

Tour Through the Northeastern Section of Lancaster County.

Continuously since 1882, inclusive, W. U. Hensel has organized and participated in annual, and some years semi-annual, drives over Lancaster county, the party often comprising strangers, who in this novel way have a much more deliberate opportunity to study the geographical situation, the physical beauties, the historical relics and the racial characteristics of our people than could be afforded otherwise. Mr. Hensel has within this period made more than forty such trips, exploring nearly every corner of the county; tracing the Octoraro and the Conowingo from their sources to their mouths; following the Pequea from its rise to the picturesque glen through which it pours itself into the Susquehanna; traversing the Conestoga valley around Churchtown and the old Windsor, Pool and Spring Grove iron works; traveling through the early settlements around "Postlethwaite's" and the historic haunts of Conestoga and Manor; coaching by the magnificent scenery of Chickies Rock and the boulder fields and high barnyard walls of Conoy, the fat lands of the Donegals and the varied splendors of Rapho, encompassed by the two arms of the Chickies creek. On these periodical journeys Mr. Hensel has been accompanied by many of our own citizens and by distinguished strangers. The late George Nauman, W. A. Atlee and W. B. Middleton were frequent participants; Vice President Stevenson, Supreme Court Justice Sam'l G. Thompson, United States Con-

sul George F. Parker, Law Writer Henry Flanders, the late Attorney General H. C. McCormick, Chief Justice Mitchell, Hon. Albert B. Welmer, legal commentator and reporter; the late Victor Guillou, Congressman M. E. Olmsted, Samuel Dickson, Esq., of Philadelphia; J. Henry Cochran, of Williamsport; National Chairman Har- rity and many other outsiders in this way have been introduced to, and have been made to especially feel, the beauties and resources of Lancaster county.

But to a New Era reporter Mr. Hensel admitted the other day he had never joined so thoroughly appreciative and intelligent a company, and he never had, altogether, such an enjoyable trip as that which he undertook on last Saturday morning, and finished the next day.

Judges C. I. Landis and E. G. Smith, W. N. Appel, John E. Malone, O. P. Bricker, G. Ross Eshleman and Mr. Hensel left Ephrata at 8 a. m. Their carriage horses trotted leisurely up the old Horse Shoe turnpike—once a great thoroughfare from Pittsburg to Philadelphia. They noted the broad and generous lines upon which it was constructed; and even before they had reached the Seventh Day Baptist settlement they—all of them being lawyers—had recalled the fierce and memorable contests in the local Courts between two opposing factions for control of the church property; they lamented, with one voice, the apparent inclination or willingness of those in charge to let the old Brothers' House, if not some of the other buildings, fall into decay; and they resolved, none dissenting, that the Lancaster County Historical Society—if not the State Association—should see to it that time and decay work no further ravages upon these most memorable sites, monuments of the early

history of Pennsylvania and the history of printing and literature in the United States. They noted with interest the old Academy of the Brethren, with its quaint belfry and the tablet recording its establishment in 1836.

An Historic Region.

Through the flourishing village of Lincoln, with its fine sandstone church, on past Clay, they observed with satisfaction a well-kept roadbed and smooth turnpike, made easier by Counsellor Malone's friendly nod to the gatekeepers. When the elevation which is crowned by the old Bricker-ville Lutheran Church (1807) was reached, they drew rein and made a halt to view the landscape o'er. To the right and north lies the great Coleman estate, comprising the remains of Elizabeth furnace, the farm and chapel. It was there, it will be remembered, Jacob Huber, the founder, recorded the fact, on a stone tablet, erected over the mouth of the original furnace (1750), that he was the first and only German who knew how to make iron. It was there Stiegel and the Stedman brothers built a new furnace (1757) and called it—after the fashion of the old ironmasters—"Elizabeth," which was the name of Stiegel's and whence came the name of Elizabeth and also of Charles Stedman's, beth township, much more probably, than is sometimes alleged from the English Queen of a far earlier day. They gradually acquired a domain exceeding 10,000 acres; and the ten-plate stove made there was one of the most notable American manufactures of the pre-Revolutionary period. It was here Robert Old, the great-grandfather of the late G. Dawson Coleman, held almost imperial sway—most notable among the ironmasters of his day. It was near here that the resounding forges, driven

by water-power, gave to the splendid torrent—which emerges from the Lebanon hills to become one of the chief tributaries of the Conestoga—the name “Hammer Creek.” The object of most historic and professional interest to this particular party was the old Lutheran church edifice, for the control of which property the long legal contest was waged so bitterly in our local Courts, terminating in the triumph of the party of the Ministerium and the occupancy of the next hill-top with a new church by the other wing of the hopelessly-divided congregation. The church remains as it was built, well nigh a hundred years ago. The plain, whitewashed walls, the lofty pulpit, perched high up on a level with the galleries, the canopy-like sounding board, and the stiff, straight pews make it well worth a visit. The graveyard—much older than the present church edifice—has a hundred tombs of varied interest, from their quaint epitaphs and curious monumental carvings, not the least conspicuous being that of Baron Stiegel’s first wife.

Further along the road is the famous “Spotted House,” a spacious old mansion built of cut sandstone blocks, alternately light and dark, and giving its exterior the appearance of a checkerboard. The swinging sign of the Brickerville hostelry tells of the old wagoning days, when “the wains from Conestoga, with their merry strings of bells,” made continuous music on this historic highway. Graceful elms, such as that which stands by the stone-arched bridge that carries the old turnpike over Middle Creek; huge chestnuts that have endured and yet survive the lightning strokes of a century; towering hickories and glistening gum trees record the taste and consideration which have stayed the ravages of the woodman.

Up Hammer Creek.

Presently the road turns into the cool shades of the glen in which Lebanon city has planted its great water works, near the junction of Poplar Run and Hammer Creek. Before this is reached the way goes past another fine old colonial mansion, of the local red sandstone, a rich specimen of architecture, abounding in traditions of domestic tragedy that are whispered around the firesides of this region, and chill the marrow—even as the echoes of the "Ewige Yæger's" horn mingles with the midnight blasts of the winter wind upon these romantic hills. One may travel far and see nothing finer or more refreshing than the sequestered haunts that lie up this stream, with its dark trout pools, its sunlit stretches and "shingly bars," now "bubbling into eddying bays" and again "babbling on the pebbles."

If one is thinking of law suits—as, of course, lawyers and Judges on a holiday jaunt never do—it is to be recalled that the location of Lebanon's pumping plant on these waters has already originated a pending application in the Supreme Court of the State for an injunction at the instance of Lancaster city, and not less than seven suits for damages by the millers "down stream."

Less sentimental than the course of a murmuring brook through the forest shades are the uses to which the headwaters of this valley are put at Bomberger's distillery. When one is introduced to waving rye fields, with their satin sheen glistening in the wind and sun at every turn of the road; and then is gravely told that some of this Shaeferstown whisky has been allowed to become sixteen years old, is it any wonder a polite Lancastrian finds his hat continuously lifted?

An Ancient Village.

And what a revelation it is to drive into Shaefferstown—one of our nearest and most neglected neighbors! Before the trolley and telephone centralized our county, outlying posts, like this ancient village, had some attention; now the county line seems almost insurmountable. Yet when all this corner of Lebanon and the adjoining part of Berks were comprised in Lancaster county, "Heidelberg" was one of the notable centres of the region. To this name its founder, Alexander Shaeffer, persistently adhered, but popular usage and regard for him overcame even his own modesty, and "Shaefferstown" it will remain. The first white footprints that pressed this region were of the German Jews, who came to trade with the Indians and stayed to rear a rude synagogue and enclose a burial place, now nearly two centuries old, with a thick stone wall. It lay later in the shadow of the eccentric Stiegel's lofty tower and castle, though all are long since in ruins. But an inspiration of classic culture, brought hither by the early Reformed and Lutheran settlers, and perpetuated by an organized and incorporated academy, has never ceased to exert influence; and to those of the party who had been students of Franklin and Marshall College it was noteworthy how many of its alumni and students had been native to this hamlet. The names of John Casper Bucher and A. Carl Whitmer are associated with the local pastorate, but Rev. A. J. Bachman, of Franklin and Marshall (73), the Hibshman brothers, Jere. Hoffman, of '62; John W. Krall ('68-69); Cyrus V. ('56), and Samuel V. Mays ('62); Rev. John W. Steinmetz (1856); W. W. Weigley ('62); C. M. Zerbe, Esq., ('62), are all natives of or closely identified with Shaeffers-

town, not to speak of Hiram Young, of York; President Judge John H. Weiss, of Harrisburg; the venerable Dr. Zerbe, and a long line of illustrious Zimmermans, Schaeffers, Stricklers, Millers, Buchers, Rexes, Lausers, Dissingers, Brendles and other worthy sons of noble sires. Few towns of its size anywhere have more history to show, and the local historian, A. S. Brendle, has done an invaluable work worthy of emulation in every village, by compiling with great completeness and preserving the history and traditions of the neighborhood, the cemetery and church records, the muster and military rolls, and a vast amount of local data that would otherwise soon escape permanent form.

A Romantic Region.

Artist and essayist, poet and romancer, might well linger amid these scenes and people and find subject for philosophic reflection or imaginative excursions in the romantic history of Stiegel's castle on Tower Hill, and its baronial hospitality; his journeys to and from his iron and glass works, his coach and retinue; or the story of the old hotel, which, like some in our county, changed its name from "King George" to "George Washington," as sentiment changed about 1776; or the memories of the old battalion days, and the "cherry fairs," and of such by-gone local industries as tile factories and the turning of spinning wheels.

Thence down the Lebanon Valley the drive is full of attractions. The inviting roadside near Millbach, with its mill race and dense shade, calling one to noonday lunch; a base ball match near Newmanstown, compelling a short halt; a horse sale at Womelsdorf, illustrating the resemblances and differences of the people on either side of "the Furnace Hills;" and then a

stretch of fine road, past fine farms, gradually bringing the travelers, about sunset, to the foot of the mountain, at Wernersville, where, to the right, in a beautiful cove, are stretched out the grouped buildings of the State Insane Hospital, and far up the hillside countless hotels, boarding houses, sanatoriums and cottages make a development that must be visited to be appreciated. Within an easy day's drive of Lancaster, the character and extent to which this resort has been developed is little known; and, while it is not the present purpose to advertise any such enterprise, it may be safely guaranteed that those who are in search of fine landscape views, pure air, dry climate and soft, even luxurious, water, may go further and fare much worse. The traveler by carriage road and footpath will find no better place to spend the night and be refreshed for the next day's journey than Wenrich's "Grand View," on the northern slope of the hills above Wernersville.

The Upper "Swamp."

West Cocalico is the northernmost township of Lancaster county. On the map it appears to be the peak of the roof; and at its apex Berks, Lancaster and Lebanon corner. A wooded elevation shelters the valley through which a road leads across the upper end of it, from the county line stone to Cocalico P. O., once known as Flickinger's store, in the extreme northwest corner of the township, where two old highways cross and the finger boards point to Richland and Schaefferstown, Schoeneck and Reading. This is a remote part of Lancaster county. Even the telephone has not invaded it. But its roads, on a red sandstone base, with a gravel surface, will shame many of the richer and more pretentious districts. There are no more

brilliant red barns; and their fine cutstone foundations, walls and gables are a sight to see. Here is the district long known as the "Swamp," now well reclaimed and teeming with verdure and sparkling waters; here are visions of game not wholly extinct and fish that may yet be lured with the fly; here are legends of Indian canoes that came dashing down from the hills in the swift headwaters of the Cocalico and sped onward unchecked until they floated into the Susquehanna; here are stories of Sam Price and Jake Amwake hooking trout and shooting woodcock; here the Pennsylvania German is yet almost entirely Lutheran and Reformed, rather than Mennonite, Dunker or Amish; here, at a country cross-roads, with an open door between the bar room and store room, is a landlord and merchant, a man of intelligence, education and force of character, who, for the love of a scientific and historic fad, has accumulated a fund of information and a collection of specimens of the "Stone Age" that would entitle an aspiring student of aboriginal life in North America to distinction and credit. For ten years Fred Arzbacher has roamed and dug the fields in search of traces of the red man who dwelt and hunted and fought and fished on these hills and in these waters. Thousands of arrow heads and battle points, hammers and axes, skinning knives and scraping knives, drills and needles, wampum and beads—of quartz and jasper, of amarynth and serpentine—varied in form, material and in use, give value and interest to his collection, which is displayed with modesty and explained with intelligence.

It is worth driving to that pleasant retreat to see a contented man.

Turning Homeward.

Follow that sparkling stream for a-half mile or so, and hard by a mill

pond are a quaint old mill and a farm house that may be profitably studied as among the best specimens yet extant in our community of domestic architecture. The old Bricker homestead was erected in 1759. About that time, be it remembered, this section was on the "firing line." The colony was in a constant state of agitation over the strife on the frontier between the Indian and the pioneer, and the political life of the province was disturbed by the acrimonious contention between the Scotch-Irish and the Quaker, each blaming the other for the troubles between the settlers and the natives. Very near to the time this fine mansion was building, just over the hill northward, the Tulpehocken massacres were creating intense excitement; and for a time it seemed doubtful whether, in face of French encouragement to the Indian cause, the English advance of the frontier line could be maintained.

At this period here was erected a stone mansion, the manor house of an 800-acre estate, the edifice some forty feet square and roofed with heavy red tiles, many of which are in an excellent state of preservation and one was secured for the Lancaster County Historical Society. In all its essential features this splendid building has been maintained and bids fair to endure for at least another century. Most notable of its features is the "plate stone" set in the south wall of the house, above the first story and bearing this pious inscription:

"Gott gesegne dieses Haus
Und ales was da geget ein and aus
Gott gesegne all Sampt
Und da zu das ganze Lant
Gott alein die Ehr
Sonst keinen Menschen mehr
Anno 1759 Jahrs
Peter Bricker Elizabeth Brickerin."

Which might be fairly translated:

"God bless this house;
And all that goes herein or out.
"God bless all the people
And also all the land.
"To God alone be the glory
And not to man.

"A. D. 1759.

"Peter Bricker. Elizabeth Bricker (his wife)."

The diversion at this place of the waters of the little creek that comes dancing down from the hills carries a clear stream through a fine farm and furnishes a twenty-four-foot head for the old mill; but beauty becomes "the bride of use," when the overflow tumbles down in a sparkling cataract under a huge and shapely elm, altogether making a rarely attractive spot.

Thence by an easy ascent, past shining meadows, hurrying waters, picturesque woods and inviting nooks, the road leads to the beautifully situated village of Schoeneck. The fine, new memorial church, erected under the will of the late Dr. Wiest, is a landmark of architecture in the native stone.

Altogether, few sections of the county present more attractions to the pleasure-seeker than this northeastern corner, too often overlooked; and those who seek recreation may go much further from home and fall far short of realizing the same satisfaction as they will find in a tour through the Cocalico region.

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