

The Diary Of *Harriet Amelia Arndt For 1865*

Excerpts from a Paper Read by John Dunlap Kendig
As Reported by M. Luther Heisey

The feature of the meeting on March 1 was the story, as told by John Dunlap Kendig, from the diary of his grandmother, Harriet Amelia Arndt, of Manheim.

It was a recital of ordinary routine affairs, such as would happen in the lives of most women in a small Lancaster County community, and yet it was "high-lighted" by national affairs as they transpired in the memorable year of 1865.

Miss Arndt in that year made two visits to the metropolis of Philadelphia, and when there was thrilled by performances by Signor Blitz, magician, by fires, lectures, holiday events, by cheering war news — the fall of Richmond, and the surrender of Lee's army; and depressed by the news of the shooting and death of Abraham Lincoln.

"Harriet Amelia Arndt was born in Manheim, Lancaster County, August 31, 1834. Her parents were Philip and Elizabeth Bartruff Arndt. Her ancestry can be traced back to Andrew Bartruff, who about 1762 built the third house in Manheim, and also kept the first grocery store; back to Colonel John Bartruff who early conducted a hotel on North Main Street, where now stands the garage of J. Harvey Spahr. Her mother is said to have had the first piano in town, and when she played it people would gather outside, listen, and look in through the window. It is also interesting to know that she had been named Harriet Amelia by Mrs. Harriet Amelia Grubb of Mount Hope, who also gave her a small prayer book at about the same time. . . .

“Manheim, very probably, had a population of about one thousand people in 1865. It was still, very largely, a farming community, a center for the countrymen to buy their supplies and barter their products. There was little industry as yet, even cigar making had hardly started to develop. Much business activity went on, but it was mostly on an individual basis.

“S. A. Ensminger, on Market Square, was a manufacturer and dealer in tin- and sheet-iron ware. Henry Ritter and Henry Kopp were cabinet makers. Henry G. Hogendobler was a tailor ‘in regular receipt of the latest fashions from the eastern cities.’ He was enabled to ‘cut and fit garments in the most fashionable style and in a manner that cannot fail to please all. Why not entrust him with a job?’

“Pritz and Ensminger had just opened a saddle and harness manufactory on Market Square. John Deyer kept a hardware store. J. M. Hahn was running ‘something new’ — a clothing, grocery, tobacco and variety store. He also paid ‘the highest price for all kinds of country produce, either in cash or in exchange for goods.’

“Bomberger and Brother had a new grocery and provision store. The Misses Bentz and Long ran a trimming and fancy store, hats and dresses. Other places included John Hostetter, wines and liquors; S. A. Ensminger, photographs and ambrotypes; Sam Ensminger, fresh drugs; J. M. Dunlap, surgeon dentist; Jeremiah M. Hahn, justice of the peace, and general collecting and insurance agent.

“E. F. Hostetter managed the coal yard, ‘handling the various kinds of coal for stove use and for lime burning, and also the best Bituminous or Sulphur Coal for Blacksmiths.’ The post office had daily hours (Sunday excepted) from 6 A. M. to 8 P. M. The postmaster, J. M. Ensminger, stated quite plainly that ‘all letters are required to be prepaid with stamps before they can be mailed.’

“The Reading and Columbia Railroad had been completed and was ‘in good running order, with first-class passenger cars, and, having made arrangements with the connecting roads North and South, offers to the traveling public a direct and through route from Washington and Baltimore, via York, Columbia and Reading to Allentown, Easton and New York, which route for beauty and summer resort should be tried to be appreciated. The Pleasure Travel to Ephrata and Litiz Springs from New York, Philadel-

phia, Baltimore and other points, is by this schedule accommodated several times per day with express trains connecting in all directions.'

"*The Manheim Sentinel*, weekly town paper, had been published continuously from January 6, 1846, and still edited by John M. Ensminger. It had agents for advertisements and subscriptions in New York and Boston, and so carried many big city ads. — *Godey's Lady's Book*, *The Sunday School Times*, *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, *Peterson's Magazines* of the times, and the *American Agriculturist*; pens, bells, pianos, Catawba Brandy, Bryan's Life Pills, Batavia Coffees, watches, farm implements, sewing machines, and United States Treasury Notes.

"There was mention of the Lancaster and Venango Mutual Petroleum Association selling stock. Oil had been struck near the Venango Company property of the Association in February, 1865. The first town bank, and one of the earliest in Lancaster County, opened its doors on March 1, 1865. This was the present Manheim National Bank, which then paid four per cent interest on deposits for six months to twelve months, and five per cent on those over twelve months."

The Arndt home was located on North Prussian Street, now known as number 39 North Main. Before it stood two large maple trees, "in keeping with the tree-clad reputation Manheim then held. It is said that people passing through town on the train in those days could see little of the town because of the many large beautiful old trees. These, like the two in front of the Arndt home, are now gone."

On some days Harriet told us, "it looked for rain," or "it looked for a gust." Among the visitors to her home was George Danner, founder of the famous Danner museum, the contents of which are now displayed in the museum at Hershey, Pa.

She attended the Fourth of July celebration at Lititz (then it was Litiz), when the address for the occasion was delivered by the Rev. George McLaughlin of Reading, and three thousand candles illuminated the Springs Park. The Lancaster Cornet Band furnished the music.

July 27, the day Colonel Henry A. Hambright returned home, Harriet spent in Lancaster. His regiment, the gallant old 79th Pennsylvania Volunteers had been mustered out of service.

The Manheim boys of the regiment returned home. The next day Harriet noted a sale of government horses. As follows every war, the government had surplus property to sell — horses, mules, wagons, etc. — and the Lancaster County farmers were extensive buyers.

And how we would have enjoyed sharing the good things in their larder. They prepared canned crabapples, preserved pears and peaches, grape jelly, canned tomatoes, and jam.

Now and then a circus enlivened the prosaic affairs of the town. Among the chief attractions of the Gardner and Hemmings' Great American Circus were a troupe of real Arabs; Ali Hassam, premier gymnast; Ben Mahommed, the man of strength; Dan Gardner, the peoples' favorite clown; and the magnificent Band Chariot.

Harriet again visited the city of Philadelphia, from October 5 to November 8. On October 23, she attended the Soldiers' Fair in the Academy of Music, given to aid the Soldiers and Sailors' Home Fund. The inauguration ceremonies were conducted by Major General George G. Meade, president of the Fair; Lieutenant General U. S. Grant, Admiral David G. Farragut, and an executive committee; Bishop Matthew Simpson (see vol. 47, pp. 17, 19, 20) opened the proceedings with a prayer.

The observance of two Thanksgiving Days in one year is not a new thing; we had them several years ago, they had them in 1865. In that year, some governors appointed November 30 as the day; later the President chose December 7, the day observed in this town. *The Manheim Sentinel* stated that business was conducted as usual. "Some of the shopkeepers closed their places of business in the morning, but about an hour afterwards they reopened them, which Mosey [a reporter] said was done in order to keep the clerks away from worldly pleasures. The bank, and public schools, however, were closed throughout the day."

"So we come to the end of this diary of Harriet Amelia Arndt for the year 1865, spending with her the picturesque Watch Night Service in the Moravian Church in Lititz.

". . . I knew her when I was only a little fellow, and there seemed to be a dignified charm about this certain lady of the Manheim of 1865 — this grandmother of mine — that I still remember vividly from those first early years of my own."