

# A Time In The Life Of Abbeville

*by William Herr Appel*

**I**t was a luncheon on May 19, 1992, hosted by John Wilberforce Appel III, and known to us all as Jack, and his wife Marian Kirk Appel at their home outside Philadelphia near Radnor. Our Aunt Madeleine had died earlier that spring at the age of 97. A memorial service was scheduled at 2 p.m. at St. Philips Episcopal Church in Haverford. Holly Appel Silverthorne, Jack's youngest sister, and her youngest son, Dan, were among those present. Dan asked enough questions about the Appel family which led him to suggest that I record some of the details my mother, Nan Herr Appel, had told me over the years.

Conversation at that memorable luncheon by sheer necessity gravitated hastily to the Appel family - about those fortunate enough to be alive and present and to those long since buried in the family lots in Lancaster. My cousin, Jack, at this time in his life bore an uncanny resemblance to my father, Richard, his father's younger brother. It seemed to me to be a testament to the strength of the genes of John Wilberforce Appel and his first wife, Ella Julia Roberts. When combined, they produced Thomas Roberts, born in 1881; Ella Elizabeth, born in 1883 and died in 1888; John Junior, born in 1887; Richard Gilmore in 1889, and lastly Kenneth Ellmaker in 1896 and spouse of the widowed Madeleine Hunt in whose memory we were assembled on this occasion. Tony, accompanied by his wife, Betty, was the sole representative of T. Roberts Appel's progeny - Bob, Charles and Tom having predeceased their Aunt Madeleine. Holly and her three sons, Spencer, John and Dan Silverthorne, were present, as were Sandy's wife, Susan, and John's wife, Faith. Jack and Marian's children, Kenny and Lydia, were also present for much of the time. My sister, Eleanor, and I represented our father Richard. Kenneth and Madeleine's two daughters, Joan Appel Carroll Garner and Katherine "Kay" Appel Muskat Doherty, were not present, and we

assumed that they were with their children and relatives on Madeleine's side.

It was a small luncheon, about eleven at the table, but the noise level seemed four times that number. There had been many changes since September, 1979, when memorial services and a reception were held in honor of Kenneth following his death at the age of 83. As conversation increased in intensity - Appel-style, breathless and interrupting - inevitably the fact that Richard Appel had married Nan Herr came up, that they were sort of a brother and a sister to one another. What were the details? How did it all come about?

My mother, Anna Elizabeth Herr Appel, had explained to me at an early age her relationship to Richard. They had the same lady, Elizabeth Henderson Hager Herr Appel, for a stepmother. It all seemed simple enough to us who lived with this explanation, but to more distant relatives, the relationship was confusing and needed clarification. The years seem to have made it all the more complicated. This lady was known by an appellation devised by Nan - Mother Bess. It seemed to be well suited to Elizabeth Henderson Hager when she married the widower, Dr. Martin Light Herr. If Lancaster had to have a queen during the Abbeville years, it is my guess that Mother Bess could well qualify for the position.



*Elizabeth Henderson Hager Herr (1856-1918). Photo c.1894, courtesy of William H. Appel.*

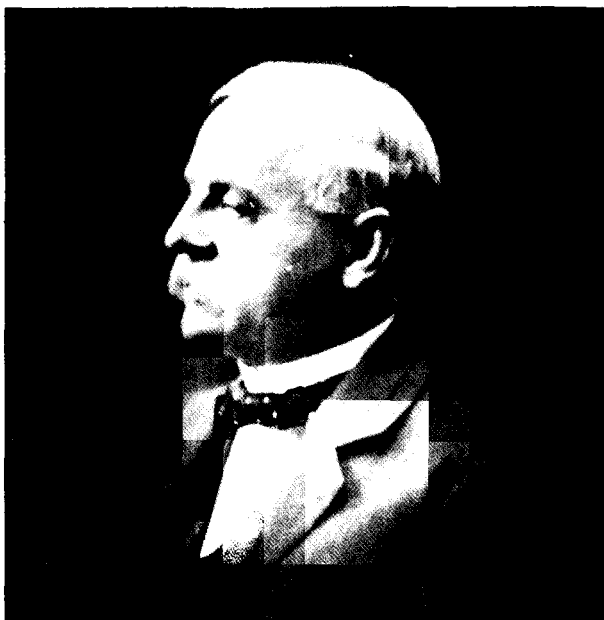
A large oil portrait of her dominated the living room at Abbeville, and after 1928 our living room in Cambridge. Her look was soft, kind, commanding and regal, as was her bearing. She, without any children of her own, was the strong bond that made Abbeville a vibrant and interesting home. All the players during those years left a deep impression upon me as my mother, Nan, would relate the almost endless stories, details and facts, often supported by old photographs, of life in and about Abbeville. In my own way, I was able to retain many of these details, many exaggerated by my mother who viewed the world as a vast Victorian novel, with the Herrs and the Appels being the characters in this novel. Nan's heritage and the environment she lived in conditioned her for all

this. But my account is primarily about how Abbeville helped to shape the lives of the descendants of John W. Appel and Martin L. Herr.

By today's standards, 34 years is not very long. That was the horse and buggy period - kerosene lamps, spring water and big families; it ended with automobiles, electric light, city water and small families. Just as the next 40 years would include a postcard sent to me by my grandfather, John Appel, in 1927 on a daring flight over the North Pole, and Nan and Richard watching the landings on the Moon in 1968.

Perhaps it all began when my mother, Nan Herr, was born. She was the youngest child of Dr. Martin Light Herr, who was born in Lancaster County in 1838. He was a successful medical doctor in Lancaster. He had attended Jefferson Medical School in Philadelphia and had served in the medical corp of the U.S. Army during the Civil War. He completed his medical training at Vanderbilt in Nashville,

Tennessee, after the war ended. It was then he returned to Lancaster and set up his practice. He married Rosina Etta Hubley in September 1870. He was called M.L. and she was called Rose. A daughter, Sarah Maria, was born ten months later, followed by William Hubley called Will in 1873, for whom I am named, and John Light in 1875. A brother, Robert, was born in 1877 but died before Nan was born. And finally, Anna Elizabeth, or Nan, was born July 17, 1880. Rose was thrown from a carriage and being pregnant again, miscarried. She became an invalid but had several more miscarriages and a trip to Colorado before she died of complications attributed to Bright's Disease in 1889.



*Dr. Martin Light Herr (1838-1902). Photo taken shortly before his death. William H. Appel photo.*

And finally, Anna Elizabeth, or Nan, was born July 17, 1880. Rose was thrown from a carriage and being pregnant again, miscarried. She became an invalid but had several more miscarriages and a trip to Colorado before she died of complications attributed to Bright's Disease in 1889.

Nan was brought up by a nurse-governess, Mary Ward, who continued to send small hand-made presents to Nancy each Christmas into the 1930s. She heard the conversation of the servants during her childhood and she recalled that she sat with her invalid mother when they heard about the Johnstown Flood. In July 1893, her father took her to the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Members

of the Hager family joined this trip.

Martin, or M.L. as he was called by nearly everyone, married Elizabeth Henderson Hager in May, 1894. The newly married couple moved from Prince Street near the center of Lancaster to Abbeville, about two miles west of the city. A large, commodious 18th Century Pennsylvania dwelling, it is centered on a 5 1/2 acre lot and its centered drive rises gradually from the Columbia Pike in a straight line separating into a circle or turn-around loop. The walk along the drive was bordered by box wood. It had all the genteel appurtenances, including a spring house, a coach house, a smoke house, a carriage house, spacious lawns, landscaped trees and an extended garden for flowers and vegetables. "Gardy" walk paralleled the garden and terminated with a bench and two tall Italian poplars, with the lush Lancaster countryside serving as a back drop, usually planted in rotation with corn and tobacco. A previous owner had added identical wings on either side of the original house, the east wing was used as a formal parlor and where Nan Herr was married to Richard Appel on November 18, 1913, and the west wing was used for storage.

Elizabeth, or Mother Bess, was the eldest daughter of John and Margaret Henderson Hager. Her father was a successful merchant and the son of the founder of Hager Brothers, a department store in downtown Lancaster. Bessie, as she was known to her immediate family, was brought up to be a queen. Her scrap books, filled with news clippings and etchings (prints) of European royalty, are a testament to her attraction to pomp and protocol, noteworthy writers and faraway places. Bessie was born in 1856; she was now 38 years old and deeply involved in civic and intellectual pursuits, helping to organize Clio and the Lancaster County Historical Society. M.L. was a highly successful doctor, a widower, with four children and a promising "catch". A move out of the crowded townhouse on Prince Street was mandatory. Abbeville, just two houses west of The Maples, her parents' stately Victorian house, was available. There was ample opportunity to furnish it with all the latest Victorian styles, and Hager Brothers could assure high quality at low cost. Besides, her grandfather, Christopher, who had founded Hager Brothers, had lived there before building The Maples.

Sarah, her new step daughter and now 23, well-educated and energetic, began to scour the Lancaster County countryside for old furniture from Mennonite and Amish farmers. She bought a few pieces including the four-legged, drop-leaf cherry table and the cherry cupboard given to me by my mother when I found a use for them. Mother Bess discouraged Sarah's flash of inspiration and relegated these pieces she collected to the kitchen and servants' quarters. Sarah's little sister, Nan, to her dying day, remained deeply critical of her stepmother's attitude, as she, too, had a deep appreciation for authentic antiques and their value.

There was a honeymoon to Europe and Dr. M.L. read a paper at a medical conference in Rome. Following the conference, a reception was held by

King Victor Emmanuel and his Queen. The beautiful regal lady from America caught the attention of the Queen who had summoned her to an audience. The fine Hager features, the straight nose, the bearing were all there. including the choker accentuating her stately posture and imperial manner. I am sure that she had spent her youth training for such an occasion.

Back in America, the new bride was pregnant, only to lose her opportunity to give birth to a natural child. The embryo was blocked in a Fallopian tube. Mother Bess spent her first winter of marriage in bed as an invalid and 14-year-old Nan spent much of her time reading to her.

M.L. lost a lot of money by investing in Lancaster's first traction company and he had to work hard to maintain the life-style he had imposed upon himself. He saw his children off to a good start. Sarah went to medical school in Philadelphia after trying nursing. Will went through Franklin and Marshall College and received a new violin from his father on his 21st birthday. John, who didn't like books went off to a military academy. Nan went to Mrs. Blackwood's, a fashionable private school in Lancaster.

In 1898, the lights dimmed at Abbeville. First, Maria Light Herr who gave birth to Martin nine months after her marriage to Christian in Willow Street, Lancaster County, died at the age of 83. Then in November, 1899, Sarah Maria Herr died of typhoid fever during her final year of medical school. Grandmother Sarah Young Hubley followed in 1900 after breaking her hip. She was just over 80 years old. Then in July 1901, M.L.'s sister, Fanny, died two years after her only child's death. Will Herr's wife, Carrie Wright, married in April 1901, and died on Christmas Day, three weeks after giving birth to a son who didn't survive. This was climaxed by Dr. M.L.'s death from uremic poisoning in February 1902 at the relatively young age of 64. Nan, from the age of 18 in 1898 to the age of 22 in 1902, was almost in a continual state of mourning and conveniently became her widowed stepmother's companion.

Abbeville was closed in 1903 and Mother Bess and Nan moved into town, I believe into a house on Queen Street, and Abbeville was placed on the market. In 1904, the Widow Herr deemed it timely to travel and spent the year planning a grand tour of Europe, which would include Nan and the Hensel family. Bound for Naples, the group sailed from New York City in April 1905. They did Pompeii, Vesuvius, Rome and the Coliseum, Florence, Venice, the Apennines and the Tyrol, Munich, Switzerland and the cog railways, Paris, London and the Lake District. Sailing out of Liverpool in September and arriving back in America, they learned that Mrs. John Appel was terminally ill from cancer. She would die in November.

Life in Lancaster City must have been humming. Nan took up painting and even taught a Sunday School class at St. James Episcopal Church where Mother Bess worshiped. When the recently widowed John Appel began to take more than a casual interest in Elizabeth Henderson Hager Herr is lost in time.

They must have attended lectures at Franklin and Marshall and meetings of Clio and the Historical Society. In early 1907, John's eldest, T. Roberts Appel, married Eva Rengier. Uncle Roberts had moved into the Appel & Appel law firm at 33 North Duke Street. Perhaps this prompted John to ask Elizabeth Henderson Hager Herr to join him in holy matrimony, but anyhow the couple were married April 1908. It was time to re-open Abbeville.

John Wilberforce Appel was named by his father, Thomas Gilmore Apple, after the famous English abolitionist. John was the third of eleven children



*John Wilberforce Appel (c. 1887). William H. Appel photo.*

and eldest son of Thomas and Emma Miller Apple when he was born in 1856. Some of the children changed the spelling of their surname to Appel convinced that this was the original spelling of the name. He had the same birthday as the Great Emancipator, February 12th. The Apples and/or Appels had an obvious identity and appellative problem in the mid-19th century. Mother Bess was just two months younger than John. Books and literature were their joy.

John had married Ella Julia Roberts, the eighth child of eleven of Anthony Ellmaker and Emma Bushong Roberts, in August 1880, in Philadelphia. True to precedent at that time, Thomas Roberts Appel was born in Lancaster the following May. Roberts, as he was called by his family and friends, grew into an Adonis, so reported my mother years later. He had a strong baritone voice in the First Reformed Church choir and his voice would continue to dominate the family gatherings well toward the end of his life. Had Nan been available during all those years of mourning, I wonder if she wouldn't have made an earnest play for Roberts. Nan did add in later years that she believed Roberts and Eva Rengier had one of the most successful marriages she had observed. Roberts married Eva in January 1908, and true to form their first of four sons, Roberts Rengier Appel, was born in November of that year. Charles Rengier was born in 1909, Thomas Gilmore in 1913, and Anthony Roberts in 1915. The Roberts Appels built a house on N. President Avenue within easy walking distance of Abbeville when they moved

their growing family out of Lancaster City.

Ella Elizabeth Appel was born in 1883, but the only daughter of John and Ella died of measles in 1888, the year after John Wilberforce Appel, Jr., was born and a year before Richard Gilmore Appel came into this world. Kenneth Ellmaker Appel was born May 1896, 16 years after his oldest brother. An interesting footnote to the progeny of John and Ella: all four sons married women older than themselves. Eva was four years older than Roberts, Ethel Smith was almost a year older than John Jr., Madeleine Hunt was 17 months older than Kenneth and, last but not least, Nan Herr was almost nine years older than Richard.

The lights were destined to go on again at Abbeville, now that John and Mother Bess were married. Roberts was close by and starting his family. John Jr. was up in Cambridge, Massachusetts, attending Harvard College. Richard was at Franklin and Marshall and young Kenneth was at home and becoming a close friend of Donald Watt who lived at the Watt estate several blocks away. Donald was the son of Peter Watt, a Scotsman who immigrated to Lancaster and established a department store with his partner, William Shand. Watt & Shand was a competitor of Hager Brothers, and was ultimately to absorb it. John Jr. was now engaged to Annie Watt, one of the twin sisters born to Peter and his first wife, who died in child birth when the girls were born. Peter remarried and started a new family.

Some time in the winter, 1909-10, John Jr. met and fell in love with a lovely social worker named Ethel Smith from Canandaigua, in up-state New York. John Jr. was working for Wanamaker's Department Store in New York City where his Uncle Joe, his father's youngest brother worked. When John Jr. came over to Lancaster to break his engagement to Annie Watt, there was quite a stir. Although Kenneth was caught in the middle, he managed to keep Donald's lifelong friendship and to help Donald start "The Experiment in International Living" in 1932.

Richard Appel must have become attracted to Nan Herr about this time, 1910. Nan felt the robust ribbing handed over to quiet and gentle Richard by his brothers, John Jr. and Kenneth, was uncalled for. Nan and Richard would take long buggy rides in the county lanes and byways. Nan, who had been Mother Bess's companion and maid-in-waiting for some ten years was thirty and unmarried, and probably fair game.

She was the short order chef who would furnish evening snacks in the kitchen at Abbeville for the Appel boys when they made this practice an evening ritual before retiring. Richard was advised to cool it. He went to New York to work on his Master's in Music at Columbia and be near John Jr. and Ethel. He was continuing on a career in church music, having a talent which his energetic mother, Ella, and her maiden sister in Philadelphia had encouraged. He was the organist at the First Reformed Church in Lancaster at the age of twelve. Richard

would take the train to Philadelphia for music lessons and stay at the Green Street house of his mother's oldest brother, "Uncle Doctor", a bachelor living with three sisters, Aunt Sally, Aunt Amelia and Aunt Leah, who would look after the young musician. Richard hardly ever talked of his mother. It was Nan who told us that Ella fainted when she returned home one day to find that Richard at the age of eight had sheared off his beautiful auburn Little Lord Fauntleroy tresses.



*Photo of the main house at Abbeville taken shortly before WWI. LCHS photo courtesy John Farmer.*

Again, true to precedent, John Wilberforce Appel, III, was born on May 19, 1911, ten months after his parents were married. Marianne was born in 1913, Sarah, named after Aunt Sally Roberts, was born in 1917 and last but not least, Holly, was born on Christmas Day, 1922. These were the New York Appels.

Richard went to Germany with John and Mother Bess in 1912 and stayed on for six months to study organ in Heidelberg. He was now engaged to Nan. They were married on November 18, 1913, in the parlor at Abbeville and I am certain that it met with the approval of all concerned.

Richard and Nan went to Washington, D.C. on their honeymoon and proceeded to Cambridge where Richard was an organist for St. John's Episcopal Church and for the Episcopal Theological School adjacent. Their eldest, Elizabeth Hager Appel, was born in early October, 1914, in Lancaster with Nan's brother, Will, assisting. Nan stayed on at Abbeville that winter, partly to recover and partly to be with her stepmother, whose goiter condition had become more severe.



John was writing a novel called *The Light of Parnell*, a romance centered on the Civil War and well-remembered by all of us for its Christmas story on page 250. It was our "Christmas Carol". He published the novel in 1916. Abbeville well suited the personalities of both John and Mother Bess. The trolley line helped them get in and out of town.

Woodrow Wilson, while a professor at Princeton University, came on to read a paper before the Lancaster County Historical Society and stayed at Abbeville. The library was lined with books. Nan rejoined Richard in Cambridge and Richard Gilmore Appel, Jr. was born in April 1917 and Eleanor Roberts Appel in October 1918. Mother Bess died in November from the goiter condition, which had become malignant. Nan spent the winter with John Appel and her three children at Abbeville.

World War I had its repercussions on Abbeville. Will Herr joined the British Expeditionary Forces in France in 1915 as a medical doctor and remained overseas until early 1919. In early 1918 Kenneth was inducted into the United States Army but was discharged soon after due to poor eyesight. Following the footsteps of his brothers, John and Richard, Kenneth after graduating from Franklin and Marshall in 1916, received a PhD in Psychology in 1918 at Harvard and lived with Nan and Richard in Cambridge. He then decided to study medicine and graduated from the Harvard Medical School in 1924. While there he met Madeleine Hunt and the two were married near Boston in September, 1921. We learned just after Grandfather Appel's death on April 16, 1928, that Kenneth and Madeleine would adopt Joan, born April 30th in Albany, New York. They later adopted Katherine born in Baltimore in 1935, the last of John Appel's grandchildren. Kenneth went on to the University of Pennsylvania and to practice psychiatry in the Philadelphia Area.

After M.L. Herr's death in 1902, Abbeville was left to his three surviving children with a lifetime occupancy to his widow, Mother Bess. Will, John and Nan continued to own Abbeville until after Mother Bess's death when they sold it to John, Jr. who could afford to buy the property so his father could remain on there. John Appel cautioned Nan and Richard when their fourth child, William Herr Appel, was born in October 1920, probably as much a surprise to the parents as it was an annoyance to the grandparent, who wondered how his son and daughter-in-law and stepdaughter by marriage could provide for all these children.

In all this activity associated with Abbeville, there is an interesting footnote to the Appel-Roberts family history. As noted earlier, Eva Rengier Appel presented a fourth son to T. Roberts Appel on March 27, 1915. Following some preliminary search for appropriate names, and having used up a good supply of family names on their other three sons, settled on naming this son after Uncle Doctor, Isaac Ellmaker Roberts, who had died about this time, as did Aunt Sally and Aunt Amelia, apparently of cancer. Uncle John Apple, living in New

York City and well versed in urban life, heard of the pending christening. He telegraphed Lancaster and asked his brother and sister-in-law to delay the ceremony until he got to Lancaster. Perhaps Edwardian realities controlling the mores of the residents of the Abbeville community helped the parents to reverse their wish to so honor the memory of Uncle Doctor. The new son was christened Anthony Roberts Appel after his maternal grandfather. Such was the world at that time.



*Contemporary view taken from the North (Columbia Avenue) side. LCHS photo, 1995.*

No one had ever questioned the ancestry of one John Peter Appel who arrived from Germany in 1733. He and his heirs and descendants apparently were good Protestants in the best Pennsylvania tradition. To this day, there are Appels who profess to the Jewish faith and culture. One could possibly attribute the brains which have come down through the generations from John Peter to be a beneficial inheritance of the Appel heritage.

Nan, too, had a problem with names, and she let us know how she felt. At an early age, she thought that if she ever had a daughter, she would like to name her after her own mother, Rosina Hubley Herr. Little did she dream of marrying an Appel, which would preclude any initiative along this line. Rosy Appel would have a hard time in this modern world. Nan had a good alternative by appropriately naming her first daughter, Elizabeth Hager Appel. When Nan and Richard had a second daughter in 1918, Rose was still “undesirable”, but Nan next thought of naming her daughter after her deceased sister, Sarah Maria

Herr. In 1917, John Jr. and Ethel named their second daughter after Aunt Sally Roberts. Nan felt a bit preempted, especially since Aunt Sally had been such a benefactress in promoting Richard's musical talent. Sarah was "undesirable". The next alternative was to name this daughter after Richard's mother, Ella Roberts.



*A less common view of the main house at Abbeville taken from the southwest (Abbeville Road side) near the carriage house. LCHS photo, 1995.*

However, Nan couldn't live with the name, Ella, so she compromised with the more euphonious Eleanor and she did admire Richard's first cousin, Eleanor Elizabeth Coblentz and daughter of Emma Amelia Appel Coblentz. John Appel's mother Emma Miller Appel lived with her daughter, Emma, in Baltimore and died in 1921 at the good age of ninety-four.

Abbeville's golden years probably extended from 1920 to 1928. John Wilberforce Appel was now a widower for the second time and in his late 60's. He was Grandpa to many of his grandchildren. He had a broad smile, which seemed to be a part of his permanent features. He liked to walk and used a cane or long staff. There were trips in the summer to Maine, Ogonquit and Bethel, to Eagles Mere in the Poconos and to Cambridge and Nantucket. Likewise, the Richard Appels would descend upon Abbeville for a month or more. Elizabeth would always stay with Mother Bess's surviving bachelor brother, John Hager, and the two maiden sisters, Kate and Sarah at The Maples. Ida and Nickum would look after John Appel, Ida to do the housekeeping and Nickum to mow the lawns, which took up to three days a week. Nickum also drove the air-cooled

Franklin, which John had purchased to replace the horse and buggy. And there was Mabel in her plain dress who would help keep the young in tow.

The front porch was lined with Bedford rockers and black straightback chairs. After the evening meal, all the adults would retire there to converse. The Will Hagers, Mother Bess's youngest brother, including his wife and five sons, lived next door to The Maples. There was continual movement between the Hager compound and Abbeville in spite of the Brown estate which separated the two. The Appel sons would learn to play tennis on the clay court behind The Maples and the Will Hager house. All five Hager boys went into Hager Brothers Department Store; Ned, Will, Nathaniel, John and Bobby. The hum of the electric interurban trolley cars going and coming from Columbia on the Susquehanna River and the open street trolley cars which would carry passengers to Maple Grove, an amusement park about a quarter of a mile west of Abbeville on the other side of Christ Herr's farm, was a familiar sound during those hot summer days.

John Appel died of pneumonia at the age of 72. We received the news in Cambridge after Richard had already taken the train to what was to be a conference in Pittsburgh. Roberts and John broke the news to him at the Lancaster train station. Nan went on down to attend the services and left their children under the care of Bob and Alice Appel. Roberts Rengier Appel and Alice Edge, a Georgia peach, had eloped in August 1926. He was eighteen and there was a lot of commotion through the Abbeville network, but the marriage of John Appel's first grandchild became a long and happy one. Bob joined the Appel & Appel law firm on Duke Street as did his son, Thomas Roberts Appel II, known as Toby in the early 1960s.

Across the Columbia Pike from Abbeville was the Christian Herr Ice Plant and farm. This particular Christian Herr, a very distant relative of Martin Herr, was the father of Paul, Esther, Elizabeth, Christian and Mary Herr. Mary was born in November 1900 with Dr. M.L. walking across the Pike to help with the delivery. Mary was 20 when she went up to Cambridge to help Nan the winter after Nan and Richard's youngest was born. At this writing, Mary Herr Glenn is over 93, in good health and lives on Marietta Avenue, not too far from Abbeville. She is perhaps the only surviving player, other than John Appel's surviving grandchildren, who can recall many of the events across the Pike from her childhood home. Most of the other now deceased players are either buried in Woodward or Greenwood Cemeteries in Lancaster. Martin purchased a lot at Woodward and an imposing monument dominates the site, surrounded by headstones. After his death, a space was left beside him for his widow, Mother Bess. This space remains empty now, since she and John Appel lie in the Appel lot at Greenwood. John's two eldest sons and wives are buried nearby. Kenneth and Madeleine chose to have their ashes scattered under a birch tree at the Gladwyn Presbyterian Church. Richard and Nan chose to use the Herr lot, and

their headstones are next to their daughter, Elizabeth, who died in Rome in January 1933. The rest of Martin's family are also interred in this lot including Will and his wife, Carrie, John and his wife, Clara and Sarah Marie Herr.

Abbeville now is surrounded by suburban growth. The fields behind "Gardy" walk are now subdivided with houses. A television tower dominates the old Henry Herr farm and the lane separating Abbeville from that farm is a paved street. The Christian Herr farm and old ice plant are long gone as is the trolley line along the Columbia Pike.

In those golden years, one could take a trolley car to almost anywhere. There were day trips to Columbia to visit M.L.'s surviving sister, Aunt Lizzy Yocum, who wore a Mennonite bonnet, a trip to Lititz for pretzels, a trip to Pequea on the Susquehanna River for a picnic or a simple trip to the markets in downtown Lancaster.

I couldn't personally go back before the early 1920s, but I could recall summers at Abbeville on the Columbia Pike just outside the Lancaster, Pennsylvania, city limits. The Doctor Martin Light Herr and the John Wilberforce Appel families dominated Abbeville from sometime in late 1893 to the summer of 1928 when a van load of some of the furnishings left Lancaster for Cambridge, Massachusetts, where Nan now lived. Abbeville had been sold after John Appel's death in April, to Dudley Armstrong, brother-in-law to one of his nieces, Marion Gilmore Armstrong. The Dudley Armstrongs resold Abbeville several years later to Dr. John L. Farmer. It has been added to the National Register of Historic Places and in July 1993, placed on the market for resale. From our immediate family's point of view, it was the end of an era and life would never be the same.

## **An Editor's Footnote To Abbeville**

In 1717 William Penn granted Hans Brubaker and Christian Hershey 1000 acres by the Little Conestoga Creek in Lancaster County, PA. On the southern portion Christian Stoneman in 1755 or John Stoner in 1756 built a small home. It measured 20 by 17 feet. The low ceilings and fireplace of this original part of the house are still visible today. The central portion of the house was built around 1790 in stone. It measures 45 by 45 feet.

Stoner was a prosperous miller whose mill stood 1/4 mile to the west of the site of the house and supplied much of the flour for the nearby city of Lancaster.

On November 2, 1825 a notice was placed in the *Lancaster Journal* announcing that the beautiful country seat and farm then called *Mount Pleasant* was for sale. It was described as "an elegant, two-story, STONE HOUSE, 45 feet square, built in modern style, 4 rooms to a floor, and a one story kitchen..."

The tract was purchased by William Coleman who owned the house from 1825-1826 and owned it again from 1830-1835. He was one of the most wealthy and prominent iron masters of the period and was also the father of Anne Coleman, the fiancée of James Buchanan at the time of her early death.

During 1826-1827, Langdon Cheves purchased three tracts of more than 194 acres in Lancaster Township from William Coleman, the Farmers Bank, and Solomon Kauffman. It was Cheves who renamed the plantation "Abbeville" after his South Carolina birthplace. It is believed Cheves may have even occupied Abbeville prior to purchasing the estate.

Cheves was born on 17 September 1776 at Rocky River, Abbeville District, South Carolina, the son of Alexander Cheves, a Scottish immigrant, and Mary Langdon, a Virginia native. He served an apprenticeship in the counting house of a Charleston merchant. Although highly successful in business, Cheves turned his attention to the law, and in 1777 he was admitted to the Charleston bar. His abilities as an attorney earned him a fine reputation and a high income. In 1808 he married Mary Dullas of Charleston. The prosperous attorney soon entered politics, and in 1810 he was elected to the U.S. Congress where he represented South Carolina along with John C. Calhoun. Congressman Cheves rose through important chairmanships to become the youngest Speaker of the House in 1814.

He declined reelection in 1815, and became a judge in the Superior Court of South Carolina the following year. In 1816 the United States Bank had been rechartered, and at once the financial institution began suffering from mismanagement. In 1819 Langdon Cheves was elected the president of the bank's board of directors, and he moved to Philadelphia. Under his administration the bank's credit was restored, and in 1822 Cheves resigned. Nicholas Biddle of Philadelphia succeeded him. Next Cheves was appointed chief commissioner of claims under the Treaty of Ghent.

Cheves' friendship with Congressman James Buchanan reportedly influenced his decision to locate his residence in Lancaster. He lived at Abbeville for about six years during which time he was a prominent member of the local Democracy. To Langdon and Mary Cheves were born two sons, Charles Langdon Cheves and Robert Hayne Langdon Cheves. Their births were duly recorded in Lancaster's First Presbyterian Church. Cheves was a secessionist, and as the abolitionist movement gained strength in the North, he decided to return to South Carolina. On 3 April 1830 Cheves sold Abbeville back to William Coleman. He died in Columbia, South Carolina on 25 June 1857.

Coleman sold the property to the trustees of the Abbeville Institute for \$10,000 in 1835. The trustees of Abbeville Institute were Samuel Bowman, President; John Light Atlee, Thomas E. Franklin, George W. Hammersly, and Thomas F. Potter. The Reverend Dr. William Augustus Muhlenberg ran Abbeville Institute for some years during which time it became recognized as a first class

preparatory school associated with the Episcopal Church.

When Dr. Muhlenberg left to become president of a college in Long Island, the Institute declined, admissions decreased, and the property was sold by the trustees to Judge Alexander L. Hayes, who then sold it to John Keller. It was purchased by a Mr. Gonter who sold the property to Christopher Hager, founder of Hager's Store of Lancaster. Hager purchased and developed much of the land in the west end of Lancaster.

## A Herr/Appel Genealogy

HERR, Christian, m. Maria Light d. 1898

Martin Light, b. 1838; d. 2/1902

m. (1) 9/1870 Rosina Etta Hubley, d. 1889

m. (2) 5/1894 Elizabeth Henderson Hager (MOTHER BESS)

b. 1856; d. 1918

Sarah Maria, b. 1871; d. 1899

William Hubley, M.D. (Will) b. 1873 m. 4/1901 Carrie Wright,  
d. 12/25/1901

John Light, b. 1875 m. Clara

Robert, b. 1877

Anna Elizabeth (NAN), b. 7/17/1880 m. 1/1913 Richard  
Gilmore Appel, b. 1889 (For children SEE Appel)

APPEL, Thomas m. Emma Miller

John Wilberforce Appel, b. 2/12/1856; d. 4/16/1928

m. (1) 8/1880 Ella Julia Roberts, d. 1905

m. (2) 4/1908 Elizabeth Henderson Hager Herr (MOTHER  
BESS), b. 1856; d. 4/1918

Thomas Roberts, b. 5/1881 m. 1/1908 Eva Rengier

Roberts Rengier, b. 11/19/1908

Charles Rengier, b. 1909

Thomas Gilmore, b. 1913

Anthony Roberts (Tony), b. 3/27/1915

Ella Elizabeth, b. 1883; d. 1888

John Wilberforce Jr, b. 1887 m. Ethel Smith

John Wilberforce III (Jack), b. 5/19/1911

Marianne, b. 1913

Sarah, b. 1917

Holly, b. 12/25/1922 m. \_\_\_\_ Silverthorne

Richard Gilmore, b. 1889 m. 11/18/1913 Anna Elizabeth Herr  
(NAN), b. 7/17/1880  
Elizabeth Hager, b. 10/1914; d. 1933  
Richard Gilmore, b. 4/1917  
Eleanor Roberts, b. 10/1918  
William Herr, b. 10/1920  
Kenneth Ellmaker, b. 1896; d. 9/1979 m. 9/1921 Madeleine  
Hunt, d. 1992  
(adopted)  
Joan Appel Carroll Garner  
Katherine Appel Muskat Doherty