home with him, included the *Fourragere* (a braided green rope worn over the shoulder), which was the unit award given by the French Government representing the *Croix de Guerre*, an award presented to foreign soldiers involved in World Wars I and II, which reflected participation in the liberation of France by that military unit. He once told his youngest daughter that he was part of the D-Day invasion, and told his youngest son that he was part of the "second wave" of the D-Day invasion. An article in the *Conshohocken Recorder*, that will appear in full later in this narrative, states that Barney served overseas for three months, which would, if accurate, not have enabled him to be involved in all of the campaigns previously mentioned. In fact, he was credited for foreign service beginning 1 June 1943 through 15 October 1945. One of his nephews thought that Barney had been in the Battle of the Bulge. If he was sent to the European Theater just after the D-Day invasion, he certainly could have played a role in that battle also.

Barney's youngest daughter, Patti, has a scrapbook album of photos and newspaper articles that was kept by his mother Florrie for at least part of Barney's overseas deployment. Information in that scrapbook (including envelopes, postcards, writing on the back of photos and letters) indicates that Barney began his army tenure in Camp Lee, Virginia, where he was assigned to Company N, 7th Q.M.T.R. (Quartermasters' Training Regiment), where he housed at Barracks T512. His original overseas assignment was with Company B of the 342d Engineer Regiment, part of the Army 1st Regiment. Official records show that the 342d Engineer (General Service) Regiment was activated in April, 1942, at Camp Claiborne,

Louisiana. The regiment sailed to England in July of that year, and left for Omaha Beach 12 June 1944, just 6 days after D-Day, which perfectly matches what he told his youngest son. On 17 June the 342d repaired the rail line north of Carentan, then assisted in the repair and reconstruction of the port of Cherbourg. They later played a major role in the completion of the Cherbourg to Paris railroad. The regiment went on to serve in the Ardennes, Alsace and Rhineland Campaigns. These were all components of the Battle of the Bulge and Barney was stationed with the 342nd during the time that these battles were raging.



BARNEY HAGAN

This photo was taken when Barney Hagan was in the Army from 1943 – 1945. The location is unknown, as is the identification of any of the soldiers other than Barney, kneeling and smiling on the left.

A look at the daily log records for the 342nd Engineer General Services Regiment in the second half of 1944 gives us a closer look at Barney's activities overseas. As of 1 June 1944, the 342nd was stationed at Grove, now Oxfordshire, but then Berkshire. Grove was reassigned from the former to the latter in 1974. Grove was situated on Letoombe Brook about 1.5 miles

North of Wantage and about 14 miles South of Oxford. In the 2011 census Grove had a population of 7,178, so it is a decent-sized town. The Wantage Road Railway Station is located on the Northern border of Grove. The unit remained in Grove from 1 June through 11 June under the command of Captain Robin S. Dickson. On 12 June the regiment departed by rail from Grove via the Wantage Road Railway Station, and arrived in Dewlish, 7 miles NE of Dorsetshire, at 7pm, having traveled 110 miles. Dewlish, a very small town (2011 population was 284), was the marshalling area for troops that were about to be sent across the English Channel to Normandy, France. They remained in Dewlish from 12 June to 13 June.

On 14 June the entire company left the marshalling area by motor convoy, headed for the embarkation point where they boarded LST (Landing Ship, Tank) 1086 at 3pm, bound for Omaha Beach in Normandy. They arrived at Omaha Beach on 15 June at noon, disembarking from the LST at 2:30 pm. Thus, they arrived there exactly 9 days after the original D-Day invasion. They then bivouacked at Transient Area D-3. They left that encampment the next day via motor convoy for their next assignment one mile south of Isigny-sur-Mer, France, a town with a population of around 3,700 in 1944. They would remain at this location until 23 June. General Charles de Gaulle, the leader of the French Resistance visited them on the day they arrived. While stationed at Isigny-sur-Mer they were engaged in clearing minefields at Grandcamp and building a railroad yard at Carentan. Carentan, population about 6000 today, was a strategic area that provided the Americans with a continuous front connecting Omaha Beach with Utah Beach. It had been captured in house-to-house fighting 9 June by the 101st Airborne Division. The Germans launched an unsuccessful armor-reinforced counterattack 13 June, known as the Battle of Bloody Gulch, just three days prior to the arrival of the 342nd.

The daily report for 19 June states that the men working at Carentan were under artillery fire while they were building the rail yard and a railroad bridge. By 21 June some of the men had been sent to Valognes (population under 7000 today) to clear mines and rebuild the railroad there. Whether Barney was working at Carentan or Valognes is unknown, but the report for 22 June states that the workers at Valognes were under artillery attack and in danger of an air attack. By the next day that report indicated that they were under imminent danger of an air attack. One German plane attempted to strafe the Carentan work crew but was frustrated by the alert actions of a machine gun crew.

On 24 June the headquarters of the 342nd was moved by motor convoy, travelling from 8:30 am – 10:30 am, to Valognes, where they would stay

until 4 July. They continued to work under artillery fire and in danger of air attack. Furthermore, there was evidence of snipers in the area. The following day a German plane dropped several bombs at 4 am, but no personnel were injured. The artillery fire had ceased by 26 June, but there were still snipers active in the area. On 30 June men were locating and destroying mines and booby traps in and around two parking lots, three houses and adjoining yards, and three miles of beach in Querqueville, six miles east of Cherbourg. Cherbourg was a major objective since it was an important port city on the English Channel. The goal was to lay a cable in the English Channel for communication purposes, and to provide a port for bringing in personnel and supplies across the channel. One work crew was clearing roads and approaches to the docks of barbed wire and road blocks, another had deactivated 12 "shoe" mines, 50 Teller mines and 10 French box mines. Schu Mines were German box mines that targeted infantry. They were set off when a soldier stepped on them. Teller mines were German anti-tank mines while box mines were French anti-tank mines. The report indicates that the 10 French box mines were stacked one on top of the other.

On 4 July it was reported that the HQ was now located 2 miles SE of Cherbourg. They were still working on the docks, employing a captured diesel-powered combination crane and a captured 2 ½ yard shovel. By 24 June it was reported that the railway slip was ready for and expecting rolling stock anytime. On 8 August it was reported that several enlisted men claimed to have seen President Roosevelt on the dock accompanied by General Eisenhower. It was at Cherbourg on 22 September that Barney Hagan was promoted to Tech 5. On 4 October 1944 the 342nd left Cherbourg by motor convoy and traveled to St. Lo, France, a distance of 51 miles away. A main transportation center, St. Lo had been captured by the Allies 17 July 1944. Barney Hagan, Tech 5, was mentioned twice in the daily reports when he was sent out on work assignments. On 19 December the daily report states that the 342nd was enroute to a new bivouac area. They were "entrucked" at 10 pm for Auffrey, France, Channel Base Section. They stayed only two days in Auffrey before they broke camp and "entrucked" at 11:30 am for an unknown destination, which turned out to be Olloy, Belgium. They arrived at Olloy at 2 pm 22 December, made camp and posted guards. The battle of the Bulge, which took place primarily in Belgium, had commenced on 16 December 1944 and would continue until 25 January 1945. By now it has become obvious that the 342nd was not involved in the actual fighting, but provided necessary back up support building rail lines, bridges and other important infrastructure.

They moved into areas after the main fighting was over and then went to work ensuring the Army was able to continue to control the new territory.

For instance, on 22 and 23 December, 1944, the 342d, 392d, 366th & 1308th Engineer Regiments took up positions along the Meuse River, reinforced by a field artillery battalion, a regimental antitank company and six French light infantry battalions provided by the military governor of Metz. These recently organized French troops were poorly equipped with a motley collection of small arms and a few trucks, but they proved very useful in screening the military and civilian traffic along the roads leading to the Meuse, both east and west of the river. These assignments were in preparation for the Battle of the Bulge, the Germans last gasp effort to change the course of the war. So, again, when Barney told his nephew he had been in the Battle of the Bulge, he was being 100% truthful.

Barney was discharged from the Army 27 October 1945, from Company A, 10th Engineer Combat Battalion, Army 3rd Division. This was not the unit that he had served in during the war. The explanation could be that Barney had been sent home prior to the rest of the unit, necessitating him to be reassigned, or conversely, the unit may have been sent home ahead of him, leading to the change. In several photos in Florrie's album, Barney is shown to be in Bad Wildungren, Germany, and Salzburg, Austria. When I was a young boy, I once asked Barney if he had ever shot any Germans when he was in the war. My youthful hope was that the answer would be "yes", so I was puzzled when he answered, "I hope not." It was only as I grew older that I fully understood that response. Later, as a teen, I asked him what country in Europe that he had visited was the most beautiful, he told me it was Austria. When I eventually saw "The Sound of Music" I was able to understand why he would feel that way.

Peggy In Alaska

While Barney was serving in the Army, Peggy was having her own war-related adventures. A series of articles in the *Recorder*, beginning in February of 1943, and running through August of 1944, detailed her travels and exploits as part of the clerical staff assigned to the War Department's Army Engineering Department. On 23 February 1943 the paper ran an article titled, "Local Girl Assigned to Duty Near Alaska." It was revealed that "Miss Peggy Mansfield" was to leave on the following Monday for Edmonton, "in Northwest Canada, close to Alaska" to engage in government engineering clerical work. She had volunteered for the post the previous November, and had received her travel orders just the day before the article. The report stated that "The work is believed

to be in connection with the new Alaskan Highway.” It was added that “Miss Mansfield” was a graduate of St. Matthew’s High School in ’39, and had previously been employed in the business office of the Bell Telephone Company in Norristown, before entering the employment of the government in Philadelphia beginning in June of 1942.

The purpose of the Alaskan Highway was to facilitate troop movements between Alaska and the lower 48 states. Prior to the highway being built, troops could only be transported by rail, and there were often significant delays due to travel congestion. The Canadian government gave their permission to the U.S. Army to build and use the road during the war, but it was to be turned over to Canada at the war’s conclusion. Today it is usually referred to as the Alcan Highway, since it originally began in Edmonton, Canada, and ended in Fairbanks, Alaska.

On 26 February 1943 the *Recorder* reported that Peggy was to be the guest of honor at a farewell dinner party in Philadelphia, arranged by her local friends. Many more details were included regarding the nature of the trip and her itinerary. She was to leave the following Monday [1 March] afternoon for Edmonton, Province of Alberta, Northwestern Canada, where she would be associated with the Engineering Department of the U.S. Army. The trip would take four and a half days, including brief stop overs in Chicago and Minneapolis. She would be performing clerical work in connection with the building of the Alaskan Highway. Also travelling to Edmonton was Peggy’s close friend, Miss Lois Werkheiser, of Norristown, a fellow employee of the government in Philadelphia, but she was not scheduled to make the trip until 20 March. Miss Mansfield and Miss Werkheiser had been associated with the North Atlantic Branch of the Army Engineers for many months, but now had been reassigned to the Northwest Division. The article further reported that on Sunday, Miss Werkheiser and Roger O’Connor, Junior Administrative Assistant of the department, were to join members of Peggy’s family at a farewell dinner at her home. Mrs. H. Newton Walker (Peggy’s sister Fran), with her children, Bonnie and Henry, of “The Woodlands” in Phoenixville, would also be present as they were weekend guests at the Mansfield’s home.

On 2 March 1943, the *Recorder*, in a gossip column called “As They Pass”, reported that a last-minute travel change-order from the government had made it possible for Lois Werkheiser to accompany the “pretty, dark-tressed” Peggy Mansfield to Edmonton. They had left together the previous day, “delighted to have the fun and enjoyment of sharing the trip.” Another farewell dinner was held at Fischer’s Restaurant in West Philadelphia just prior to their 5:40pm departure from 30th Street

Station. Attendees at this dinner were Peggy's mother and sister, Mrs. John J. Mansfield and Mrs. James Talone (Clare), along with Mr. and Mrs. Louis A. McDermott, parents of Lois. They were later met at the station by the staff of the War Department Engineers, Philadelphia, each presenting the young women with "warm gifts to ward off the dry, frigid winds of Edmonton." One of the officials, described as being "formerly closely associated with President Roosevelt", had arranged for an official of the Pennsylvania Railroad in Chicago to meet them and "squire them about during their four-hour stopover." Another official was to meet them in Minneapolis and perform the same duties. They were due in Edmonton on Friday, "and soon will be busy at their desks aiding in promoting the progress of the new Alaskan Highway." If the reader is keeping count, there were three farewell dinners for Peggy, the one previously reported on Saturday night, which it was now revealed took place at the Shangri-La Restaurant, then the one Sunday night at the Mansfield residence, and finally the dinner on Monday afternoon at Fischer's just before their departure. If nothing else, she was certainly well fed when she left for Canada! A photo of Peggy appeared in the newspaper 9 March 1943, with the news that she had arrived in Edmonton. In "As They Pass" on 12 October 1943, it was reported that Peggy placed a long-distance call from Edmonton to her home in Conshohocken. This article revealed that, although she was originally stationed in Edmonton, Province of Alberta, she had volunteered to be transferred farther north to Whitehorse in the Yukon Territory.

In March of 1944, after a year in Canada, Peggy was granted two weeks leave. She first travelled to Edmonton, where she was the guest of Lois Werkheiser, who had stayed in Edmonton. She then continued on to spend a week with family in Conshohocken. A *Conshohocken Recorder* writer named Molly Matson, who authored a regular piece called "Molly Tells", decided to do a story about the hometown girl who had been living in the Great White North. Published 11 March 1944, the day after Peggy had departed on her 4500-mile return trip to the Yukon, the writer asks Peggy to describe her adventures in Canada and the realities of everyday life in such a remote area. She recapped the previously reported details about Peggy's original plans to travel to Edmonton with Lois Werkheiser, and then added that "Peggy's more adventurous spirit led her still farther north, and she answered a call for young women government workers at Whitehorse, 1250 miles farther into the snowbound Klondike." Peggy had first visited with Lois in Edmonton for a few days, and before her visit was over "nostalgia had touched Lois, and she too, secured a leave and made

the rest of the trip with Peggy. They flew from Edmonton to Minneapolis, clad in warm flying togs and fur-trimmed parkas” where they changed clothes and continued by train, arriving two weeks earlier.

Peggy described to Molly that at the present season in Whitehorse (March), they enjoyed daylight from only ten in the morning until 4:30 in the afternoon. Peggy said that “The moon and the stars are shining until well into mid-morning and night falls again in late afternoon.” From September to June is exactly the opposite. “Then, we have daylight almost

Conshohocken Recorder Friday, March 10, 1944—2

MOLLY TELLS—

Local Girl Returns to Far Klondike Regions After Two Weeks Visit, First in Year

A Conshohocken girl left yesterday on a 4500-mile round trek to far Whitehorse in Yukon Territory.

Leaving late in the afternoon, attractive Peggy Mansfield, daughter of Mrs. John Mansfield and the late Councilman Mansfield, is making the first lap of her long journey by rail, going first to Minneapolis, where she hopes to fly to Edmonton, Alberta, and thence 1250 miles farther by air to the remote Gold Rush settlement in British Columbia.

Peggy is attached to the U. S. Army Engineers Department, going up there more than a year ago to lend a hand with the clerical work on the dramatic new Alaskan Highway, which flings itself through Yukon and Alaskan wilderness for a distance of 1800 miles from Edmonton, to Fairbanks, Alaska.

A Norristown girl, Lois Werkiser, volunteered for the distant post at virtually the same time as Peggy, though Lois left approximately a



PEGGY HAGAN – 1944

constantly, except at midnight, when it becomes dusk for a short period.” She reported that the temperature was a moderate 75 degrees for much of the summer, but sometimes falls to 75 degrees below zero in the winter, averaging twenty below during that season. Peggy explained to Molly that Whitehorse was the seat of the Gold Rush of ’98, immortalized by Yukon poet Robert Service. (Peggy’s children were familiar with the book of Robert Service’s poems that she brought back from her sojourn there. That volume is still in the possession of her youngest daughter.) “There are many people there now who knew Robert Service”, Peggy told Molly, “and there is a Robert Service cabin there, where his relics and some personal belongings are exhibited.”

The article states that the basic population of Whitehorse was about 300, mostly Yukon Indians with a sprinkling of French Canadians. However, the military population had greatly ballooned the number of people. “They tell us it is like the Gold rush times of ’98 again”, Peggy said, “There are so many people in a town equipped to house a few hundred, that you have to wait in long lines for everything.” Most of the social life of the government group centered around the government barracks, where the newest films were flown in from Hollywood and shown three times a week, and long before they were available in the Lower 48. Dances were held at the Officers’ Club and parties in the barracks. Peggy stated that there were 10 men for every woman in the government group, so she and her friends were always certain to have an enjoyable experience.

There was no fresh milk, no fresh vegetables were available in winter, and when the town’s only ground transportation, the single-track White Pass and Yukon Railroad, was snowed under, as it had been for most of that winter, there is no fresh butter, and little oil to heat the barracks against sub-zero mercury. Whitehorse was a radio “dead spot”, with reception only in the winter after 10:30pm, when the atmosphere was clearer. There was no reception in the summer. Peggy was the thirty-second young woman to be added to the government group there, but the number had greatly increased since her arrival. The women had transportation priority number 4, which was the next rating below servicemen.

“Is there any gold yet to be found in Whitehorse?”, Molly asked. Replied Peggy, “Yes, the Indians go out in the country and dig some gold, whenever they need money. The rest of the time they hunt or the women do beadwork. They’ll make you some beautiful things if they like you, but if they don’t, they won’t make anything for you.” It could be pointed out that no example of such beadwork was ever seen by any of Peggy’s children, which might make one wonder if the Indians were not too fond

of her.

Peggy said that she hoped that she would soon get to go to Fairbanks, Alaska, 600 miles farther north than Whitehorse. "I was all ready to fly up one day, my parka on and everything, when someone presented a higher priority rating." She had travelled a considerable distance on the Alaskan Highway, which she described as a "mud road to a great extent", because concrete is not practical in such intense cold. But she reported that much of the road was a good, well-surfaced highway. Peggy had travelled 185 miles north of Whitehorse on it. The article concluded by observing that Peggy's "lovely brunette hair and sparkling dark eyes made her a personable representative of these United States."

The final installment of the reports concerning Peggy's wartime activities appeared 1 August 1944, under the headline "Transferred." The same photo of her that had appeared twice before in the series of articles chronicling her adventures in the Yukon, taken from the waist up and showing her in a lacy dress, with her arms crossed, appeared at the head of this article. It advised the readers that "Miss Peggy Mansfield, 120 Spring Mill Avenue" had left on the previous Saturday for New York City, where she had been transferred to the Manhattan District, U.S. Army Engineers. It pointed out that she had been associated with the Army Engineers for several years, in the Philadelphia District and later with the Northwest Division at Whitehorse in the Yukon. It mentioned that Miss Lois Werkheiser, "of Swede Road near Norristown", who had served with Peggy in Alaska, had also been transferred to the Manhattan District. The piece stated both women had returned from Whitehorse on 29 May (not factually true, Lois had stayed in Edmonton) on a leave of absence that had stretched for several months, and that they planned to reside together in New York City. It recapped the news that had been previously reported, that Peggy and Lois had left for Canada early in 1943 to lend clerical aid for the new Alaskan highway, and that Peggy had been home for a visit in March before resuming her duties in the Yukon until her May leave. Peggy had often told her children that her clerical duties in Manhattan were related to the Manhattan Project (the designing of the atom bomb) and the evidence seems to indicate the veracity of her claim.

Peggy's sojourn in Canada was one of the signature events of her life and in later years she often related her experiences there to her children. One of the first toys that the author of this family history can remember was a Canadian Royal Mounted Policeman doll (it would be labeled an "action figure" today) in his bright red uniform. When he was able to read he enjoyed reading a book of poems by the Canadian poet Robert Service

that Peggy also brought back from Canada, the favorite being “The Shooting of Dan McGrew.” All her children remember the photo album of her time in Edmonton, especially the photo labeled “May 1” which depicted everything still covered in several inches of snow!

Barney And Peggy Together

Soon after her return from Manhattan and his return from the Army, Peggy and Barney were married, on 6 April 1946, just about one month after the death of her mother, and they moved into his parent’s home at 610 Fayette Street. The *Conshohocken Recorder* ran the following announcement on Friday, 5 April:

Miss Mansfield Weds Tomorrow

The marriage of Miss Margaret J. Mansfield, daughter of the late councilman and Mrs. John J. Mansfield, 120 Spring Mill Avenue, and Bernard J. Hagan, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Hagan, 612 [sic] Fayette Street, will take place quietly tomorrow at ten in St. Matthew’s R. C. Church.

Mrs. James Talone, 136 West 11th avenue, sister of the bride, and Philip Hagan, Norristown, brother of the bridegroom, will be the attendants. James Talone will give his sister-in-law in marriage.

The bride is a graduate of St. Matthew’s High School in ’39 and spent three years in the government engineering department service, stationed for fifteen months in the Yukon. Mr. Hagan was graduated from St. Matthew’s High School in ’38 and is employed at Welding Engineers, King Manor. Serving three years with the Army Engineer Corps, he was overseas three months. [Obviously a mistake as shown by Barney’s military record]

The following Tuesday, 9 April 1946, the *Recorder* ran this short article:

Miss Mansfield Weds

The marriage of Miss Margaret J. Mansfield, daughter of the late councilman and Mrs. John Mansfield, 120 Spring Mill Avenue, and Bernard J. Hagan, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Hagan, 610 Fayette Street was solemnized quietly at 10 Saturday morning in St. Matthew’s R. C. Church.

The bride was given in marriage by her brother-in-law, James Talone and was attended by her sister, Mrs. James Talone.

*Philip Hagan was the best man for his brother.
The couple left later for a wedding trip to Atlantic City
Discharged from the Army last October, he has been em-
ployed at the Welding Engineers Inc., Upper Merion.*

About a year after their wedding, soon after the birth of their first child in 1947, Barney and Peggy removed from Conshohocken, where they had been living with Barney's parents, to DeHaven Street in Upper Merion Township. It was at this location that they raised their four children and innumerable household pets, including dogs, cats, snakes, lizards, turtles, and parakeets. There was even a pair of spectacled caimans and a squirrel monkey that briefly made their presence felt in the home. Barney and Peggy resided on DeHaven Street for three and a half decades until Barney's passing in late December of 1983. Not long afterward, Peggy sold the house and moved briefly to Maple Shade, NJ, before eventually departing for Woodland Hills, California, to be closer to her daughters. Peggy passed away, surrounded by her children, in California in April 2004.

THE THANKSGIVING DAY BRIDGEPORT VERSUS NORRISTOWN HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL GAME

By James P. Brazel & Robert Cohen

Introduction

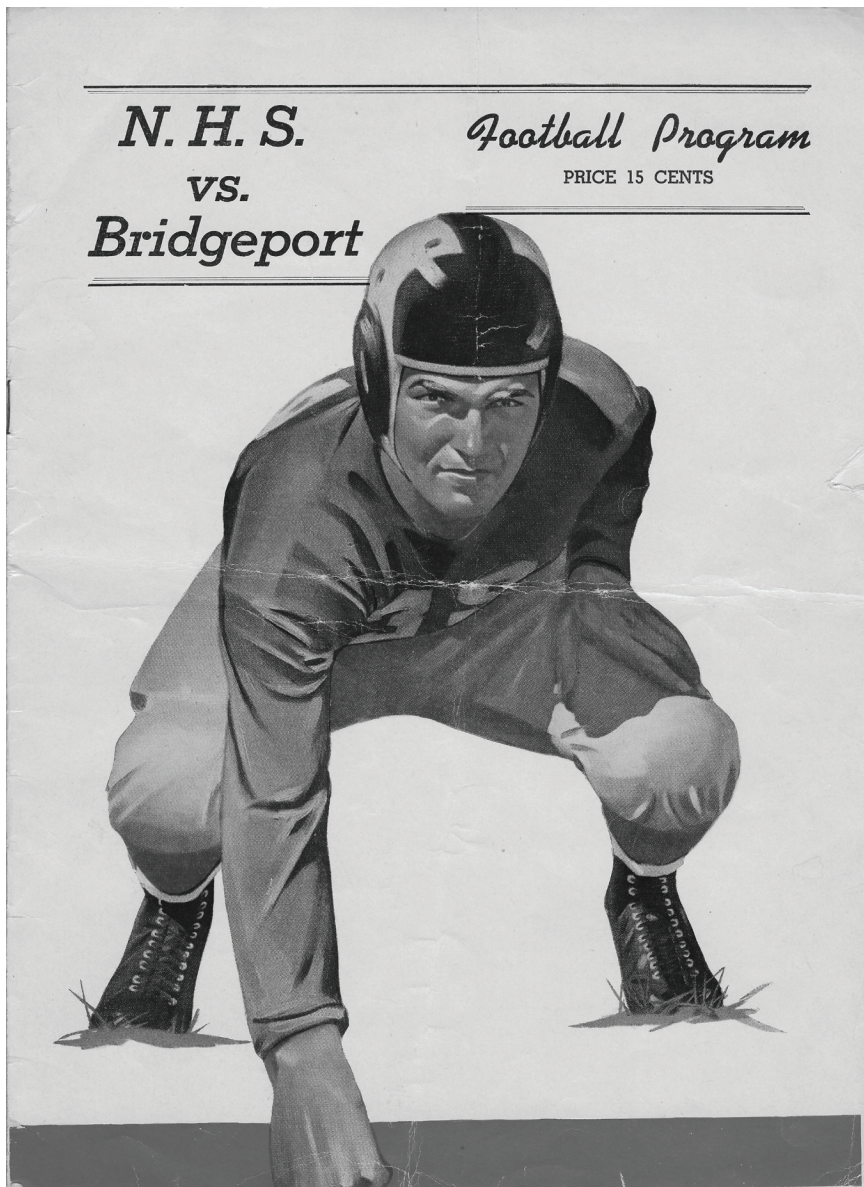
The inspiration for this article came primarily from a chance meeting of three Historical Society of Montgomery County members at the Society's Annual Luncheon meeting on November 6, 2021. Those persons were James Brazel, the Bridgeport native in this story, and Robert (Robby) Cohen, Norristown High alumnus—and his wife Debbie. The two guys got to reminiscing about the Bridgeport-Norristown Thanksgiving Day football game and what they remembered, firsthand, from those games. Robby mentioned that he had a set of programs from the series, quite a few, including some early ones, but not the complete series. And he agreed to lend them to Jim for further research.

This article begins with Jim's memories of the 1946 and 1947 games as he has remembered them, as well as some of "life" back then, misconceptions and all. Some of these will be corrected-or updated in a following section. Then the complete *Norristown Times-Herald* reporting on the two games will be presented to end the article with grown-ups' reporting on the events of those two Thanksgiving Mornings three quarters of a century ago.

My Memories of the 1946 & 47 Games (James Brazel)

One of my first, and probably the favorite football game memory of my life is of the Thanksgiving Day Bridgeport versus Norristown game of 1946. I was taken to it (in more sense than one) by my father, Joseph F. Brazel and his best friend since their childhoods, Frank Popielarsky, who was also my Godfather.

Men of their generation and "working class" backgrounds had commonly been taken out of school for family economic reasons before attending high school. Although the hometown high school organized athletic team experience was an unrealized life experience for them, they sincerely and avidly enjoyed seeing it experienced by a younger generation. My father had played football in various local church and fraternal



Cover of the 1947 Program

organization leagues, “..until I was thirty” as he was wont to remind me. He was thirty when he married my mother.

Also, my father and Frank had often attended college football games, notably the Villanova – Temple games back in the 1930s before their marriages and the assumption of family obligations.

I had previously been to one other football game, Bridgeport High versus Phoenixville, an away game at Phoenixville. Frank had an automobile, a 1936 Plymouth, as I recall. Our two families enjoyed many picnics and fishing days together in the 1940s and early 1950s, packed into the Popielarsky’s cars, especially up along the Perkiomen Creek. My dad did not have his own car until 1953.

The only memories I have of that Phoenixville football game experience are peripheral to the game itself. For example: being informed that we were driving through Valley Forge Park and my trying to relate it to my school lessons in American History on the noble sacrifices there of the Revolutionary War soldiers with their three-cornered hats and muskets. But I observed no evidence of that out there to demonstrate it, as we passed through those rolling hills and mowed fields. I must have missed the cannons and log huts. I was in second or third grade.

Shortly after passing through Valley Forge Park, Frank and my dad very enthusiastically commented to each other on how much the road cut up the hill passing today’s Freedoms Foundation on Nutt Road had improved this route. To this day I often think of that when I pass through there on Route 724 and can only speculate about how unsatisfactory the earlier route must have been.

When we got to the Phoenixville High School field, the two grown-ups exchanged enthusiasms about the Bridgeport High quarterback’s capabilities. I believe that may have been Carmen Falcone, who graduated from Bridgeport High in 1945 and went on to be the quarterback for The University of Pennsylvania football team and co-captain (with one Charles Bednarik) of the 1948 U. Penn team. So, the trip to Phoenixville’s athletic fields would have been in the fall of 1944. But I have no memories of that game itself. The only football I was playing then was unorganized pick-up games with boys around my age—tackle on the lawn of The St. Augustine Church Temperance Society Hall across the street from our house on Rambo Street.

And all this was before television.

So my second football game attendance experience, where I was expected to pay attention, was at the Bridgeport- Norristown Thanksgiving Day game on November 28, 1946 at Roosevelt Field, Norristown High’s

capacious home stadium, where the game was played every year. Bridgeport's athletics field was not big enough *for this game*.

My dad and Frank apprised me of Bridgeport's underdog status but also their toughness—and maybe some tendency to play dirty; but only if it was *really* necessary, you know, to beat Norristown. So to start off with, that's what this was all about. By now, I had some understanding of what was going on—passing versus running, penalties and getting to “first down” from the men with the measuring chains.

My memory is that a Bridgeport player tackled a Norristown player behind the Bridgeport goal line and the Bridgeport side of the field erupted in cheers. My dad told me this was called a “touchback” and now Bridgeport had two points and Norristown did not. What's more, the word was passed that the name of the Bridgeport player who made the tackle was Hugh Connors. I went to school with his younger brothers and his sister was in my year. So an Irish boy had come through and done the job. That's the kind of thing I remembered.

The game was played out and to counterfeit, if not coin a phrase, the tension waiting for something bad to happen to ruin this was *unbearable*. I remember the gleeful cheering when the game ended, and the sight of spectators, grown men from the Bridgeport side rushing out on the field to tear down the Markley Street end goal post. Uniformed policemen attempted to stop them but even more Bridgeport enthusiasts came out on the field and the posts came down. My dad and Frank stayed up in the stands and explained to me that it was a tradition to do that when you really felt good about winning a football game. To this day that is the only time I have ever personally seen that done.

Another distraction I remember from up in the stands was the appearance, late in the game, of Lehigh Valley Transit trolley cars, sitting on a passing siding out on Markley Street. Through-running trolleys, including the modern light yellow “Liberty Bells”, ran past both ways during the game. My dad explained to me that they were there to transport people who had attended the game back to their homes to the north side of Norristown. But not south across the Schuylkill River to Bridgeport where that trolley line did not make local stops on its way on the P&W Line to 69th Street terminal.

The next year's game was played to a similar script for 59 minutes. Bridgeport had scored a touchdown early in the game, but missed the extra point. Score 6-0. So the game played out with the brave Bridgeport lads holding on. But in the last minute, a Norristown player, identified in the stands around us as one “Jazz Genuardi”, caught a lobbed pass that you

could *just see* he was going to get. And my memory from that morning seventy-five years ago has been that was how the game was tied, with that blooper pass. Norristown made the extra point, and gloom descended at 7-6. Defeat snatched from the jaws of victory.

I went to see other Bridgeport-Norristown football games, but none hold the place in my memory that these two do.

And Bridgeport never won another Thanksgiving football game against Norristown.

| Story in Figures | | |
|--|--------|--------|
| Statistics of Bridgeport High School's victory over Norristown High: | | |
| | B.H.S. | N.H.S. |
| First Downs | 11 | 10 |
| Yds. Gained Rushing | 121 | 182 |
| Yds. Lost Rushing | 30 | 36 |
| Passes Attempted | 14 | 11 |
| Passes Completed | 4 | 4 |
| Passes Intercepted | 2 | 2 |
| Yds. Gained Passes | 4 | 51 |
| Fumblers | 2 | 3 |
| Fumbles Recovered | 1 | 4 |
| Yds. Lost Penalties | 25 | 15 |

The stats of the 1946 game published in the November 29, 1946
Norristown Times-Herald

Some Research on The Actual Stats of The Game

According to an article by Wilmer Cressman in the program for the 1950 game, the series began in 1945. At that date, going into the 1950 game, he states that the record was Norristown: 4 wins to Bridgeport's 1.

A search of the *Norristown Times-Herald* microfilm records at the HSMC has uncovered the date of the last game in the series: November 24, 1955. After that year Norristown High played Upper Merion High on Thanksgiving Day for several years. Bridgeport and Upper Merion High Schools were merged in a jointure effective in the 1966-67 school year. If the Cressman article in the 1950 program is correct about the series beginning in 1945, then the 1955 Thanksgiving Day game would have been the eleventh in the series; and the ending record would have been Norristown: ten wins to Bridgeport's one.

The program for the 1946 game showed "STATISTICS OF TODAY'S TEAMS", the team rosters, with the first names of the players spelled out (not uniformly done in later programs) for the Norristown players, but not the Bridgeport players who were only afforded first initials. In the roster for 1947, the first names of both teams' players were spelled out.

| STATISTICS OF TODAY'S TEAMS | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----|--------|--|
| NORRISTOWN | | | | |
| 40 Joseph Haines | Back | 150 | 5' 6" | |
| 41 Charles Cognato | Center | 140 | 5' 9" | |
| 42 Earl Josephs | End | 145 | 6' 1" | |
| 43 Frank Mitchell | Tackle | 235 | 5' 6" | |
| 44 Richard Dennis | End | 180 | 6' 1" | |
| 45 Leonard Smith | Back | 155 | 5' 7" | |
| 46 Winfield Brown | Back | 156 | 5' 10" | |
| 47 Alfred Cymbaluk | Guard | 168 | 5' 8" | |
| 48 Alex DiNoi | Back | 155 | 5' 6" | |
| 49—Paul Bingaman | Back | 170 | 5' 10" | |
| 50 Chester Bright | End | 160 | 5' 11" | |
| 51 Fred Cymbaluk | Guard | 160 | 5' 8" | |
| 52 Fred Long | Guard | 140 | 5' 6" | |
| 53 Eugene Coder | End | 160 | 6' 2" | |
| 54 Robert Cain | Center | 130 | 5' 6" | |
| 55 Curtis Coull | End | 140 | 5' 10" | |
| 56 Herbert Abbott | Back | 170 | 5' 8" | |
| 57 Augustus Patson | Guard | 158 | 5' 7" | |
| 58 Robert Campbell | Back | 166 | 6' | |
| 59 William Mullen | Back | 143 | 5' 7" | |
| 60 Michael Calamia | Tackle | 175 | 5' 11" | |
| 61 Anthony Fusco | Back | 150 | 5' 8" | |
| 62 Carl Hunsicker | End | 170 | 6' 1" | |
| 63 John Daywalt | Back | 170 | 6' 1" | |
| 64 Joseph Genuardi | Back | 155 | 5' 9" | |
| 65 Harold Swayze | End | 160 | 6' 1" | |
| 66 William DiSanto | Guard | 140 | 5' 4" | |
| 67 Norman Rader | Tackle | 210 | 6' | |
| 68 Herbert Torbidone | Tackle | 210 | 5' 9" | |
| 69 Keith Law | Guard | 170 | 5' 8" | |
| 71 Henry Butler | End | 165 | 6' 2" | |
| 72 James Cox | Back | 165 | 5' 10" | |
| 73 Warren Atkinson | Gr'd, Tackle | 180 | 5' 9" | |
| 74 Anthony Giamo | Guard | 170 | 5' 11" | |
| 75 Richard Antonelli | Tackle | 230 | 5' 9" | |
| BRIDGEPORT | | | | |
| 1 F. Tomeczuk | Center | 148 | 5' 7" | |
| 2 P. Dall'osto | Back | 145 | 5' 9" | |
| 3 J. Kudoba | Back | 155 | 5' 8" | |
| 4 D. Jammercone | Guard | 145 | 5' 7" | |
| 5 E. Makold | End | 150 | 5' 9" | |
| 6 W. Conners | Back | 145 | 5' 7" | |
| 7 L. Tancredi | End | 170 | 5' 9" | |
| 8 J. Phillips | Back | 138 | 5' 7" | |
| 9 J. McKenna | Back | 140 | 5' 7" | |
| 10 M. Beatrice | Back | 150 | 5' 8" | |
| 11 J. Rupert | End | 190 | 6' | |
| 12 S. Pacilio | Guard | 135 | 5' 6" | |
| 13 Joe Bisotti | Back | 152 | 5' 7" | |
| 14 D. Battaglio | Tackle | 158 | 5'8½" | |
| 15 B. Ruttman | End | 160 | 5'11" | |
| 16 F. Picarello | Back | 170 | 5'10" | |
| 17 N. Phillipy | End | 165 | 6' 1" | |
| 18 R. Ross | Guard | 172 | 5'8½" | |
| 19 E. Bangert | Guard | 165 | 5' 8" | |
| 20 M. Valero | Tackle | 165 | 5' 9" | |
| 21 A. Iocavino | Center | 160 | 5' 6" | |
| 25 R. DiCicco | Guard | 185 | 5' 8" | |
| 26 T. Chomiski | Tackle | 175 | 5' 8" | |
| 27 J. Biscotti | Tackle | 200 | 5' 7" | |

Roster from the 1946 Program

The Bridgeport roster for 1946 shows that there was indeed a W. Conners, a "Back", on the Bridgeport team. He is likely the "Hugh" Conners whose name I heard credited with the touchback tackle that won the day for Bridgeport. However, a look at the November 30, 1946 *Times-Herald* account shows that the Norristown right halfback:

Herb Abbott, who had been sparkling all morning with his romping, tried left tackle but was smothered behind the goal line by the entire right side of the Bridgeport forward wall. Ralph DiCicco and Joe Rupert were most prominent men in on the kill.

So, regardless of what I heard at the game, Hugh Conners was not recognized in print as prominent in "the kill"

STATISTICS OF TODAY'S GAME

| NORRISTOWN | | | | BRIDGEPORT | | | |
|------------|------------------------|--------|------------|------------|--------------------------|--------|-----------|
| 10 | Earl Place..... | Guard | 170 5' 7" | 1 | Philip McKenna..... | Back | 130 5' 5" |
| 11 | James Cox..... | Back | 160 5' 10" | 2 | Frank Tomczuk..... | Center | 146 5' 6" |
| 12 | Joseph Haines..... | Back | 160 5' 7" | 3 | Daniel Gammercone..... | Center | 141 5' 5" |
| 13 | William DiSanlo..... | Guard | 152 5' 7" | 4 | Joseph Biscotti..... | Guard | 164 5' 4" |
| 14 | John Daywitz..... | Back | 175 6' 1" | 6 | Patsy Doleisio..... | Back | 140 5' 8" |
| 15 | William Light..... | Center | 150 5' 6" | 7 | James Barbaretta..... | End | 154 5' 8" |
| 16 | Curtis Coull..... | Back | 153 5' 11" | 9 | John Dunlevy..... | Back | 119 5' 3" |
| 17 | Earl Joseph..... | End | 155 6' 1" | 10 | Joseph Piermatteo..... | Back | 150 5' 6" |
| 18 | George Williams..... | Back | 160 6' 1" | 11 | Frank Ladredo..... | Guard | 157 5' 4" |
| 19 | Joseph Genuardi..... | Back | 163 5' 11" | 12 | John Desanto..... | Guard | 148 5' 4" |
| 20 | Fred Long..... | Tackle | 155 5' 8" | 13 | Michael Valerio..... | Tackle | 163 5' 9" |
| 21 | Gene Coder..... | End | 175 6' 5" | 14 | Albert Donorfrio..... | Back | 131 5' 7" |
| 22 | Vincent Catania..... | Guard | 170 5' 8" | 15 | James Pastorius..... | Back | 150 5' 9" |
| 23 | Robert Campbell..... | Back | 163 6' 1" | 16 | Ralph Manjardi..... | Back | 144 5' 5" |
| 24 | Keith Law..... | Guard | 202 5' 11" | 17 | Norman Phillippy..... | Back | 156 6' 1" |
| 25 | Robert Caparella..... | End | 160 5' 11" | 18 | Nick Borzillo..... | End | 149 5' 9" |
| 26 | David Lloyd..... | Guard | 196 5' 11" | 19 | Ignatius Serfino..... | Guard | 142 5' 5" |
| 27 | Leonard Smith..... | Back | 150 5' 7" | 20 | Frank Picarelli..... | Back | 176 5' 8" |
| 28 | Raymond Salamone..... | Back | 173 5' 11" | 21 | Salvatore Ritrougto..... | Back | 147 5' 6" |
| 29 | Andrew Capone..... | Center | 195 6' | 25 | Ralph Rossi..... | Guard | 179 5' 8" |
| 30 | Raymond Saylor..... | Center | 185 5' 10" | 26 | Thomas Chomiski..... | Tackle | 179 5' 7" |
| 31 | Raymond Bibbo..... | Back | 155 5' 11" | 27 | Stephen Baraszowski..... | End | 144 5' 8" |
| 32 | James Lawler..... | Tackle | 196 6' | 28 | John Kudaba..... | Back | 152 5' 7" |
| 33 | Preston Blasecker..... | End | 165 6' | 29 | Daniel Valerio..... | Tackle | 180 5' 9" |
| 34 | Norman Rader..... | Tackle | 215 6' | 30 | Dominic Battaglio..... | End | 180 5' 9" |
| 35 | Henry Butler..... | Tackle | 175 6' 2" | 31 | John Biscotti..... | Tackle | 205 5' 7" |
| 36 | Daniel Zamelti..... | Back | 190 5' 7" | 33 | Salvatore Barbone..... | Back | 159 5' 7" |
| 37 | Richard Antonelli..... | Tackle | 205 5' 9" | 37 | Robert Hammond..... | Tackle | 172 6' 2" |
| 38 | Frank Mitchell..... | Tackle | 230 5' 11" | | | | |
| 39 | Richard Dennis..... | Tackle | 195 6' 1" | | | | |

Roster from the 1947 Program

The 1946 and 1947 rosters show a Joseph Genuardi, "Back", 163 pounds weight and 5'11" in the 1947 season. And his individual photo, labels him "Jazz" Genuardi. So I heard his nickname correctly up there in the stands. But let us see what the *Times-Herald's* sports writer Red McCarthy has to say about who caught that touchdown pass in the last minute of the 1947 game.

With fourth and still one to go, Norristown caught Bridgeport by surprise when Williams dropped a soft pass into the arms of Genuardi in the right flat. It was good for a first down on the Port 23.

So there most probably is the "Oh no!" lobbed pass I remember being caught by one Jazz Genuardi. But apparently it was not the touchdown pass. Four more plays resulted in a first down on the Bridgeport 11.

Then came the tie-producing touchdown. Williams took the ball from center, gave it to Campbell on a handoff. The Dragons, suspecting Campbell to hit his right tackle were taken by surprise when Bob threw one of his few passes this season – a bull’s eye to Genuardi on the six. Joe went the remaining distance.

Bridgeport’s quarterback in the 1946 and 47 games was Johnny Kudoba. The reproductions of the two years’ *Times-Herald* articles we include in this article will be found to be extremely detailed compared to any coverage of high school football games we read today. For example, Red McCarthy’s description of Kudoba as the “brilliant quarterback for the Dragons yesterday” early in the 1947 game is contrasted to “Kudoba’s try for the extra point was no good and Bridgeport had a 6-0 lead.”

The long-time Bridgeport correspondent for the *Times Herald* was John “Johnny” Nicola. He reported alongside Red McCarthy’s article on the 1946 game that the Bridgeport public schools were given a holiday on the following Monday and:

In the event you care to see the goal posts, they rest on the Bridgeport High lawn in a ‘V’ sign...that’s ample proof of traditional rivalry that will linger on after our time.



“JAZZ” GENUARDI — Back

**Photo from the 1947 Program
showing
Joseph “Jazz” Genuardi**



DRAGON CO-CAPTAINS

The visiting Bridgeport High School Dragons will be led against the Eagles this morning by Co-Captains shown on the left. Johnny DeSanto, left, is a mainstay of the South Siders' stellar line, while Phil McKenna, right, helps spark the backfield. Both are seniors and will be out to "bag" the Eagles for a more pleasant "trimming" to the turkey-dinner dish that follows, but, will they be successful? ? ?

The photo and write-up in the 1948 Program for the Bridgeport co-captains, Johnny DeSanto and Philip "Corky" McKenna, both seniors and veterans of the previous year's contest.

Associated Press—International News—United Press—Reuters—Sports

Norristown Times Herald

Montgomery County's Great Home Newspaper

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NORRISTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1946

Page 15

Bridgeport Celebrates First Win Over Norristown, 2-0

DRAGON LINE TRAPS ABBOTT FOR THIRD PERIOD SAFETY; HAPPY FANS TAKE GOAL POSTS

Kutuba's Fumble on Two-Yard Line, Recovered by Norristown's Hunsicker, Sets Stage For Game's Only Score; 12,000 Spectators Watch Contest

By BOB MCARDNEY
Times Herald Sports Editor

There could be no more joy in Flatbush after a Brooklyn Dodger World Series championship than there was in Bridgeport today following the scrappy Dragons' well-earned 2-0 victory over a fighting Norristown High eleven, before 12,000 fans yesterday at Roosevelt Field.

Jubilant South Siders even had one set of Norristown goal posts to show for their first football victory in history over their county rival. It goes down in Bridgeport annals as one of the choicest athletic moments ever digested by the cross-river community.

For Norristown it climaxed the most disastrous football program on record, the Eagles winding up with a season that showed rather definite signs of improvement, and a victory over a Badger High team that could not score a win all year.

Eagles Fight Hard

But it was a battling Norristown team that went down yesterday. The Blue and White gridders placed their hearts out in the same manner in which Johnny Brown's Bridgeport team did.

The Eagles' defense, led by the line of four, kept the Dragons from the end zone. The Blue and White gridders placed their hearts out in the same manner in which Johnny Brown's Bridgeport team did.

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Bridgeport Action In Carving the Eagle



Camasso Sets Point Record In Ambler Win

Halfback Don Camasso made an all-time record for the Ambler team by scoring four touchdowns and converting an extra point to lead Ambler to a 20-0 victory over Norristown in the season finale and a tie, scored, untied record of 10 points.

Other games concluding the league schedule, saw Halloway (Upper Merion) 25-0 at Willow Grove with Nelson Meares accounting for all four touchdowns in a 20-0 victory over Norristown. In a 20-0 victory over Norristown, the Quakers' battled 20-0 to a 2-0 tie at Quakertown.

The Ambler finale, which ran to 3:27, the "Crusher" offense, scored a total of 20 points in the first half, as compared to the four 20, saw Camasso, a junior winner of the initial 1946 Maxwell Club Memorial award, two 27, and 18 yards for scores and 5 yards, twice for extra points.

Types Old Mark

His 135 points in nine and one-half games more than enough to secure Jim Sullivan's old mark of 100 in the Ambler team's record book. Captain Hank Curran and Norman Wilson, passed Camasso in third place and the last-period were out of play. Each found the end zone.

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Punts and Passes of Turkey Game

Norristown Goal Posts Form Victory Sign at Bridgeport High School

By JOHN NICOLA

Naturally it's all over but the shouting—the latter for Bridgeport of course. We advise you stay out of that line of 4,000 if you're not cheering for Bridgeport. They're still "popping up" over the fact that in football history over the Eagles and will be for a couple days more Monday has been declared a "holiday." Try to avoid the crowd and its certain derision.

The score was 2-0 favor Bridgeport, but it's only fair that we mention to read: Ralph D'Amico and Joe Hunsicker 2 Norristown 0 for it was these two Seniors who scored. Hunsicker in the end zone for the game's only points.

Both were carried out on the field by teammates after the Eagles' end.

Superintendent of Bridgeport Schools C. C. Smith was as elated as a boy at a circus. He called the Dragons at halftime in the dressing room, and was back after the glorious victory—this time making the victory declaration that received just as much enthusiasm as the triumph.

Gloom hovered over the Eagles' showers as expected—the worst football record in history was being written down the drain. The lucky crowd had taken no good afterwards.

Bridgeport's chances John Hunsicker and Frank Ambler, in which one individual scored in a "vase victory" in the line, headed by Capt. Leo Ambler, and the Eagles' defense, the backfield made sure the Eagles' defense was not "bring down" down. "All did a 'make up job'." Hunsicker summed up, speaking his sentiments determined and hard work.

Norristown had its first right at the start in recovering the ball-off and making four straight field goals. Bridgeport's defense, the "good start—bad end," records for look back several weeks at the start.

Continued on Page Sixteen

DETROIT FIVE WHIPS WARRIOR FOE, 66-55

PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 29 — (UPI)—Outclassed by a sharp-shooting Detroit quintet, the Philadelphia Warriors had dropped to a 5-69 rating today in the Basketball Association of America with three wins in as many losses.

Detroit, coming from behind in the second quarter, gave nearly 4,000 fans a spectacular display of basketballing at the motor city won by a 66-55 margin. Facing the Detroit attack were John Zink, who racked up 24 points, and Robert Little, 20.

EAST GREENVILLE BOWS

East Greenville saw too much of Norristown's Vic Prosser yesterday. The big right halfback broke through the line to score touchdowns that all, but gave the Berks Scholastic League team a 20-0 victory in the Thanksgiving morning action. Their home gridders before 7:30.

Besides the three six-pointers, Prosser also racked up a 200 yard victory.

ALLENTOWN UNBEATEN

The mighty Allentown High School team hosted an undefeated and untied season today after beating a 20-0 victory in the traditional Thanksgiving day championship. The win was the 16th straight for the Crusaders over a 100-point streak.

BUT WITH CONFIDENCE—GIVE WITH PRIDE

COLE'S

TO EVERY MASCULINE TASTE

TOPS ON HIS GIFT LIST

100% wool or flannel lounging robes with plaid or fancy weaves to add softness and style. Shawl collar and full-length to complete the perfect design. Simply warm for those cold winter months and ideal for



The November 29, 1946 Norristown Times-Herald Newspaper Article on The November 28, 1946 Bridgeport-Norristown High Thanksgiving Day Game

Associated Press—International News—United Press—Reuters

Norristown Times Herald

Montgomery County's Great Home Newspaper

FINANCIAL COMICS

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Norristown Nips Bridgeport In Final Minute of Play, 7-6

Law's Perfect Boot Caps 80-Yard March

Scrapy Dragons See Second Period 61-Yard Touchdown Drive Erased Near Game's End; Both Teams Tally on Pass Plays

By RED MCARTHY
From Special Staff

Picking all its wallop in the last five minutes of the game, Norristown High School's football team yesterday swung a lethal haymaker—from 80 yards back—to score in the final 30 seconds of play, salvaging a victory, 7-6, that already seemed to be Bridgeport High's.

Cumulating that blow with an 11-yard touchdown pass, the Eagles marked a 61-yard scoring drive engineered by the Dragons in the second quarter. With the eyes of 8,000 persons concentrated on the back of his neck, Norristown's Keith Law applied the coup de grace to Bridgeport with a perfect placement boot.

Credited assistance in a scrappy

Bridgeport In Final Minute of Play, 7-6

Scenes As Eagles Beat Dragons

Pointed above are two scenes of yesterday's grueling battle between Norristown and Bridgeport High schools which resulted in a 7-6 win for a favored Norristown eleven. In the photo, Bob Campbell, Norristown, is shown on one of his ball-carrying plays. In the lower photo, the Bluffs, Norristown's substitute back, is being tackled by Bob Newman and Doug Buchanan. (Inset) Frank Franklin, Bridgeport.

Upper Merion Meets Patties Here Saturday

A football game between Upper Merion and the Patties will be played here Saturday.

MARCHES HONOR CLUB ATHLETES

Those in the house and... The American Football Club... The American Football Club... The American Football Club...

Orioles Whip Truman To See Brooks, 55-39; Army In Clash Tie For First With Middies

PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 28.—(AP)—The football teams of Army and Navy reach the end of their 1947 campaign in Philadelphia's Mather Field tonight when the Middies will meet the Orioles in a game that will decide the winner of the Eastern Division of the National Football League.

The Orioles, who have won 10 of their 11 games, will meet the Middies, who have won 9 of their 11 games, in a game that will decide the winner of the Eastern Division of the National Football League.

The Orioles, who have won 10 of their 11 games, will meet the Middies, who have won 9 of their 11 games, in a game that will decide the winner of the Eastern Division of the National Football League.

WEST CHESTER ELEVEN

UPSET CHESTER, 14 to 6. The West Chester team will meet the Chester team in a game that will decide the winner of the Western Division of the National Football League.

GIFT ROBES

for your man...

You can depend on a robe like this to give you the most famous... Botany Robes... \$15.95

Also in combination with... \$17.95

The November 28, 1947 Norristown Times-Herald Newspaper Article on The November 27, 1947 Bridgeport-Norristown High Thanksgiving Day Game

A TALE OF TWO BREWERIES

(WITH APOLOGIES TO CHARLES DICKENS)

By Rich Wagner

The village of Gulph Mills has quite a storied past dating back to colonial times. General Washington used it as a munitions depot and a local mill supplied flour for the troops on their way to Valley Forge.¹ Gulph Creek flows eastward through West Conshohocken where it empties into the Schuylkill River, where there is a bend in the river described in daily traffic reports of slow-downs on the Schuylkill Expressway as the “Conshohocken Curve.” Located on the east side of the curve, Conshohocken grew like a number of towns along the Schuylkill with the advent of the Schuylkill Navigation Company’s canal which in addition to transportation, provided water to power mills promoting industry. Railroads soon followed and ultimately served both sides of the river.

It is interesting that two breweries sprang up simultaneously in the early 1890s, one on a large tract of land, formerly a mill with a colonial mansion overlooking the property, the other in an industrial neighborhood of Conshohocken. Both were built as modern plants, taking advantage of innovations in construction technology. Refrigerating machines could manufacture ice and cool entire buildings so there was no longer a need for lagering beer in underground vaults. Steam provided power for pumping, grinding and other machinery. And electric generators powered motors and illuminated buildings.

Gulph Mills

Gulph Creek, had been dammed to form a series of ponds to supply mills with water power and were a source of ice in winter.² Tinkler’s textile mill was operating into the early 1890s when it burned down. John H. Griffith converted the ruins into an ice factory³ and in January 1892 together with William Haywood, Oscar Knecht, John H. Stemple and J. A. McFarland formed the Gulf Ice and Brewing Co. The company purchased 21 acres of ground along the Gulph Creek for \$45,000, which included the ice plant and cold storage buildings. The Philadelphia & Reading Railroad agreed to extend tracks to the brewery.⁴

Wets and Drys weighed in on the question of licensing. John H. Moore, one of the leading farmers of Upper Merion, filed an affidavit that the brewery would benefit the farmers in that section saying that the



Tinkler's Mill
From the Collections of the
Historical Society of Montgomery County

lime-tempered grain of Upper Merion would produce a fine brew. Patrick Quigley, preeminent local wholesale liquor dealer, filed an affidavit stating that \$52,000 was spent on malt liquors manufactured outside the county. A petition was presented signed by fifty local liquor dealers, hotel and restaurant keepers. Another, signed by 300 local businessmen said the brewery would create jobs, industry, commerce and tax revenue. Another petition signed by 200 people in favor was also introduced.⁵

The Woman's Christian Temperance Union (W.C.T.U.) of Conshohocken presented a petition which had been circulated throughout the county containing over 2,000 signatures. According to *The Western Brewer*, "the objection to the license was made by the cranks, who held that the law says a license shall be issued to 'persons' and that corporations are not 'persons.' The court very properly overruled the objection as not pertinent - not to say impertinent."⁶

A license was granted to the applicants: John H. Griffith, Wm. Haywood, John Stemple. Capital investment of \$5,000 of 50 shares of stock at \$100.00 a share. The shares of stock were divided: 25 shares to John

H. Griffith, 5 shares each to: Wm. Haywood, John Stemple, Henry Tracy, Charles Johnson, Oscar Knecht. Signed for the Commonwealth by A.L. Tilden. Recorded March 1, 1892.⁷

In June the company hired J.W. Butler, who had built Griffith's ice plant, to build the brewery⁸ which was up and running in eight months. The brew house was designed to produce 150 barrels per day and the refrigerated stock house had a capacity of 4,000 barrels. The ice plant had a capacity of 50-tons per day and the pond supplied natural ice. The property included a farm where horses for delivery wagons were housed. Twenty hands were employed.⁹

Gulf Brewery extolled the virtue of the sparkling spring water flowing from the Gulf hills, claiming it to be the purest water in the Schuylkill Valley. It was reported they brewed dark beer containing food coloring called Culmbecker [sic Culmbacher] said to be in demand by trans-Atlantic steamers. They also brewed porter and brown stout. Gulf Beer was evaluated by a nationally recognized authority and found to have medicinal properties. He declared it to be among the highest grade of goods he had ever examined.¹⁰

The Economic Panic of 1893 deeply affected the nation for a number of years. In January 1894 local men were returning to work after having been idle for months, including all the employes of the Gulf brewery.¹¹

In June the company issued a new series of bonds to finance expansion of buildings and equipment which included doubling the capacity of the ice plant. There was a large meeting of stockholders with 533 shares voting in November 1895. John H. Griffith, primary stock holder, was named supervisor of the brewery and property. John Tracy was named treasurer.¹²

The brewery had financial difficulties. Despite being capitalized with \$75,000, they were carrying a \$57,000 debt. In September 1897, F.M. & H. Brooke, malt dealers, took them to court to collect \$11,000. Tracy was appointed Receiver by the Court, permitting the company to continue operating pending a settlement. The two parties reached an agreement outside of court.¹³

At the annual meeting in November, officers were re-elected.¹⁴ In December John C. Tracy advertised the plant would go for sale at 10 o'clock January, 26, 1898:

The brewery consists of 19 acres and 42 perches [rods] of land in Upper Merion township about one mile from Conshohocken, having on it a dam, water right, five dwelling houses, brewery buildings, stable, ice houses and sheds.

The brewery is a very complete one consisting of a bottling establishment with all the vaults, pumps, engines, cooking apparatus, etc., to make an up-to-date brewery. The capacity is 35,000 barrels a year.

Everything will be sold. The buildings, land, good will, business and material on hand.

The brewery has a good trade established and is now doing a good business.

A \$1,000 must be paid down at the time of the sale and the balance within ten days after the confirmation of the sale by the court. It will be sold clear of all encumbrances.¹⁵

The company was re-organized as the Conshohocken Brewing Co. with \$150,000 capital, split between common and preferred stock, which purchased the brewery for \$53,000 in March. John Rothacker was named president. He was one of the sons of G.F. Rothacker & Sons' Lion Brewery in Brewerytown, Philadelphia. Robert Morris, secretary/treasurer, and A.H. Harley and W. Curren, were named additional directors. They said the company would be back in business in a matter of days.¹⁶ Their license fee was \$500 which covered production of 3,000-5,000 (31-gallon) barrels.¹⁷

Six months later a spark in the mill house ignited malt dust which caused an explosion and fire which destroyed the adjacent boiler and engine house. The roof over the brew house was completely burned. The brew house was 2-story, brick and 2-story frame above.

Firemen arrived within twenty minutes of being notified and quickly had three streams of water battling the fire. They managed to save the storage and refrigerator rooms. Owing to the absence of wind, the two-story office building and a storage shed next to the brew house were uninjured, as were the stable a few feet away and the bottling shop beyond that. None of the surrounding houses were affected and the fire was put out in six hours.

John Rothacker was on his way to the brewery and did not know of the conflagration until he arrived around one o'clock, about an hour after the fire started. He immediately took charge. Damage was estimated at \$50,000 with \$40,000 insurance on the buildings and stock. He assured customers that his family's brewery would supply them until the plant could be rebuilt.¹⁸

The insurance claim amounted to \$37,000 which was paid in December 1898. The company said workmen had begun clearing the ruins and announced plans for a 30,000 barrel-a-year brewery with an ice plant, all

of brick, stone and iron, which was expected to be completed by summer.¹⁹

In March 1899 the company announced it was going out of business. The company's efforts to attract more investors and get the Board of Trade involved were unsuccessful. F.M. & H. Brooke were the primary owners and when no one showed interest in the property they did not re-license the plant.²⁰

The plant was never rebuilt and the property was offered for sale at public vendue in May 1907.²¹ Three years later it was reported that local liquor dealer Nicholas Talone expressed interest in operating an ice plant there.²² There were two buildings remaining on the property which had been used as office and storage space for both Tinkler and Griffith. In 1913 a Mr. Thompson purchased the property with the intention of converting them into a residence.²³

Conshohocken

George Frank, a Philadelphia brewer, purchased property from Joseph L. Jones, near Jones St. on Hector in December 1889. He had not renewed his Philadelphia brewery license and began building a brewery on the site when the local temperance people announced their plans to oppose him getting a license.²⁴

In April 1890, his application for a license was denied on the basis that he had previous brushes with the law which included serving nine months for murder, being charged with perjury and defrauding the Federal Government of Revenue.²⁵

The following year Frank X. Rieger, a German immigrant who was in the grocery business in Philadelphia made his bid to get the brewery started. He purchased three lots, one with the brewery building another for a refrigerated stock house and a third for machinery. John S. Hipple was the contractor for all the construction.²⁶ In May, 1892 Rieger got a license for what became known as the Conshohocken Brewery. The brewery was in operation by December and Rieger said he would have beer on the market by the first of February.²⁷ A new refrigerating machine was added the following year.²⁸

Mr. Rieger cut his finger on a rusty nail while handling beer cases and died of blood poisoning in April 1895 at the age of 62.²⁹ His widow and son ran the brewery for a year after his death.

Sheriff's Sale. By virtue of a writ of Levari Facies issued on of the Court of Common Pleas of Montgomery county, to me directed, will be sold at public sale on

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 19, 1896, AT 2 o'clock, p.m. in court Room No., 2 at the Court House in the borough of Norristown in said county, the following described real estate:

All that certain Brewery and lot of land, situated in the borough of Conshohocken, said county, to wit; Beginning at the northeast corner of Hector and Jones streets having a front on said Hector street of 60 ft. 6" by 41 ft., with a brick vat house attached 28 ft. 7" by 40 ft. 8 in., brick boiler house 20 ft. by 9 ft., attached, frame coal house, 16 ft. by 10 ft. attached. The appurtenances are a 60-h.p. boiler, 16 h.p. engine, 10-ton ice machine, artesian well and pump. 1 brine pump, one boiler pump, mash-tub and kettles, water tank, 15 vats in vat room, 15 vats in fermenting room, 16 vats in stock room, brine tub etc. Frame stable 22 ft. by 19 ft., stabling for 4 horses, frame bottling house 14 ft. 5" by 20 ft. 5" with 15 h.p. bottle washing machine.

Seized and taken in execution as the property of Frank Rieger, and to be sold by Charles Johnson, Sheriff. Sheriff's office, Norristown, Pa., January 14, 1896.³⁰

From the *Conshohocken Recorder* Feb. 4, 1896

George Frank purchased the property for \$13,800. Included in the estate was a house and lot in Philadelphia which was purchased by Leonard Reiger [sic Rieger] for \$4,400.³¹ Frank sold the brewery to Frederick A. Loeble in November, who also purchased five adjoining lots from Joseph L. Jones.³² Loeble sold the property to James A. McGrath and Henry J. Barrett in August 1897.³³ They formed the Conshohocken Brewing Co. and received a license for \$300 to cover production of between 1,000 and 2,000 barrels.³⁴

Robert Baizley purchased the brewery in September 1898 for \$13,500.³⁵ His family had an iron works in Philadelphia and manufactured boilers and appliances for breweries. In October Crystal Spring Brewing Co. was incorporated in Camden, New Jersey.³⁶ John H. Griffith, who had been supervisor of Gulf Brewery became manager of Crystal Spring Brewing Co.³⁷ Despite its name, the brewery was nowhere near the "sparkling spring water from the Gulf hills."

The company planned to quadruple the capacity of the plant with a four-story brick and iron malt house adjacent to the existing buildings which would be enlarged and outfitted with new machinery. A new boiler was in the process of being installed. Plans had been made for a

refrigerating machine house equipped with a 30-ton per day ice machine.³⁸ It was natural for a brewery to be in the ice business. Crystal Spring would become the only local manufacturer, giving them a competitive advantage over the ice being shipped in from Norristown.

Throughout 1899 Rudolph Weber, as proprietor, advertised: Crystal Spring Brewery, Guaranteed Pure Malt Beer. Bottled at the Brewery for private or hotel trade.³⁹ But the local press noted that the brewery kept making news owing to levies by the sheriff, disputes regarding control of the company and other matters.

...A.W. Morris, the manager of the Crystal Springs Brewery, did a neat piece of detective work last week. A number of articles were taken from the brewery one day while he was in Norristown, during the time when he was in charge of the plant for the Sheriff. Mr. Morris said nothing when the articles were missed but determined to find them. He did this last week and on Friday got out a warrant for the arrest of Rudolph Weber and his accomplices, charging them with the stealing of the articles. He also got out a warrant for the searching of the premises of Daniel Kirkner at Barren Hill.

Mr. Morris with Constable Sowers and two deputies went to Barren Hill and searched the premises of Mr. Kirkner, [proprietor of a local hotel]. A valuable beer filter, set of single harness and a Dearborn delivery wagon was found there. All are the property of the brewery.

*On Saturday morning Magistrate Saylor gave Mr. Kirkner a hearing. He was held on his own recognizance under bail for his appearance at court. We understand that a warrant is now out for the arrest of Mr. Weber and others are likely to follow.*⁴⁰

From the Conshohocken Recorder Sept. 21, 1899

A.W. Morris was appointed receiver of Crystal Spring Brewing Co. in October 1899. He explained that the brewery was purchased by Mr. Rudolph Baizley and Mr. Rudolph Weber over a year ago in partnership and that soon afterwards Weber purchased Baizley's interest. A misunderstanding occurred and the two have been meeting to resolve the dispute.⁴¹

To the Public: Rudolph Weber is no longer connected with the Crystal Springs Brewery, of Conshohocken, and all patrons

and customers of said Brewery are hereby warned from making any payments of money to said Weber on account of goods sold and delivered from said Brewery, and any payment made to him by its customers will not be considered a payment to the owner of the Brewery, and repayment will be required.

*A.W. Morris, Manager, For Rudolph R. Baizley.
Conshohocken, Pa., October 18, 1899.*

From the *Conshohocken Recorder* Oct. 20, 1899

In June 1900 Crystal Spring Brewing Co. was reorganized by Rudolph R. Baizley, H.D. Smith, R.V. Page, Robert Blackman, Albert Stecker and Frederick W. Schultze, all of Philadelphia with \$50,000 capital stock: 2,000 shares at par value of \$25.00 a share.⁴² The company announced plans for extensive improvements to the plant starting with an enlargement of the refrigerated stock house.⁴³

The company announced plans to increase their capital stock in August 1901.⁴⁴ Production stood at 1,000 barrels a week. In January 1902 it was reported the brewery let the contract for a new 5-story stock house⁴⁵ to Emil H.C. Hartmann⁴⁶, Philadelphia architect. In February they had plans prepared for a single story, fully equipped bottling house.⁴⁷

During construction, Crystal Spring Brewing Co. made an assignment to George I. Vandergrift for the benefit of creditors. According to *The Conshohocken Recorder*, "The company is now having a four-story addition built to its plant, and its officers claimed that it was doing a good business. This brewery has had many ups and downs. Its owners are continually in trouble of one sort or another, and the assignment is no surprise to those who have been conversant with the methods in vogue there."⁴⁸ They also had gotten into trouble with the Federal Government over not putting tax stamps on the kegs that went to the trade. This spelled the end for Crystal Spring Brewing Co.

Gustave Schindler applied for a license for the brewery in February 1904 and said his top priority would be to install an ice machine and go into the ice business. No ice had been harvested from the river that year and all the manufactured ice available in Conshohocken was coming from Norristown.⁴⁹ In June 1904 Wm. F. Koelle, Philadelphia architect was awarded a contract for: Brew House, Wash House, Boiler House and Stock House alterations.⁵⁰

There was a dry contingent that opposed the license. The Conshohocken W.C.T.U. thought the money would be better spent putting up water

fountains, so the Norristown W.C.T.U. filed a remonstrance in Court, signed by over 100 local residents, against the issuance of the license. They claimed Schindler was a front man for Baizley and there was no demand by saloonkeepers so the brewery would be supplying speak-easies. They also claimed sales to clubs and minors led to debauchery along the river banks.⁵¹

Schindler got his license in April with the Court stating, "The application of Augustus K. Schindler for a brewers' license at this place was granted the Court saying, however, that if they could have passed on the question of necessity, the license would have been refused." Despite getting the license, the brewery never produced beer.⁵²

In September 1908 it was reported that improvements were being made at the Crystal Spring brewery by New York capitalists with the intention of manufacturing yeast cakes.⁵³

That was followed by at least two fires by arson, one in the old office building in 1908 and another in March 1909 when the stable was set on fire.⁵⁴

The Baizley Estate sold the property to a Mr. Boesch [sic Bausch] in September 1910. He immediately began remodeling and announced plans for a 50-ton per day ice plant and a stable for a dozen horses. Mr. Seger, superintendent, told reporters that 100 men would be employed.⁵⁵

Max Schmidt, Rudolph R. Baizley and Frank Bausch's wife, Lucie made an oral agreement which spelled out how the formation and operation of the Bavarian Brewing Co. was to proceed.

Each party was to contribute \$1,000 to Schmidt and John Baizley, Jr., son of Rudolph R. Baizley, to act as trustees and use the money towards equipment for the brewery. The agreement also provided upon incorporation, Max Schmidt would pay \$3,000 for capital stock, Mrs. Bauch \$5,000, both to be credited to their initial deposit of \$1,000.

Mrs. Bausch was to secure her husband as manager for five years beginning October 1, 1910, to be paid \$250 per month until February 1, 1913 and \$300 per month thereafter. The salary was to be paid in stock until February 1, 1911 and then \$150 in cash and stock for two years, thereafter to be paid in cash.

The rental of the property was to begin January 1, 1911. The terms of the agreement were that the company would pay \$1,000 taxes for 1913-1915 and \$1,500 for 1916-1919. Also, that the company could buy the property for \$30,000, with a down payment made prior to December 31, 1920. The mortgage to bear 5% interest with the principal paid by January 1, 1939.

In September 1911 Max Schmidt filed a bill in equity in which Rudolph

R. Baizley and Herbert F. Stetser were defendants. Schmidt requested the Court to restrain the defendants by injunction of conveying any of the brewery property, and requested an accounting of all money used in the alteration and improvements made to the property. Schmidt maintained that he and Mrs. Bausch had fully complied with the terms of the agreement and that they had been unable to get control over the property and that R.R. Baizley refused to account for the money spent on improvements. Schmidt claimed \$2,000 had been expended and he was seeking to get his original \$1,000 investment plus costs.⁵⁶

Two months later thieves broke into the old brewery in broad daylight and started dismantling machinery and removing parts including a heavy steel connecting rod, a brass eccentric strap and some expensive valves. James Scanlin, proprietor of the hotel across the street, called Mr. Baizley. Scanlin entered the building but the thieves heard him and got away with their plunder. A representative of the owner was sent out but didn't report the robbery to the police for two days.⁵⁷

By 1913, Mr. Lukens, a local wireless radio buff had put a 70-ft. tall mast at the top of the old brewery as an antenna for the radio station he built in his home.⁵⁸

In August, 1915 Ernest Altmarer & Sons, Distillers of Colognes of Philadelphia were looking into adapting the brewery for their purposes.⁵⁹

More recently it was home to Acme Saw Co. and now the building has had a facelift and been converted to housing.

Summary

It is interesting that these two breweries were established at the same time. One by a German immigrant who had already established himself in business, the other by a group of investors that formed a corporation. Just in time for the Panic of 1893 which was later referred to as The Great Depression, until an even greater Depression collapsed the economy in 1929. Industrial production fell 15% and unemployment rate was 17-19% nationwide.⁶⁰

John Griffith probably converted the ruins of Tinkler's mill into an ice factory with the intention of forming a brewing company. The resulting Gulf Brewing & Ice Co. was undercapitalized and was bailed out by re-organizing as the Conshohocken Brewing Co. with an infusion of capital, presumably from a well-known Philadelphia brewery. Unfortunately, a fire brought things to a halt. That Conshohocken Brewing Co. never rebuilt and sold the property.

A different group of investors formed the Conshohocken Brewing Co. and purchased Rieger's brewery. The Crystal Spring Brewing Co. was

formed shortly thereafter. The brewery was purchased by an iron manufacturer who made equipment that his company could sell to the brewery.

A.W. Morris and John Griffith who had been involved with the formation and operation of the brewery in Gulph Mills, both became involved with Crystal Spring. There was an effort to form a new company, Bavarian Brewing Co., but Baizley did not accept the terms of incorporation and left the building idle. The brewery went out of business in 1902. A few years later Gustave Schindler made improvements to the plant and even got a license, but never went into production.

Gulf lasted six years, the brewery in Conshohocken lasted for ten years. In 1898 there were five breweries in Montgomery County producing over 40,000 barrels of beer, the vast majority of which was produced by the Adam Scheidt brewery in Norristown.⁶¹

Around the time that Gulf and Conshohocken were being formed the Scheidt brewery had purchased Norristown's other brewery in order to increase production and in 1894 built a large modern brewery. Having begun as a family run firm it continued as such even after incorporation. It became the largest brewery just outside of Philadelphia with production capacity of half a million barrels, and continued as a branch of Philadelphia's Schmidt brewery from 1954-1974.⁶²

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THE LIFE, DEATH AND LEGACY OF COLONEL THEODORE W. BEAN

By Donald B. Lewis

Introduction

Most of the historians who have chronicled the past of Montgomery County were men more of thought than of action. William Buck was a scholar, Edward Mathews a newspaperman, Edward Hocker both a newspaperman and a librarian: all three spent their lives quietly collecting, preserving and elucidating traces of the county's past. Howard Jenkins, a newspaper publisher, engaged briefly in the Civil War and in some post-war political turmoil, but by middle age he wrote his historical accounts from the quiet countryside of Gwynedd and disseminated his religious and political views in mannerly Quaker print, social and religious circles.

Colonel Theodore Weber Bean was another breed of historian. Bean began his adult life as an energetic village blacksmith, wielding his hammer in a Jeffersonville smithy. While a young husband and father, he answered a call from President Lincoln and enrolled in a Cavalry unit of the Union Army. During nearly three years of active military service, he participated in several of the war's most violent battles. When peace returned, Bean studied law, became a well-known and well-respected Norristown attorney, and simultaneously pursued a career as a public orator, politician and historian.

Like many veterans, Bean first wrote of what he knew best—military history—but the scope of his historical interests and writings eventually broadened. Bean was a leading force in the formation of the Historical Society of Montgomery County ("HSMC") and became its first President. He was active in the planning of Montgomery County's 1884 Centennial celebration and edited (and wrote much of) the seminal history of Montgomery County published that year. Respected by all who knew him, a man with no apparent vices or blemishes on his character, Bean successfully entered the rough and tumble of politics, and was elected to, and served with distinction in, the Pennsylvania state legislature. And then, at age 57, at what might have seemed the height of his powers, this exemplary man descended into despondency and met a violent death, at his own hands, in a Norristown cellar.

Bean's Beginnings

Theodore Weber Bean was born to William Lane Bean and Mary (Weber) Bean in Norriton Township on May 14, 1833. Bean's paternal ancestors were thought to have emigrated from Wales about 1700. The Bean family had early connections to Evansburg and its St. James Episcopal Church. Bean's grandfather, Jesse Bean, settled on the 300-acre "Cold Spring" farm in Jeffersonville around 1800.¹

Young Bean was educated in the public schools of Norriton Township. At age seventeen he apprenticed himself to Jeffersonville blacksmith Isaiah Richards and resided with Richards and his wife in 1850. Following his father's death in 1855, Bean on April 2, 1859 acquired the former Richards homestead, consisting of slightly over 11 acres of land along the Ridge Turnpike, for the sum of \$4,250. On this land he operated his own blacksmith shop and produced small tools in an augur factory.

On January 4, 1860, Bean married Hannah Heebner of Lower Providence Township at the St. Augustus Lutheran Church. Hannah, born in 1837, had in 1856 graduated from the Pennsylvania Female College in Trappe. By the June 7, 1860 Census, Bean, then reporting himself as a master blacksmith, was residing in Jeffersonville with his wife, his mother and Matthias Tyson, an apprentice blacksmith. On July 25, 1861, son William Heebner Bean was born to the couple.

Bean's Military Career

The American Civil War erupted just three months before the birth of Bean's son William. Theodore did not immediately enlist, but when President Lincoln on July 2, 1862 issued a call for 300,000 volunteers to serve for three years or the duration of the war, he answered it. Previous volunteers for military duty had been mostly young and unmarried, so that in 1862 Lincoln had to appeal to the patriotism of men who had families or were settled in life. As Bean saw it at the time, unsuccessful battles had been waged near Washington, General McClellan's Peninsular Campaign against Richmond had failed, ordinary channels of trade and business throughout the country were paralyzed and the war was intensifying. Bean reasoned that for the Union to be preserved men of all classes would have to step forth to fill gaps caused by prior warfare, and he was willing to do so.²

David B. Hartranft, proprietor of the Jeffersonville Hotel and a neighbor of Bean, had been a member of a local militia unit in peacetime. Following the outbreak of civil war, Hartranft was made Captain and authorized to recruit a cavalry company. Recruited by Hartranft, Theodore Bean and his brother Edwin on August 23, 1862 enlisted in Company L of

the Seventeenth Pennsylvania Cavalry, a unit comprised of soldiers from Montgomery and Chester Counties.³ After enlisting Bean prepared for the worst: on September 1, 1862, he wrote in longhand a single-page will, unwitnessed, in which he bequeathed all his estate to his wife Hannah and named her his executrix.

1862 Service

After Captain Hartranft's recruits passed physical examinations and horsemanship tests, Bean's Company was mustered in at Harrisburg's Camp Curtin on September 17, 1862 (coincidentally the date of bloody Antietam). At the time of muster, private Bean was appointed First Sergeant.⁴ On October 17 he was appointed Second Lieutenant, and on November 21, 1862, just before his unit left Pennsylvania, he was promoted to First Lieutenant, filling a vacancy.

On November 25, 1862, Bean's regiment moved to Washington to defend the District of Columbia. The regiment encamped for several days on East Capitol Hill before being ordered to the front. On December 22 it reached Occoquan, Virginia, where it engaged in its first skirmish. Then, after a review before President Lincoln, the regiment joined General Joseph Hooker's Army of the Potomac.

1863 Service

On February 1, 1863, before the Seventeenth Cavalry saw its heaviest action, Bean requested and was granted a leave of absence. (One result of this leave of absence would be the birth of his daughter Mary Louise Bean on November 6, 1863.) From the time of his return to his unit through April 1863, Bean was stationed near Stafford County, Virginia. During this period Bean became seriously affected by inglorious "inward piles" (hemorrhoids). Bean felt that this condition was caused by excessive riding, fatigue and exposure during a period of intensive picketing and patrolling. The condition, which sometimes rendered him unable to ride his horse, would continue to afflict him for many years, long after the war's end.⁵

The Seventeenth Cavalry's first notable action came at the Battle of Chancellorsville, Virginia, to which it had accompanied infantry columns commanded by General Hooker. On May 2, 1863, after Confederate General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson had defeated the Union Army's Eleventh Corps and was attempting to split and thereby flank the surviving federal forces, the Seventeenth aided Major General Alfred Pleasanton in stemming Jackson's advance and restoring the Union line. Pleasanton would later assert that he and his forces had thereby saved the Union Army. However, during the battle, just as Bean's men were entering a

wooded area to escape an assault by Jackson, an enemy shell exploded within inches of Bean's left eye. The explosion singed Bean's eyebrows, whiskers and hair, left powder marks on his face and inflamed the eye. Though Bean's injury was not later noticeable to others, a physician would in the future conclude that the explosion had resulted in an irregular opacity on the crystalline lens of Bean's left eye, rendering it "useless as an instrument of vision."

In June of 1863, General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia headed northward en route to an intended invasion of Pennsylvania. At the time the Seventeenth was part of the Second Brigade of General John Buford's Cavalry, which began proceeding northward through Virginia in anticipation of an eventual clash with Lee's army. During this journey, Bean received treatment for his piles, which made it painful for him to ride. Nonetheless, on June 9, 1863, the entire federal cavalry corps, and the Seventeenth with it, engaged in the Battle of Brandy Station in Culpeper County, Virginia, the largest cavalry battle ever fought in North America.

On June 29, 1863, after crossing the Pennsylvania border, the Seventeenth spent the night encamped near the grounds of Pennsylvania (now Gettysburg) College, knowing that large numbers of Confederate forces lay nearby. Early in the morning of July 1, Buford's men fell into combat with a large portion of Lee's army a mile and a half from the town of Gettysburg. Buford, who was short on infantry support, quickly recognized the strategic importance of the Union army occupying the high ground at Cemetery Ridge and beyond. With just two brigades of dismounted cavalry, Buford was able to deceive the enemy into believing that it was encountering a much larger force, and was able to slow the advance of a third of the Confederate army.

Bean as part of the Seventeenth first took up position in a line of cavalry, whose right flank extended across the Mummasburg Road near Oak Hill (site of today's Eternal Peace Memorial), and the Seventeenth helped hold the Confederate army in check until the arrival of General Howard's 11th Corps. In a display of bravado, Buford's forces protected Union forces on their way to the elevated ground of Cemetery Ridge by forming a line and threatening a mounted cavalry charge against the enemy. The ability to reach that high ground proved critical to the Union army's ability to withstand strong Confederate attacks during the subsequent two days of battle. It was said by Major General Pleasanton, who commanded the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac during the Gettysburg campaign, that the country and the army owed the Union's success at Gettysburg to the actions of General Buford and his division.⁶

After the Union Army occupied Cemetery Hill, the Seventeenth took

up a position protecting the army's flank. The unit spent a restless night on July 1, 1863 in Joseph Sherfy's Peach Orchard along the Emmitsburg Road, guarding nearby roads. Almost immediately after daylight on July 2, some men of the Seventeenth began exchanging fire with the enemy and continued doing so until the arrival of General Daniel Sickles' Third Corps. However, the Seventeenth did not participate in further combat at Gettysburg. Late in the morning of July 2, General Meade (who had replaced Hooker) and Major General Pleasanton ordered it to collect Union supply trains in the vicinity of Taneytown and to take them to Westminster, Maryland, to guard them against possible attack.

One reason for the redeployment of the Seventeenth was that General Meade was then unsure whether he would allow his forces to fight at Gettysburg or whether he would fall back to a location near Pipe Creek, Maryland. Other reasons were that Buford's unit had suffered heavy losses since Brandy Station, had been handled severely on July 1, were low in supplies and rode horses that were in poor condition. The Seventeenth accordingly left a position in front of General Sickles' Third Corps⁷ and proceeded to Maryland, first to Taneytown, then to Westminster. Bean, "debilitated" after the first day of battle, was separately sent to Frederick, Maryland in a "broken down" and "protracted" condition in which he was unfit to ride.

Likely in light of his weakened physical condition, Bean was later assigned by General Buford to Division Headquarters to provide special escort and combat duty. Bean, made Captain on November 1, 1863, served on Buford's staff until the latter's death in February 1864, then served on the staff of Buford's protégé and successor, General Wesley Merritt, through the end of the war.

1864 Service

During the lull in combat in the winter of 1863-64, Bean twice returned home to Norriton. On January 8, 1864, he requested and was granted a ten-day leave of absence on the grounds that he needed to attend to "important business." On February 27, 1864, he received a letter from Benjamin E. Chain, a Norristown attorney, stating that Bean's mother was severely ill, that her physician had only faint hopes for her recovery, and that she had requested Bean's counsel in disposing of real estate that had for years been under his control.⁸ Bean was granted a second leave of absence on the ground that he needed to attend to "important Legal business."

In April 1864 Bean was assigned the position of Acting Provost Marshall for the First Division of Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Shenandoah. As Provost Marshall, Bean's duties included maintaining order

among soldiers and civilians and hunting and arresting spies and civilians suspected of disloyalty.

On August 29, 1864, Dr. William H. Rulison, Surgeon-in-Chief of the Union Cavalry, was mortally wounded by a sharpshooter while riding with General Alfred Thomas Archimedes Torbert's staff in an action at Smithfield Crossing, West Virginia. Realizing that he was dying, Rulison asked General George Armstrong Custer to write to his mother and requested that his body be sent home.⁹ Following Rulison's death, Bean was ordered to accompany the doctor's remains to the Rulison family home in Oswego, New York. Bean made arrangements to have the body embalmed and obtained a coffin, then accompanied the dead surgeon's remains northward by train to Baltimore, Harrisburg and points north. Following completion of his mission, Bean visited his own home, then caught trains at Philadelphia and Baltimore to Harpers Ferry, en route to rejoining his Cavalry unit in the Shenandoah Valley, where Union General Phil Sheridan was then waging a campaign against the rebel enemy.

On September 21, Bean joined the Union army's line of march to Front Royal Virginia, where serious unpleasanties loomed. In late September, in the final phases of the Valley campaign, it was discovered that Mosby's Rangers¹⁰ had not only shot a Union cavalry officer after he had surrendered but had killed wounded soldiers who were being transported in Union ambulances. At Front Royal, General Torbert, a friend of the murdered officer, was so enraged that he ordered the retaliatory executions -- in direct contravention of well-established military law -- of several prisoners of war from Mosby's command. It has been said "likely" that two such prisoners were shot by a detail under Provost Marshall Bean.¹¹

Historian Carol Bundy states that following these executions, when two other Confederate prisoners refused to disclose Mosby's whereabouts, General Torbert ordered Bean to "[t]ake those men up to that tree and hang them." Bundy writes that Bean, reluctant to do so, gave them many opportunities to divulge Mosby's whereabouts. She concludes that the men were eventually hanged either by the Second Cavalry or by men serving under General Custer, who held grudges against Mosby's forces arising from previous encounters. (Bundy adds that during the hangings Custer's band played "Love Not, the One You Love May Die," and that after the executions the people of Front Royal were warned not to cut down the bodies, which remained on the gallows for days as grisly reminders of Union revenge for the murders of federal soldiers.¹²)

Historian James McLean records the incident differently. He states that Torbert ordered Bean to question two prisoners, named Overby and Carter, to discover the location of Mosby's headquarters. After both refused, two

horses were brought over, the prisoners were placed in saddles and ropes were placed around the prisoners' necks and tossed over a tree limb. According to McLean, Bean again questioned the men, and they refused to answer. One asked for a Bible, read a little and then prayed. The other defiantly declared that "Mosby'll hang ten of you for every one of us." At that two whips cracked, the horses bolted, and the prisoners were dead.¹³ Whatever Bean's role in the Front Royal executions, he never wrote of it publicly and made no allusion to it in his diary,¹⁴ stating only that on September 23 Torbert "ran into a hornet's nest" and that on September 24 his unit "captured 70 prisoners." Whether the event weighed on his mind and conscience after the war is a matter of conjecture.

In any case, on December 31, 1864, Bean entered into his diary his most philosophical entry for the year:

Here ends the year 1864 full of tragic interest & glorious history. Full of sorrow to many who have lost the youthful promise of Home. A Year that witnessed the final experiment of Republican government and stamped us before the powers of the earth – as an indestructible nation.

1865 Service

Early in 1865, when the army was in winter quarters, things were comparatively peaceful for Bean. On January 6, he was made a Master Mason in Hiram Lodge No. 12 in Winchester, Virginia. On January 26, he received orders appointing him as Judge Advocate for a court martial. On February 12, he received a 15-day leave of absence.

Soon afterwards, under Sheridan's command, the Seventeenth engaged in raids on the James River Canal and communications facilities near Richmond. The cavalry engaged in diverse fighting near Richmond in March of 1865, and throughout April kept up a running fight with Lee's fleeing Confederate army. One of the encounters in its pursuit of Lee was a battle on April 1, 1865 at Five Forks, Virginia, which lay near the South Side Railroad, a supply line for Lee's embattled Confederate troops. Lee, safely headquartered in nearby Petersburg, ordered Pickett to hold Five Forks "at all hazards."

In preparation for battle, Pickett's forces were entrenched along the White Oak Road. The Union Cavalry was positioned facing Pickett's soldiers, approximately 250 yards away. As a staff officer in the cavalry, Bean was ordered by General Merritt to keep the Union forces aligned parallel to the White Oak Road. To do so, Bean had to remain on the field of

battle for two to three hours, during which time he had to pass continuously from left to right between the opposing armies amid continuous and heavy exchanges of shells. A Union sergeant later described the incessant roar of muskets and carbines in those hours as the severest and “most deafening” sound he had ever experienced. When battle finally commenced, the Union cavalry dismounted and helped rout the Confederates, forcing Lee to flee the protections of Petersburg. But after being subjected for hours to deafening noises, Bean was left “quite deaf” for about three hours. After that, the hearing in his left ear recovered but the hearing in his right ear remained permanently impaired to some extent.

On April 9, 1865, the Union Cavalry Corps was ordered to advance on the enemy at Appomattox Court House. According to Bean’s diary, Lee’s forces “met our Cavalry with their lines of battle and pressed us back,” but “[t]he infantry came to our support – whereupon the advance was reversed” and Lee’s army surrendered. Bean, on General Merritt’s staff at the time of surrender, later opined that “in securing this joyful result the cavalry, led by Sheridan, contributed largely, the Seventeenth sustaining its hard-earned reputation for gallantry to the last.”¹⁵ Upon leaving Merritt’s staff Bean was commended by his General for courage, bravery and heroism.

Bean was breveted Major and Lieutenant Colonel of the U.S. Volunteers for “gallant” and “distinguished” service during the campaign in Virginia and the War and thereafter became known as “Colonel Bean.” Bean participated in the Grand Review in Washington on May 23, 1865, but before his release had to visit bureaucratic departments in Washington to procure certificates of non-indebtedness. The experience “completely disgusted” Bean, who added in his diary, of the federal bureaucracy:

Kings could not put on more airs or appear more indifferent and ill disposed. I would enjoy the pleasure of goring them.

But he resisted the temptation, pulled in his horns, and was honorably discharged on June 20, 1865.

Early Days of Peacetime

Both during and after his apprenticeship as a blacksmith, Bean had set his sights on another profession: as early county historian Moses Auge phrased it, Bean had begun a “methodical course of self-culture... having in view the practice of law.”¹⁶ As a civilian, Bean returned to his Jeffersonville farm, and for a time resumed his blacksmith business while pursuing the study of law under Benjamin Chain. Bean’s pre-war apprentice,

Matthias Tyson, continued to work for Bean. Tyson later observed that diminished vision left Bean unable to do fine iron work, and that Bean's piles rendered Bean unable to do heavy work as before and required him to take on a second apprentice.¹⁷

By 1865 Bean had begun writing. He first penned *The Roll of Honor of the Seventeenth Pennsylvania Cavalry; or, One Hundred and Sixty-Second of the Line, Pennsylvania Volunteers*.¹⁸ This eighty-eight page volume, dedicated to the "Veterans of the Regiment," was, in the words of Bean's Preface, "[a]ctuated by the single desire of perpetuating, in an humble manner, the untarnished record of the Regiment, the names of comrades, the number and date of engagements associated with its history, that they may be carried with us to our thousand homes." The volume must have been begun while in the service: four days after his discharge, Bean visited his publisher, who estimated the cost of 300 copies at \$130. By August 10 the booklet was in Bean's hands.

Bean wrote that he did not think it desirable to write a history of the operations of the Seventeenth, leaving those details to a future "true historian," confident that time would not forget the part the unit played in the struggle for freedom and self-government. Instead Bean authored an eight-page paean to the service rendered by his comrades. He observed that at the time of its creation of his unit cavalry units had been held in some disrepute, described by critics as the "contempt of the enemy and the terror of their friends." Bean offered a lofty tribute to his fellow troops, reviewing the highlights of its service and declaring that:

Soldiers, you have triumphed! Under the eye of your distinguished commanders, inspired by their genius and valor, you have marched to victory over a hundred battlefields. True to your colors, true to the glittering steel that has so often carried terror and dismay to the once haughty and insolent, but now fairly vanquished, enemy, you retire to the pursuits of civil life to share with your justly honored commanders, as you did the perils and dangers of the battle, the joy and blessing of a lasting and honorable peace.

Bean concluded by telling his fellow cavalymen that they could look back with pride and honor upon "these fiery and bloody campaigns you have ridden, knowing that the Regiment had never "betrayed the confidence of its commanders in the field;"¹⁹ or, if possible, its more cherished friends at home." Following this rather florid prose the remainder of the volume consisted of a compilation of tributes by others to the Seventeenth and of

rosters of the companies of which the Seventeenth was comprised.

In the immediate aftermath of his military service, Bean had little interest in politics. On August 14, 1865 he attended a Union County Convention at Norristown's Odd Fellows Hall.²⁰ He wrote in his diary that "the utmost harmony prevailed" but that "the hollow heatedness of politics and politicians is enough to disgust every upright and honest man." On September 16, he met a standing committee of Montgomery County and "again declined nomination for assembly."

But Bean did have an interest in the law. He obtained a commission as a Justice of the Peace on April 10, 1866. In 1867, physically unable to ply his blacksmith's trade as he had before the war, he agreed to sell his smithy and augur business at a "sacrifice" price. He and Hannah then purchased 12 acres and 158 perches in Norriton for \$1,500.²¹

On April 1, 1868, Bean completed the sale of his smithy and began devoting full time to the study of law. On February 24, 1869 he became an attorney and was admitted to the Montgomery County Bar. According to his diary he completed his first case in the Court of Quarter Sessions—a case of assault and battery—on May 8, 1869. Bar membership propelled Bean into a miscellany of local offices and positions. In 1870 he was appointed Deputy Escheator for the county, a position in which he administered property subject to forfeiture because there were no heirs capable of inheriting it. In 1871 he became a Notary Public, a position he held through 1888.²²

From 1871 to 1872 Bean served as editor of the *Norristown Independent*, a newspaper which was a precursor of the *Norristown Daily Independent* (1874-76). Established in May of 1865, the *Independent*, which was Republican in its politics, provided local news and professed to be devoted to public interests. On Christmas Eve 1871 Bean delivered an address at the opening of a community hall in Jeffersonville and in 1872 became President of the Jeffersonville Library Association. From 1872 to 1877 Bean served as Solicitor for the Montgomery County Treasurer, and in 1873 he authored lectures delivered at the Pennsylvania Female College, his wife's Alma Mater, on "Property Rights of Married and Single Women in Pennsylvania."²³ His daughter later observed in a note to HSMC files that the property rights of women was a "favorite study" of Bean's.

On April 3, 1874 Bean acquired property in Norristown Borough from the northeast side of Swede Street to Oak Street for \$3,800. He purchased this property from Sarah B. Heebner Weber, his wife's sister. A week later Bean sold his Norriton property, and by August 1875 the Beans took up residence at 809 Swede Street in Norristown Borough, in a home that Colonel Bean would occupy until his death.

Bean Becomes an Historian

May 10, 1876 marked the opening day of the Centennial Exposition, a gala celebration held in West Philadelphia to commemorate the one-hundredth anniversary of the birth of the United States of America. Bean attended the opening, visiting all the main buildings.

Three years before, a local newspaper had suggested that because of its fame Valley Forge “should be made a grand objective point in the Centennial Celebration.” Agreeing with that sentiment, Bean began preparing what he described as “a convenient guide-or hand-book” to *Valley Forge, Washington at Valley Forge One Hundred Years Ago; Or, The Foot-prints of the Revolution*.²⁴ A map of Valley Forge included in Bean’s volume provided an overview of the former locations of soldiers’ huts and General Washington’s Headquarters, locations that were not then marked by monuments. According to Bean’s 1876 diary, his guide to Valley Forge was in the hands of an agent the day before the Centennial’s opening.

Bean’s volume encouraged visitors to view traces of Washington’s encampment, including still-visible remains of century-old military entrenchments. Bean’s writing placed Washington’s encampment in Valley Forge in its full historical context, detailing the battles that had preceded the encampment, Washington’s actions while at Valley Forge, and the eventual evacuation of the camp after the British had departed Philadelphia for New York. Bean declared in his *Preface* that his volume contained “all that the pilgrim to this spot will require to renew in his heart the debt of gratitude which we owe to the illustrious men who made these hills as notable as their lives have become memorable in the common history of our country.”²⁵

Bean then became heavily involved in efforts to preserve permanently the site of Washington’s winter encampment. On December 18, 1877, the eve of the centennial of the establishment of Washington’s camp, Bean attended a meeting to plan a celebration of the 100th anniversary of the camp’s evacuation. On June 19, 1878, the centennial celebration of Washington’s evacuation of Valley Forge was held by the Valley Forge Centennial and Memorial Committee, of which Bean was a member. (Under the auspices of this organization, Bean gave additional lectures on women’s property rights in private homes to raise funds to pay off the mortgage that then existed on Washington’s Headquarters.) Ceremonies at this centennial celebration included reading of an historical paper, an oration, a poem and a military review. Bean served as historian and delivered a stirring oration that referred to “the shoeless soldiers, the frozen ground, the cheerless hills, [and] the lowering leaden sky that arched over them with gloom.” Just eight days later, on June 27, 1878, a second son was born to the Beans

and christened Lane Sunderland Bean.

One of the earliest calls for Valley Forge to be preserved as a park came from Bean. Bean and Anna Morris Holstein²⁶ were said to have “repeatedly urged” that Valley Forge be made a national park.²⁷ In May 1880, Bean traveled to Washington to urge the appropriation of \$20,000 for a park at Valley Forge.²⁸ Later, between 1888 and 1890, while a Pennsylvania state representative, Bean drafted a bill to seek \$25,000 from the federal government for the Centennial and Memorial Association’s work.

After the Valley Forge Centennial celebration, Bean’s interest in historical writing accelerated. Between 1878 and 1883, Bean authored several pieces in the *Philadelphia Weekly Times*’ “Annals of the War,” including articles on General Buford’s actions at Gettysburg,²⁹ a cavalry charge by General Custer at Yellow Tavern, the fall of General Zook, and General Pleasanton’s activities at Chancellorsville.³⁰ Bean even tried his hand at poetry, writing a verse “Appomattox” and another entitled “The Charge of Keenan,” the latter of which was dedicated to the memory of fallen “heroes” and surviving members of the 8th Pennsylvania Cavalry. During the same years, Bean served as Solicitor for Norristown Borough (1880) and Solicitor for the Sheriff’s Office (1880-1884). The June 10, 1880 census found Bean, his wife, his three children, his mother and “boarder” Mary Weber Bean and 17-year old Katie Casselberry, a niece, all residing at 809 Swede Street.

In 1881, Bean was highly instrumental in, if not primarily responsible for, the founding of the HSMC. According to Elwood Roberts’ *Biographical Annals of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania*,³¹ a meeting for the purpose of establishing an historical society for Montgomery County was held in the Norristown Courthouse on February 22, 1881. Bean joined several county notables in issuing a call for the gathering, then served as chairman of the meeting. One of the reasons for the formation of what became the HSMC was to prepare for a celebration of the centennial of the formation of Montgomery County by an Act of Assembly dated September 10, 1784. The HSMC’s charter stated its purpose as the study and preservation of the history of Montgomery County.

Bean became the first President of the HSMC. At its first meeting he articulated his vision of the Society’s mission, observing that in the “comparatively new” country of America, “we have been more successful in making history than in preserving it,” and adding:

*The almost marvelous achievements of the great heroic
and distinguished men and women who have preceded us in the
work of life, and bequeathed to us civil and religious liberty*

*and the personal advantages of permanent self-government, place us under obligations to reciprocate in some measure the distinguished favor, and, if possible, to rescue their work, their common history, from the households of their progeny before it is forgotten or deemed of minor importance. To this end this meeting has been called, and we hope it will result in permanent and effective organization, intelligent and methodical effort, until the work is accomplished.*³²

Bean remained president of the HSMC for eight years. On February 29, 1889 he asked leave to decline further service as president, but requested to be placed on the executive committee, on which he then served until his death.

Bean has been described as “the organizer and the inspiration of” the HSMC, and the perpetuation of the organization has been ascribed to Bean’s “enthusiasm and constant devotion to its success and welfare.” It has been said that Bean’s “varied and extensive research, his studious research, [and] his analytical mind” brought to the Society “much that was valuable, and much that would otherwise have been lost not only to the society but to the county and state.”³³

Soon Bean became a popular patriotic orator. At the dedication of a memorial to General Zook at Gettysburg’s Wheatfield on July 25, 1882, Bean gave what one newspaper described as “an interesting biographical and historical oration.” Further pursuing his interest in military history, Bean published “Sheridan in the Shenandoah” in 1883 in *Scout and Mail*, a weekly newspaper devoted to the interests of the Grand Army of the Republic.

On June 4, 1883 Bean filed a claim for an Invalid Pension.³⁴ In it, Bean asserted that he was continuing to suffer from the “inward piles” arising from his riding in early 1882, from the loss of vision in his left eye suffered at Chancellorsville and from the loss of hearing in his right ear sustained at Five Oaks. In the course of documenting and pursuing the claim, Bean would contend that the partial loss of sight had prevented him from continuing his blacksmith work, and that as an attorney and “writer for publications” his visual condition had been “inconvenient” and “embarrassing,” because he had been obliged to employ people to copy or write as he dictated. He would further assert that his work was confined to daylight hours because of fear of straining his good eye. Bean would also contend that his hearing loss impaired his use of the telephone and required him to pay “strict” attention in court proceedings.

In May 1884, Bean gave a Memorial Day oration at Lancaster. In it he praised the officers and soldiers who had fought on the side of liberty in America's various wars. He recalled that in all ages monuments had been raised to "princes, potentates and successful conquerors," but that "it was reserved for our day and country to pay the same tribute to the gallant private soldier that is paid to the officer – to mark the graves of all with that grandest monument to the dead, the American flag, and to strew with impartial hand flowers on the graves of all who had battled for the Union."³⁵ Bean spoke of interesting traditions and incidents in the history of Lancaster County. The *Lancaster Intelligencer* declared that Colonel Bean was a "finished orator," that he held the attention of his audience from the start of his oration to its finish, and that he was given "hearty applause."³⁶ Not long afterwards, on July 3, 1884, the Grand Army of the Republic held a three-day encampment at Reading; Bean was awarded the honor of commanding the Union forces.

The year 1884 brought a four-day public celebration of the Montgomery County's Centennial. The project had been discussed at length at a meeting of the HSMC on May 25, 1882. At a September 10, 1883 organizing meeting, Bean was appointed Chairman of the Program Committee. In an ensuing parade on September 11, 1884, a featured event was the appearance of a group of Native American children from the Indian Department of the Lincoln Institute of Philadelphia. The children rode in open conveyances during the parade, then were transported to tents set up in the Courthouse courtyard, where they received dinner and sang. Afterwards, Bean addressed the children on behalf of the Centennial Committee, recognizing in them "descendants of the race who once were the proud possessors of the ground we now occupy" (which Bean described as "honorably and peaceably" acquired by Penn), and expressing hope that they would carry to their "far Western homes the potent agencies of a liberal Christian civilization," would serve as "active factors for the redemption of your tribes and race" and would become "good husbandmen, industrious artisans, devoted teachers, peaceful men and women," so that they would have "descendants who will some future day memorialize your inscrutable past in picture and story."³⁷ If the speech today sounds patronizing, it must be remembered that the year 1884 came less than a decade after the death of Custer at Little Big Horn and the later conclusion of the Indian Wars.

1884 also was the occasion of the publication of a two-volume history of the County edited by Colonel Bean: *History of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania*, a volume that was described in 1943 by Kirke Bryant, a later President of the HSMC, as "the most important book on Montgomery

County.” In his *Preface* to the county history, Bean described the text as a “memorial of the first century of its corporate existence.” He wrote that:

Material facts have been diligently sought after and patient labor cheerfully bestowed upon the work. Events are chronicled in narrative rather than controversial form, and truth, gleaned from a thousand sources, has been condensed in order to make it a valuable work of reference for the present and future generations. It has been prepared with care and liberality and a determination to make it as complete and accurate as possible.

Although commonly thought of as Bean’s history, Bean’s acknowledgements demonstrate that much of its content was provided by other notable Montgomery county historians, most notably William Buck (who wrote nearly half the work), but also including Howard M. Jenkins, Abraham H. Cassel, James Y. Heckler, Jones Detwiler, Henry S. Dotterer and Moses Auge. In his introduction, Bean thanked his daughter Mary Louise for her “careful and intelligent co-operation,” her “cheerful assistance in the revision of both manuscript and proof,” and “for many suggestions and notations of historical facts.” Sales of Bean’s history were sufficiently successful that, according to Buck, in addition to his agreed compensation Bean gave him “a handsome present.”

Bean’s 1883 pension claim remained pending throughout all of 1884. During that year it was under close scrutiny by the federal Pension Board, because Bean’s contemporary military service records provided no contemporary documentary evidence of the claimed disabilities. Numerous affidavits were submitted and depositions taken concerning the claim. Some doctors provided support for the claim, while several soldiers who had served closely with Bean asserted that they never became aware of any of the conditions that Bean claimed. Eventually, on February 2, 1885 the Board of Review recommended admitting Bean’s claim for loss of vision but rejecting the claim otherwise.³⁸ A month later the Pension Board agreed, granting him \$8.50 per month from April 13, 1883 to April 3, 1884 (a half-pension rate) and \$17 per month thereafter. The Pension Board found that as to the conditions other than diminished eyesight Bean had adduced no competent evidence establishing the origin of the condition or its existence at the time of his discharge from the Army.

On February 19, 1886, Bean met with his Seventeenth Cavalry comrades at Jeffersonville. On May 13, 1886 a military banquet and reception was held at the Pottstown City Hall to honor the Seventeenth Cavalry. Called upon to speak, Bean reviewed the history of his unit, noting the

extreme pride he had felt when his unit had been reviewed by President Lincoln at the Plains of Stafford, Virginia, when it first joined General Hooker's Army. On August 5, 1886 Bean attended the 17th annual banquet of the Army of the Potomac in Pioneer Hall in Alta, California. On October 9, 1887 he was the orator at a reunion of the survivors of the Seventeenth Cavalry held at Lebanon, Pennsylvania.

Bean delivered another address at Seven Pines National Cemetery on Memorial Day, May 30, 1888, under the auspices of Phil Kearny Post No. 10 G.A.R. of Richmond, Virginia. Following this address, the *Richmond Dispatch* of May 31, 1888 reported that yesterday had been "the most notable day in the history of the Grand Army of the Republic in this city." It opined that "Colonel Bean fairly won the hearts of the boys in gray with an address abounding in rich historical and patriotic utterances."

Around the same time Bean became involved with a pamphlet titled *The Loyal Girl of Winchester*. When first released on November 22, 1864, that pamphlet contained an exchange of letters beginning on September 15, 1864, when Union Major General Sheridan had secretly written to Rebecca Wright, a young woman living in Winchester, having heard that she was loyal to the Union. Sheridan asked for information concerning the position, strength and intention of the forces of Confederate General Jubal Early. Miss Wright responded with information that Early's forces were smaller than represented, due to the departure of a division of artillery. After a subsequent Union victory over Early, Sheridan in 1867 wrote Miss Wright to state that it was thanks to the information in her letter that the battle of Opequon was successful, and sent her a watch and chain as a memento.

Nearly twenty years later, Bean made written inquiries into the details of the incident. In response, a former officer on General Early's staff confirmed the accuracy of information provided by Miss Wright about Early's forces. Union General George Crook wrote that it was he who had recommended Miss Wright to Sheridan after becoming convinced of her "high character" and loyalty. Bean then wrote to President Rutherford B. Hayes enclosing those letters, and on October 4, 1888, the former President requested that the original pamphlet be reprinted with the addition of the letters, including Bean's.

Colonel Bean Enters Politics

As previously observed, immediately following his Civil War service Bean had been disgusted by politics. But within twenty years, while enjoying a large clientele and an extensive legal practice, Colonel Bean eventually found himself attracted to the political arena.

In 1882, Bean's name surfaced as a possible compromise candidate at a county Republican Congressional convention held at Lansdale's Freed's Hall. Bean received few votes and was not nominated. In 1887, however, Pennsylvania's Governor Beaver appointed Bean a member of the State Commission on Industrial Education. By November 1888 the admirable Colonel, by then a well-respected lawyer, orator and historian, a man of temperance and no apparent vices, became one of eight Republican candidates for State Representative from Montgomery County. The election returns of November 8, 1888 showed him to be one of five winners, all Republicans.

During his term as a state representative, Bean served as chairman of an educational committee and advocated increased expenditures toward public schools, measures for the betterment of former soldiers and sailors, and a manual training program. His two-year term in office was said to be marked by his earnest advocacy of his causes. Newspaper clippings reported that Bean was "[s]omeone who commands the respect of the house." He was cited as a "diplomat" for extending an invitation to President-Elect Harrison to visit the Pennsylvania State Capitol, and it was reported that Bean "belong[ed] to that school of intellectual and patriotic men who cannot help doing wise things while living, and who dwell in the minds of the people when numbered with the dead."³⁹

The time of Bean's political rise was marred by some sadness, as his mother died on March 10, 1889, at age 94. But Bean declined to go into seclusion. Active as ever, he delivered his "Address at the Dedication of the 17th Pennsylvania Cavalry Monument" at Gettysburg on July 2, 1889.⁴⁰

The next year brought a rare setback for the Colonel. The seeds were sown when, as the *Philadelphia Times* reported on April 12, 1890, distress arose among the farmers of Montgomery County after four farms had failed within several weeks, with the properties passing into the hands of a Sheriff or an assignee. As a result, the farmers adopted a resolution "to refuse to vote for lawyers for the Legislature."

By July 22, 1890, Bean had announced himself as a candidate for the Republican Congressional nomination in the Seventh District. However, on July 26 he withdrew his name from consideration, believing that a contest for the nomination would be prejudicial to his party. Nonetheless, by early August the *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported that Bean might nonetheless become a candidate for renomination as a State Assemblyman, and that if re-elected Bean proposed to make a bid for the Speakership at Harrisburg.

On September 28, 1890 the *Philadelphia Times* reported that Bean was fairly sure of renomination, having been a "conspicuous and honor-



Theodore W. Bean
From the Collections of the
Historical Society of Montgomery County, PA.

able” member of the Pennsylvania Assembly. It noted that Bean’s fellow Montgomery County Assemblyman, C. Tyson Kratz, tried to overcome the prejudice of the farmers against lawyers “by working in a corn patch and claiming that his ancestors were tillers of the soil.” Bean, without stooping to such antics, secured renomination. Nonetheless, on November 6, under the headline “The Farmers Did It,” the *Times* reported that all the farmer Assembly candidates had won, and all the lawyer candidates had lost, regardless of party lines. Among the candidates Bean finished last, though within 469 votes of the top candidate for the post.

Despite his political defeat, on the surface all seemed to be well in the life of Colonel Bean. His political defeat could not have stung very badly, as it was less a personal defeat than a consequence of an agrarian revolt against lawyers generally. Bean remained highly regarded in Montgomery County, and on November 8, 1890 attended a flag raising at the new Pencoyd School in Lower Merion, closing the ceremonies with a “rousing patriotic speech,” according to the *Times* of November 9. Bean’s law office in Norristown at 415 Swede Street (previously located at 508 Swede) was in a block known as the “Bean Block.”

The Sudden Death of Col. Bean

For several days preceding Tuesday, January 20, 1891, Bean was spending considerable time with his eldest son. William Bean was by then an Army Lieutenant who had been stationed on special duty in Pennsylvania for several years but who had recently received orders to join his regiment at Fort Bowie, Arizona. When Colonel Bean arrived at his Norristown office on that Tuesday morning, nothing unusual was noticed about his appearance except that he seemed downcast over the impending separation from his son. Edward Long, who occupied an office adjoining Bean’s, observed that Colonel Bean had seemed depressed for several days.

At about 3:30 P.M., a janitor, A.B. Barndt, descended into the cellar of Bean’s office building in search of coal for the furnace. In the darkness, Barndt stumbled over an object he could not identify until he placed his hands on it and discovered it to be a human body. The janitor rushed upstairs for help, and with the aid of a light it was discovered that it was Bean’s corpse. Bean’s head was reportedly lying downward in a pool of blood, on makeshift bedding on the cellar floor he had created out of old newspapers and carpeting. Tightly clenched in Bean’s right hand was a razor that he had brought from home and used to cut a deep gash in his throat, one that reportedly extended from ear to ear. Before cutting his throat Bean had ingested two-thirds of a vial of laudanum, an opiate that

he had obtained the night before at Dr. Oliver F. Lenhardt's drug store at the corner of Airy and Swede Streets.⁴¹ Bean's death was estimated to have occurred at 3:00 P.M.⁴²

The following day, the same janitor who discovered Colonel Bean's dead body revealed that the preceding Sunday night, when entering the cellar to attend to the heater, he discovered the Colonel, who seemed to be "surprised" and "unnerved" at being found there.⁴³ This revelation gave rise to surmise in the press that Bean had planned his suicide previously and that only his discovery by janitor had prevented Bean from taking his life sooner.

Bean was interred on January 23, 1891, following funeral services held at St. John's Episcopal Church of Evansburg. Bean's funeral procession proceeded from Bean's Swede Street home to Montgomery Cemetery. The bar attended in a body. The Zook Post of the Grand Army of the Republic and the Patriotic Order of Sons of America and other organizations of which Bean was a member also attended, but military formalities were not observed, except for the sounding of taps at Bean's grave. Bean's pallbearers included General W.W.H. Davis, Bucks County historian and J. A. Strassburger, Bean's personal attorney and father of future newspaper publishing magnate Ralph Beaver Strassburger. Bean was laid to rest in Montgomery Cemetery's Lot R 140.

A Coroner's jury empaneled immediately after the death returned a verdict that Bean had committed suicide "while in a fit of despondency."

Possible Explanations of Bean's Suicide

Bean left no reported suicide note, but contemporary newspaper reports attributed Bean's death to financial reversals. The *Norristown Register* of January 21, 1891 provided the fullest account. It stated that there was "every reason to believe" that Colonel Bean's mind had been gradually giving way" under the "severe strain" of "business and other reverses."⁴⁴ It explained that some months previously Bean became "financially entangled through the affairs of a client" and that rumors that his financial circumstances were straitened led to several of his creditors presenting requests for payment. The *Register* reported that Bean "believed that a crisis in his affairs was at hand" and "looked upon failure as inevitable," thereby shattering "the ambitions of a lifetime." The *Philadelphia Inquirer* on January 21, 1891 reported that on the evening preceding his suicide Bean had summoned his family around him and expressed fear that his reason was giving way beneath the strain of business reverses and that he "would be unable to withstand his weight of care."

Colonel Bean's son, Lieutenant William Bean, told the *Register*

that his father had “for some time been engaged in an effort to prevent a financial disaster,” with the result that his physical health was “impaired” and the Colonel feared his mind would be wrecked.” Lieutenant Bean said that his father felt he was “losing his mind” and that he would not have sufficient physical strength to “rebuild his mental structure.” But he added that notwithstanding their past concerns about Bean’s mental condition, his family was shocked at the suicide, since Bean’s affairs had been straightened out, “the crisis was really past,” and plans had been made for the Colonel to rest from business to travel and enjoy old friends to “dispel thoughts of his misfortunes.” Lieutenant Bean and friends of the deceased assured the *Register* that an investigation of Bean’s affairs would disclose nothing dishonorable, “nothing more serious than misfortune.”

Perkasie’s *Central News* on January 29, 1891 discounted financial losses as a cause of Bean’s suicide, stating that although Bean had been “financially embarrassed” he had “worked steadily and earnestly” and that because “his accounts are perfectly straight, no answer can be found for the death.” Lieutenant Bean stated to that newspaper that his father had become “financially involved through his business affairs,” but that arrangements had been made to “satisfy all demands against him.” William stated that his father had been unwell for some time and that the strain upon him had been so severe that when his difficulties were settled his mind gave way and he took his own life in a fit of despondency.⁴⁵

Despite Colonel Bean’s efforts to resolve his financial difficulties, it seems clear that at the time of his decision to take his own life, his finances remained in very serious straits. Years later Bean’s granddaughter, Dorothea Jones Downing, in a note to the HSMC, wrote of the suicide that, “I am not sure of the reasons, though he evidently had left many debts.” Bean’s estate file⁴⁶ confirms that Bean’s finances were on very unstable ground. A March 9, 1891 inventory of Bean’s estate valued all of his personal property at just \$650, comprised entirely of one “doubtful” real estate mortgage. On March 7, 1892 Hannah Bean petitioned the Orphans’ Court for permission to sell Bean’s Swede Street property, declaring that her husband’s personal estate was insufficient to pay his just debts and necessitated the sale of all his real estate. Mrs. Bean later reported that the property had after due notice been sold to son William Bean for just \$50, subject to mortgage indebtedness and interest amounting to \$6,105.⁴⁷ The \$50 realized from the sale of Bean’s Norristown property would not have gone far toward repaying Bean’s other reported debts, which then exceeded \$6,000.⁴⁸

Mary Ann and Francis Nace

Bean's suicide also gave rise to conjecture in the *Philadelphia Times* that the Colonel had become embarrassed in his role as Executor of the estate of Mary Ann Susannah Nace, which remained unsettled at Bean's death. The *Times* on January 21, 1891 reported that Francis Nace, Ms. Nace's brother, had become "heavily embarrassed," with judgments totaling \$42,000 entered against him and that it was rumored that Bean was "seriously involved" in this embarrassment. It further reported that Nace had begun an investigation into his financial relations with Bean and had come into Norristown on the very day of Bean's suicide to serve notice on Bean to "square up his account." It appears clear that Bean's dealings with the Nace family gave rise to some of the financial difficulties which so distressed Bean.

Francis Nace was a prominent Norriton farmer whom Bean had profiled in his 1884 *History of Montgomery County*.⁴⁹ Nace's unmarried sister, Mary Ann, had financial dealings with Colonel Bean nearly a decade before Bean's death. On March 14, 1882 she had loaned Bean \$1,000. On July 1, 1886, Bean transferred to her a \$1,400 mortgage for unspecified consideration, suggesting that Bean had not repaid the 1882 loan.

Ms. Nace died on December 11, 1888 at age 62, following a stroke. Her Will, which appointed Bean as Executor, directed that her body be interred in the Nace family plot at Montgomery Cemetery, where her mother was reportedly the first person interred. The Will directed the removal of an iron railing surrounding the plot and a small monument within it and the substitution of granite grave markers enclosed by a heavy granite coping, in accordance with a plan prepared by William E. Cunningham, owner of a Philadelphia marble yard. The remainder of Ms. Nace's estate, net of debts and a small bequest to Montgomery Cemetery for lot maintenance and repair, was to be distributed according to law, which meant that it would pass to her brother Francis. A December 19, 1888 appraisal valued Ms. Nace's estate at \$19,333.81, including an item described as "Bond - Bean & Nace" valued at \$2,000.

On December 12, 1889, Cunningham served a notice asserting that Ms. Nace had entered into a \$3,000 contract with him, that he was ready to perform the contract, and that if Bean refused to allow him to do the work, he would demand the profit he would have earned had he completed it.

On March 7, 1890, Bean filed his first and final account of the Nace estate, the gross value of which he calculated at \$19,643.40. He claimed credits paid or to be paid on account of the estate totaling \$16,440.39, including "Cash on Bond of Bean & Nace" of \$1,855, and over \$11,000 in payments to Francis Nace. There remained a balance of \$3,201, appar-

ently set aside as a reserve against Cunningham's claim, which Bean had refused to recognize as enforceable.

Cunningham asked the Court to appoint an auditor to distribute the funds in Bean's hands among those legally entitled to them. A lengthy series of meetings followed in which the auditor, Edwin Longacre, heard testimony to determine whether Cunningham's "contract" was enforceable. Bean appeared both as counsel for the estate and as counsel for Francis Nace, a position which might have been thought fraught with conflict, since any money paid to Cunningham would diminish Nace's inheritance dollar for dollar.

Cunningham testified that Ms. Nace had told him that the granite cemetery work referred to in her Will would be his as soon as she got "her money matters arranged." His testimony also showed that the price spoken of was \$3,000, about half of which was expected profit. Francis Nace, who opposed Cunningham's claim, testified that the monument and stones placed in his family plot had been placed there in a manner that his father had directed. Nace claimed that his father had specifically expressed the wish that the plot remain unchanged during Francis' lifetime as well as after his death. Nace added that he understood that his sister wanted to have "something very important" done with the family plot, but he claimed that he had told her that it could not be done without disregarding his father's wishes, and that afterwards she had tabled her decision. Some of Nace's testimony might strain a skeptical reader's credulity.

Very late in the proceedings, on November 24, 1890, Cunningham was recalled to the stand to testify that he had called Bean shortly after Miss Nace's death. According to Cunningham, Bean said that he had just read Ms. Nace's will; that he was glad that Cunningham had called, as he was just about to write to him about the cemetery work; and that Cunningham would hear from Bean as soon as he had made certain financial arrangements. But, Cunningham testified, Bean never called him back. Such testimony might have been viewed as undercutting Bean's refusal to recognize Cunningham's claim.

Between Cunningham's testimony and March 1891, several confusing events occurred. On December 18, 1890, Bean sold Francis Nace three town lots near Norristown's Stanbridge Street, lots which had apparently been transferred to Bean by the Sheriff, for the sum of \$1,500. Four days later, Bean granted a \$2,500 mortgage on his Swede Street home to his sister-in-law Sarah B. Weber, due to be paid on April 1, 1891 with 4-1/2% interest. What Bean did with the \$4,000 proceeds of these transactions is unknown, but the proceeds were not part of Bean's reported estate at his death. If Bean met with Francis Nace on January 20 to "square accounts,"

it seems likely that Nace received some or all of the money; certainly Nace presented no claim against Bean's estate. Moreover, at the final meeting of the audit on March 24, 1891, attorney J.A. Strassburger appeared for the deceased Bean and asked to reopen the audit for the purpose of "proving certain claims which Theodore W. Bean has against the estate and against Francis Nace, the residuary legatee." Strassburger stated that he intended to prove that Bean as Executor paid certain moneys on the account of Nace by his direction and request, and claimed a credit for them against any award to Nace.

On March 9, 1891, the Auditor issued a report finding that there was no legally enforceable contract between Ms. Nace and Cunningham, and that Colonel Bean's account was correct in every particular, save one. Longacre found that the credit of \$1,855 claimed by Bean for the "Bean & Nace Bond" should be treated as an "uncollected asset," noting that counsel for all parties were in agreement. Longacre also noted that Cunningham had withdrawn his claim after the hearing to facilitate private settlement discussions among the parties.

Thereafter, on October 22, 1891, the *Central News* reported that Francis Nace had purchased his widow's homestead. On February 9, 1892 it observed that Nace—who at that time owned about twenty-five houses in Norristown in addition to a 200-acre farm in Norriton and had judgments against him totaling about \$17,000—had recently made an assignment for the benefit of his creditors.

It seems impossible well over a century later to know exactly what to make of these naked facts. It would seem possible that Bean's account of Ms. Nace's estate had contained some irregularity arising from a bond that Bean had not repaid. However, the reason for the discrepancy, and whether Bean feared embarrassment if it were publicly disclosed, is highly unclear. What does seem clear is that Francis Nace may have placed Bean in uncomfortable legal positions and exerted strong financial pressures on Bean that contributed to or caused the Colonel's "despondency" and suicide.

Colonel Bean's Legacy

On April 20, 1891 the *Norristown Herald* published Resolutions from a Committee of the Montgomery County Forestry Association declaring that the community had lost "an honored citizen, a conscientious counselor, a gallant soldier, a wise legislator, and an author whose extensive knowledge and studious research furnished much valuable information to the reader and student of history. Such an assessment of Bean's contributions to the community can scarcely be questioned. But there were other consequences, direct and indirect, of Bean's life and death.

Bean was described by some of his military comrades in an 1895 tribute⁵⁰ as “particularly happy in his domestic relations,” and as a “kind and devoted husband and father, devoting his whole life to the advancement and welfare of his family.” But Bean’s death had unhappy consequences for his grieving family. His daughter Mary Louise was scheduled to be married on February 10, and though the wedding went forward it was without the father to whom she had been devoted. Bean’s wife Hannah applied for and obtained Bean’s accrued pension benefits and later a widow’s pension, but the latter started at just \$8 per month and did not exceed \$20 per month until the eve of her own death. Although the family home was purchased by son William, the heavily-mortgaged Bean residence came to be used as a rental property; by 1900 Hannah and her youngest son were residing at 125 E. 4th Avenue, Conshohocken with Bean’s daughter Mary Louise and her husband, Aaron Conrad Jones, a fertilizer manufacturer. Hannah died there at age 79 on September 25, 1917, her death attributed to a cerebral hemorrhage contributed to by “Senile Degeneration.”

Still, while his life was not financially successful, Colonel Bean left a rich legacy to Montgomery County through, among many things, his military service, his 1884 County history and the establishment of the HSMC. And his children, each of whom were accomplished and carried on their father’s work in some fashion, represented an equally important legacy.

William Bean

Bean’s eldest son William was an 1878 graduate of Norristown High School and an 1881 graduate of the Law Department of the University of Pennsylvania. After entering West Point in 1882, William served with the Second Cavalry in the Cuban campaign and was present at the fall of Santiago de Cuba. Appointed a Major in the Army’s Commissary department in 1902, William became regarded as one of its most efficient officers and devoted himself to distributing maximum food at minimum cost. He was reportedly a man of “the most sanguine temperament” and a “genial disposition,” though of a “nervous” nature. He was thought “peculiar” by some for boasting that he could live on fifteen cents a day.

Sadly, history repeated itself as Major Bean committed suicide in what newspapers described, echoing reports of his father’s death, as a fit of “despondency.” Bean had been relieved of his duty at the Department of Missouri and assigned to the Philippines, an assignment that seemed to appeal to him. At his home in Lincoln, Nebraska on the morning of March 17, 1904, he had appeared in good spirits at breakfast, and afterwards asked a servant to get some trunks out of the attic so that he might pack for his trip. Bean then sent the servant away on an errand, sat down on one of

the trunks with his face between his hands, and asked his wife to play the piano for him.

According to one newspaper report, Bean asked his wife to play something “lively,” and she responded by loudly playing the “El Capitan March.” Another report claimed that she instead played Chopin’s mournful “Prelude Pathetique.” Whether the piano music was stirring or funereal, halfway through her playing a pistol shot rang out and the falling of a body was heard. Major Bean had aimed his Army Colt revolver at his right temple and fired a fatal shot through his head.

Explanations for the shooting varied. Several reports stated that Bean had been suffering “stomach and nervous troubles,” others that he had been a victim of insomnia for several weeks, had an intense headache and was on the verge of nervous prostration. One attributed his suicide to overwork combined with insomnia, stating that some of those closest to him thought that he appeared on the verge of nervous collapse.⁵¹ Whatever the cause of his suicide, Bean’s body was shipped home and he was interred beside his father at Montgomery Cemetery.

Theodore Lane Bean

Bean’s second son, christened Lane Sunderland Bean, was renamed Theodore Lane Bean following his father’s death. Theodore graduated from Norristown High School in 1893 and then attended the University of Pennsylvania, where he received his Bachelor of Science Degree in 1899 and a law degree in 1902. He was long active in Republican political circles. A prominent member of the Montgomery County Bar for many years, Bean became a Burgess in Norristown from 1903 to 1905, a member of the Valley Forge Park Commission, a State Senator from 1935 to 1936, and former assistant District Attorney. He died in his Norristown office at 317 Swede Street, collapsing at his desk of a heart attack at 9:45 A.M. on September 20, 1943. Theodore Lane Bean was interred at the churchyard of the Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge, the park which his father had been so instrumental in celebrating and preserving, an historic site at which his father had delivered an address just days before his son’s birth.

Mary Louise Bean Jones

Mary Louise Bean graduated from Wellesley College in 1859. She rendered valuable assistance to her father in compiling and editing his landmark *History of Montgomery County* and in planning Norristown’s Centennial celebration.

Mary Louise married Aaron Conrad Jones on February 10, 1891. She

later became a long-time Trustee of the HSMC, was highly active in its affairs, and under the name “Mrs. A. Conrad Jones” wrote many valuable published pieces for the Society. Mary Louise Bean Jones died at the age of 93 on October 20, 1957, at Virginia’s Roanoke Hospital, nine days after she fractured her hip when she lost balance rising from a chair. She was interred with her husband Aaron Jones at the Plymouth Meeting Friends Cemetery.

END NOTES

1. See Moses Auge’s biography of Bean in *History of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania*, Theodore W. Bean, editor (Philadelphia: Everts and Peck, 1884), pp. 554-56.
2. *History of Montgomery County*, p. 260.
3. Bean outlined the activities of the 17th Cavalry in *Roll of Honor of the Seventeenth Regiment of Pennsylvania Cavalry, or One Hundred and Sixty-Second of the Line, Pennsylvania Volunteers 1865* (Philadelphia: James S. Claxton, 1865), and described them in detail in his *History of Montgomery County* at pp. 260-268. Other histories of the 17th Cavalry have been written by Henry P. Moyer, *History of the Seventeenth regiment, Pa. volunteer cavalry or one hundred and sixty-second in line of Pa. volunteer regiments, war to supline [sic] the rebellion, 1861-1865* (Lebanon, Pa: Sowers Printing Co. 1911) and Samuel P. Bates, *History of Pennsylvania Volunteers 1861-1865* (Harrisburg, PA: B. Singerly, State Printer); Frederick H. Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion* (Des Moines, IA: The Dyer Publishing Co., 1908).
4. Among the recruits for Hartranft’s cavalry troop were 50 men from a camp at Zieglersville who claimed that a different officer, John B. Adams, had previously recruited them but then abandoned them, and declared that they wanted to join Hartranft’s cavalry. When they were mustered into Hartranft’s unit, the recruits were placed under arrest on the grounds that they belonged to Adams’ command. Bean was designated by the officers and men in camp to travel to Washington to confer with the Secretary of War and Adjutant-General of the United States to resolve the status of the arrested soldiers. Though the Governor of Pennsylvania joined in an appeal to the Secretary of War to restore the arrested soldiers to Hartranft’s troop, the Adjutant General declined to change their original muster status and, though relieving them of arrest, restored them to their original unit.
5. As will be discussed in more detail below, Bean in 1883 filed a claim for what was termed an “Invalid” pension, based on disabling conditions that

allegedly arose in the course of his military service and persisted later. Statements and unattributed quotations throughout this paper regarding Bean's physical condition are based upon statements by Bean and his physicians, friends, colleagues and acquaintances made in connection with that application.

6. In recognition of its gallant service at Gettysburg, a monument was erected to the Seventeenth Cavalry on Buford Avenue on September 11, 1889. The monument records the positions and actions taken by the Cavalry at Gettysburg on the morning of July 1, 1863. It states that the Seventeenth participated in 55 engagements, including Gettysburg, Chancellorsville, Mine Run, the Wilderness, Todd's Tavern, Sheridan's First Expedition, Cold Harbor, Trevillian Raid, Deep Bottom, Fishers Hill, Winchester, Gordonsville, Goochland County House, Five Forks, Sailor's Hill and Appomattox.
7. Harry W. Pfanz, *Gettysburg The Second Day* (Chapel Hill and London, the University of North Carolina Press 1987), at p. 97. A retired Superintendent of Guides for the Gettysburg Battlefield described the order as the result of "some mistake," because it preceded the arrival of any replacements, W.C. Storrick, *Gettysburg: The Place, The Battles, The Outcome* (Harrisburg, PA: J. Horace McFarland Co, 1932), at p. 46. The decision to leave the army's flank unprotected made General Sickles anxious, and led to his decision to move his troops far from the position to which General Meade had assigned him to a salient near the Peach Orchard, where, because they were separated from the main Union line, they were soon heavily besieged.
8. Chain, a Norristown attorney and later the first elected district attorney of Montgomery County, was the husband of Bean's cousin Louise Bean Chain. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* of February 27, 1863 showed Chain and Bean as Administrators of the Estate of John C. Weber, likely a relative of Bean's mother (who somehow survived her 1864 illness, and lived until 1889).
9. *The New York Times* on September 5, 1864 noted these facts, adding that after uttering his final requests, Rulison "gasped his life away."
10. The cavalry command of Confederate John Singleton Mosby, also known as Mosby's Raiders, was notorious for lightning-like raids on Union forces and for its ability to elude pursuit.
11. Carol Bundy, *The Nature of Sacrifice: A Biography of Charles Russell Lowell, Jr. 1835-64* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), discusses the incident in great detail at pp. 434-38.
12. Id.
13. James McLean, *California Sabers: The 2nd Massachusetts Cavalry in the*

Civil War, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000), at p. 143.

14. Many of Bean's diaries are in the possession of the Historical Society of Montgomery County. The most informative of these are his diaries for 1864 and 1865 (none apparently survives for 1863), which record activities during the war. Later diaries (1866, 1868-69-70, 1871, 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1881, 1883, 1884, 1886, 1887, 1890) are more prosaic, recording weather, whether Bean was in his office or elsewhere, legal activities and illnesses. Many contain faint or faded handwriting indecipherable to the eye of this writer.
15. *History of Montgomery County*, p. 267.
16. *Id.* at p. 555.
17. Apparently before he became an attorney, at some point Bean invented the steel-rolled car wheel and became the patentee of a process for manufacturing such wheels, for the manufacture of which a company was founded in Norristown.
18. (Philadelphia: James S. Claxton, 1865).
19. Was this phrase perhaps an allusion to the unreported hangings of prisoners of war at Front Royal ordered by a superior of Bean's?
20. By Bean's death he was said to be a member of Norris Lodge No. 430 of the International Order of Odd Fellows.
21. By the 1870 census Bean was recorded among the inhabitants of the "Shannonville" post office of Norriton, residing with his wife, his children, and his mother Mary, who was then 78 and "retired." Bean reported himself a "lawyer."
22. On September 20, 1870, perhaps in his capacity as a notary, Bean witnessed a temperance pledge from R.J. Stewart in which Stewart pledged his word as a gentleman that he would not thereafter use intoxicating liquor.
23. Two writings on the subject were "Lost Estates" and "Judges Judged, or, Sequel to 'Lost Estates,'" No. 1.
24. (Norristown, PA: Charles P. Shreiner, Independent Printing House, 1876)
25. *Lorett Treese in Valley Forge: Making and Remaking a National Symbol*. (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), at pp. 5-7 questions the reliability of some often-repeated reports to the effect that Washington had tracked some of his troops by the bloodstains their feet had made upon the frozen ground and that Washington had been observed at Valley Forge praying on his knees, his cheeks suffused by tears. Such

reports, included by Bean in his text, may have been apocryphal or exaggerated, but they had credible provenance at the time, and an intensely patriotic man such as Bean could scarcely have been expected to doubt them.

26. Ms. Holstein, of Upper Merion Township, a descendant of early Swedish settlers of the region, was an army nurse during the Civil War, a member of the Mount Vernon Ladies Association and a fundraiser for the Valley Forge Centennial and Memorial Association.
27. *Valley Forge: Making and Remaking a National Symbol*, at pp. 5-7.
28. *The Reading Times*, May 23, 1880.
29. Theodore W. Bean, "Who Fired the Opening Shots? General Buford at Gettysburg – the Cavalry Ride Into Pennsylvania and the Choice of the Field of Battle—the First Day on the Outposts Before the Arrival of the Infantry," *Philadelphia Weekly Times*, February 2, 1878.
30. In general, these were topics on which Bean had personal involvement as part a member of the Seventeenth Cavalry. Pleasanton's activities at the Battle of Chancellorsville have been discussed, as have Buford's activities at Gettysburg. The Battle of Yellow Tavern, on May 11, 1864, involved a raid on Richmond by part of General Sheridan's Cavalry, a raid which challenged celebrated Confederate General J.E.B. Stuart. General Custer was then in charge of a Michigan Brigade, one of whose cavalrymen was credited with mortally wounding Stuart. It would appear that Bean was not present at General Samuel Zook's death, which occurred on the Second Day of battle at Gettysburg. Ironically, Zook's death was an indirect result of the withdrawal of the Seventeenth Cavalry on July 2, 1863 and Sickles' consequent relocation of his troops to a perilous position near the Peach Orchard. Zook was killed in Gettysburg's famed Wheatfield while attempting to reinforce Sickles' heavily-beleaguered forces.
31. (New York: T.S. Benham & Company and the Lewis Publishing Company, 1904).
32. "Colonel Theodore W. Bean," *Historical Sketches*, Historical Society of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, Vol. 1 (1895), at p. 11.
33. Remarks by William McDermott, set forth in detail in the first volume of the Society's *Historical Sketches, A Collection of Papers Prepared for the Historical Society of Montgomery County* (Norristown, PA: Herald Printing and Binding Rooms, 1895).
34. Changes in federal pension law and the rise of pension attorneys and pension agents to assist claimants seem to have been responsible for the filing of many pension claims long after the end of the Civil War. Bean's Pension

Agents were Sickels and Randall. Sickels was Horatio Gates Sickels, former Colonel of Pennsylvania's Third Reserve and a breveted Major General. Sickels appears to have been well connected politically and highly effective in pursuing pension claims. By historical serendipity, Sickels was successful in gaining a "Mother's Pension" for this writer's second great-grandmother in 1886, over a decade after she had filed the claim unsuccessfully using a different agent.

35. *Lancaster Intelligencer* (June 4, 1884, p. 8).
36. Id.
37. *History of Montgomery County*, Appendix p. xviii.
38. By then Bean had at one point acknowledged that his hearing might not be impaired to a "pensionable" extent.
39. Undated and unsourced clippings, Historical Society of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania.
40. *Pennsylvania at Gettysburg* (Harrisburg: 1904), Vol. 2 at p. 858.
41. Dr. Lenhardt declared that Bean had purchased this substance between 5 and 6 P.M on Monday evening, at which time Bean looked "distressed" and "nervous." He stated that he had almost hesitated in selling Bean the drug, but did so because his regard for the Colonel prevented him from concluding that the drug was purchased for anything but a legitimate purpose.
42. Most of the foregoing facts regarding Bean's suicide were extracted from the *Philadelphia Times* of January 21, 1891 and the *Norristown Register* of the same date, which reported the suicide with minor variations. Reports of Bean's death, one or more of which attributed the suicide to temporary insanity, were widely published throughout the country.
43. *The Morning Call* (Allentown, Pennsylvania), January 22, 1891.
44. The same *Register* article suggested that such reverses had arisen by the time of Bean's campaign for reelection as a state legislator and impacted his defeat.
45. It might be noted that Bean's own diary entries in 1890 and 1891, which were highly sporadic, do not reveal any concern by Bean at the state of his health or mind. Further, no evidence has been found hinting that the conditions giving rise to his pension claim, or some form of post-traumatic stress arising from his wartime experiences, contributed to Bean's decision to commit suicide.
46. The estate file is on file at the Montgomery County archives. The Last Will and Testament of Colonel Bean filed on February 11, 1891 was the same

one-page document Bean had created on September 1, 1862, which he had never revoked. Because the will had been unwitnessed, it was submitted to the Court with affirmations from persons familiar with Bean's handwriting who declared the handwriting to be Bean's.

47. One of the mortgages was the December 22, 1890 \$2,500 mortgage to Bean's sister-in-law Sarah B. Weber. William Bean's bid was described as "the highest and best" bid for the property. The sale was supported by a notarized affirmation by appraisers that they were of the opinion that the real estate would sell at a cash sale for \$5,250 if free of all encumbrances.
48. Bean at his death was indebted to various parties on promissory notes totaling \$2,254; to Messrs. T. McAdams and D. Morgan Casselberry (his brother-in law and owner of an Evansburg tannery) on endorsements totaling \$1785; and to the Peoples National Bank on judgments totaling \$2200.62 which the bank had obtained against Bean. In addition he was obligated in the aggregate of \$328.53 on various book accounts.
49. According to Bean, Francis Nace was a "progressive" farmer, kept "well-informed on matters pertaining to his branch of industry," and eagerly sought "new improvements of whatever character" employing "[a]ll modern machinery adapted to the wants of the agriculturalist." *History of Montgomery County*, at pp. 1016-17.
50. See note 32, *supra*, at p. 15.
51. The various accounts of William Bean's suicide appeared in *The Lincoln Star* (Lincoln, Nebraska), March 17, 1904; *The Nebraska State Journal* (Lincoln, Nebraska), March 18, 1904 ; *Omaha Daily Bee* (Omaha, Nebraska), March 18, 1904; and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 18, 1904.

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To Our Friends

The Historical Society of Montgomery County is the gateway to the preservation of our past. Our mission is to educate, preserve and promote the history of the County and the genealogy of its people. We need your support to continue the presentation of speakers and genealogy programs, to preserve our valuable artifacts and library materials, to conserve Montgomery Cemetery, and to increase our educational programs.

This can be done with your help through charitable trusts, memorial gifts, gifts of real estate, life insurance, tangible personal property, and bequests in wills and revocable trusts.

Following is a format that could be used in making a will:

**I HEREBY GIVE AND BEQUEATH TO THE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA,
THE SUM OF (or THE FOLLOWING)_____.**

