

# *The Story of Dillerville*

By JAMES I. PYLE

WHEN King Charles II of England in 1681 granted the lands of Pennsylvania to William Penn in settlement of debts of the Crown to William Penn's father, Admiral Penn, there occurs the first transfer of the site upon which Dillerville was afterwards located.

May 15, 1735, John, Thomas and Richard Penn, sons of William Penn, conveyed to Jacob and Veronica Funk, 301½ acres located in Manheim Township, Lancaster County.

June 5, 1735, Jacob Funk conveyed this same property to Jacob Snably.

May 5, 1743, Jacob Snably conveyed it to Christian Hershey (wife Catharine), and on his decease it was conveyed by his three sons to Benjamin Hershey (son of Christian).

May 12, 1783, seven acres and 105 perches were purchased from Benjamin Landis and wife.

May 1, 1784, Benjamin Hershey conveyed to Samuel Myer 152½ acres.

April 12, 1793, Samuel Myer conveyed to John and Moses Michael 301½ acres for 2550 pounds.

May 3, 1796, Moses Michael and wife sold 94 acres to Dr. Alfred Dufresne for 1300 pounds.

March 29, 1833, Dr. Dufresne conveyed a tract of 52 acres and 23 perches to Adam Diller for \$8,993.00. This tract consisted of three plots of ground on which was erected a two-story brick house.

The ancestry of Adam Diller as recorded by Ellis and Evans in their *History of Lancaster County*, page 535, is as follows:

### **Ancestry of Adam Diller, the Founder**

Casper Diller of Huguenot descent, 1675-1775, settled one mile south of New Holland, Lancaster County.

Philip Adam Diller, 1723-1777, married Elizabeth, 1727-1807, daughter of Leonard Ellmaker.

Leonard Diller, 1759-1798, married Mary Magdaline Hinkle of Hinkletown (5 children).

General Adam Diller, 1790-1859.

Adam Diller, founder of Dillerville, was born March 28, 1790, in Lancaster, and died April 2, 1859, in Philadelphia, and was buried in Laurel Hill Cemetery, Section O, Philadelphia, Pa.

Adam Diller was captain in the Second Cavalry Regiment, Second Brigade, of Pennsylvania Militia, 1814. Sheriff of Lancaster County, 1827. Adjutant General of Pennsylvania, 1839-1845, and was considered as a candidate for Governor of Pennsylvania.

The muster roll record of his Company contained the names of sixty-three officers and men, mostly from Cocalico and Rapho townships as can be seen in your Society's Record, Vol. 37, page 175.

July 27, 1825, Captain Adam Diller and Captain Clement A. Berskley each commanded a troop of horsemen that met General Lafayette at Mount Vernon on the Philadelphia Pike and escorted him to Lancaster.

The year 1833 saw the railroad come into Lancaster County.

January 1, 1834, the Railroad Committee reported "the city had to build a bridge at Dillerville Lane to carry the thoroughfare across the single track railroad at Dillerville."

On January 16, the *Lancaster Examiner* reported, "Stone blocks are nearly all laid for one track and the iron rails fixed on a considerable portion of it."

Shortly thereafter a local newspaper said, "A locomotive engine with a train of passenger cars has, to the manifest delight of our citizens, for several days been employed, running from North Queen and Chestnut to Rohrerstown." This traffic experi-

ment no doubt, was of great interest to the few residents of Dillerville.

Monday, March 31, 1834, three passenger coaches, drawn by horses, passed through Dillerville going from Lancaster to Columbia.

April 3, 1834, a steam engine, drawing three coaches, made the same trip.

April 10, a train bearing Governor Wolf and other State, Civic and Railroad officials passed through Dillerville from Columbia on their way to Philadelphia.

The locomotive Black Hawk, pulling a train, passed through Dillerville from Columbia on April 16 at the tremendous speed of eight miles per hour. This locomotive, built in England, had previously been pulled by horses over the turnpike to Columbia.

The locomotive Lancaster, built by Baldwin of Philadelphia, passed through Dillerville with a train, October 7, 1834. This marked the beginning of regular passenger and freight traffic.

The locomotive Columbia also was in regular service at this time.

At the close of 1834 the railroad was double-tracked and Dillerville, for the first time, witnessed trains moving east and west simultaneously. The double track spelled the doom of horse-drawn freight cars and the Commissioners in 1836 excluded the horse and supplied locomotives for all trains, which it was predicted, would haul twenty tons at a load. In this connection it may be of interest to note that under good conditions, Conestoga wagons, carrying about six tons of freight, averaged around four hundred miles a month. On some stretches as much as eighteen miles a day could be covered.

At the beginning of the transition from horse power to steam engines, a horse could, and often did, outdistance the new engine, but imperfections were overcome and soon the steam engine was securely established as a definite advance in transportation.

May 31, 1836, Jacob Herringer of Lancaster in a local paper offered to "build railroad cars of any kind or size to order, also steel springs of every description as heretofore."

On June 24, 1835, Adam Diller conveyed one and a half acres "neat measure" to the Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mount Joy and Lancaster Railroad Company, "sixteen and a half feet from center line of said railroad."

Diller may have purchased the land entirely for speculation or may have decided to speculate after it became his property. However that was, we can easily imagine he sensed the changes that the steam road might bring about and had high hopes that his lots might be the beginning of a movement that would develop into a thriving town, situated as it was at the point where the railroad branched, going to Columbia and Harrisburg.

### **Dillerville Plotted**

Be this as it may, Diller announced on September 17, 1835, the plotting of seventy-five building lots priced at \$85.00, each being 66 feet by 165 feet, and 50 feet by 218 feet in size.

On his plan, Plot A marks the Harrisburg, Portsmouth and Lancaster Railroad depot lot, containing one and a half acres. Plot B designates Diller's Warehouse lot, and Plot C as Russel's Factory.

The new Reading Road, subsequently called Dillerville Road, connecting the Harrisburg and Petersburg pikes, crossed the Diller land in a general southwest to northeast direction.

Other streets plotted were Middle Street, Cherry, Mulberry and Locust alleys, all of which paralleled the Reading Road. Market Street paralleled the railroad track.

The Diller lands were touched by lands owned by William Coleman, William C. Hull, Christian Brubaker, Abraham Hershey, Philip Dietrich, Christian and Samuel Myers.

January 9, 1836, Diller sold to Pedrick and Risdell, merchants of Philadelphia, Lots Nos. 27 and 36 for \$170.00.

January 22, Henry Funk purchased three lots, Nos. 56 and 57, corner Market Street and Reading Road, facing 90 feet 9 inches along the Reading Road, to Lot No. 58 to Cherry Alley, along Cherry Alley 117 feet 2 inches and Market Street 189 feet 9 inches. Lot No. 23 on Market Street 50 feet to Lot No. 24, then 218 feet to railroad, along railroad 50 feet, then by Lot C and along Lots 20, 21 and 22, 218 feet to beginning.

The same day to John Wertz of East Hempfield Township, Lot No. 70 for \$75.00.

January 29, 1836, to Isaiah Bell, Jr. of Philadelphia, Lots Nos. 6 and 48 for \$170.00. Also Lots Nos. 5 and 49 for \$170.00 to Moltby John Littleboy, Jr., of Philadelphia, flour merchant.

May 6, 1836, to Alexander M. Russell, blacksmith, Lot C for \$75.00.

August 11, 1836, to Henry Funk merchant, Lots Nos. 21 and 22 for \$100.00.

December 1, 1836, Diller sold 38 acres 172 perches to James Cameron for \$5,500.00. This land adjoined the building lots to the southeast.

January 12, 1837, Volney B. Palmer purchased Lots Nos. 18, 43, 44 and 45 for \$500.00.

February 6, 1837, Simon Cameron, Esq., of Middletown, bought Lot No. 28 for \$150.00.

March 7, 1837, Lot No. 29 was deeded to Rachel Shreiner for \$200.00.

April 1, 1837, Lot No. 55 was deeded to John Marks of West Hempfield Township for \$60.00.

May 1, 1838, Samuel Wonderly and wife of North Liberties, County of Philadelphia, sold Lot No. 27 to the Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mount Joy and Lancaster Railroad Company for \$125.00.

October 11, 1842, Lot No. 54 was sold to Joseph Harnish for \$750.00.

November 14, 1843, Leonard Bachler paid \$300.00 for Lot No. 35.

August 1, 1845, the Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mount Joy and Lancaster Railroad Company paid \$500.00 for Lots Nos. 1 and 2.

February 8, 1848, to Samuel Ruth one plot and Lots Nos. 72, 73, 74 and 75 for \$500.00.

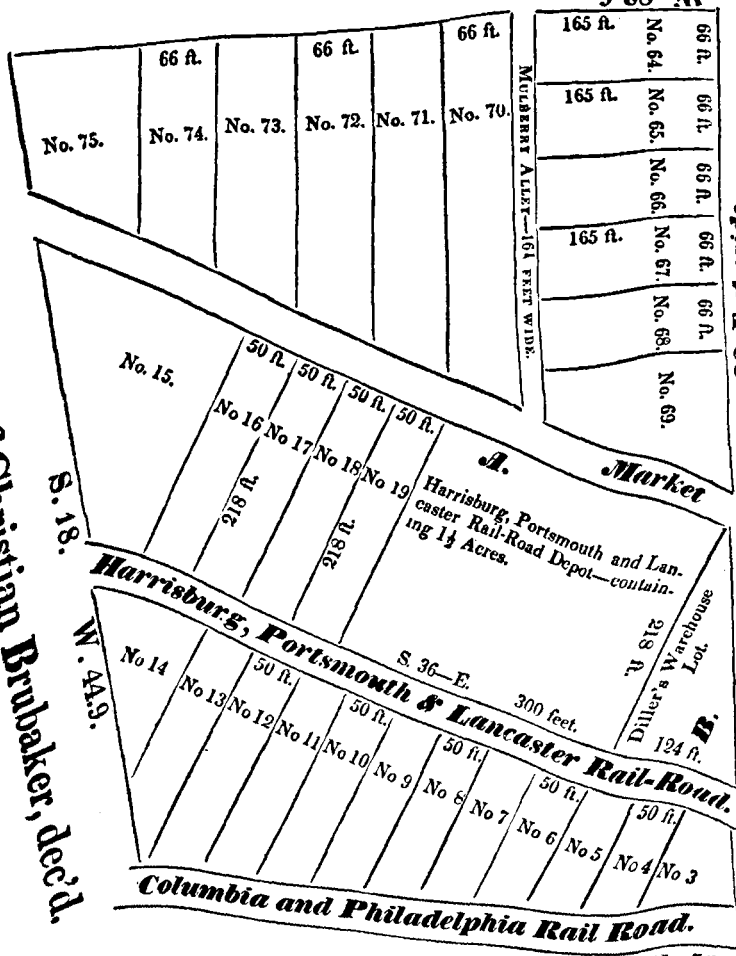
November 15, 1848, to Benjamin Herr, 9 acres 65 perches for \$2,250.00.

October 27, 1851, Adam Diller (then of the City of Philadelphia) sold to John N. Lane, Christopher Hager and James B. Lane for \$4,000.00 a two-story brick dwelling and lot, southeast corner New Reading Road, then southeast along Market Street 215 feet,

# Other Land of Adam Diller.

W. 82.9.

Land now or late of Christian Rubaker, dec'd.



## Land of Wm. C. Hull.

PLAN OF DILLERVILLE  
 Platted by Adam Diller in 1835

# Land of William Coleman, Esq.

Adam Diller.

N. 32½ E. 65. 8.

LOCUST ALLEY—16½ FEET WIDE.

66 ft.

66 ft.

66 ft.

66 ft.

66 ft.

No. 45.

No. 44.

No. 43.

No. 42.

No. 41.

No. 40.

No. 39.

No. 38.

No. 37.

No. 36.

No. 35.

No. 34.

Middle Street—33 Feet wide.

66 ft.

66 ft.

66 ft.

66 ft.

66 ft.

66 ft.

66 ft.

66 ft.

No. 54.

No. 46.

No. 47.

No. 48.

No. 49.

No. 50.

No. 51.

No. 52.

No. 53.

No. 55.

165 ft.

165 ft.

165 ft.

165 ft.

165 ft.

CHERRY ALLEY—16½ FEET WIDE.

66 ft.

66 ft.

66 ft.

66 ft.

66 ft.

66 ft.

66 ft.

No. 56.

No. 63.

No. 62.

No. 61.

No. 60.

No. 59.

No. 58.

No. 57.

59. N

165 ft.

165 ft.

165 ft.

165 ft.

Road—33 Feet wide.

Reading

Street—33 Feet wide.

Russel's Factory.

No. 22

No. 21

No. 20

No. 19

No. 18

No. 17

No. 16

No. 15

No. 14

Intersection of Rail Roads.

Other Land of

E. 56.

S. 40. E. 15.6.

along railroad southwest 125 feet to alley; northwest along alley 145 feet to New Reading Road, along said road 145 feet; and another lot, northwest corner Reading Road and Market Street northward along Reading Road 416 feet.

This completes various lot and land transfers concerning our story. We find no record of the building of the houses on these lots, but it must have proceeded soon after the sale got under way. Dillerville at the peak of its development never contained more than about a dozen houses.

### **A Tavern in the Town**

In April, 1838, Stephen C. Paul was conducting a tavern in Dillerville Hall. Some of the signers to his application were, Peter Streitz, Solomon Daibert, Henry Shultz, Peter Stormfeltz, Charles Meckley, Adam Diller, Henry Funk, John Marks, H. M. Mercer, James L. Francine, Jacob Andrews and Ambrose Crolley.

The courthouse records show the following taverns in Mannheim Township in 1848: Jacob Brubaker, Martin Kling, Abraham Landis, Peter Maurer, Jacob Minnich, Henry Forney, Emanuel Shober, Abraham Shenk, John Dunkel, Jacob Baker. In 1849: Joseph Stemmer, Israel Hubb, Peter Snyder. In 1850: Henry Blickenderfer. In 1854: John Martin, Shreiner and Graff, Levi Schlott, Emmanuel Vankanon. Just where these various hosts dispensed their hospitality is not mentioned except in the case of Peter Maurer who is located, "Lititz Pike."

One of the last tavern keepers at Dillerville was Jacob Blizard better known to everyone as "Daddy." We are unable to learn if it was a whole or part time job for him but we know definitely that in the mid 1890's he was employed by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company as fireman of its carpenter shop power boiler, located on Harrisburg Avenue, between Mulberry Street, and the Lancaster Railroad line. At this time he did not live in Dillerville.

There was a one-room school house at the northwest corner of the Petersburg Pike and Dillerville Road but it disappeared long since. Cater-cornered from the school house the old toll house stood, but it, too, was removed years ago.



June 22, 1839, Adam Diller was taking orders for mulberry trees (*Morus Multicaulis*) to be delivered in October for silk worm culture. He raised the trees at Dillerville. This would indicate he did not allow his land to lie idle.

On Saturday, August 1, 1840, some of the residents of Dillerville witnessed an unusual spectacle. Matthias Zahm records in his diary: "This afternoon a few minutes before four o'clock, John Wise made an assension with his large baloon from the jail yard. He was up four or five minutes when he came down in James Cameron's field near Dillerville." With his curiously fashioned beaver hat and long, soiled towcloth "duster," Professor Wise must have provided a thrill for the children who witnessed the landing of the bulging gas bag.

December 3, 1840, the Hugh Keys, an engine built by Pennell and Lehner at Duke and Chestnut streets, Lancaster, was drawing trains through Dillerville.

In 1841 Charles Dickens, on his American tour, passed through Dillerville as a passenger on the railroad. We do not know of his making any record of this event.

### **What—A Military Academy?**

May 22, 1847, Captain A. Partridge and the Rev. C. C. Burr addressed a large gathering at the courthouse on the subject of Military Education, preparatory to the opening of the Military Academy at Dillerville. Later in August the friends of the Military Academy being planned and the public generally, were invited to attend a meeting at the school room (lower hall), at Mechanics' Institute, October 7. No further record has been found and we assume the Military Academy never got under way.

In 1848 the locomotive Tioga was pulling trains by Dillerville.

July 19, 1848, the first company of troops from the Mexican War battlefields returned. It was the Stockton Artillery of Mauch Chunk, Pennsylvania. Two years earlier it had gone out to service with eighty-nine officers and men, but only fifty-two of them were making the trip home. Mayor Carpenter, heading a large delegation from Lancaster, met the train at Dillerville. There the troops disembarked and marched to Shober's Hotel in Lancaster, where

a luncheon was served, after which the veterans entrained and resumed their journey home.

The *Inland Daily* of September 16, 1853, said: "The Lancaster and Harrisburg Railroad Company have offered a reward of Three Hundred Dollars for the apprehension and conviction of the person or persons who placed the oak block on the track above Dillerville on the 7th inst., evidently with a view to throw the train from the track."

Bridgen's Map of 1853 shows the Dillerville plotting of streets. At the western limit of the village along the track to Harrisburg is located the "water tank." Subsequently faster schedules caused the pickup of water while running, and the water troughs were laid between rails on both tracks just east of where the railroad crossed the Little Conestoga Creek.

The names found on this plan as living in the various houses or owners of lots are, P. McLaughlin, S. Cameron, A. Hull, D. H. Hooper, P. S. Nails, B. Herr, P. Cassidy, M. Myers, S. Ruth, E. S. Huber, E. Shober.

The residents of Dillerville had a close touch with local developments during the Civil War. In the fields nearby, along the Harrisburg Pike and on the Fair Grounds, also located along the same pike, Camp Dennison was located. On May 6, 1861, the Second Regiment of Ohio Volunteers (McCook's Ohio Brigade), composed of 2000 officers and men, encamped there. On this date they were presented with a stand of regimental colors consisting of a beautiful State Flag with the coat of arms of Ohio and a fine silk National Emblem.

Colonel Wilson was in command and received the flags, which were presented by the ladies of Springfield, Ohio. It is of interest to note that the camp woke up that morning to find a fresh covering of four inches of snow which fell during the previous night.

We believe that with the coming of each new contingent of troops the name of the camp was changed, for when the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Regiments, of Pennsylvania Volunteers encamped there the name was Camp Johnston.

May 27, 1861, it is recorded that the sick were hospitalized in the nearby college buildings.

June 30, 1863, the disturbed Dillerville folks easily saw in the distance, the drifting smoke from the burning Columbia bridge.

In 1865 the Lancaster Branch of the Reading Railroad was built and Dillerville secured another outlet to the world. The road was opened to traffic in 1866. The type of locomotive used by this road is shown in an old photograph owned by E. E. Leisey, of Ephrata, a veteran employee of the Reading for nearly a half century.

The *Lancaster Inquirer* of October 12, 1867, contains this information: "Reading and Columbia Railroad. Lancaster Branch. Lancaster Junction 8:50 A. M., Petersburg 9:05 A. M., Dillerville 9:15 A. M., Lancaster 9:20 A. M."

In the days of the springtime of the 1890's a resident of Dillerville could look to the southeast and see the apple blossoms in the George W. Schroyer orchard and later enjoy the fragrance of the carnation beds as their spicy perfume was wafted on the breezes.

They could hear the noise and also see the enthusiastic crowds that watched the base ball games being played on the "Old Ironsides" diamond located just a short distance east of Dillerville between the Pennsylvania and Reading Railroad lines.

A certain 18th of April was made famous by the midnight ride of Paul Revere. Another 18th of April in 1893 was made famous by the midnight passing of the early locomotive, "John Bull," through Dillerville. It was on this date that John Bull, pulling two ancient coaches, formerly in use on the Camden and Amboy Railroad, slowly wended its way under its own power past Dillerville, on its journey to the Columbian World's Exposition about to be held in Chicago. It is doubtful if any person in Dillerville except those in the DV tower saw it go by.

In September, 1898, several carloads of sick soldiers came through Dillerville on a special train on their way to a Lancaster Hospital for treatment. They were detrained from the present Charlotte Street siding.

September 7, 1898, the residents of Dillerville saw the special train over the Reading Railroad bring home Captain Thomas L. Whitson's Company L veterans. It arrived around eight o'clock

in the morning, after an all night trip from Jersey City. October 25, Company L again went through Dillerville on a special train on their way to Philadelphia over the Reading line, where the next day they marched in a grand review of Spanish War Veterans before President McKinley.

October 12, 1898, the "high brass" of the Pennsylvania Railroad, four full trainloads of it, passed through Dillerville that day, enroute to New York from Pittsburgh, on their annual inspection of the track-bed between those two points. For several weeks prior to this, section gangs on the local trackage had been busy getting their sections in order.

October 26, 1898, the Niagara Express, westbound, struck a two-horse team owned by Henry Shaub, city contractor, at a crossing near Dillerville. One of the animals was killed instantly and the other mortally injured. The train was considerably damaged.

### **A Church Is Founded**

So far as we can discover the residents of Dillerville mostly attended religious services in the various Lancaster churches until 1899. Then on December 31, 1899, the Rev. Charles Elvin Haupt, D.D., pastor of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Queen and James streets, Lancaster, opened a Sunday School in Dillerville, with Levi Nixdorf as superintendent. A congregation also was organized. We record some of the activities.

February 4, 1900, the first sermon was preached.

June 27, the Sunday School picnicked at Gables Woods.

Dec. 27, the first Christmas exercises were held.

April 20, 1902, the cornerstone of the church building was laid.

July 20, the frame church building was dedicated.

August 13 and 14, a lawn fete was held.

" 18, Church building and lot deeded to the Trustees by Rev. Jacob Darmstaetter for \$600.00 and the congregation executed a mortgage of \$300.00 to the Peoples Trust Company, of Lancaster. This ground formerly owned by Henry Huber.

July 8, 1906, a communion service was held.

" 19, Sunday School picnic at Rocky Springs.

Officers at this time were, Supt. J. Peter Stradtman  
Asst. Supt. William Sheaffer  
Secretary, May Rittenhouse  
Treasurer, William Sheaffer

Organist, Mrs. John Stauffer  
Asst. Organist, Miss Gertrude Leachey

Teachers, J. Peter Stradtman, William L. Rineer, Mrs. Carrie Leachey,  
Mrs. Mary Stradtman, Mrs. William Sheaffer.

The officers of the congregation were, President, Dr. C. E. Haupt, Treasurer, William Sheaffer, Trustees, John Sheaffer, Edward Kepner, and John Stauffer.

1908—Enrollment, officers, 4; teachers, 3; scholars, 23; total, 30.

1910—Joseph H. Raum was superintendent.

1918—Andrew Leibfried, Jr., was superintendent. Enrollment about 40.

1924—By this time it was decided to close the mission. Dr. Haupt had died in 1920, and the work languished. However, the mortgage of \$300.00 had been paid in full. Up until this time the building had been kept in good repair and painted both inside and out. The building was closed for several years but later the Mennonites sought and were given permission to use the building for religious purposes.

The encroachment of industry finally reached Dillerville and crowded the church off the scene. The building was moved in 1943 to a distant location.

The money received for the property was divided between the Mennonites operating the mission at this time and Grace Church. Each received \$249.45.

Thus closes the story of organized religious effort in Dillerville, and the place that knew them, knows them no more forever.

### **A Paradise for Botanists**

Northwest of Dillerville, a small run meanders in a general easterly direction. Between the Harrisburg and Manheim pikes the low level stretches bordered this run, the land was swampy and known to several generations as Dillerville Swamp. During the years 1898 to 1901 inclusive, the writer collected specimens for his annual High School herbals. Skunk Cabbage, Golden Club, Fringed Gentian, Arrow Leafed Violet, Wild Blue Flag and Marsh Marigold were found there. My brother in 1886 and 1887 recorded in his herbals the finding in this region, May Apple, Blue-eyed Grass, Fivefinger, Slender Blue Flag, Hounds Tongue, Horseradish, Yellow Iris, Millfoil, Mint, Motherwort, Milkweed, Swamp Milkweed, Tree Hibiscus, Wild Bergamot, White Clover, Boneset, Swamp Thistle, Smaller Daisy Fleabane, Basket Willow and Lizard Tail

Without a mark of conjecture, the Rev. Henry Ernst Muhlenberg, one of America's great botanists, "The American Linnaeus," trod this swampland, gathering and classifying many grasses and sedges. Professor Thomas C. Porter, in his "Flora of Lancaster County," as found in Mombert's History, gives page after page replete with the notation, "Found in the swamp near Dillerville."

Extensive peat beds were found in this swamp, as reported in 1881 in *The Lancaster Farmer*, by A. C. Stauffer, who lived in the vicinity. When dried, this peat was excellent for fuel, or for use as fertilizer; the beds were discovered three to six feet below the surface. This peat was the accumulation of grass root and stalk fibers of ages past. The bed extended "for some miles eastward, along a run of water, crossing the Manheim road north of Lancaster."

The hand of man drained the section of the swamp between the Harrisburg Pike and the Harrisburg Railroad line to build the present Long Park. The portion along the Manheim Pike is also rapidly being obliterated. Refuse is dumped there daily, and it is a matter of time until it also completely disappears.

### **They Quarried Stone**

Aside from railroading, the only industry of the village was the stone quarry, owned and operated for many years by William Westman. Amos Aulhouse, Amos Beaner and Frederick May worked in the quarry. Levi Ember, David Powell and a Mr. McCue were teamsters. All of the quarry output was hauled over the Dillerville Lane and Harrisburg Pike to Lancaster. The lane had a very steep drop from the bridge crossing the Reading track to the level crossing of the Lancaster tracks. After starting down there could be no stopping on account of the grade and the heavy load. On several occasions, because of this, teams were struck by a train, resulting in the death of some of the horses and destruction of the wagons. The stone, which was of excellent quality, was used in foundation and retaining walls. A good specimen of the Westman Dillerville Stone may be seen today in the retaining wall in front of St. Mary's Church on West Vine Street.

Mr. Westman operated another quarry some distance from the Dillerville quarry. The stone from the second operation was a different type and was hauled to the Peacock Furnace in Lancaster.

On December 17, 1922, Westman was killed by a train, as he slept on the tracks near his home. He came from Ireland, and was a stonemason by trade.

In the 1890's one type of locomotive in use was an engine with a sort of a bonnet on top of the stack called by railroaders a "cabbage head." This was a contrivance designed to be a combination smoke consumer, spark catcher and cinder trap. Our recollection is that it consumed little or no smoke, and caught few sparks or cinders as the cinder-strewn window-sills and seats of the coaches attested.

The wooden coaches contained red or green plush covered seats and were lighted by kerosene lamps which hung from the ceiling. Ventilation was by oblong narrow windows set in the roof offset. These windows were opened and closed by a brass apparatus which came down into the car that could be reached by a very tall man or with a claw-shaped tool mounted on a three-foot stick. The coaches had iron wheels with open platforms and equipped with hand brakes which were not for ornament but used by the crew for reduction of speed going down hill or approaching a depot. The coaches were heated by coal stoves, one in each end of the car, fired from small coal boxes alongside of them. Passing from coach to coach was a precarious proceeding when the train was in full speed or rounding a curve.

In front of the smoke stack was a headlight, an oil lamp enclosed in a glass-paned box with a reflector back of the lamp. The rays of light did not stream very far but doubtless they matched the speed of travel.

Increasing freight business compelled the construction of the "cut off" from Dillerville eastward to the Conestoga River in 1882-83. This followed the original survey of the road before the citizens of Lancaster caused the detour through the city to be built. With this improvement came the laying of additional storage tracks at Dillerville and the construction of a turntable about fifty feet west of Dillerville Lane.

Dillerville experienced an unusual activity when the cut-off was built. The contractor erected a two-story frame building in Dillerville to house the laborers. The kitchen and dining room were on the first floor and the bunks occupied the second floor. With the completion of the work the shack was removed.

The increased business caused the placing of a permanent shifting engine at Lancaster. It was No. 513, a saddleback type of engine which carried the water in a container mounted over the boiler somewhat in the style of a saddle on a horse. William Foltz and Samuel Kurtz were two of the early conductors of shifting crews. Henry "Junior" Evans and James Paxson were engineers. Smith Swords was yardmaster. Benjamin Elliott was a member of the work train crew when the second track was laid on the Harrisburg line about 1892.

In the early 1890's the grounds around the Dillerville tower and the nearby banks along the tracks were landscaped. Flower beds were laid out in elaborate designs and shrubbery planted. Some seasons the growth and blooms were especially beautiful and attracted many persons from Lancaster on Sunday afternoons. These beds were cared for by a gardner and assistants who were assigned to this type of work on the Philadelphia Division. When the new station was built in 1929 on the cut-off, the boxwood at Dillerville was removed to the new station grounds and the DV tower abandoned.

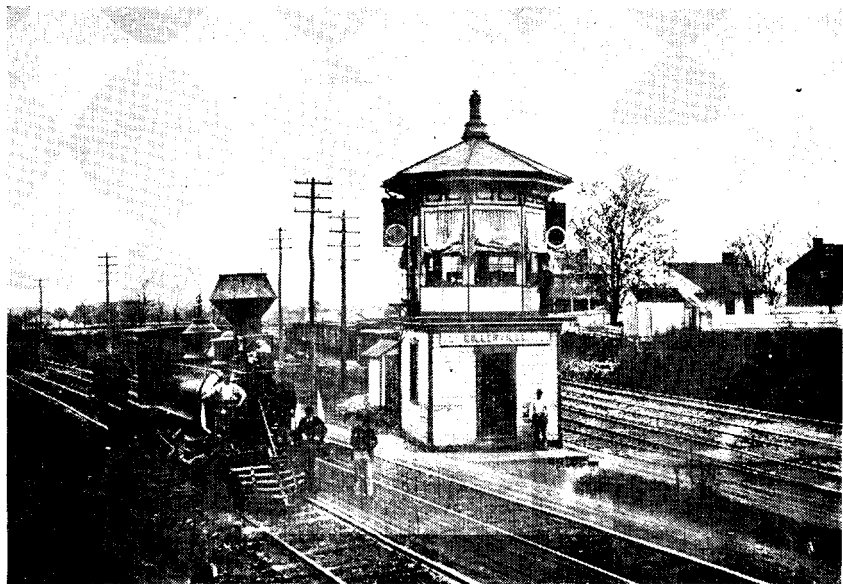
### **The Famous DV Tower**

The center of all operations in Dillerville for the railroad was the DV tower. The superintendent of the Philadelphia Division writes, "the first mention of Dillerville Block Station was in fall timetable, effective November 29, 1897. Previous to that time the timetable only showed Dillerville. No mention of Block Station. However in 1881 agreement was entered into with Reading Company for joint protection and maintenance of Crossing Frogs at Dillerville and we might assume that the Block Station or Tower was constructed about that time, or between 1881 and 1897."

When Dillerville was made a train stop is not known. The Pennsylvania offices in Philadelphia were able to supply a few



dates. They state that from the information contained in the guides (schedules) still available among their records, DV was not a flag stop. This could mean it was a regular stop. The earliest guide preserved is dated 1851 with DV listed with other stations.



DILLERVILLE TOWER  
EARLY VIEW

David A. Robinson, Telegraph Operator, (second story); Michael F. Barkley, Leverman in shirt sleeves. On the shifting engine, Harry Evans, Engineer (in the cab); Samuel Kurtz, Conductor (seated); others unidentified. Note the Station Board on the Tower Building, Phila. 69 miles, Pittsburg. 283 miles.

The *Independent Whig* of March 6, 1855, has this advertisement:

Harrisburg and Lancaster Railroad.

The through mail train leaves Lancaster at 10:40 A. M., Dillerville 10:45 A. M., Landisville 10:50 etc.

Coming east the schedule reads Harrisburg 7:45 P. M.,

Landisville 9:00 P. M., Dillerville 9:15 P. M., Lancaster 9:30 P. M.

In Timetable No. 1, effective May 2, 1892, a number of trains were scheduled to stop at Dillerville. In the timetable dated May 17, 1897, there were nine trains scheduled to stop there. The DV stop was withdrawn from all of the trains scheduled to stop there in the timetable dated Nov. 29, 1897.

In these days of inflated prices for everything, it is of interest to note the fare to or from Dillerville to Lancaster was four cents on the Pennsylvania and ten cents on the Reading line. On the Pennsylvania this expenditure took passengers to North Queen and Chestnut streets. On the Reading line a choice was possible. Passengers could alight at the outer station on Prince Street near Frederick Street, or continue on and take the longer ride to West King and Water streets, where a waiting room was maintained in the Stevens House building.

The Reading Company never erected any building or weather shelter at Dillerville. A levelled stretch along the track, covered with gravel or cinder, was their stopping point. As this was located in a deep cut of possibly twenty-five feet, a flight of steps led upward to the Dillerville Lane level.

The Pennsylvania Company built a frame shelter east of the Dillerville Lane, on the south side of its right-of-way. It consisted of three sides and a roof, being open on the track or north side. At this point Dillerville Lane crossed the Pennsylvania tracks at grade and went up very steeply to cross the Reading track over a bridge. Grade changes during the past two years have obliterated all traces of the original ground levels.

One of the crack trains of that day was the Limited Mail. Gust Jeffries was its engineer. He had a clean record of no accidents for a long time but it finally was marred. The Limited Mail and the Reading train were scheduled to reach Dillerville crossing within a few minutes of each other. It is told that one day one of these trains was late with the result that the engines met at the crossing frogs. Both locomotives were derailed and overturned. Mr. Jeffries refused to run an engine thereafter and completed his career with the Pennsylvania Company acting as

a signal maintenance worker in the Dillerville area.

We have been able to learn a few of the names of persons who lived in Dillerville and something of their work.

An Atlas of 1899 shows these persons as living in Dillerville, Henry Westman, Harry Diffenderfer, Henry Shaub, Joseph W. McEvoy, Mary A. Huber and M. A. Westman. The D. Breneman Estate is recorded as owner of a plot of ground.

Thomas Barkley owned his home and lived in Dillerville for many years. He was employed by the Pennsylvania as section foreman of the tracks in and around Dillerville.

Samuel McKeen, who earlier served in the U. S. Regulars and saw service against the Indians on the western plains, came to Lancaster in 1885 and also worked for the Pennsylvania. He was track foreman on the same section that Mr. Barkley had charge of earlier. McKeen lived in Dillerville for more than a decade before moving to Lancaster. He was retired in 1925.

Joseph Hunter lived in Dillerville, between the Columbia tracks and the Harrisburg Pike. He was a "floating gang" foreman for the Pennsylvania. His family consisted of a wife and two daughters, Jane and Margaret.

John Barkley, son of the track foreman, learned to be a telegraph operator at the DV tower and afterwards worked for a time at the CA tower, Queen and Chestnut streets. His brother, Richard, also learned the same art but worked at points away from this section.

Gil Foltz and Al Kurtzler were engineers at the pumping station for the water troughs at the Little Conestoga Creek. Both of these men lived in Dillerville.

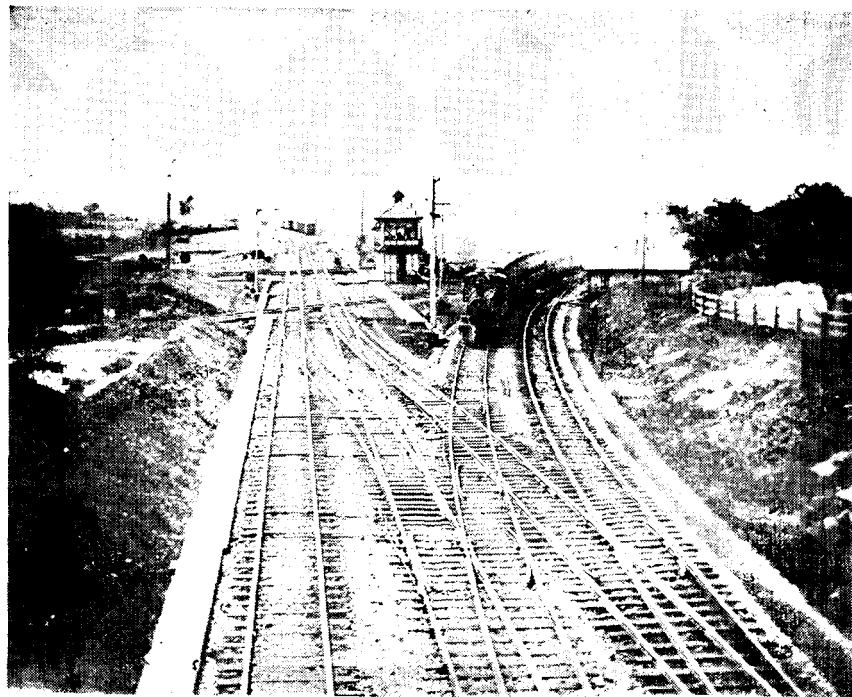
Henry Westman, Adam Hoover and Clyde Bullock were all employed in various capacities by the Pennsylvania in and around Dillerville.

Elizabeth Breneman born October 8, 1772, was married April 16, 1792, to Thomas Ruth. They lived in Dillerville and had ten children who resided in the vicinity of Lancaster and in Donegal. Samuel Ruth, the fourth child was employed by the Pennsylvania.

Few non-railroaders were permitted to enter the Dillerville Tower known to all railroaders as DV. The operating room was

reached by a high flight of outside steps and contained the telegraph instruments and mechanisms for setting both switches and signal paddles.

For twenty-five years David A. Robinson was operator there. Later he was Weighmaster and Yardmaster at Dillerville. He died August 27, 1948, aged eighty-four years, having spent his



### DILLERVILLE TOWER

#### LATER VIEW

Engine with five coaches coming eastward from the Harrisburg line onto the cut-off. Note the enlargement of the Tower and absence of the Station Board.

entire working life with the Pennsylvania Company, most of it right in Dillerville.

Mr. Robinson's co-worker was Michael F. Barkley, another son of Foreman Thomas Barkley. "Mike" was the Leverman and

known to every trainman whose run took him past Dillerville Tower and a host of other persons. Mike was tall and slender but iron-muscled. To throw the cross-over switches, especially the distant ones, required a certain knack. The handles of the mechanisms came up through and extended about four feet above the tower floor. Each signal paddle and switch required a separate mechanism. Each of these iron handles had an offset on it approximately eight inches above the floor level. This was wide enough for the leverman to put one foot on and raise his whole body off the floor while grasping the lever handle. Since the lever was inclined at an angle, he could use the weight of his body to help bring the lever to the new position which was automatically locked when he released his hold. Mr. Barkley died November 30, 1923, after more than forty years of service in the tower.

Lewis K. Sanford was also an operator at the tower; Harvey Reilly, Harry Leachey, Aaron Mehaffey and Diller Souders all were levermen. Noah Shiflet was an employee in the tower, and lived in Dillerville nearly thirty years.

Opposite the tower, across the tracks leading to Harrisburg stood the Section Tool House. Nearby was a well of fine water, used by the trackmen, train crews and workers in the tower to slake their thirst. In the earliest days, before water tanks or water troughs were installed, the locomotives were supplied their quota of water from this well by the bucket method. The tool house has disappeared and the well is closed.

In the days before the installation of the interlocking switches a switchman performed this function by hand. Christian Donecker on one occasion, while performing this duty, became excited for some reason, made a mistake and threw the switch the wrong way thereby causing the derailment of the oncoming train.

Minard Walton and Thomas Barkley, Jr., also were hand switchmen and John Sheaffer was a trackwalker.

John Keller, a well-known contractor, who lived for many years at the northeast corner of Duke and Lemon streets was for a time a Pennsylvania Railroad supervisor over the tracks between Dillerville and Harrisburg.

## For the Welfare of the Children

A Mr. Starkweather was supervisor over the Pennsylvania tracks covering the distance from Columbia to Coatesville. He lived in a large house located on Dillerville Lane, between the lane that led back to the Brennan farm and the cutoff tracks. Mrs. Starkweather took a great interest in the children of the village. She organized a Sewing Circle and also a Singing Class. Meetings of both these groups were held in the Starkweather home. A large room on the first floor of this home was turned into a play room for all of the village children. Rainy days always brought an overflow gathering. One of those children, Mrs. Margaret May Wohlers, to-day still has vivid and pleasant recollections of those childhood days. Years later as a young lady, Mrs. Wohlers worked for a time at the Prince Street Cotton Mill while residing in Dillerville. Work began at 6 A. M. She walked from home to the mill, accompanied by her brothers, George and John, who worked at Altick's Carriage Factory. Later John worked in various local lockworks.

For years, Josiah Powl, the butcher, lived in the village; Amos Leachey was tenant farmer for Mrs. McGrann who owned the land from the cutoff to the Petersburg Pike, fronting on Dillerville Lane. His son, Harry, and granddaughter, Gertrude, were helpers in the Lutheran Chapel in Dillerville.

The old hotel was a combination two-story brick building with a long frame addition at the side which housed the bar. After the hotel ceased to operate, the brick building was occupied as a residence. Frederick May lived there for a time with his family. At that period the old bar was still in its original location as was the large cupboard or closet in which the liquor formerly was kept. The old bar room served as a playroom for the May children and their friends.

In a three-story brick house built close to the tracks leading to Lancaster, east of the Dillerville Lane, Mrs. Mann, a widow, lived with her two daughters, Emma and Susie. This house was distinguished by having two balconies along the track side. One on the second and the other on the third floor. Emma married John

Goodman, one of the trackmen at Dillerville. Susie married William Lotz, an engineer on the Pennsylvania, and moved to Columbia and years later to Harrisburg.

### **It Had a School**

In the early days the first Dillerville School was a one-room brick building located in the heart of the village. It was on the west side of Dillerville Lane opposite the lane that led to the Brennan farm. After the new schoolhouse was built at the Petersburg Pike, the original schoolhouse was occupied as a dwelling, Frank Heisler living there for over twenty years.

Familiar names greet us among the known teachers of that "little red brick schoolhouse": About 1895, Harry R. Bassler; about 1900, Miss Anna Eby; 1903, Miss Ada Burkholder (Shuman); 1904, a Mr. . . . Evans; 1905, Dr. J. G. Hess; 1906, C. H. Martin (treasurer of the Historical Society) with fifty-five pupils in eight grades; 1907, John Matter. Later, the old McGrann mansion (where now the Hubbard Chick Farm is located), was converted into a four-room school, and served its day until the handsome Brecht School was completed on the Lititz Pike, and the pupils transferred there.

Referring to the original schoolhouse, which was called No. 5, according to a report now in possession of C. H. Martin, we find that in 1851-52 James Benson was teaching a group of forty-four scholars, bearing such well-known Dillerville family names as Ruth, Hull, McGrann, Schreiner, Huber, Smith, McGlaughlin, Blizzard, Hackman, Swails, Graft and Getz.

In 1937 the Pennsylvania Company electrified its line to Harrisburg. January 6, 1938, the first all-electric train passed through Dillerville on a test run. Regular service began January 15, of that year.

In 1940 the new curve at Dillerville was built to permit through trains to maintain a speed of seventy miles an hour without reducing same going around the curve as had to be done previously. This necessitated the erection of the fourth bridge on Dillerville Lane.

On July 15, 1943, John U. Shroyer, State Secretary of Highways of Pennsylvania, after an inspection tour, stated he was amazed at the hazards on the Dillerville Road.

During 1945 and 1946 the three narrow and antiquated bridges were rebuilt at a cost of over \$368,000.00. At this period the traffic count was 1,975 passenger automobiles, 472 trucks and 109 pedestrians using this road daily.

In the early days of railroading everything was done slowly by man power alone. Now a resident of Dillerville could see a section of track, which a generation ago would take two hundred laborers a week to lay, being done in less time with a crew of 130 men using a battery of machines. One to pull spikes, one to remove bolts from splice bars, one to smooth ties, one to lift rails into place, one to replace bolts and a compressed air contraction to drive in the new spikes. Rails now used weigh 140 pounds to the yard in contrast to thirty pounds in use prior to the Civil War period.

The latest announcement of a change on the Pennsylvania Railroad came at the close of 1948. All of the local switching engines and branch line locomotives were to be replaced by Diesel engines. The first Diesel shifter arrived February 18, 1949. From the old Dillerville Road can be seen the installations of sand tower, water tower and fueling station, located in the Engine House Yards, which will service the new motive power.

So we bring the Dillerville story to a close. Houses, school, church, people—all are gone as has the dream that built the village. Nothing remains but an occasional whistle of the mighty rushing locomotives, echoing over the deserted place that once was a pleasant village occupied by a contented people.

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