

LETTERS OF
ROBERT ROBERTS SHRONK
TO
JAMES SIMMONS SWARTZ

volume no 2

Starting from January 3rd 1915
And running to April 19th 1921

2135 West Ontario street,
January 3rd 1915.

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Dear James,

The air is filled with "Billy Sunday" who began his ten weeks' evangelical services this morning in the big tabernacle at 19th and Vine streets, just across the street from Horace E. Richard's town house, but he, I presume, is now in Florida. The Rapid Transit Company will certainly reap a financial benefit from the meetings for their cars ran as crowded this morning as they do in baseball seasons, or when a circus is in town. Personally I do not feel enthused over the meetings. Sunday's mannerisms, as I have read of them, do not tally with my idea of what a preacher of righteousness ought to be. He seems to be playing to the gallery. I, however, differ from most of the people; perhaps I am becoming a fossil and ought to take a back seat. I have tried to picture in my mind the Apostle Paul being heralded by a lot of "Trail-hitters" and the people of any of the cities he visited renting a furnished house for the accomodation of him and his family. I do not like the spectacular in religion. How things have changed since you and I used to sit under the preaching of Watkinson, Clark, and Chesshire; Each of whom have a distinctive belief in the sacredness of the scriptural doctrines and preached the truth regardless as to whether they won friends or foes. You will recall the opposition that sprung up on the part of the other congregations in the neighborhood whenever converts were being received into the church and how ably those oppositions were met. In this "advanced age" everything is "the Brotherhood of Man". This has assumed such proportions that I sometimes wonder why there should any longer be an organization known as the Baptist Church. I shall, if an opportunity affords, go and hear Sunday to see for myself how he behaves on the platform. Singer and I had the honor, this morning, of sitting on the Empire chairs. The one I occupied I found to be as comfortable to sit on as it is beautiful to look upon. They are indeed prizes of which any church ought to be proud. Dr. Seasholes preached a very appropriate sermon from the text Genesis 1.1. "In the beginning God" for the opening of a new year. Two young women were given the hand of fellowship. The meeting on Thursday night was a splendid success. I was told this morning. The King's Daughters served crullers and coffee during the social gathering that preceded the watch night service. There were present representatives from the Methodist, Lutheran, Reformed Episcopal and Presbyterian congregations. We had a large fire this morning at 20th street and Glenwood avenue, where Este's large lumber yard, a row of dwellings and a steam fire engine were destroyed. You will see an account of it in the papers in the morning.

Hoping this will find you in good health, as it leaves me, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

January 10th 1915.

Dear James,

The old maxim, "No news is good news" may be all right and true, but whenever I fail to hear from you for more than a week, I begin to have all sorts of imaginings, and you

know that when things take hold of anyone's brain the best does not always come. "Man is fearfully and awfully made" and he is very much likely to give attention to the fearful, at least I am, and I suppose it is born in me. A pretty long preface, is it not? to my saying I hope that neither ill health or ill fortune have kept you from writing. In the last letter you complained about your hand troubling you. And that may explain my regular letter not coming.

Dr. Seasoles gave us a very interesting talk this morning on Dwight L. Moody, and his great evangelical work. Next Sunday he will tell us about "Sam" Jones, and on the following Sunday his talk will be on "Billy" Sunday. Do you see I am bound to hear something about the spectacular evangelism of which I do not approve. With all the cottage prayer meetings, arranged by the "Executive Committee", whoever they may be, or of the great talks in the 19th and Vine streets tabernacle, no preceptable increase is seen in the attendance at our church services. Mrs. Seasoles and her little daughter, Grace, are laid up in the house, each suffering from bronchitis. Others, suffering from colds may account for so many empty pews. I wish you could see the trolley cars running down 22nd street to the tabernacle. They are so crowded today that standing room is at a premium. The transit company put on extra cars just as they do on big baseball days or when a circus comes to tpwn. Sunday, doubtless, will do a great deal of good, but he uses some awful language. The slang is being widely quoted, while the good is forgotten. He goes to Washington next week to meet President Wilson. May he convert him from the error of his ways, so that business men will not be able to say that are suffering from "Wilson's propperity"..(It certainly is too bad that "Old Bob" wasn't around today, to see what the Hardings, Coolidges and Hoovers have done to the grand old United States. A.C.C.)

This is not much of a letter, but it will let you know I am concerned about your welfare. Hoping it will find you in good health, as it leaves me, and mine, I am,
Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

January 17th 1915.

Dear James,

Your letter of the 12th, dated "1914" which I readily knew was a mistake, reached me on Wednesday, settling all disturbances in my mind as to your well being. I wouldn't like to advise you to give up smoking, for that is a thing I wouldn't like to do without myself. Like you, I cannot smoke and write at the same time, especially if smoking a cigar. My preference is a pipe with good strong tobacco. I used to enjoy the cigars Rev. Beugless would send you. They were superb. At the penitentiary I used to get some equally as good, made of the best selected tobacco. They, however, spoiled my taste for anything not so good. As I was unable to afford such a luxury, I took to the pipe. In my going around as a reporter I occasionally get some very good cigars, which I take instead of drinks. When Dr. Stidham came back to the Falls and I found he still had a fondness for good smokes I kept the best for him. One day he came to my home and I gave him several that I had received from John Matthews, a rich manufacturer of kid, who had them made especially for himself at a cost of half a dollar apiece. I wish you could have seen Dr. Stidham look at the cigars when

I told him what they had cost. He afterward told me they were the best he had ever smoked. I tried several of them while at Matthews' house. I have not yet been to hear Billy Sunday and do not know whether I shall make an attempt to get a seat or not. John Roy and Horace Green heard him twice last Tuesday. They attended the afternoon service; went out for something to eat at the close, and then right back to the tabernacle. Roy thinks Sunday is the greatest preacher of the Gospel he has ever heard and says the slang phrases used are so well fitted into the talk that one would hardly notice they were slang. He told me this morning that he went again on Thursday night and secured a good seat. On Friday I went to the Commonwealth office to renew my subscription. The Rev. Springer, the editor, is much enthused over Sunday, whom he regards as a second John the Baptist, and thinks his work here will bring the ministers back to preaching purer Gospel. Should he accomplish this his mission to Philadelphia will be one of the greatest blessings of the century. I thought of Springer's statement this morning while Dr. Seasholes was preaching on "Sam" Jones. There was a mixture of Gospel facts in the discourse and many quotations from Jones. Next Sunday he will preach on "Billy" Sunday, then I hope more direct Gospel will be served. Sunday must be a wonderful man by the way he continues to hold the great crowds. A singular thing about the crowds is the good order they keep while in the tabernacle, and on their way to and from the services. I ride home on the cars which pass nearest to the tabernacle, and they get filled to their capacity, and yet I have never heard a loud word spoken. Each passenger looks as if he or she were deeply impressed and seldom converse with each other. Arrangements are being made for the men of the 14th District, in which the Falls is included, to attend in a body on Wednesday night, February 3rd, when seats in the tabernacle will be reserved. The names of the men desiring to go have to be given to the committee today. I did not give mine for the reason that I cannot tell so far ahead whether I could go or not.

Mrs. Seasholes is slowly recovering from her attack of bronchitis and pneumonia. Little Grace, the baby, is up and about the house. They have had quite a serious time and Dr. Seasholes thinks it will be several weeks before Mrs. Seasholes will be about again. Hoping this will find you in good health, as it leaves me, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

January 24th 1915.

Dear James,

While waiting until it is time for me to call up the different fraternal homes to get an account of their Sunday afternoon services I thought I would indulge in a little talk with you on paper. We are having a disagreeable day and most people seem to be staying indoors. The cars on 22nd street, which run direct to Billy Sunday's tabernacle did not carry the usual crowd to the afternoon service. I heard one of the road superintendents say he would order the extra cars to go back to the barn. The falling off is, I suppose, due to the fact that the meeting this afternoon, and evening, being for men, and of course men wouldn't think of venturing out in bad weather the way women do. Nothing but a lack of suitable dressing will keep a

woman home. I have not yet heard Sunday and I rather think I will let my room there be left for other comers. We had a very interesting account of Sunday's life and work this morning in place of a sermon. It being the third and last of a series on "Promising Evangelists I Have Known". While Sunday may be accomplishing a great deal of good in his way, I shall be glad to get back to the regular services in the church. If the ministers would only preach the gospel there would be no need of such special gatherings.

I see by the papers that Devon Inn is to be sold at Sheriff's sale. I hope you got clear from the responsibility. When it was transferred from the Philadelphia syndicate.

I see you received a copy of Dr. Mills' pamphlet "Falls of Schuylkill and its Association with the University of Pennsylvania". I received one during the week and appreciated it very highly and am hoping he may soon publish his military and other history of the Falls. There was a pretty high freshet in the Schuylkill during the week, the second this month. There is nothing that causes such a yearning in my breast for being young again than a freshet in the Schuylkill. How I used to like taking a rowboat, pull up along the shore, and then row out in the current, fasten a rope to a piece of lumber and row it in to shore; or, to take a pole or scoop net and dip in the eddies for sucker fish. It has been so long since I handled a pair of oars that I fear my old time skill in that line has departed as has much of my physical strength. Hoping you are well, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

2135 West Ontario Street,
January 31st 1915

Dear James,

Your letter found me in bed laid up by an attack of bladder trouble, which I think resulted from a cold taken on Tuesday afternoon while attending the funeral of Select Councilman Albert M. Deprefontaine, in Tioga Methodist Church. I have been kept in the house ever since, but am feeling better ~~xxxxxxixixix~~ and hope to be able to resume my work tomorrow. I did a little last night by telephone, but was glad when I got through. I was sorry for two things you mentioned in your letter. That you have lost so much money on the Devon Inn property, and of Jacob's daughter having been operated upon for appendicitis and hope she may come out all right. I also hope there may be an exceeding bright lining to the financial cloud which has hung over Devon Inn to comfort you before you get too old to enjoy it. Sadie Dykes has been in St. Timothy's Hospital for sometime suffering from a general breakdown and is I fear in a serious condition. I just had a talk with Mrs. Seasholes on the phone; she and little Grace got downstairs today for the first time in several weeks, owing to bronchial trouble. Dr. Seasholes and most of the male members of the church leave about 3.30 this afternoon in special trolley cars for the Billy Sunday tabernacle night service, going early to avoid the rush I suppose. All the

other churches in the Falls, Wissahickon, Roxborough and Manayunk are going to the same service. In our church there is to be a union womens' service tonight, a woman to speak, a woman to light up and attend the fires, and another to ring the bell, while two others will take up the collection. I'm afraid I will not be able to follow your advice in going to hear Billy Sunday and get religion. I guess I'll have to get along without "hitting the Sawdust Trail". Mrs. Seasholes also told me of the death yesterday afternoon of Edward Dodge, for many years bookkeeper in Powers & Weightman's laboratory. His wife and four daughters belong to our church. January is finishing up here in Philadelphia with a snowfall, preparing the way for the shortest and meanest month of the year. If you did not get a copy of Dr. Mills' pamphlet, let me know and I will mail you the extra copy his stenographer sent me. Hoping you are well and that you may get time to hear Billy Sunday without getting his kind of religion I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK

February 7th 1915

Dear James,

Your letter of the 5th came to hand in time for me to have it at the breakfast table yesterday morning. I do not wonder at your hand being shaky after having signed the document which robbed you of so much money. I do not see how you managed to write at all under such circumstances? I am afraid sometimes that your sense of honor is a little too acute for your own good. I never had that much money to lose but I have settled some small accounts for which I was called a fool because they had been outlawed by the statute of limitations. I am glad Jacob's daughter passed the critical period of her operation and hope she may have a speedy recovery. I am feeling much better than when I last wrote. The old adage, "a change of pasture is good for the calves" I think is going to prove true in my case. I called in a new doctor, old school, and after a careful examination he informed me that the most I needed was nourishment and advised my going off the strict diet I had been placed on two years ago, assuring me that my kidneys were in an excellent condition. So I am eating most things that come on the table again. Dr. Seasholes preached a splendid sermon this morning on "The Two Ordinances", which was very appropriate for the communion season. Charles Chipman, a ~~xxxx~~ warm friend of Dr. Seasholes', was present with his third wife. They reside on 23rd street, just above ~~xxx~~ Tioga street. After the service he brought Mrs. Weiland and I home in his handsome automobile, going down Midvale avenue to the Park Drive, down Diamond street to Broad and thence to Tioga street to 22nd where he dropped me out and then took Mrs. W. to her home. I will mail you a copy of Dr. Mills's pamphlet; should he send you a copy, you can forward one to Jacob. In the Chronicle of last week, that is the one I mailed you on Tuesday, was a notice of the death of Edward Dodge, for many years a bookkeeper at the laboratory. I do not know whether you knew him or not. He married a daughter of Mrs. Lizzie Walker Rodgers, a niece of Rev. Jacob G. Walker.

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His wife and children are members of our church. I have not yet gone to hear Billy Sunday to get religion. More than a hundred men went from our church last Sunday night, in special trolley cars, surpassing by quite a number both the Methodist and Presbyterian groups. Where they came from I have not heard. A young man named Russell E. Thompson, 20 years, of Tioga, was drowned yesterday at noon, by the upsetting of a canoe in the Schuylkill in that treacherous place just below the Reading Railroad bridge. The body has not yet been recovered. Hoping you are in good health and may recover all the money you have lost, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

February 14th 1915

Dear James,

Your letter of Friday night did not reach me till the second mail yesterday, so I did not have it at the breakfast table. I enjoyed it very much, particularly of you and Dr. Rowland going fishing; also of your running barefoot. I always had an idea that you differed, in that respect, from other boys, my first recollections of you impressed me of your unusual neatness. I used to look at your hands in school and never saw them soiled like my own and other boys. I am glad you had such a delightful time at the reception. Dr. Seasholes had told me of having met you there. You must keep in mind your own 75th birthday, March 21st, when the church is going to hold a celebration of its 63rd anniversary of occupying the present building, and the 57th anniversary of your baptism. A very pleasing coincidence that these should all occur on March 21st. The celebration will be in the nature of an Old Home Day. We shall try to have Dr. Humpstone and Dr. Walker with us, together with others formerly connected with the church. It will also be the 63rd anniversary of the Sunday School as a Baptist Sunday School, although it had for years been in charge of a Baptist superintendent and teachers, save one, Miss Kate Sorber, a Presbyterian for years before leaving the Old Academy building. Since your mention of Dr. Mills' pamphlet having been published in "Old Penn", I recall having a copy of the same. When I read the pamphlet it was all familiar but I thought it had been printed in The Forecast. Having another pamphlet I do not want you to return the one I sent you. Send it to Jacob. He might enjoy having it read to him. Rev. LeRoy Stephens, of the Pennsylvania Baptist Education Society preached this morning. Dr. Seasholes was present. He went over to the Masonic orphanage for girls in the afternoon to preach for oriental Arch Chapter. Sadie Dykes died this morning in St. Timothy's Hospital ~~xxx~~ after a long illness of complications of ailments. Hoping you are in good health I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

February 18th 1915

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Dear James, I heartily agree with all you write about Sadie Dykes. She was a noble woman of whom it can truly be said, "She did what she could". I am, however, in the dark concerning the other person to whom you referred. It may be my blind stupidity, but I have to, as the saying goes, "give it up". Owing to an engagement with a party in the city I was unable to attend the funeral of Sadie Dykes. Singer did, and told me last night of Dr. Seasholes having read a very pretty letter from you. Rev. William Crawford, of the First Church, Manayunk, assisted in the services. The church and the choir each sent floral tributes. I am feeling considerably better, but while I am permitted to eat substantial I have no appetite. I saw my doctor this morning and had another irrigation of the bladder. He gave me some tablets to cause appetite and to aid digestion.

Samuel McKinney, Sr., who was baptized by Dr. Hanna, and who is quite deaf, will be 86 years old on Saturday. It was decided last evening that as many of the members of the church as possible should call on him during the day at his home, 174 Calumet street, which is old Spencer street. It occurred to me that a few lines from you might be appreciated. We are getting some results of the Billy Sunday revival, a young man named Harmer, who formerly attended the Sunday School, and two young women named Martin, daughters of Mary Daymon Martin, came before the church and will be baptized next Sunday week, in the evening. In looking over some papers I came across a little pamphlet "The Rise of the Temple", an address of Dr. Stidham's before Mary Commandery K of T, which he sent me at the time. Have you a copy? If you have not and would like to own one, I will mail you the one I have. He certainly knew how to give polish to an address. I am glad you appreciate the Chronicle. It is an easy way of keeping you posted in general happenings at the Falls. Did you see the Nosegay copied in last week's Forecast about Laboratory Hill, which I wrote for the Record? Too bad you hand gives out the way it does. I am glad, however, to learn that the giving out is painless. Hoping it is all right again, I am

sincerely yours,

R. R. Sharonk.

February 21st 1915

Dear James,

Your letter came a little late yesterday morning so I had to read it after I had breakfasted. Samuel E. McKinney, Sr. is a tall, typical North-of-Ireland Irishman. He was a Covenanter Presbyterian and with John Morrow and others tried to organize a church of that faith in the Old Academy in 1872-1873. He was convinced on the question of baptism, I believe, by John Roy, and was baptized 25 years ago by Mr. Hanna. For a long time he was active in church work and attended the services regularly until he became deaf and aged. He has, it is generally supposed, some means, but was never free-handed with it. One of his sons married Cecilia Meredith. McKinney was a building contractor and is said to have made considerable money in Australian gold mines. He is well read in the Bible

and sent a beautiful letter to the church, expressing his appreciation of the remembrances received yesterday, his 85th birthday, and noth the 86th as I was told on Wednesday night. I fully agree with concerning Jennie Reed. Like her mother, Mary Ann Harper Reed, she is a noble woman, as were all the Harper girls, only one of whom, susan, the wife of Frank Morison, is now living. I am sorry you have to put up with restaurant cooking. I would not like to depend on such food. Like yourself, I was brought up to know good substantial food, well cooked, fortunately for me I have never been deprived of it for any length of time, and now am very ~~XXXX~~ proud of my daughter who looks after the table supplies, and doing the cooking. You can form some idea as to her proficiency from the meal she prepared for my birthday party last October. She cooked and prepared everything that was served, except the ice cream and fancy cakes and employed the colored man to do the serving and silwashing. Do you not think I am fortunate in that respect?

The reason you did not see the funeral notices of Sadie Dykes in the Ledger is because the managers, some time ago, cut loose from the other papers and only publish such death notices sent or taken to the office. Most of the undertakers take the notices to the other papers. I have always thought the Ledger made a mistake in the action taken. We are having a spring-like day here today, one feels good in being out of doors. Owing to the Billy Sunday revival, the church will omit its usual Washington Birthday supper tomorrow night. I send you herewith Dr. Seasholes' address on "The Rise of the Temple", your being a Mason will see in it more than I could. Put it among your treasures. I think you will appreciate it. Hoping you are well, as this leaves me, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

February 28th 1915

Dear James,

I do not know why, but whenever I fail to receive a letter from you on Saturday, I begin to have all manner of evil forebodings concerning you. Why are we so constituted that whenever things do not go as we desire, we get to thinking of something wrong instead of something good, always forgetting the truthfulness of the old saying, "No news is good goods". In my last letter I sent you the copy I had of Dr. Stidham's little pamphlet "The Rise of the Temple", which I hope reached you all right. I was saddened on Wednesday evening when I went into Reed's Dry Goods Store, to purchase some notions for my daughter, in learning that Jennie was confined to her bed. She had an operation several years ago for appendicitis, and it seems never fully recovered. In addition to this old complaint she is suffering from diabetes and is being kept under a strict diet. Either ailment is bad enough, but with the two I fear her days are numbered. Her sister Carrie is much concerned about her. We had a grand sermon this morning on the importance of the man at the pool of ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Bethesda, who

was waiting on the porch for the troubling of the water, and whom Christ healed. Reference was made to the sulphur and other curing springs in this country into which the angel of healing had descended. Helping one to Christ, was the theme. At the close of the sermon Benjmain Walker, a young man living on Haywood street, told of his attending the Billy Sunday meetings and of his conversion. He, with four or five others, will be baptized this evening. Among the others are Charlie Mason and his wife, who came from the same part of Scotland that John Roy did. Mason has been a presbyterian while his wife was an Episcopalian, and two sisters, named Martin, daughters of Mary Daymon Martin. Their aunt, Lizzie Daymon, was at the Wednesday evening prayer service. It was the first time I have seen her in church since Free did the great service of leaving. Has Dr. Seasholes written you about the Old Home Day we expect to hold on March 21st? As you are aware it will be the 63rd anniversary of the opening of the lecture room; the 57th anniversary of your and Dr. Walker's baptism; and what is more important your 75th birthday anniversary. We want you to be present and hope the occasion may be a Red Letter Day in your life. Such a triplicate anniversary is unique and comes to but few mortals. I have not yet had the opportunity of hearing Billy Sunday, but I believe he is doing a great deal of good although I do not approve of all his methods. Hoping this will find you in good health as it leaves me, I am

sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

March 7th 1915

Dear James,

We are having a taste of winter here today, everything was covered with soft snow this morning, presenting a very pretty landscape, especially at the Falls and Fairmount Park. There was not interruption in running the trolley cars so I even got over to church without any difficulty. The congregation was smaller than usual, I suppose people would rather sit indoors than go to the trouble of going to church. I went and returned alone, as neither Mrs. Weiland or her sister, Elizabeth Peltz, ventured out. Elizabeth has been in poor health for some time. Mary took her down to hear Billy Sunday several weeks ago and she came near having an attack of pleurisy from the exposure. Being up in the eighties she cannot stand what she once could, but thinks she ought to. I called at the Reed store on Wednesday evening to convey to Jennie your sympathy and best wishes, only to learn that she had received the same direct through the letter you had sent her. I was glad to learn from Carrie that Jennie was improving and was able to come downstairs for her dinner, and hope she may fully recover or be so patched up as to live happily a long while. Diabetes is a curious ailment. It takes some people off quickly, while others endure it for a long while. I know a doctor, Benjmain R. Peltz, of Roxborough, a distant connection of the our Peltz family, who has had it for years but does not seem to worry about it. So you have not yet got the Devon Inn affair

untangled. As the thing has not been finally settled I feel that there may be hopes of your getting out of it at least some of the money you invested. Whether we will appear again on this mundane sphere or not is a question I have often considered but never decided. I somerimes feel as though I was here in the remote past but cannot tell where, when or how. As to relatives, mine have never been of very great help, or hindrance to me. Some of them have had a great deal more out of me financially than I have had from them. Outside of our immediate family there had never been a display of what people call love. Cousins are simply cousins because they happened to be born so. I presume you get the Forecast and that you have seen the piece I had in this week's issue on Midvale avenue. I wröte it as a special for The Record some weeks ago and it was printed in an early edition and then taken out of the form, so it did not appear in the papers distributed in the city. I got credit for it and the city editor gave me a proof for my scrap book. I telephoned the editor of the Forecast and told him I would give him a proof if he would use it. He said he would be glad to have the artivle, so I added the last paragraph and mailed it to him as a contribution. You must not forget your coming birthday anniversary, nor the celebration of that and the other important events. We are looking forward to having a pleasant Old Home Day at the church on the 21st, so do your best to be present.

One young man was received into the church this morning. Others preferred to wait until the next communion which will be on Easter Sunday, a sort of a form introduced by Russell and Conwell which is not altogether in accord with old-time Baptist proceedings. But what's the use of complaining? Hoping you are in good health as this leaves me, I am

sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK,

March 14th 1915

Dear James,

I was very sorry to learn by your last letter of Jacob's daughter having to go back to the hopsital to undergo another operation and hope she is by this time over the crisis and that she may soon be well. I was also pained in learning of her having been desrted by her husband. Is it not strange how some things run in families? Her grandfather, Long, was an absentee from his home for many tears. Another thing that pained me was in learning that you have to look after the family. What a reward there must be awaiting you in the sweet bye and bye. I was under the impression that Jacob's wife was pretty well to do, through her mother, who was a daughter of Nicholas Fulmer, who always passed as a wealthy farmer, owning the property now known as Woodside park, in the upper end of West Fairmount park. But then, we never can tell, reputations do not always represent one's real standing, financially, morally, or otherwise. I have always considered myself as a distant relative of Jacob's wife. Robert Foulon, a cousin of my mother, married Mary A. Fulmer, a cousin of Sarah Fulmer Long, Nettie's mother. Mrs. Foulon, 84 years old, lives with her son. Robert Foulon, a pennsylvania

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Railroad conductor in West Philadelphia, The editor of the Forecast sent me several extra copies of the issue containing my article on Midvale avenue. Learning you lost your copy, I mailed you another which I suppose reached you all right. We are having a delightful spring-like day here today. In all the Baptist churches throughout the county today was set apart as Denominational Day. Dr. Seasholes preached one of the strongest Baptist sermons this morning I have even listened to, his text being "A peculiar People, zealous of good Works", Titus 2:8. The difference between the Baptist and Catholic was shown to be that while the Catholics hold to people coming to Christ through the church, we believe in persons coming into the church through Christ, hence hold to 'believers' baptism. We are looking forward with much interest to the anniversary to be celebrated next Sunday, the success of which will depend greatly on your being present, so kindly try to be with us. The celebrations will be informal. Dr. Seasholes will give a short talk and I will have a brief sketch, relating chiefly to the opening of the lecture room, having as a boy in company with my uncle, William G. Roberts, attended the first service. Uncle left on the following May 3rd for California with Charles Service, a brother of Dr. L. M. Service, and William Craig, of Germantown. I have not yet heard Billy Sunday, but may go some day, this the last week of his being here. I will however, not have any costly gift to present to him. Rev. Charles Warwick, of Diamond Street Church, died Friday night. With best wishes, I am,

sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

March 19th 1915

Dear James, While hoping to see you on Sunday I want to send this in congratulation of your 75th birthday anniversary, and to express the wish that you may see many happy returns of the day. 75 years is no longer considered old, and the wise no longer measure lives by years. As I look back I see that I have known you sixty of your 75 years. I have known no one who has been more helpful to others than you, and I sincerely hope you may reap a goodly part of the reward due you before you are called higher.

With best wishes I am,

sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

March 21st 1915

Dear James,

You were so taken up by others this morning that I found no chance to express my high appreciation of having you with us. It made me feel good in seeing the people crowd about you. Which shows you still have a strong hold upon the dear little church. Walker was very kind in coming to the celebration. He told me he was afraid he would be unable to leave his own

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church. You can blame me for the whole affair, except the flowers, for which Singer is to blame. Had I consulted my own feelings I would have remained home as I contracted a cold on Thursday and today I had considerable trouble with my truss. I was, however, glad to be present and only wish I could have gone back to the Sunday School this afternoon. How did you like the appearance of the Empire chairs? Were they not in keeping with the flag decorations? I do not intend writing a letter today, but merely wished to express my great pleasure in the way the anniversaries were carried out. My going to the Falls, if anything, was more beneficial than otherwise, as I am feeling much better this afternoon.

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

March 28th 1915

Dear James,

The shortest letter I ever received from you came to hand last ~~ninth~~ week. Short as it is it makes me feel pretty bad in learning of your additional trouble in your right arm. I could tell by the writing that every stroke of the pen was agony to you. I sincerely hope you are rid of it by this time. I was greatly pleased in the splendid success of last Sunday's celebration, which is still being talked about, and most of all I was glad you were present. I had a little taste of grippe during the week and did not get over to the Wednesday night prayer meeting. Neither did I get to a meeting on Thursday evening of the Permanent Advisory Board, in the First Church. I went to see my doctor on Wednesday evening and he gave me some awful bitter medicine, which has got me in pretty good shape again. I went to church this morning but was greatly disappointed. Dr. Seansoles is absent for the day, up at Hershey to deliver an address. Rev. W. H. Gotwald, of the Anti-Saloon League, filled the pulpit, or rather killed the time with a talk on the evils of the saloons, an address I heard him give some time ago with little preface added about the key of a locked cemetery gate being obtained in a saloon on the opposite of the street, a pretty string point in his argument, only he didn't say where the cemetery is located. A Dr. O'Brien addressed the Bible Class in the afternoon, and A. P. Hughes, of the Publication Society, is to speak tonight.

Miss Elizabeth Peltz has had a severe cold and came near having pneumonia. I called last evening and found her much better, but her sister, Mrs. Weiland, looked as though she ought to go to bed, she could scarcely keep on her feet from a bad attack of grippe. The two live alone and ought to have someone with them. I saw Miss Carrie Reed at church this morning. She told me that Jennie had had a set back during the week but was feeling better today. I went up to the annual meeting of the overseers of the Roxborough Poor on Thursday. Dr. B. R. Pektz, a distant connection of our Pelzt family, is the visiting physician and said he would have liked to have met Dr. Rowland, with whom he attended a school on the Trappe, in Montgomery County, but has not met him for about forty years. Hoping you are in better health than when you last wrote, and please do not punish yourself again in writing me, unless you feel

all right.

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

April 4th 1915

Dear James,

Aside from the snow which came as a genuine winter blizzard yesterday, and which is rapidly disappearing, we are having a splendid Easter here today. People greeted each other at church this morning with a "merry Christmas", the salutation being more appropriate than an Easter greeting. I am somewhat in trouble with my eyes. I had them tested this past week and the oculist gave me a prescription for a new lens for the left eye. I got the lens yesterday but it does not give me the satisfaction I expected it would and I am unable to read even large sized print. By bending very low to the paper I am able to write this. It may be that the eye may become accustomed to the new glass. I shall try it for a day or so, and then go back to the oculist and have him examine the lens. I went to the city yesterday and got caught in the worst of the blizzard. It was the worst storm I have been out in since the blizzard of 1888, and I was very glad to get back home. Fortunately the storm did not interfere with the telephone wires, so I was able to cover my district last night by using the telephone. For my work the telephone is the greatest invention ever brought about. I hope the treatment you were receiving, according to your letter that came to me during the week, may result in a permanent cure of your right arm. We had a delightful service this morning; Dr. Seasholes gave us a splendid sermon from Revelations 1-18. The choir sang a long Easter cantata, to which to me having no soul for music, was a little tiresome. I have never enjoyed singing like I did when your quartet sang those grand anthems. "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing"; and "As The Mountains are Round About Jerusalem", and never expect to hear any singing that will equal it. Dr. Seasholes welcomed fourteen new members and others will be baptized tonight. I expect rather an interesting church meeting on Wednesday night. The question of having individual communion cups will be considered and I suppose adopted. Dr. Seasholes has been working for such a change for a long while. The King's daughters, I believe, will furnish the new outfit. I used to be greatly opposed to any change, but of late have considered that if it is right to use two or four cups, why not use a hundred? The church will join the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Reformed Episcopal next week in a four weeks union evangelical service, one week in each church. Wednesday nights each church will hold its own prayer meeting. I enquired of Miss Carrie Reed today, of her sister, Jennie, and was told she is much better. Mrs. Weiland and her sister, Elizabeth Peltz. are both improving. Hoping this will find you in good health as it leaves me, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK

April 18th 1915

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Dear James,

I have just returned from a visit to the Masonic Home. The services there today are under the auspices of the Ladies' Auxiliary of Mary Commandery. I did not stay to the services as they would have brought sad recollections to my mind. The ladies always held their service on the first Sunday in March until this year, and for sixteen consecutive years Dr. Stidham preached the sermon. Since his death Dr. John G. Wilson, of Union M. E. Church, has held forth. The occasion is about the greatest in the home services each year. Do you know that Mrs. Stidham and her daughter Edna have returned to West Philadelphia and are living close to Ethel's home? I still have considerable trouble with my eyes and was not able to get to West Laurel Hill Cemetery to attend the funeral of your niece. I sent a letter of sympathy to her parents. They must feel all broken up over her loss. I was in hopes she might live to care for Jacob in his blindness and to help her mother. Her departure is doubtless for the best, but how hard it is for us to feel so. There is an epidemic of measles at the Falls. Dr. Seasholes' home is under quarantine owing to little Grace having "them". Margaret and the two boys are stopping in other homes so that their school-going will not be interfered with. While Mrs. Seasholes is suffering from severe scalds on one of her arms, neck and face, she tripped and fell while carrying a pitcher of boiling water upstairs. The prevalence of the measles and the desire of the women to get at their spring house cleaning led to the abandonment of the union revival services. The first week's services were held in our church, but were not largely attended, so on Friday night those present decided to postpone the remaining three weeks' services until fall. I called on the Peltz' last evening and found Elizabeth much better; almost herself again. Mrs. Weiland, who had a pretty trying time attending Elizabeth while herself suffering from the grippe, is slowly mending. She told me that about all she needed was a good rest. Mrs. Hugh Scott told me this morning that her husband, who is getting over a severe cold will be 82 years old on May 10th. Do you remember his father, Samuel Scott? They lived at the end of Cockroach Row nearest the Reading Railroad bridge. He was a nice old Irishman, but awful contrary. From some cause or other I was always afraid to meet him when I was a boy. "Aunt Hannah" Scott, dear old soul, was one of the nicest women I have ever known and for years was very faithful to the church. Ella Roberts told me this morning that she had received my letter this morning, in which I enclosed your check. She returned from Wilmington sooner than she expected to owing to Belle straining a nerve on one of her legs, so that she could not walk.

Hoping this will find you in good health, I am
Sincerely,

R. R. SHRONK.

April 25th 1915

Dear James,

The habit of writing to you on Sunday afternoon has a strong hold upon me, so that should I neglect a letter I do

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not think I could feel satisfied? There are times when one has little of anything particular to write about and this is one of those occasions. You are aware of the summer-like heat which doubtless prevails in New York as it does here, so it would be no news to you for me to say it is hot here. I went over to the church this morning and listened to a very fine sermon from the text "I Must Decrease but He must increase". We have lost another member of the church in the person of Mrs. Margaret Hammer, widow of James Hammer and sister of Thomas Short. She died early yesterday morning in the Philadelphia Hospital of paralysis. Several years ago a man jolted her on the street, in the city, causing her to fall and fracture one of her hips. At her age the injury was incurable. She was removed to the home of a half-sister in Roxborough and several months ago to the hospital. Efforts were being made by members of the church to have her placed in a home for incurables, but every such institution was found to be crowded with lists of applicants waiting. She was stricken with paralysis early last week, word was sent to Dr. Seasholes and he went to the hospital immediately, but found her unconscious. She will be buried Tuesday afternoon from an undertaker's parlor, 6066 Ridge avenue, Roxborough. Dr. Seasholes will officiate. Mrs. Hammer and her husband were baptized by Dr. Chesshire in 1863, a short time before ~~xxx~~ I was. You ought to come to church next Sunday morning when individual communion cups will be used for the first time in our church. Edwin Singer is suffering from another bad attack of heart trouble and I am afraid his days are numbered. Mrs. Seasholes is slowly recovering from her scalds and little Grace from measles. Neither Mrs. Weiland or her sister, Elizabeth Peltz, were at church this morning. They are, however, slowly recovering from their ailments. Hoping this will find you in good health, as it leaves me, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

May 2nd 1915

Dear James,

Do not worry about replying to my letters, so long as you are not prevented from doing so from illness. I thought you would have to look after your niece's funeral, and hope you have gotten through with that white elephant Devom Inn, which has been a source of so much mental anxiety to you, to say nothing about the financial costs. In your letter you mentioned Samuel Scott as being the first man you met on coming to the Falls. I remember his being hostler at Laurel Hill Cemetery entrance, or rather it was at the hitching rails opposite the entrance. What change there has taken place in the cemetery since you first walked through it? At that time it used to be a regular visiting place for Falls people on Sunday afternoons. Now it has been extended northward to the Reading Railroad and southward to old Nicetown Lane, taking in Dr. Pepper's "Fairy Hill".

Jennie Reed attended church this morning. She has fallen away considerably, but seems cheerful. Mrs. Weiland was also present, being the first time in many weeks, owing to illness to herself and her sister, Elizabeth. The latter intended to go but the weather being raw and threatening she was

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afraid to go. Well, the old church is in line with others now in using the individual communion cups. It seemed strange not to see the old silver pitcher and goblets on the Communion table. The new trays remind me of griddle cake holders. The small glass receptacles (they cannot correctly be called cups) are all right, but they show the color of the grape juice which has been substituted for the wine so long used. Singer is a little better today but still confined to his home. I fear that much of his trouble is caused by his lack of care in what he eats and I often think that his trouble is as much due to his stomach as to his heart. I knew an infidel who lived to be 84 years old and then died through grieving for his deceased wife. He claimed that there was no such thing as heart disease; that most if not all the deaths attributed by the doctors to that ailment were caused by imposing upon the stomach. Dr. Seasholes preached this morning from the 35th chapter of Exodus; of the people, men and women, giving joyfully to Moses material for building the tabernacle. The sermon was preached with a view of getting the people of the church to pay off an indebtedness of \$2100 and to provide \$900 for needed repairs. The amount (\$3000) to be raised in two years. Subscription cards were distributed one of which I enclose, that you may see it. I have been summoned to attend court tomorrow morning as a juror. I shall try to get excused from serving and think I shall succeed. Thinking that I might have to serve I telephoned the Chronicle on Friday to send me an extra copy, so you will get yours a day earlier than usual this week. Hoping you are in good health and that the treatment you are receiving may cure your arm, I am sincerely

R. R. SHRONK.

May 9th 1915

Dear James,

The week went by without my having any word from you. Naturally I am wondering whether your arm has been the cause. This is but following out a freak of one's nature in always imagining the worst instead of the better and to my mind has always been a strong argument in favor of God. Ignorance always comes before knowledge and weeds do not have to be cultivated. Born in sin one is a sinner, and how easy it is to do the wrong. ~~xxxxxxx~~ Enough of such preaching. I shall set doubt aside and conclude you are well and rejoice in the fact that your name was not included among the passengers of the Lusitania, which the devil by the aid of the German slaughterers blew up. General Sherman used to say "War is Hell!" Were he alive today I think he would add the word of damnation to his definition. I hope you had no friends on the ill-fated vessel. I had the satisfaction during the past week of having the long-vexing question "Why the 88th Regiment's encampment at the Falls was called Camp Stokley, settled. Captain Sylvester H. Martin, of Erie, Pa., president of the Regiment's Survivor's Association, told me the camp was named after William S. Stokley, by Colonel McLean, through the close friendship that existed between the two men. He also told me that Mr. Stokley frequently visited the encampment and that it was through him that the Robeson meadow was secured. So the

camp was named after Mr. Stokley and not after Mayor Stokley, a position he did not enter upon until January 1st of 1872. I sent you one of the subscription cards issued by the church in my last letter simply that you might see it and not for you to use. Dr. Seasholes read a number of subscriptions this morning among them was one of \$300 by the Sunday School; several of \$25 each from individuals not mentioned. Binkin read a letter from Falls of Schuylkill Lodge of Odd Fellows thanking the church for the fine service last Sunday evening in celebration of the 96th anniversary of the order, and donating \$5 to the improvement fund. This is "Mothers' Day" and Dr. Seasholes preached a splendid sermon on "The Old-Fashioned Mother". I wish you could have heard it. He was given a leave of absence for a three-months lecturing tour on Wednesday night; he to supply the pulpit with ministers during June and July; the church to secure preachers for August. I do not when he will start; from his remarks this morning he expects to be here on the second Sunday in June to give certificates to those received into the church during the past year. Singer attended services this morning, but said he was feeling very weak. Mrs. Weiland was also out this morning but her sister did not feel equal to the journey. I learn that the church will have to spend considerable money in improving and repairing the sexton's house. As has always happened I suppose the whole purpose undertaken will be accomplished. Hoping you are well, I am sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

P.S. I had no trouble getting excused from jury duty. RRS

May 16th 1915

Dear James,

Isn't this a dark disagreeable Sunday? Almost enough to fill one's mind with gloom. Here in Tioga a fire in the cellar-furnace makes the house comfortable. It was so dark in church this morning that the lights had to be turned on so that the small congregation could see the hymns to sing. Through an arrangement with the City Mission Society, Baptist pastors exchanged pulpits this morning. Dr. Seasholes preached in Fairhill Church, Lehigh avenue below Sixth street, while the Rev. Frank Farley, of Trinity Church, preached in our church. He gave us an earnest sermon on "Contending for The Faith" once delivered unto the saints, keeping us in until almost 12.30.. I do not know what or how the City Mission has authority to arrange for an exchange of pulpits. To me it doesn't seem Baptist, but then, why should I kick about it. There are a good many things done in the denomination which years ago would not be tolerated. One thing about the exchange it give the churches a chance to hear different preachers, and saves the pastors the trouble of preparing an extra sermon for the occasion. We have the Permanent Advisory Council of Baptist Churches of Philadelphia and vicinity, which examines all candidates for ordination to the ministry and considers the establishing of new churches. While I am a member of the Council, with John Roy, representing our church, I have no idea how the Council was brought about. It used to be, as

you are aware that any church having a member to be ordained asked at least nine churches to send pastors and delegates to form a council; the same rule prevailed when a new church was to be constituted, or had any grievances to settle. Perhaps the present mode is one of progress. It, however, impresses me as being a little too much like the Presbyterians. I attended a meeting of the Presbytery of Philadelphia North, on Tuesday afternoon in the Falls of Schuylkill Church. Aside from a little wrangle over the report of the Committee on Temperance the preceeding was rather cold. In the evening special exercises were held in the unveiling of a bronze tablet in memory of our friend, Dr. Joseph Beggs. The inscription reads: Joseph Beggs, D.D., L.L.D. stated supply November 7th 1856 to April 29th 1859. Pastor, April 29th 1859 to April 17th 1894; Pastor Emeritus, April 17th, 1894 to April 14th 1899. He rests from his labors and his works do follow him".

I did not get to the evening service but I suppose Dr. Beggs' life and works were lauded by the speakers. That church has a very fine and able pastor, the Rev. Samuel W. Steckels. I remember a talk I had with Dr. Beggs a short time before he became pastor emeritus. I lived in Manayunk at the time, and while walking along the river to the Falls, a tramp I always enjoyed, I found him sitting on a log on the top of an embankment. I asked him if he was meditating on a sermon for the following Sunday. Pointing to a little boy fishing in the river, he replied, "No, I'm watching that fisherman". He asked whether I was in a hurry and on learning I was not, he reached into his pocket and took out two fine cigars and aksed me to sit down and join him in a smoke. He had recently returned from a trip abroad in which he spent some time with friends in Ireland, and a short time in Rome. Adjoining the place where he was stopping in Ireland was a fine estate, owned by a catholic. The latter had arranged for a large garden party to which Dr. Beggs was ~~xxxxxx~~ invited. The day before the party was to be held, the owner of the property called and asked Dr. Beggs if he would feel offended were the invitation to the party withdrawn giving as a reason that his brother, a priest, had unexpectedly come to his house, and that it would never do to have a Catholic priest and a Presbyterian minister to meet at a party. Dr. Beggs told him of the happy relations priests and ministers have in America, and that he would accept no withdrawal of the invitation, assuring him that there would be no fight. He went to the party, met the priest, and found him very agreeable. They strolled together over the large lawn, while the priest questioned him about the United States. Upon learning that Dr. Beggs had just returned from Rome, the priest asked him if he had ever been there before, and on learning he had, asked, "Did you find any difference in our people, the priests? Didn't you find them much cleaner in appearance?" "On saying he had observed the change, the priest went on to say, "It is all owing to the restrictions put on them in the use of tobacco. "Why it used to be that anytime a priest wanted to smoke he would simply go to the tobacco tree, pull off as many cigars as he wanted and smoked them!" Dr. Beggs said this was too much for him, so he asked the priest if he had ever seen a tobacco tree, and then explained that tobacco was a plant and not a tree, and that cigars were made bu rolling the cured tobacco leaves. That was news to the priest. "It is a great thing to have learning. I always thought cigars were the fruit of a tobacco tree." when asked if he didn't read, he replied, "Oh, yes, I'm reading all

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the time, but only read church books." All this may prove tiresome to you, but as I have little else to write about today, I thought it might perhaps interest you. Hoping you are well, and have been relieved of the pain in your arm, I am
Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

May 23rd 1915

Dear James,

I was very much pleased in receiving a letter from you on Wednesday afternoon, but just as sorry in learning of your still being troubled with your good right arm. Your comments on Dr. Joseph Beggs meet with my approval. He was more of a pastor than a preacher and doubtless obtained his D. D. and L. L. D. honors like many others have done, from small colleges for certain considerations. I remember well the union meeting he and, I think it was Rev. Wesley Best, the Methodist, held trying to stop Rev. Judson ~~xxx~~ Clark's success. On one of the occasions Beggs declared that were he to immerse the candidates he would use a scrubbing brush to clean their filthy bodies. The statement greatly displeased my Uncle William Shronk, a leading Methodist, and Samuel Birkmire, a Presbyterian, (father of John H. Birkmire who had married my cousin Mary Ann Shronk, and both of whom had been baptized.) Rev. Andrew Culver, who was pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Manayunk, when we were youths, always claimed that Beggs had stolen the Falls Church from him, saying that he has originated the movement at the Falls. Poor old father Cullen. I met him I think it was in 1885 at the Falls. He and Peter Morris were standing on the corner of Ridge avenue and what was then Spencer street. Morris called me from the opposite side of the avenue ~~xxx~~ to come over to him. As I did so he asked me if I knew the man he was talking with. I knew him at once and he looked better than I had ever before seen him look. He told me that he had met with the worst calamity that could happen to a mortal, saying, "One day while ministering before the altar, my memory suddenly failed me and I could remember nothing, all my learning of which I had reason to be proud, departed and I did not know my own name or any person. I have by hard effort picked up a little learning and am able to again say Mass. I am also getting acquainted with persons I once knew." he told me he was stationed in New Jersey, but ~~xx~~ I do not remember what part of the State. Not a great while later I heard he had gone to Chicago and the last I heard of him was of his having been knocked down and run over by a heavy truck while crossing one of the streets, and of his being taken to the hospital suffering from what were thought to be fatal injuries. His nephew, Rev. John Cox, who made the first altar for St. Bridget's Church, was drowned by the capsizing of a boat on the lower Delaware. I wish we Baptists had more Boardmans, Waylands, and Spurgeons. In this advanced age there is too much trying to mix oil and water in the form of inter-church federations and social unions. Our church, as you are ware, never prospered more than when the other denominations tried to stop its progress. Perhaps the time may come again, when "the faith once forever delivered unto the saints will be contended for earnestly."

Did you see the phenomenon in the sky on Thursday morning,

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consisting of three beautiful circles surrounding the sun? I am one of the unfortunates who knew nothing about it until it was past. It was caused by the sun's rays falling upon the moistened atmosphere which had been frozen by a cold strata of air, the icy particles showing all the colors of the rainbow. There has been a good deal of comment on the strange sight, also a great deal of guessing as to its meaning. Some claim that it predicts war, while others hold that it was one of the signs of the heavens which are to appear before the coming of the Lord. Dr. Seasholes' sermon this morning was on the subject and based on the text: "Rev. 4-3" "and there was a rainbow round about the throne". It was a highly interesting sermon, in describing the rainbow, but gave no real reason why the circles appeared. It was much like Theodore Tilton's famous lecture on "The Problem of Life", which I listened to him deliver in the Academy of Music 39 years ago. It was one of the most eloquent lectures I have ever heard and was dramatically delivered. He told what was not the problem of life, but left his hearers to guess just what it was. What a relief the weather is here today after a week of chilly dampness. Mrs. Weiland attended church this morning but her sister Elizabeth does not seem to gather any strength. I fear she nurses her ailments too much and grieves over what she does not have to enjoy and become discouraged. She forgets that persons who have lived 84 years do not recuperate as readily as when they were younger. Dr. Seasholes announced this morning that there will be a mortgage-burning in connection with this evening's service. \$100 has been paid on the mortgage held by the Manayunk Trust Company by money collected at the Wednesday evening service, and I suppose a paper representing that amount will be burned. He urged the different organizations to bring in their contributions so that similar burnings may be made weekly until the debt is wiped out. I am glad you enjoy the little historic sketches of the Falls. The subject although interesting has been pretty thoroughly threshed out and it is getting difficult to find something new to write about. Hoping this will find you in good health, with your good right arm relieved of its pain, I am sincerely

R. R. SHRONK.

May 30th 1915

Dear James,

I was much pleased in having your letter at my breakfast table yesterday morning and glad to learn that your arm is a little better. May the improvement continue until all that is left of the pain will be the memory thereof. As to the attack of Dr. Spencer, I think it was exaggerated. I have not seen him for quite a while. Dr. Seasholes told me on Wednesday evening that he thought the affair was "played up" by the reporter, that Dr. Spencer had told him about it some weeks ago when he said the man roughly pushed him. That the affair was kept a secret so long looks rather queer to me as Spencer likes publicity. I am sorry to learn of there being trouble in his church. I was under the impression that everything was peace and harmony with him and his people. When he was called to the pastorate and had accepted the call I happened to be present at the Friday evening prayer meeting and congratulated the church on its choice and told them that I believed Dr. Spencer

would be the Joshua to lead them out of the wilderness of discontent, over the Jordan of reconciliation into the Canaan of Christian love and unity. Dr. Spencer is not as staunch for Baptist doctrine as he once was. He has what I call "the courtesy fever", and believes in dismissing with letter, members to non-Baptist churches. I had a tilt with him sometime ago in the Permanent Council, when the candidate, a former Methodist minister, was recommended to be ordained to the pastorate of Passyunk Baptist Church. Spencer offered written resolutions recognizing his previous ordination and to merely install him as pastor of the church. The man was regularly ordained as a Baptist minister. I did not write the Rittenhouse article you mentioned. I believe it came from a Germantown reporter on the Record. John Johnson was related to the Rittenhouse family on his mother's side (his mother married a Rittenhouse) I think. You mentioned writing paper given you by our old friend, Horatio Gates Jones. He had a history of the paper mill, written on paper from the first paper mill of Wigard Levering one of his maternal ancestors. It, with all his other records, save his autographed history of Roxborough, is buried in the Pennsylvania Historical Society. The autographed history is in my possession. He gave it to me a short time before he was taken sick, so that I might write an article on Roxborough for The Ledger. Poor old Horatio. Everybody thought he was rich, while he was almost as poor as a church mouse. I always liked to get in conversation with him. How he prated about the Welsh Society. I told him one time that I thought I would get him to propose me for membership, when he said, "A German shronk a member of Welsh Society? Impossible!" I then asked him about the Roberts', at which he wanted to propose me right away. After considering the matter I concluded not to join the organization and I guess I am as well off, as if I had become a member. Were I a Catholic I would be considered a good boy today as I attended two church services. Dr. Seasholes preached a patriotic sermon based on the separating of Abraham and Lot, using that as a comparison to the separating of Farragut and Albert Sydney Johnson, the former going into the Union Army from Norfolk, Virginia, while Johnson, a Texan, went from California, to join the Confederate Army. Farragut died from a cold air fiend raising a window in a railroad train. Johnson died from a wound received in the battle of Shiloh. He told ~~xxx~~ his surgeon to attend to wounded Union prisoners. This, Dr. Seasholes asserted, was giving his life for others and compared him to "The Man of Gallilee who gave His Life for the Saving of the World". For some cause, which I do not know, the choir was absent so there was no anthem before the sermon, consequently church was out at 11.35. I then walked up to Grace Reformed Episcopal Church, where the pastor, Rev. Walter E. Oakford, has started his patriotic sermon which he preached for Meade Post No. 1 G. A. R. of which there was a good representation present. His father, Isaac R. Oakford, is commanding the Post, which accounts for their going so far to attend a memorial service for the 21 comrades who had died during the year ending today. I was introduced after the service to a comrade of the Post named Yahn, as we stood at the entrance to the church on Ridge avenue. He told me that coming to the church stirred up many recollections in his mind, and pointing to Shantz' old home, said, "I was in that house the day the news

came of the firing on Fort Sumter." He is a cousin of Amelia Yahn, who frequently visited Joseph Shantz. He said he remembered the Shronks, of their living in a little white-painted house standing back from the avenue. He did not know me, but said he was well acquainted with my brother, Owen. I went to the latter service thinking you might have come over from New York to attend the service. I came home with Colonel Robert Cox, a member of the Post, who resides with his daughter on Ontario street below my home. He buried his wife a year ago in April, after they had lived together for 62 years. Edwin Singer attended church this morning. He looks weak and said he was not gaining strength very rapidly. I am afraid he will never get rid of his heart trouble till it overcomes him. He are having another gloom-inspiring cold, rainy and disagreeable day, with little prospects of a clear sky for tomorrow for the now-aged veterans of the Civil War to observe their sacred custom of decorating the graves of their departed comrades. Meade Post, I understand, has given up holding memorial services in Laurel Hill, holding them instead in the post headquarters. The Ladies' Aid will hold a strawberry festival on Friday evening on the lawn fronting on Midvale avenue, if the ~~xxxxxx~~ weather permits, and in the church should the weather be unfavorable. Hoping this will find you well with your good right arm keeping up to improvement, I am sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

June 6th 1915

Dear James,

It is a good thing when one runs out of a certain kind of paper to have another kind to write on, so I use this large sheet today rather than to search for the kind I generally use, and which the girls keep a supply. It is a good thing also to have some one to keep up a stock of paper and envelopes. I cannot remember when writing cost me anything except the postage. So you see I am lucky, or fortunate. This kind only costs the trouble of carrying it home, and I use it chiefly for official correspondence. I fully agree with you regarding the Chronicle's lack of old time editorials, which the founder, James Milligan used to write. His was a gifted pen and he had the happy faculty of getting into the atmosphere of correct reporting. I always admired him and when he passed away I felt it was always a pleasure to sit in his little office and converse with him. He was indeed a self-made man, having had but little schooling. His father, a textile operator, taught him and others of the family to read and write at night. I remember one occasion when I met Professor Vodge, in Milligan's office, and while Milligan was temporarily absent, of the Professor saying, "Mr. Milligan is the ablest logician I have ever known". By the way, it will be 38 years this summer since I began writing the Falls news for the Chronicle. During all the years I have never missed supplying a single issue of the paper with a letter. Once, while suffering from an injured hand I was obliged to dictate to my daughter, Elizabeth Story. That, I think, is quite a record, is it not? In your letter you alluded to a

breakdown which Mark Watkinson suffered before coming to the Falls. I do not remember ever having heard about it. He was, by all odds, the greatest preacher that ever occupied the Falls pulpit and I have always felt that had he married Margaret Morison he might have remained there till called to Heaven. Do you remember the large Bible the women of the church gave him before he left? While in Norfolk he lost the Bible with other goods, I think through confiscation. Years afterward, while pastor of a church in Camden, N.J. he received a letter from a Southern woman asking if he were the Rev. Mark R. Watkinson to whom the women of the Falls of Schuylkill Baptist church had presented a Bible. She told him of buying the Bible at a second-hand book store and on reading the inscription engraved upon the clasp concluded it possible to return it to the original owner. He wrote her that he was the person, and a short time later received the Bible by express. He told me how glad he was to receive this much-valued gift from the dear people of the Falls. I have often wondered what became of the Bible after he passed away. Had he complied with the wishes of my father and other men of the Falls he would have started an independent church in the Old Academy building. I remember the talks they had after he had left the church, but they could not persuade him into such a scheme. The dear old church completes its 77th year today. I made a brief mention of the fact at the communion service, and Dr. Seasholes suggested that we hold an anniversary service on Wednesday evening. As I sit in the church and look at the pews I can see them occupied by those who once constituted the congregation, most of whom are now beyond the troubles and cares of this life. Perhaps I am getting aged, for do as I may, the grand and good old past occupies much of my attention. There are so many things and persons in the past which I would be sorry to forget, and some which I often wish I could cease remembering. Mrs. Stidham and her daughter, Edna, were present at this morning's service. Both are looking well. Mrs. Weiland was also out, her sister Elizabeth was able to go, but the weather seemed threatening and she was afraid to take the trip. The Sunday School began its summer morning session today as the church service does not begin till 10.45. The James S. Swartz Bible Class continues to meet in the afternoon. It is to have a reception on Tuesday evening, to which, you have been invited, according to a statement made by Dr. Seasholes. He will leave in the middle of the month on a lecturing tour, and maybe will be absent three months. He will supply the pulpit all the time he is away save the month of August. The Bible Class, Roy informed me on Thursday night, when he and I attended a meeting of the permanent Advisory Council, in the First Church, will adjourn until Dr. Seasholes' return. Did you know that George West Blake, of the Roxborough church, died suddenly on Thursday of a hemorrhage, and was buried yesterday afternoon? Dr. Gordon, who is supplying the Roxborough church, conducted the services, and was assisted by Dr. Spencer, who baptized Blake 42 years ago. I had known him for many years and always had a warm regard for him. I did not get to the funeral. It already seems natural to use the individual communion cup, but I cannot help but wonder what some of the old-time members would think of the change. Instead of wine the church uses grape juice, which comes under the "fruit of the vine", but personally I would prefer what used to be erroneously called "unfermented" a thing that cannot exist for wine is not wine until after fermentation, although learned men differ

on this subject. Hoping this will find you well, with your good right arm greatly improved, I am, sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

June 13th 1915

Dear James,

Do you remember Andrew Gilmore? He was a grandson of Robert Evans, who kept the Fountain Park Hotel when you came to the Falls. "Andy" we called him, was a bright fellow and I often think would have been a good boy had it not been for his surroundings. Had he lived he would have been 72 years old today. He became a probationer in the Methodist Church when about 15 years old, but his uncle, Joe Evans, deviled him so that he did not hold out the required six months. My first taste of champagne was through Andy. One day he saw his Uncle Joe carry a basket of the wine and hide it in the cow stable. Andy hid it in another place and every once in a while would go and take out a couple of bottles. He had no cork screw, but broke the necks off the bottles by striking them against stones. Many of the bottles split lengthwise and all the wine fell on the ground. One of those I saw broken broke in half and about four of us got a little sip. Since then I have tasted that grade of wine three times, but never drank more than a full glass altogether. Writing the date to his letter put the above in my mind. I am sending you a "Nosegay" article which I wrote and which was published in last Saturday's Record, thinking it might prove interesting to you. The reception, or entertainment of the James S. Swartz Bible Class, on Tuesday, was a splendid success. I was present a little while but on learning what was to come I saw it would be impossible for me to stay as there was enough on the programme to last till nearly midnight. I went to the church thinking to sign the certificates Dr. Seasholes gave this morning to those recently received into the church. I signed them in his home before starting back home. The lecture room, with the long tables, looked like an old-time Sunday School New Year's turkey festival. Wonder how they came to drop those old festivals? How the good women used to work. I remember the occasion when through Mr. Chesshire's suggestion they added oyster pie with the menu. John Green, Harry Pretty, Joe Walker and I put the tables together that day. As we finished the work Mr. Chesshire came in and sniffing the pies said he would like to have a piece. I went into the room where they were being baked and seeing a row set on a table to cool, told Aunt Hannah Scott and Mrs. Lesh I thought we ought to have one for putting up the tables. Margaret Morison objected. Mrs. Lesh nodded for me to take one. I put a knife and four forks in my pocket, gathered up three plates, picked up one of the pies while Margaret's back was turned, stuck the plates and pie under my coat and made for the upper room, followed by the rest. I cut the pie into quarters and handed each of the four a part, Mr. Chesshire wanted to know what I was going to do for my piece. I told him waiters didn't eat with the guests, and that I had no taste for oysters in anyway they could be served. I never learned whether Margaret missed that particular pie or not. I do know the four men enjoyed it. Do you remember Emma Highley, whose

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mother had charge of the Falls Station on the Norristown Railroad for many years? She was married to a man named Briester, who conducted a bakery at Tenth and Spring Garden streets. She was buried on Wednesday and I believe died a week ago today. With her sister Blanche and brother George B. McClellan Highley, she was a member of the Lehigh Avenue Baptist church. I met her there on several occasions and always found her pleasant and entertaining and managed to retain her beauty. I did not know of her death until Uretta Johnson told me on Wednesday evening of her having been buried that day. Your highly interesting letter came in time yesterday for my breakfast table. I never had heard the account ~~xxxxxx~~ you gave ~~Mark R. Watkinson~~ of Mark R. Watkinson. I have always understood he died of starvation through losing his mind. I was glad to learn of you buying the books you mentioned. It is quite time you went to some expense for your own pleasure, and I hope you may live long to enjoy them. I have many books at my command though most of them belong to my daughters. Owing to the trouble with my eyes I have read very little of late. What little I do is by the aid of a magnifying glass. I am using drops morning and night for my eyes and at the end of this month I expect to pay another visit to my oculist, and if he cannot help me I will try someone else. I see that William Jennings Bryan is going to indulge in a rest. While I have no great love for his politics I have always thought he was the brains of the Administration at Washington. Ministers exhort the people to pray for the Government. May the Lord use the weak and ignorant to confound the strong and use until the end of the present term. I believe in prayer but I do not believe in dictating to God. His purposes are wise and will be accomplished. If there is anything I feel profoundly thankful for in this crisis, if it be a crisis, is that God reigns. Dr. Seasholes leaves on the 8 o'clock train tonight for his three months lecturing tour through the West, so we will have the pleasure of listening to other preachers, if it can be called a pleasure. I often think that hearing others leads to a better appreciation of the pastor, if he is worth appreciating. I shall mail this as usual from the general postoffice this evening and hope you will receive it before leaving for Lewistown. May you also have a pleasant trip. Miss Elizabeth Peltz got over to church this morning for the first time in months. Her sister accompanied her. We have had another hot and sultry day and it now looks as if we will have a thunder storm. Hoping this will find you well, as it leaves me, I am sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

June 20, 1915

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Dear James,
Eto, Eto Eto.

One morning I induced an elderly man who was sitting on the steps leading up the steps to the school (Forest) to come into the school. He occupied a seat near the door and when Mr. Mackie asked the boys of the spelling class to spell a word the stranger stood up, snapped his thumb and finger, saying "I can spell that" and proceeded to spell the word. He did the same thing several times, when Mr. Mackie came to me and asked me to go for Cornelius De Groot, a director. He lived in Stoever's house above the railroad near Scott's lane. I ran to his house only to learn that he had taken the stage for the city. When I got back to the school the pupils had all left for the outside except yourself and you sat on one desk with your arms folded and your feet on another desk. As I climbed through a window I heard Mr. Mackie ask you to help him put the man out, but you remained silent. When I reported to Mr. Mackie he called to John Drenman who stood in the door to go down to the mill for James Hogan, the dyer. Hogan came, carrying a heavy dye club. When Mr. Mackie saw him and the big stick he became courageous and rushing at the man, caught him by the coat collar and seat of his trousers and expelled him from the school into Hogan's hands, who led him down the ~~set~~ hill. Later in the day

I was told the man's name was John Dyer and ²⁷
that he had recently been discharged from the
insane department of the Philadelphia Almshouse.

Thomas Schofield was buried on Wednesday from
his late home in Martin street, Roxborough. He
was formerly a member of our church while
Mr. Chesshire was pastor, but later took his
letter to the Manayunk church. His was the 4th
death in the family in a few years. John was
found dead on a bench in Fairmount Park; Maria,
the hunchback, died a short time later; then
Alice passed away. Mary, the sole survivor,
lives in the house on Queen lane. Thomas married
Martha Birkenire, a sister of Ellen, who used to
sing in the church choir, and John Harry Birkenire,
who passed away in Manayunk some years ago.

--- Shrouk - in German - means "cupboard".
Sincerely,

R. R. Shrouk.

June 26th 1915

Dear James,

Etc etc.

The texts you mention were there used
by Dr. Stidham the first Sunday he preached at the
Falls. I was a little prejudiced against him for
fear he would prevent the church calling Mr.
Paddleford, whom everybody was ready to call to the
pastorate. You will remember they held a business
meeting and decided unanimously to call him
when Mr. Abbott suggested that action be postponed
until the two other candidates engaged could be
heard. Eventually Mrs. Rachael Miller and I were
all who favored calling Paddleford, after Stidham,
preached. In my mind Paddleford was as good
as N. Judson Clark and almost as eloquent as
Watkinson.
Mary Clouse, who for years has lived

alone in her house on Queen Lane, and who is 82 years old, is anxious to get into the Baptist Home. She has sold her home to Christian Verbeck I believe for \$2200. Her mother's will, which was witnessed by Margaret Morrison and William Sorber, had never been probated until the sale of the property was arranged. Dr. Walker identified the signature of his aunt Margaret but there seems to be trouble in getting someone to identify Sorber's signature. His son, Charles K. Sorber is the only one known who could, but at last accounts he refused to go to the trouble of going to the Register of Wills office. Should Mary Clouse get into the home I think it is her intention to roll the proceeds of the sale to the Home.

- Do you remember the picnic (Sunday School) on the Fourth when we were in Garrett's old woods, while the Presbyterian school was on the other side of the post and rail fence in Scott's Woods. The Presbyterian school at that time met in the old Academy. As our own school was marching up the lane it was learned the Presbyterians had been disappointed in their ice cream, and would have to do without that luxury. In the woods Mrs. Chesbire got the officers and teachers of our school together and proposed that we and the older scholars do without our share of ice cream so as to invite the smaller children of the Presbyterian school to come over and get our share of the ice cream. It so happened that when Mr. Keuzler brought our ice cream he had an additional can on his wagon, which you purchased, giving us sufficient for both schools.

Sincerely
R. R. Shrock

July 4th 1915

Dear James, etc. The boy thrashed so mercilessly by Mr. Mackie was John Dreunau who we used to call "Pussy". You are the only one I ever

never that covered Mr. Mackie. I have often thought that had he the teaching abilities of George P. Eldridge I might have had a better education. I was one of the foolish boys who would rather take a licking than study my lessons. He had whipped me through Smith's Grammar three times before I left school to work in Simpson's Milk Handkerchief Print Works. During the winter of 1859-60, when the mill closed I attended school under Eldridge and then for the first time carried my books home to study. He tried to have me remain at school. When the mill started up again he even went to my home and had a talk with my mother on the subject, but it was too late, our home conditions would not permit my going up work although the wages I received were very small.

--- Margaret Morrison was the prime cause of McKie's coming to the church. "He is such a good friend of Jacob's" was the argument she is said to have used in getting Mr. Abbott to favor his receiving the call. Steinman was about the poorest preacher the church has ever had and yet I always had a warm spot in my heart for him.

-- One morning in March 1860, when there was every indication of an ice freshet in the Schuylkill I walked along Tissot's shore on the rotten ice, jabbing holes through it with a stick when I got up to the little wharf and out from the eddy my stick went through the ice at the first jab. I stumbled and went head first through the ice after it. I had the presence of mind enough to look up and saw the hole, looking like a small moon. I swam to it and thrust my head up through it. My brother Owen caught me by the hair and pulled me up as the ice. I hurried home and had just got into dry clothes when Steinman called. I said to him jokingly "you ought to have come a little sooner and we might have had a baptism." He then spoke of my sinful condition and of the consequences that would have followed my being drowned. --- When last I saw him he was in the Manayunk post office when he called to sell me a book. I felt he needed the money so gave him two dollars and told him to forget the book. --- Mary Clouse told me

last Sunday that everything had been attended to ³⁰
regarding the probating of her mother's will. Mary
Sorber Porter, I believe, identified her grandfather's
signature. Charley Sorber is an all right fellow
when things go his way, but is exceedingly sensitive
and easily offended. I never knew of his regretting any
of his own actions but once, and that was when
Michael Arnold first ran for judge. A Press
reporter went out to the Falls to get something about
Arnold's secession utterances and interviewed
Sorber, who said a good deal about Arnold's rebel
sentiments during the War. What Sorber regretted
was that the reporter quoted him in the article
he wrote. We had a --- Mrs. Weiland
and her sister Elizabeth were again out to service this
morning. They had with them their nephew Karl Peltz,
only son of Josiah Peltz. He has just graduated from
Harvard and will take a summer course at the U. of
Penn. I believe he intends to be a lawyer.

R. R. Shronk.

July 11th 1915

Do you remember James McDonald who used to
live at Abbott's? He and Roy married sisters. He moved
somewhere over in New Jersey and became a Presbyterian
because there were no Baptist churches near where he
lived. Bella Birkenire, who married Joseph Whartenby,
with him became an Episcopalian after they moved
up-state.

----- I had a sort of a josh-back to the old days
this morning as I walked up Queen Lane to church
in the house next to the corner, and once occupied by
Prof. Spritzer, someone was playing a piano. It
was in that house while the Prof. lived there that
I first heard a piano played.

R. R. Shronk

July 18, 1915

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I had a severe shock soon after I had finished breakfast yesterday, when my daughter told me of the death of Dr. J. G. Walker. I was not aware of his being ill and had not seen him since March 21st, when we had such a happy anniversary celebration in the church.

I was glad to learn by your letter of Mrs. Rebecca Uhler having a permanent home. I have always felt a sorrow for her. Until I read your letter I did not know that Algernon Uhler was married. I knew less of him than I did of his brothers, William, Jonathan and Harry. I have always thought the worst thing Jonathan ever did was to marry Miss Cauffman, who drove him to a hasty death if not suicide. While I never had any acquaintance with her I had a rather unpleasant experience in connection with her at the time of her husband's death. I was trying to make a living at collecting. Her father sent for me and gave me a lot of doctor bills amounting to several thousand dollars to collect at the regular rate of five per cent. I found many of the bills had been paid and receipted for, but never credited on the doctor's books. I distributed the bills through the Falls, Manayunk, Roxborough and West Manayunk, mostly to poor doctors. I arranged for them to pay a little at the time so as to have the amount paid within a year. I collected \$50 and was arranging to take it to Mrs. Uhler, when I received a very impertinent letter from her. I was so angered at the letter that I took it and the money to her attorney John Dolman. I asked him to read the letter. He was greatly surprised to know she would write in that way and asked what I was going to do. I told him there was but one thing to do and that was to quit. I gave him the money, less my fee, got his receipt, and that ended my job and I have never met Mrs. Uhler since. "Little Elora" I think likes to have her old friends call her by that name, although she

has grown out of all claim to being called "little".
--- on my way home from church at the Falls I 32
stopped for a brief chat with Mr and Mrs Harry
Conover, who were sitting on their front porch. Harry
asked me if I knew where John Humpstone is, and
was surprised to learn of the prominence he has
acquired. They told me that in March 1875 they
went up to Manayunk where they were married
by Humpstone in his house, after which they
went to Emma's aunt Elra Conroy's for supper
after leaving them and while walking to Allegheny
avenue, I thought of the night you and I ran down
Queen Lane after the man who had tried to rob the
hatrack in your home. Do you remember the run
and how we caught and gave him over to policeman
William (Curly) Watson!

R. R. Stronk

July 25th 1915

(Aunt Dr. Walber's funeral) Frank Morrison
or Hugh Scott were not at the service. I met Fred
Stehle as I reached the house, which we entered
together. Frank is a good fellow, always ready
to help any in trouble, but seems to take a back
seat for himself. I did not expect him to attend the
funeral as I was under the impression that there
were ill feelings between the Morrises and Walber
because of Aunt Margaret leaving just most of her
property. Frank refused to go to the Register of Wills
Office to identify his aunt's signature as a
witness to the will of Mary Clouse's mother Mrs
Weiland has been made trustee for Mary Clouse
who until there is room for her in the home
will board with Louise Dietrich Johnson
at the time my Uncle Robert Roberts moved
down to the toll gate, you and Mary Pelts

were there and you took her to her home. I know it³³
by her having told me. When she was a little girl
she went to Manayunk to visit the wife of Dr. Conroy,
who had been a school teacher. Returning home she
got off the train at School Lane, night came on and
she became frightened and girl-like began to cry.
My father, who was the superintendent of roads of North
Penn Township, was on his way home and meeting
the crying girl asked her who she was and why
she was crying. On learning she was a daughter
of a friend, Dr. Pelts, he took her home, or almost
there for they met Dr. Pelts who had started out in
search of Mary.

R. R. Shronk

August 1, 1915

I do not know who baptized Lincy Mettinger
Stone, but think it was Mark Watkinson. She
took her letter to the First Church, Norristown.
I think her sister, Annie Seltzer went from our
church to Lawrenceville. You and I are among the
oldest members of the church. Mary and Elizabeth
Pelts were baptized by Watkinson and are I believe
the only two remaining of those he brought into the
church except Hetty Bechtel, whom I came near
overlooking. I do not know of any unless it
might be Frank Morrison's wife Susan Harper
Morrison, who beside yourself came into the
church during W. Judson Clark's pastorate.
Mary Clouse and Mary Schofield were baptized
by Chessline a little before I was. Elizabeth

Mutter Mettinger, widow of Lewis Mettinger is the³⁴
only one living that I know of who was baptized
in the fahmyhill by Dr. John W. Richards, when
the church held services in the Old Academy. I
have not seen or heard of her for a long while, but
believe she is living with her son-in-law
somewhere in West Philadelphia. Her two
sons, Arthur and John Mutter Mettinger live
in Atlantic City. Lizzie, as we call her,
always seemed to have a vacant room in her
upper story, but was as good-natured as the
day is long. She must be well up in the eighties.

R. R. Shronk

Aug 8th 1915

Near James,

Etc.: I agree with you as to the
politics of the Day being unworthy of consider-
ation and yet I sometimes feel that it a
good thing for the country that we have a
coward in the White House (Real Christians he
was! And a slacker of Civil War, himself) M
Jc
Lewis Mettinger and Joseph Walker, you know,
married sisters, Elizabeth and Mary Miller, well,
the two men rented the Hagner Markers and
grounds, the same house in which Mr. Mackie
lived. They started to cultivate a truck garden,
Walker, having been a clerk, was not used to
outdoor work. I can see him yet stooping to
weed the patch wearing white collar, gloves to
prevent his hands from being soiled or
sunburned, and holding a large white
umbrella over his head. Of course, the venture
was a failure financially. Regarding his aunt

Margaret; while she was bossy, she was human
 I remember on one occasion when thinking to
 increase an interest in the Sunday School, I
 proposed ~~to~~ celebrating one of its anniversaries.
 Everything went all right until Margaret opposed
 it. I went to meeting one night to complete
 arrangements when Roy and others told me
 my scheme had been dropped because Mrs
 Monson did not approve of the celebration. At
 the conclusion of the prayer meeting I walked to
 Margaret and without letting her know I was
 aware of her opposition asked her if she would
 help me get Dr. Walker to come and give us an
 address, with Judge Arnold. Her reply was, "Do
 you expect Jacob and Judge Arnold to take part?"
 she then thought it would be a nice thing to have
 the celebration and we had it, with talks by Jacob,
 yourself and Judge Arnold.

---- As I was on my way home I met George
 Monson, who is a trolley car conductor on Columbia
 avenue. He told me he had buried his sister, Sarah,
 yesterday afternoon. She died on Wednesday in the
 Philadelphia Hospital. Sarah was always a quiet
 girl and woman. After the death of her parents she
 married Lewis Childs, a good-for-nothing fellow,
 a widower with several children. After getting
 her money which was not a very large sum, she
 practically left her. He is now in the almshouse
 suffering from paresis, brought on by drink
 and bad living. Did you know of the death of
 Robert Evans Service, Alexander's son? He died
 suddenly on Wednesday in Brooklyn and was
 buried yesterday morning. He was a traveling

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salesman and had been a widower eight years
and is survived by two daughters. His sister,
Nellie Service Pretty, lives in Washington, D.C.
I presume her name is still Pretty as I have never
heard of her being married again. She is, as you
know the widow of my half-nephew Edwin Pretty.

August 14, 1915

Dear James, Etc.

I have been trying to locate the Carey
(Laurel Hill) High School in which you said Professor
Maguire taught before teaching in the school on
Smith's Hill. I think it must have been in what was
the cemetery chapel which stood in the centre of
North Laurel Hill cemetery. The chapel had at one
time been used as a hotel kept by James Renshaw, who
in 1824 became the first postmaster of Manassas.
I often heard my father talk of the hotel and of the
school the professor taught on Smith's Hill. I know of
no building in that vicinity, save the chapel, that
would have been suitable for a high school.

--- I received a telephone message yesterday afternoon
from Mamie Meredith Neher telling me her aunt,
Mrs. Mary Wurfenny, widow of William Wurfenny
was very sick at her home, 408 Queen Lane, Germantown.
I was rather surprised in learning her sister, Mrs.
Meredith, who has been confined to her bed for a number
of years owing to a fracture of one of her hips, is able
to get up and downstairs by the aid of a cane. She
is two years older than Mrs. Wurfenny and lives
with Mamie in Green Street.

--- expected to conduct the church service
myself, I found, however, that Mrs. Minnie Morris
had arrived home during the week from Shanghai,
China and I prevailed upon her to give an account

of her work and experience, which she did in 37
a very interesting way.

Did you ever hear of the time Bessie Tyson invited Robert L. Soud to a dinner at her home on Laboratory Hill? He went, wondering why he had been so honored. After being introduced to others of the party, they went into the dining room. Soon after they had been seated Bessie, who acted as hostess, said, "Now Mr. Soud, please say something funny!" He then knew why he had been invited, and tried his best to be pleasant.

R. R. Shronk

August 20, 1915

Dear James, Etc.

You mentioned your uncle Henry Rankin as having met his death while working on the canal below Manayunk. On the occasion when your uncle Henry Sivarts visited the Falls in 1873 to attend your mother's funeral, he and Joseph Shantz, called on me one day at my old home to inquire about my father who was suffering from what proved his last illness. Shantz introduced your uncle to mother, but said his heart was too bad for him to attempt to walk upstairs to see father. Mother asked your uncle to go up to father's room, when he replied "Thank you, I will, for I used to know Mr. Shronk many years ago. Mother took him to the room and told father one of his old friends had called to see him. Your uncle spoke and father (who, you know, was blind) said "Is that not Henry Sivarts speaking?" And when assured it was he said, "I have not met you since Henry Rankin's death 40 years ago". By a singular coincidence your uncle,

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Mr. Shantz and my father died within 3 weeks.
Father from general weakness; Shantz from
heart ailment; and your uncle from pneumonia.
--- Mary Clouse seems happy in her new home in
German town.

R. R. Shrank

- - - -

Sept 5, 1915

Dear James, etc

Do you remember the Sunday School's trip
to old National Guard Hall on Market street? I often think
of some of the little girls who, when the pictures of the
rain before the Deluge were shown, placed their
handkerchiefs over their bonnets to save them from
getting soaked by the rain.

--- None of your recent letters referring to an
article of mine on the Schuylkill canal, you mentioned
the pretty little canal boats that conveyed passengers.
I can see those boats yet, with their white-painted
cabins extending above the decks, the pretty little
windows with their green shutters; and lace
curtains. I used to sit, when a child, on the old
bench on the top of the river bank at the old
home and watch them pass up and down the
river, with the happy-looking passengers aboard.
We called them "Union Boats". Why I do not know,
unless it might be from their running into the
Union Canal. Next to the steamboats they formed
my chief attraction on the river --- Other boys
used to come to swim, an old scow used for
carrying goods across the river before the
frame bridge was built and belonging to
Uncle Giffrey Shrank was tied to the shore,
from this the boys would jump and dive.
--- Do you remember Edwin Wild, the

little Welshman who used to think he could sing and always went up in the choir gallery? He boarded with Rachel Muller and worked as a clerk in Dobson's city offices. I rowed him up the river on two occasions to a fine swimming place, opposite School Lane, but could not coax him to go more than ankle deep in the water. He would lie on his stomach and kick out like a fastened bullfrog, but never learned to swim.

R. R. Shrank

Sept 12, 1915

Dear James, Etc:

... the politicians of our beloved city have not been inactive. The fight over the next Mayor promises to be an exciting one, but from present indications it looks to me as if the Independents will win out by electing George Porter, present Director of Public Safety. (How wrong he was! Acc) I have always voted Republican, but this way things have changed, I hardly know, as the Democratic Congressman said "Where I am at!"

... the statement about Thomas Wood, Jr being the only survivor of the block printers was true. He, however, passed away while the newspaper article was "on the hoof" in the Record office waiting to be printed.

... at the monthly church meeting on Wednesday evening I suggested that something be done towards replacing the spire of the

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church. I was told it couldn't be done
without causing continual damage to the
church ceiling, some of the brethren favor
trying some day to erect a stone tower and
belfry and remove what is left of the old
spire. A good move if we only had the means.

R R. Shronk

Sept 13, 1915

Dear James, Etc.

I saw a lot of copy that the
Falls Methodist minute had sent to the
Chronicle about the 78th anniversary of the
church. In 1888 when we celebrated our
50th anniversary in June, the Methodists
discovered that their church was 60 years
old that fall, and held a celebration. Of
late years they are getting back further
and are nearly a year older than we are.
Our church was constituted June 7, 1838.
Some time about 77 or 78 years ago, Andrew
Gilmore, who had a farm at what is now
Ridge avenue and York street held a Methodist
class meeting in his house, the presiding
elder of the Fairmount District, I believe, was
present. From that meeting the (Falls)
Methodists date the formation of their
church.

R R. Shronk

Sept 18, 1915

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Dear James, etc.

our old friend William R. Williams was buried yesterday afternoon in Mount Peace Cemetery after services had been conducted in undertaker Barie's, at 1820 Chestnut street. He died on Tuesday at his home 222 Marbeim street, Germantown, of general debility after ten days illness. He was 81 on August 17th and had been blind five years. I always had a strong admiration for Williams. I often thought of a remark he made to Mr. Chesbire one weekday night when he attended service. Mr. Chesbire told him how pleased he was to see him at the service and told him he would call on him sometime for prayer. "Please, do not" was the reply, "for I have to do my thinking in Welsh." I have often wondered if he had to do his thinking in Welsh while bargaining with George W. Childs and others regarding the breeding of Jersey cows, at which he made good money.

--- (Mrs. William Wurfenny) It was a bad thing for her when Dr. Pampinella got into the family by marrying Lizzie, their only daughter. He blamed Harman Johnson for "doing" Bill out of his share of Sarah Wurfenny's estate. The Doctor, however, managed to run through with what they did get. After Lizzie's death he married again and had a daughter, who is now in the Wm. L. Elkins Mesarie Orphanage for girls. The Dr. had an office in Selugh Avenue near 16th street, where he resided and another office in the city.

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He made a good deal of money on a fake cure for locomotor ataxia, till found out, when he committed suicide by taking a quick poison.

R. R. Shronk.

Sept 25, 1915

Dear James, Etc.

(Williams R. Williams) I called several times at Williams after he became blind. I walked up to the School house (Abbottford Road) in which he resided after leaving Dr. Evans' homestead, only to learn he had moved to Queen Lane, Germantown. I then tramped over to Queen Lane, thinking my sister, Margaret Young, who lives at 301 Queen Lane might know his address, but she didn't.

- - I presume you know of the death of Mrs. Wm. Wempenny. She passed away Monday morning. She was buried on Thursday afternoon in North Laurel Hill Cemetery.

R. R. Shronk

Oct 2nd 1915

Dear James, Etc.:

I fully agree with all you said about William Wempenny and his wife Young. Sam Wempenny married his father's first cousin, a fact, I presume, you are aware of. She helped to take good care of Mrs. Wempenny during her last illness. Sam Oldham and his wife, a daughter of Joe Walker, lived with them. Oldham, a son of Wm. Wempenny's sister, Louise, married a daughter of Wempenny's cousin, Mary Muller Walker. Quite a family complication but not as much as that of Lewis Shronk, father of young Sam Wempenny's wife. His

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second wife, Clara Hagner, was a sister to
his son-in-law, Mark Hagner, which made
his daughter his sister-in-law and Mark's
children his grandchildren, nieces and
nephews.

Your statement regarding Samuel Abbott
was the first I had heard of him for a long
while. Poor fellow, what a blessing it would
have been had he died before getting married. I know
no one for whom I have more pity. Reared in luxury,
never knowing the worth of a dollar, it seems
hard he should now be such a burden to himself
and others. He used to bother me a good deal
wanting me to have him appointed a reporter on
the Ledger, for which he is no more fitted than
I would be to run a brewery. Mrs. John
Watson, asked me some time before her death
if I thought he was in need of money. I told
her he was, and she said she would send him
some occasionally, but didn't want him to
know from whom it came.

R. R. Shronk

Oct 9, 1915

Dear James, etc.

"I did not go down to North
Philadelphia Station yesterday to see President
Wilson and his intended bride arrive to see
the game of baseball. My daughter visited
an oculist yesterday who is a German. He
has little love for Wilson (why should he in
1915) whom he said was all right as a
school marm. Mrs. Weiland thinks he
(Wilson) is doing right in marrying again. She

however, has met no one to take the place of #4
Mr. Weiland. I told her people married
just for love — and the second time for
convenience.

R. R. Shronk.

October 16, 1915

Dear James,

I am unable to recall Griffiths
though I suppose I once knew him during the
early part of the Civil War. I was away from
the Falls. At its start, when Captain Charles
Thomson Jones' company of Penna Dragoons was
expected to be called out Uncle Robert Roberts, who
was sergeant of the company had me go down to
tend the toll gate, while he prepared to go to the
front. He spent a great deal of time riding a
bald-faced horse, one of his friends gave him,
and became very proficient jumping rail fences.
I was at the toll gate until late in July. Later
he had me go down every now and then to relieve
him, especially on Sundays. In 1862 I went to serve
an apprenticeship at painting with a man
named B. Franklin Haines, 708 Lyraid Avenue,
and was with him until the middle of September.
The last Saturday I was there I walked, after supper,
as usual to Ridge Avenue and then to the
toll gate. Uncle Robert left me in charge,
returning on the last car, 10.30 from the old depot
at Columbia Avenue. He stepped from the front
platform of the car. I handed him the money
bag and key of the gate house and stepped on
the rear platform. In those days, you will
remember, the conductor had to drive as well
as to conduct the cars. I used to ride

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"dead head". After the car got up to the old Washington Tavern the conductor came back to the rear platform for my fare. Imagine my surprise to see a new man on the job and not having a cent in my pockets. I explained to him how I had been riding free and asked him to take me up to the Laurel Hill toll gate, where I would borrow the fare from Alderman McBride. He was merciless and I had to get off. It was unmercifully dark and lonely and to make things worse I was angry. As I began the descent of Robin Hood Hill I saw a white object, about the size of a 3-month old calf, in the middle of the road. I, of course, thought of ghosts, it being in front of South Laurel Hill Cemetery. A cold feeling crawled up my spine and my hat seemed to rise. I do not know of ever being so badly frightened. I was afraid to go forward and didn't want to go back. So after standing still awhile I summoned up courage and started forward. The thing did the same, jumping up and down all the while as if enjoying itself. When it got to the curve opposite the entrance to Mt. Vernon Cemetery it gave a tremendous leap and passed through the iron railing there, then stood on top of South Laurel Hill wall and disappeared. I hurried on, walking the planks between the railway tracks on the hill, my footsteps causing an echo from Mt. Vernon tower, and I thought the thing, or something else, was after me. I did not meet a soul that night until I got to Tissot's, where there was some excitement over a man who had

run down James street across the hotel yard ⁴⁶
and off the wall landing in the crotch of
an ash tree from where he was lifted unhurt.
When I reached my old home gate I saw lights
in Shantz' Hall, over Doyle's store; walked to
the hall and saw Lieutenant Eldridge
dulling Dobson's soldiers. Next morning
the Falls was excited; Dobson's company was
getting ready to leave for Harrisburg. I went
down to the toll gate. Uncle Robert said he
would go see the men leave. The next I saw
of him was on a horse car in uniform as he
passed the gate; he called "I'm going with them,
stay at the gate until I come back!" He soon
returned on another car, rode by the gate,
stopped at his home to bid the folks goodbye
and was gone. I wrote a letter to my boss
explaining the situation and stuck to the
gate. After returning home Uncle was sick
two weeks. When I went back to the paint
shop the boss put up a growl and I left. So
you see I did not know much of what was
going on at the Falls in those days. What was
the ghost I saw that night? I have never been
able to determine.

----- I wanted to enlist after I got old
enough but Dr. Serrice, who attended me for my
chronic sore throat, which resulted from being
struck in the neck by a town ball bat, said I
might as well think of suicide as the exposure
in the army would kill me. So that is why
I did not go into the army.

R. R. Shrank

Oct 24, 1915

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Dear James, etc:

— article you might be interested in, a little history of the Pencoyd Iron Works & Houses
The S.S. Keely property mentioned, you will know as Nathan L. Jones' lumber yard & Keely bought the property in at the sale when the estate was being settled and to the surprise of the family said he had bought it for himself. On the site of the lumber yard he erected a row of small dwellings something like 30 in number.

Torn Down 1/1944

— I have just written a letter to Jacob in which I showed him that his wife and I are second cousins. Mrs. Mary Fulmer Foulon, 91 years, who was buried on Wednesday, was a cousin of Jacob's wife's mother, while Robert Foulon was a first cousin of my mother. His mother and my grandfather, Robert Roberts being brother and sister, a relationship, I told him I was glad to acknowledge.

R. R. Shronk

Oct 30, 1915

Dear James, etc

(Pencoyd article) you mentioned the old tradition about one John Roberts having as a Tory, put ground glass in flour for the American Army in the Revolutionary War, is a subject I have long sought to solve. There were a number of John Roberts; one of whom was my most remote American ancestor & I have

often heard my father speak of a John Roberts having been hung with a chain, but never heard which branch of the family he belonged to. Some put it that the Toy was a Robeson, whose old grist mill at Ridge Avenue and the Wessabuckon drive you doubtless remember. That tradition has it that the glass was ground in the flour in a little mill that stood in the woods near the Schuylkill. Neither of the traditions cause me any worryment. I do not know whether my ancestors took part in the Revolutionary War, though I have heard of my great grandfather, Godfrey Shanks, the historic fisherman, having been a captive in the war, but I have been unable to verify the statement. Nettie, however, on her mother's side can boast if it is worth boasting of, of having ancestors who took part in the war as Hessians. Her great grandmother, Charlotte ~~Est~~ Est Wewell, was the young woman who rode to Washington's camp and told him of a plot of British officers to capture him. She and not Lydia Warragh, was the heroine of the case. She was the daughter of a Hessian surgeon, and married another Hessian, Nicholas Wewell. Nettie, however, has not applied for membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution. She might, however, become a member of the Colonial Dames through her maternal ancestors, one of whom, a Richardson, was mayor of Philadelphia.

— — — Another thing I learned while at church this morning was of the death on Friday of our

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long-time friend, Hettie Bechtel, in the Roxborough Home for Women. She would have been 79 years old tomorrow, November 1st. The body was brought to the home of her niece, Hettie West, at the Falls. She was one of the noblest women I have known. Through her, her brothers, Peter and Jacob, her mother and sisters, Sallie and Lillie, were brought into the church.

--- I went down to 24th street and Selugh avenue after I had my dinner today to get an account of the dedication of the new and handsome building of St. Columba's Catholic Church, and met and shook hands with the Archbishop whom I knew when he was merely a priest. The church has 1600 families, and supports four priests and a large parochial school; the church, school, rectorate and parish hall taking up the entire square.

R. R. Shronk

Nov. 6-1915

Dear James = Etc Etc.

I have no record of the baptism or death of Harmon Johnson's wife. She was a good-natured soul, but like her twin sister, Louise Oldham - Benham, I always thought she was a little wanting in the upper story. I remember the time

she and Harmon were married. Mrs. Wempfering sent my father a small slice of the wedding cake tied up in white paper bound with narrow satin ribbon. The package was placed away and never tasted. Years afterward, with the paper and ribbon soiled from the grease of the cake, was consigned to the fire. Father had a curious habit of keeping things until they were useless and none of the family disturbed them.

R. R. Shronk

Nov 13, 1915

Dear James, etc etc

--- George Northcott, of Roxbury, was a bright man, but no match for Judge Kelley. In 1862 he ran against Charles Thomson Jones for Select Council, when the Falls was included in the 21st Ward. I heard him speak at a gathering in front of Henry Lutz's saddler shop. Robert Carlisle presided and made one of his smooth-tongued orations about his loving Democracy next to his God, but he didn't tell who his God was. James G. Maree, of Manayunk, and Wm. H. Stearns, of Troga, ran for Common Council. They were elected by a majority of nine ~~9~~ (9) votes, but when the official returns were announced the majority was on the other side. Maree, a particular friend of mine carried on the jewelry business for more than 50 years in Manayunk, is now living, retired, with his daughter, Mrs. William Nassau, a noted soprano singer, in Germantown. He

was 85 years on the 4th of last July, but looks 10 (51)
years younger.

--- I think it was at a meeting, with
Judge Arnold's father presiding, when John
Wobson made his famous speech. Mr. Arnold
said "The next speaker will be Mr. John
Wobson!" Wobson, stepping forward said: "It is
not me but money you want! Put down a
hundred for me and fifty for our James!"

-- Charley McEwen after he got out
of the business with Daniel Ruffner. I
used to see him every now and again sitting
in front of the Ledger Building waiting to see
L. Clarke Davis, the managing editor. He and
~~his~~ Davis were what are termed "brought
together children," as his father, David
Davis, married Harriet McEwen. I think
Davis used to help him financially. I saw
a death notice in the Ledger, 10 or 12 years
ago, of a Charles McEwen, at the home of
his son on Westmoreland street near D street.
I went to the house and found the dead man
to be our Charley. He had fallen gray
considerably and the only part of his face
that looked natural to me was his chin
whiskers. When I was a boy Daniel
Hoyt sent me to Charley's Drug store for
10 cents worth of strychnine to poison a
dog. Charley gave me nearly a pound of
what I afterward learned was whitening

and told me to hold it out at arms length. I ⁵²
did so. Hoyt spread it over a chunk of
beefsteak; the dog ate it and also two
other pieces without showing any signs
of dying. Hoyt then tried to shoot the
animal with an air rifle but the
balls flattened on the dog's skull. Finally
Bill Taylor came along and struck
the dog a powerful blow on the head
with a pick handle, killing him instantly.

R. R. Shronk

March 20, 1915

Dear James, Etc.

- The first school I attended was the
little par school on Laboratory Hill. It was a
one-roomed school. In one corner, was a number of
raised seats, like steps reaching close to the
ceiling. They were occupied by the largest
girls in the school, whom I can remember
Jennie, Mary Ann and Lovie Harper;
Emma Hoyt, and Matilda Shronk. One
day I did something wrong, which was not
unusual. To punish me the teacher, James
K. Finley made me go up and sit between
two girls on the uppermost row of seats. I
have never felt more humiliated than I did
that day especially in climbing to pass

the other girls.

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--- Harry Major was one of the boys in my Sunday School class, always attentive, quiet and orderly. I thought a great deal of him. I knew his father. Do you remember how he used to squint one eye when in conversation? After I moved to Froga I used to walk to Nicetown and from there ride to the Falls on his "pusher" (locomotive). My brother Owen washed his (Major's) engine when he was killed. After that occurrence I never rode the pusher again, out of compliance with my mother's wish.

R. R. Shronk

November 27, 1915

Dear James, Etc.

(re Dr. Humpstone) I often think of his coming to the church with his father and sister. You remember of his mother having been brought to Philadelphia in a ship from England, taken in a carriage to the home of her mother, Mrs. Robert McFarland, at West Falls, where she died without having put her feet on American soil. My aunt, Mrs. Sarah Cameron, lived in part of McFarland's double house and she got Mr. Cheslure interested in the strangers. He conducted the funeral services and induced Mr. Humpstone

to come to church. You know what followed
and what an earnest though peculiar
preacher he was (54)

- - - As I walked down Ridge Avenue, from
church with Mrs. Weiland, I looked at the Old
Falls Hotel in its present somewhat dilapidated
condition and thought how different to what
it was when Mr. Arnold had charge of
everything. Then it was kept clean and
orderly. The horse sheds on both sides of the
avenue and the garden between the hotel
and Morrison's store, and the little
lawn between the hotel and the river
Mr. and Mrs. Arnold, Mike and Tom
with their half-sisters, the Coughlin
girls, always gave ~~me~~ me an air of
grandeur to the place. The hotel, like
that of Robert Evans' was kept in an
orderly way even if there were a good
deal of traffic at both on Sunday evenings,
which led you, on your first trip through
the village, to think the Falls was the
wickedest place on earth.

R. R. Sprank

Dec 4, 1915

Dear James, etc

I thought today of an event which
happened at the Falls just before Farmout Park
Drive was made along the east side of the
Solwaykell River. William ~~the~~ Illingsworth,
who was afterwards a mail carrier, and
Policeman Thomas Short, were walking

along the old path near the river, through 55
Tissot's meadow. They saw Horace
Smith coming out of Tissot's dining
room carrying a covered dish. He walked
down the stone steps and through the
kitchen yard to the lower side of the
hotel. There he placed the dish under the
branches of one of the Norway spruce
trees Tissot had planted on the sloping
lawn. He walked out towards Ridge avenue,
Illingsworth and Short went to the tree
and found on the dish, a broiled spring
shirker, which they proceeded at once
to eat. They then placed the bones on
the dish and hid behind another
tree. Horace Smith and Wm. Wimpenny
soon came to the spruce tree, under which
Smith crawled and handed out the dish
to Wimpenny. Raising the napkin he saw
the bones and before Smith could rise,
Wimpenny banged him along side the
head that sent him rolling down to the
bottom of the hill, saying: "Take that
damn you, I knew you were up to one
of your tricks."

R. R. Shrank

Dec 11, 1915

Dear James, etc.

a miss Grundy, a granddaughter
of Stephen Mills, whose sister Elvira Mills
was a constitutional member of the church, is
to be baptized tonight. She attended Zoega

Church, but moving to the Falls she concluded to come with us and before the deacons on Wednesday evening. She has the mill's fluency of speech.

--- I used to envy the other boys who could stay out without showing signs of being cold. One boy, Patsy Clifford, who lived on Laboratory Hill, used to be on the hill sledding, wearing no stockings, his shirt open, all day. His uncle, Mark Clifford, was a stonemason and I think worked for your father on the Reading Railroad's Stone Bridge. The family moved to Manayunk and I have lost trace of them.

--- I thought this morning of John H. Richard, the French artist, for whom I worked a while after my sad experience in attempting to be a storekeeper with a stock of goods that were shrewdly and unsaleable save to an easy mark like myself. He was a peculiar man but a good one to work for. He had lived many years at the Falls with a woman he called his wife, but to whom he had never been married, save as a common-law marriage. He gave his secret away to her sister, who in turn told Mrs. Richard. She then, having him sign all his property to her, made a will leaving the property to her nephew Richard Brehm and her friend Jonas Everhart. She died then Richard brought suit to recover the property but lost the case in the old Nisi Prius Court under the ruling of Judge Thompson, who said "In a common law marriage the wife is

entitled to all her dower rights as though the 57
marriage had been a ceremonial one, but the
husband has no claim upon property
belonging to the wife". He also sustained the
doctrine of "Death having closed the wife's
mouth, the law closes the mouth of the
husband". Hence he was not permitted to
testify against her. Richard's last work was
in preparing the Government fish exhibit for
the Centennial Exposition. He afterward went to
Washington, did a little work at the Smithsonian
Institute for Professor Spencer F. Blair. In 1881
he came to this city to visit a friend on Perkins
street, where he died suddenly of apoplexy. I
believe a compromise in his favor was made by
Brehm and Everhart. Prof. Baird had filed my
name as Richard's successor as soon as the
work would begin, but he, too, died suddenly,
which ended my chances.

R. R. Shrank.

Dec. 18, 1915

Dear James, Eto:

So I watched Humpstone's success with
the greatest of pleasure. I do not know whether he
preached in Manayunk in the morning or not. You
remember he was pastor at Manayunk when called to
Brooklyn and his sister, Elizabeth, was married to
Alvoro Goslow, a fine fellow, now a deacon of the
Manayunk church.

--- as to Spencer, he is somewhat of a
puzzle to me. I was told by a newspaper man that
his present trouble resulted from his having a young

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wife and that she has been too intimate with a member of the congregation, and that it was this man who assaulted Spencer in the dark vestibule last April. Yes, I remember the talk there was about him while at Roxborough over the twice burning of the church and the attempt to burn down the parsonage. Mr. Mulligan never had much faith in Spencer after he tried to tell him how to run the Chronicle. After going to Racine Spencer's mind gave way and he was for a time thought to be a hopeless mental wreck.

R. R. Shrank

- - - - -
Dec 20, 1915

Dear James, Etc.

- - - I remember one day in February 1864 when I drove Mrs. Chesahine in Mr. Abbott's open carriage over to what is now ~~Cypress~~ Agnewyd to the funeral of an aged minister named Waters who had married the widow of my mother's grand uncle, George Hatch. It was one of the coldest days I ever spent out of doors. A great contrast to the heated room in Simpson's Print Works in which I worked. From the house I drove to Lower Marion Church, Bryn Mawr. It was so cold that everybody gathered around the red hot stove while the ministers in turn went to the pulpit to speak. Mrs. Waters was very indignant because Mr. Chesahine had not brought his choir with him to sing a hymn "dear Pappy loved so much."

- - - You will see in the last issue of the Forecast that Mr. and Mrs. Lister were to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Christmas in the old Hess homestead in

which they were married on Christmas Day 1865. They held the celebration and I believe had a very pleasant time. I do not think the Hess family ever had a homestead. When I was a little boy Harry Hess and family lived in a little cottage at Ridge Avenue and Jimmy street. Mrs. Hess was a sister of Peter Bechtel's mother, their maiden name was Mann. The house on Queen Lane in which the wedding took place 50 years ago, was built by Christian Hess, who was a partner of Harmon Johnson in the grocery business. He, with his mother, and sisters, Annie and Catherine occupied it. After his death and that of his mother, the property was used by Annie and her star boarder, Alexander Mc Seventy. The Hess family had no love for Harmon Johnson; Annie used to tell how he came to the house while Christian was dying and got her mother to get \$2000 out of a trunk he said belonged to him.

R. R. Shronk

Jan 1st 1916

Dear James, Etc

---I have a dim recollection of you and Mr. Snyder making survey along the Schuylkill along our old shore and other points. I never pass the Stone bridge without admiring its beauty, or recalling your fatherxx who I think was one of the noblest men I have ever known; A man who every man employed by him had nothing but good to say. I have always wondered how he kept us such a close friendship with John Binkin who was just about the opposite in his general disposition.

-----My aunt, Jane L. Roberts Hansell, was buried yesterday from the home of her son and only child, Percival R. Hansell, 415 Martin street, Roxborough. She died on Monday after several years illness in her 84 year. She was the last of her generation and unless Uncle Billy Roberts' wife Aunt

Maud is living, was the last aunt I had. She was married to Jesse Hansell, by Dr. Stidham in 1869, in the home of John Major, the ell of Hugh Scott's old mansion on Ridge avenue below Queen Lane, next to where Morison's grocery stood; the house in which I first saw the light of day. I, alone of her nephews was present at the wedding and acted as best man, while Mrs. Major, the only witness was matron of honor. After the ceremony was concluded I stepped up and kissed the bride. Whew! Wasn't my uncle cross; he almost cursed me, and vowed he would follow me to California to get even if he knew I was to be married. He died January 27th 1884 in his 84th year. While old enough to have been her father he made her a good husband and left her well provided for, leaving her the house on Martin street and the interest on the balance of his estate. His children of his first marriage had to wait for their share as they were to get nothing until after her death.

R R S

January 16th 1916

Dear James, Etc.,

-----Dr. Seasholes announced the topic for discussion by the Mens' Bible Class in the afternoon would be "Defenceless America". I wondered whether he would refer to "Watchful waiting" Wilson who in my estimation is about the most defenceless thing this country has. There is a growing talk for Roosevelt (Theodore) who I think would have had the Mexican troubles settled long ago had been President. Wilson announced he would not allow the Mexican bandits to draw him into war.

R. R. S.

Jan. 22nd 1916

Dear James Etc,

----What have the New York brokers been doing to poor Watchful waiting Wilson? I see by yesterday's papers that the poor man's portrait shown on the screen was hooted. Will not such treatment make the poor man feel bilious? I do not know whether Dr. Seasholes read the article or not, but he prayed most fervently for the President this morning. From the way things looks Roosevelt is going to be a big factor in this year's Presidential campaign. While there is something about him I do not like I would rather have him back in the position that to have Wilson re-elected. (Any kind of a Republican rather than a Democrat, eh A.C.C.)

R. R. S.

Jan 29th 1916

Dear James, etc

---Walking up Queen lane I passed along what we used to call Abbott's road. As I entered the entrance I began to see the devastation time and neglect has wrought. The once well kept wall has crumbled; the fences along either side are nearly all down, the trees dying or dead. The little octagonal building over the ice house is roofless. The mansion which used to be kept so prim and neat looks deserted. I did not go

near enough to see whether it is occupied or not, but judge it is not. The barn is dilapidated, while the granary in which John Roy lived so many years looks as though a bomb had been dropped upon it from a German airship. The roof is off and the east end has either fallen out or been torn away. A glance at the once beautiful garden in which those old-time choice strawberries which the Baptist Ministers' Conference used to enjoy at the June meeting, only added to my sadness. I trudged around the south side of Queen Lane reservoir over a miserably kept road from which entrance is had to James Dobson's and Horace Richard's houses. All that is left of Dr. Evans old home is the charred walls with one pair of window shutters and the door on the south side intact. When I looked in the ruin I thought what a good thing it was for our dear old friend the Doctor that he was in his grave before the place, with that of Abbott's, was wrecked.

---- AS I used to walk along Ridge Avenue through the Falls which I reached about five o'clock, for many mornings the street or Avenue would be filled with strings of Catholics on their way to early service at St. Bridget's Church, where a mission was being held. That was the time when Horace Smith circulated the report that some of the Irish carried or wheeled their cook stoves to be blessed. Was it not a wonder he never got his head broke by the way he used to talk about the Irish? I went to his house when he lived in Queen Lane, one morning to have him extract a tooth, when he told me he had lost a customer just before I got there; that Mrs. Bennett had called to have a tooth pulled and that when he said to her "all right, get into the chair. I nearly killed a negro awhile ago and perhaps I can kill an Irish woman." She, he said, was so frightened she ran from the house.

R. R. S.

Feb. 1st 1916

Dear James, etc

So you preceded me in viewing the wreck at Abbotsford. As to the \$25,000 mortgage which Griffith thought to have annulled, I do not know whether he ever took any action but I do know that Charley Sorber was very much concerned at one time about some legal proceedings on the ground of Mrs. Abbott not being competent. How it ended I do not know. Smith's place is now known as Plush Hill, presumably from Dobson's Plush Mills being so near. The house is occupied by a number of families, but I do not think they are Italians. Poor Sam Abbott. What a pity Dr. Evans did not put his money in trust for him. I was told that when Sam went over to Clifton Heights to view a house that could be bought for \$12,000 he was greatly pleased with the property and asked the agent if he would take \$15,000 for it. I have not seen him for some time.

R. R. S.

Feb. 12th 1916

Dear James, Etc etc

Dr. Seasholes several weeks ago at the

Wednesday evening meeting spoke of the value of preparedness, and of the president going about advocating it. He then asked me what the feeling was at the Falls prior to the breaking out of the civil war, which we used to call the rebellion. I told him that the general feeling was that war could ~~xxxx~~ be averted until after the Southern States had attempted to secede and even up to the firing upon Fort Sumter. I also told that I thought Wilson's chief object was to be re-elected. I may be mistaken but I think the country could get along better with Roosevelt at the helm than it is with the grinning school teacher who smiles like a willsome, willing and aged maiden every time he has his photograph taken. Perhaps he is fond of his teeth.

R. R. S.

Feb. 19th 1916

Dear James, etc.

In thinking of John Dobson I am reminded of two talks I had with him. One was about the time Mr. Chesshire left the Falls, when he said, "Mr. Chesshire is a nice old man, but he has two damn bad sons. They did me up, but I do not think so much of myself as I do of Dr. Uhler and Swatz", he not using the sound of the "r" in your name. The other was soon after he had bought the Smith property. I was standing in front of my store one morning; Dobson came along and asked me to walk down the avenue with him. When we reached the Smith property front he told me he had bought the property for \$22,000; that he had sold the upper part to Alexander Krail and Matthew McCullough for \$10,000; while Dr. Uhler took the house and central part for \$12,000, leaving the Ridge avenue front clear, and which he offered to sell to me for \$10,000. He urged me to take it saying he would pay all expenses so that I would have nothing but the interest to pay and that I could get more than \$10,000 worth of building stone out of the property, and then sell it for building lots. Having the store on my hands and my means exhausted I was afraid to assume the obligation and refused the offer. He took more than the amount named of stone out of the quarries and then built houses on the site. I have thought that was the one time when opportunity came to my door without letting it in. But why worry now?

R. R. Shronk

March 4th 1916

Dear James, Etc.,

I just arrived from the Falls where I inspected the new bank and had a red carnation stuck in the buttonhole of my overcoat. The quarters, in the upper store of Odd Fellows Halla, looks somewhat small but will answer. It is fitted up nicely and will open for business on Monday morning. It ought to have started today in commemoration of the beginning of the last year of Woodrow Wilson's Presidency, a thing worthy of celebrating. Should he be re-elected we will be inaugurated on Sunday unless the ceremony should be postponed till the following day. What do they do on such an occasion?

---While walking up Ridge avenue I glanced up the old hill we used to climb in going to the Forest School. That is when we chanced to go by the way of the little bridge

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that crossed the run near George Nugent's little mill. A few of the old trees remain and the hill seems but little changed. Do you remember the little stone vault as we used to call it, that stood on Smith's Hill a short distance from the building that was called "Smith's Folly"? With the boys I used to climb up on a round stone to peep through the narrow vent hole, which widened inward. After peering some time we could see coffins lying on shelves along the inner walls. In one of the coffins was the body of Rev. Dr. William Smith, first provost of the University of Pennsylvania. One day Horace Smith broke open the vault took the lids off the coffins and carried the skull of one out and placed it on top of a post and shot at it with his rifle. Shortly afterward the coffins with their contents were buried in North Laurel Hill Cemetery. I can remember my father talking of Horace's sacrilege and saying someone ought to shoot him in the head.

R. R. Shronk

March 11th 1916

Dear James, etc.,

Strange you never heard of Horace Smith shooting at his grandfather's skull. You know, I presume that it was he who stopped the angel weathervane on our church steeple from turning with the wind. He shot at it until he perforated ~~xxxx~~ the wings and sent a ball into the swivel denting it so deep that it could not revolve on the rod. Horace did another trick that was much talked about at the Falls. One day, walking up Queen Lane, near where John Green used to live he picked up a chicken that had been run over by a wagon and killed. Wrapping it in a newspaper which he tied with a cord he carried it up to ~~xxxx~~ Jacob Hohenadel's saloon in Old Falls Park and requested Jacob to keep the package until he returned. It was in summer. The package was put on a shelf under the bar where it remained for nearly two weeks before Horace called for it. Cutting the cord he opened out the paper and there was the much decomposed chicken filled with vermin. Horace let on he was angry because the package had not been put on ice. Hohenadel told him, "Now I know what made the stink in the bar-room. Everybody was asking me if I was serving limburger cheese!" Harmon Johnson once told me of Horace going with ~~xxxx~~ Sam Winpenny to a city clothing store to buy a pair of checked trousers and of his substituting a pair large enough to fit a man six feet in height. Harmon said it was amusing. The next morning when Winpenny called him into his room to see him holding the top band of the trousers up near his arm pits, while the bottom of the legs more than covered his feet. Like you, I always had a liking for Horace. He once told me the Falls was the most ignorant place he knew, there being but three men in it worth a damn, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ so far as intelligence was concerned. I asked him who they were and he said, "Jim Swartz, Sam Winpenny and Tissot". I learned later that you were the only ones in the Falls who had bought his book on Dr. Smith's Life.

--- This is the anniversary of the blizzard of 1888 in which I came near being lost and overcome while walking from Queen Lane to my mother's home. The strong wind blew the snow in blinding sheets cutting one's face almost like a

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knife. I had walked down Queen Lane from the railroad and had to walk around huge drifts. Had you left the Falls at that time?

---The bank seems to be doing well and will likely succeed.

R. R. Shronk,

March 25th 1916

Dear James, Etc.,

In the last issue of the Chronicle I have a little notice of the Old Scott Mansion, in which I said I first saw the light of day, in the ell attachment of the mansion on Friday morning, October 18th 1844. I received a letter yesterday from Franklin W. Morison, informing me that he was also born in the same building on Friday, May 13th 1836. So by that I know he will be 80 years old on May 13th.

R. R. Shronk.

April 1st 1916

Dear James, etc

as I read what you had written about the old Falls; the Scott mansion; Robert Knox Scott, and poor old Tom Hickey with his black pipe. He had a repulsive look but I never heard of his harming anyone. He had the distinction of being the first Irish Roman Catholic to live in the Falls. I can see the old man, in my mind, with his wide open shirt front and bare chest. I do not know whether you ever heard the talk about Robert Knox Scott's death or not. It was pretty widespread at the time. He and Mrs. Scott with Dr. and Mrs. John Conry of Manayunk, were accustomed to spending their summers together at Saratoga. The Dr. and Mrs. Scott became quite intimate and rumor said ~~xxxx~~ there was an affinity between them. Soon after their return from Saratoga one year, Mrs. Conry died suddenly; a short time later Scott passed away. Not long after Dr. Conry and Mrs. Scott were married. When she went to live with him in his mansion on Washington street, Manayunk. Her father and mother Squire William M. and Mrs. Sorber then moved into the Scott mansion. Mrs. Conry became a Catholic, as did her daughter, Ella. The latter was married to a man named Connors, I think, and lived with him in New York. Elliot Conry, the Doctor's only son, was supposed to be wealthy, but I believe died poor. After Squire Sorber's death Mrs. Conry refused to take any share of her father's property and told Joseph E. and Charles K. to divide it between them, as she had sufficient to keep her without it. Charley Sorber is said to have made a good deal of money from investments made for Elliot Conry. I believe Ella has gone through all her money before she died. She once owned the property on which John Dobson built his home. Robert Knox had a brother, John, whose widow became the wife of Thomas Barker, who for years kept the little saloon opposite Odd Fellows Hall. John was just the opposite of Robert Knox and was too fond of his toddy. The first recollections I had of him was hearing of his having snakes in his boots. He had one child, which had it lived till after his death, would have inherited his property, as it was his widow got her dowry while

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the rest went to Robert Knox. When the Mifflin Mansion was turned into a saloon in connection with the beer brewery, Robert Knox spent much of his time with Sam Winpenny and others at the saloon. One day while sitting on the porch drinking a glass of beer he discovered "fishberry" in the beer and from that day on never drank another glass of the beer. I do not know the commercial name of the berry, but it was used for poisoning minnows by mixing it with dough, then thrown into the river, the fish eating it became crazy and floated up on top of the water where they were used as bait for the larger fish. Sixty years ago the Falls was a neighborly village. People taking pride in keeping their homes neat and clean. I often think of Arnold's place, etc, etc. Bobby Evans Fountain Park Hotel was also attractive with its garden, summer houses and the meadow along the river. The river itself was different with the various properties forming its shore on most of which were the large willow and other trees. My father's shore with its rowboats fastened to the willows forms one of the dearest places in my memory. How I used to like to take one of the boats and in freshets catch drift wood and other things passing in the swift current.

R. R. Shronk.

April 8th 1916

Dear James:

I was greatly pained yesterday at noon in learning of the death of Horace E. Richard's wife. She passed away on Thursday in their house on Vine street, after a prolonged illness, which prevented her from going with Horace to Florida this past winter. He arrived home Wednesday so was with her when the end came. He told me of John Dobson having offered him \$100,000 for his property at the Falls, and then raised the offer to \$125,000 which he also refused. "Now", he said, "I cannot get \$15,000 for the place. James Dobson recently offered me \$25,000 but I refused, but now I wish I had taken it."

R. R. Shronk.

April 29th 1916

Dear James, Etc

I had forgotten that Theodore Geyer and his wife once occupied the little cottage or porter's lodge of the Mifflin Mansion. He was a man I had a very warm regard for and for a time worked with, at painting, for John Henry Green. I do not know whether you knew his father, Dr. William Geyer, a retired physician who spent much of his time at Bobby Evans' hotel. At the time my brother George was born, Dr. Moses Smith, a Quaker who had been our family physician, was sick, and to oblige father Dr. Geyer attended mother. He lived on Lehigh avenue on what is now Mount Vernon Cemetery. Later the family occupied Penn Smith's old home. As to the entrance to the driveway to the Mifflin mansion it was where Patrick Byrnes erected his home and tavern at the upper end of the lot between the house you lived in and Ridge avenue. It extended along the upper side of the lot through your house's grounds to the turn at the northeast corner of the lot thence

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southward to the mansion between what was afterwards John Mooney's house and the mansion's barn. James street was opened in 1850 or 51 through the Mifflin mansion property. I remember the pear trees particularly; the large Catherine pear tree which stood back of your house; a tree of the same kind, you remember, stood at the north side of the Forest School house and like the one near where you lived was part of a pear orchard. My great grandfather, Godfrey Shronk, had a fine pear and apple orchard on what was afterward the properties of Thomas and Lewis Shronk, Mrs. Frank Mower, Samuel Wimpenny and John Miller, all now owned by Powers & Weightman. Mrs. Miller's lot was the one between what you knew as Joseph Shantz' property and the old Shronk homestead, just above the lower Laboratory yard. The laboratory firm of Powers, Weightman and Harrison bought the property next to Mrs. Wimpenny's to erect their distillery and a wharf was built out in the Schuylkill for canal boats to unload their cargoes, but when the wharf was finished it was found that the water was not deep enough for loaded boats to get to it. The firm then made a trade with Mrs. Miller, giving her in exchange for her property, the lot next to Wimpenny's. The Millers, as you doubtless are aware, had three daughters, Elizabeth, who was married to Lewis Mettinger and who is still living in West Philadelphia; Mary, who became the wife of Joseph B. Walker; and Sarah, who died a spinster. Although I well remember those peach orchards I have no recollection of ever having eaten any of the fruit thereof. One time when I returned to school after the summer holidays, as we used to call them, I saw a large pear high up in one of the trees outside the school yard. I climbed the tree and got the pear. William Moore Smith saw me get it and asked me to give it to him. I wanted it too, but hated to refuse him so handed it over and he gave me a large copper cent, insisting that I should take it. I often thought he might have cut the pear in half and then we could have both had a taste.

----- (1916) Magistrate Thomas McFarland and Mrs. Mary Ella Brecht, with whom he lives at 2235 West Venango street, to see what they had to say regarding a law suit in which McFarland is the defendant, which was before another magistrate yesterday, when he was held under heavy bail, on the charge of appropriating to himself money belonging to Max Levy, a constable. Mrs. Brecht went his bail. I went to the house, found a light burning in the hall, but got no response from my repeated ringing of the bell or pounding on the door. Mrs. Brecht is the pretty little girl we used to know as Nellie Johnson, Harmon's youngest daughter? She was married to William Brecht, of Roxborough; took to frequent automobile rides with Dr. Charles S. Trites, a neighbor, which led to a separation of her and her husband; and of Trites' wife getting a divorce. She and the Doctor came to the Tioga house to live, but he got tired of her and left, going to the western part of the State, where he is said to be behaving himself splendidly and has charge of a consumptive treating establishment. Although Nellie has lived so close to me, three squares away, I have never seen her. If I did, I didn't recognize her. I believe the Magistrate had trouble with his wife who left him. Pretty kettle of fish, isn't it?

R. R. Shrook.

May 6th 1916

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Dear James, Etc.

Penn Smith was truly a character and was one of those men who never got drunk above their necks. I knew but one other man like him in that respect and he was William B. Illingsworth, who was a letter carrier at the Falls the time I was. He would get so full he could scarcely walk, but never showed it in his talk or made any mistakes in delivering his mail. Charley Sorber used to tell how Penn Smith, from the porch of Arnold's Hotel, would call him from the carriage works, "Come here, Charley, and take me home. These damn legs of mine are drunk again!"

----- (~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~) (in reference to Mackie, teacher at the old Forest School) Although he was an Episcopalian minister, can you imagine him preaching a sermon when in one of his stammering moods. Poor old man, the last time I saw him was on a Sunday afternoon when he had charge of Holy Trinity Mission which met in the old Academy. I met him in front of our church as I was about to enter the gate on my way to Sunday School. I spoke to him and turning to me he said "Are you not one of the Shronks?" When I told him I was he asked me which, "Owen or Robert?" When I told him what he wanted to know if I were any better man than I was a boy. The first time I ever saw him was in the little pay school on Laboratory Hill which I attended and was about eight years old. He then had charge of the little school on Garrett's lane, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ near Five Points to which the Falls road on the west side of the river led. He had called to see James K. Finley, the teacher of the Laboratory School, and told him he was an applicant for the Forest School.

-----In reference to Rev. Robert Ritchie, rector of St. James the Less Church---He went into the feed store of John B. Ferris, at Ridge avenue and Bridge road, one day, and in a talk with Ferris, who was one of his parishioners at the time, that he had power to forgive a man's sins. Ferris, with an oath, ordered him out of the store and from that day went with the new church (now Grave Chapel). Ferris told me that he liked to go to all the churches to hear the different pastors preach, but when he wanted to hear a specially good sermon he always went to the Baptist Church to hear Mr. Stidham.

R. R. Shronk.

May 13th 1916

Dear James, Etc.

Do you remember Michael Dollard? I knew him when he worked in the old quarry and used to spend the few pennies I would get hold of in Mrs. Dollard's little frame candy shop that stood next to the quarry, and in which she made money. I never had any proof of the fact, but I always had an impression that she sold whiskey on the sly. Do you recollect the store Mrs. John Mooney kept on the lower side of James street, a little above where you once lived. I went into the store one day to buy peanuts when a little girl came in and asked Mrs. Mooney to let her have half a pint of the same kind of vinegar her mother got last night. The stuff was gotten from a back room and the odor betrayed

what it was when she handed it across the counter to the girl. Poor woman, the mother of a priest, Rev. James Mooney, who expired before she did, as an assistant rector at St. John the Baptist Church, Manayunk, she died, perhaps 20 years ago, at the home of her daughter on a little street near Ridge avenue and York street.

----- I did not notice the "grill" in the Forecast. Michael Brehl (he spelled it that way) worked as you said, in the old quarry and was a German. I always greatly respected. *Winnig - (French)*

----- So Stehle challenged your father's vote? He was mean enough to do anything and his children inherited the same spirit. He put me in mind of the man Dr. Henson used to mention in his lecture "Fools", when asked how he got his money, replied, "I saved it!" There is a story told of how on one occasion Stehle told Fred (his son) to take a carriage and go to a party over at Reuben Smith's Belmont Hotel. Smith it seems, was a good customer of Stehle's in buying bread and cakes. He gave Fred ten dollars and told him to have a good time. The next day, after serving his bread route, he asked Fred what kind of a good time he had over at Smith's and whether he had enough money. Fred told him he had a splendid time and putting his hand in his pocket said, "I didn't need all the money, here is \$9.75. I had to spend a quarter." When Stehle died I went to the house on Bowman street to get data for an obituary for the Ledger. Mrs. Stehle, after giving me the facts, asked if I could get the notice in the German-Demokrat, saying "Stehle always wanted to see his obituary in the German-Demokrat". I told her I could but that it would cost me a dollar. "All right, Pob", she said, "you ride it and you will get der tollar". I wrote it but "der tollar" never came my way.

Did you ever hear of Bill Stevenson getting Bill Illingsworth to challenge Jacob Dietrich's vote? Jacob, as you know, was president of the Lincoln and Johnson Club in 1864. The club met in Shantz' Hall. Dietrich had overn served as Judge of Elections. He spoke one day, in the laboratory where he worked, of his having been born in Germany. Stevenson kept that fact in mind until Dietrich opposed him at an election, when he had him challenged on Naturalization, preventing his voting and ~~giving~~ giving him the trouble of taking out minors papers. I regarded it as a mean act, for I never thought Dietrich would have voted had he known he had not the right to do so.

At the time you declined to be a candidate for Select Council I thought you acted wisely. Billy Morison was the first Select Councilman the Falls ever had. When the 28th Ward was created the Democrats nominated Billy and his Republican friends helped to elect him. While he was in office I rode to the city one day with Captain Charles Thomson Jones, in a horse car. He wanted to know how the Falls people liked Morison and said "They wanted to get rid of Jones so they cut the Ward in two and elected Morison. Now instead of having one Jones they have two." When Mr. Morison took his seat he came to me and said, 'Mr. Jones, you have had long experience in Councils. I am a green member and I'll regard it as a great favor if you will tell me how to vote.' Of course I told him and he is voting my way on every question and pays no attention to any caucus held by the Democratic members." I can still see his cheery face widen in smiles as he told me how well pleased he was with Democrats like Mr. Morison.

-----Here is another story of the Stehle meanness. I went into the bakeshop one evening when I saw Mrs. Stehle cutting half an inch from sticks of horehound candy. I asked if they were too long for the jar. She said, "Ah, nein, der Stehle has a pad colt and das candy vill do him goot". I thought she might have cut up one single stick, but in doing that she would lose a whole cent.

R. R. Shronk.

May 20th 1916

Dear James, Etc.,

In my last letter I mentioned a number of mean things concerning the Stehles. Fred, who succeeded his father to the bakery and later to the saloon, is now living retired in West Philadelphia. While in the saloon business he made money by usury. He would advance money to the police and park guards, charging them a bonus and two per cent interest per week. The Park Commissioners becoming aware of the fact issued an order prohibiting the guards from anticipating their pay on penalty of dismissal; and the police in receiving they pay in cash instead of warrants on the City Treasurer, closed that source of revenue for Fred. When in business he was very good to me and would give me a quart bottle of whiskey for medicinal use, with the injunction, "Let me know when the bottle is empty", not being a toper the bottles lasted a long time, and liquor was given to me for "baiting". He frequently told me he wanted to get out of the business; not on account of the type of business; but because it didn't pay.

R. R. Shronk

May 27th 1916

Dear James, Etc. I have been trying to recall the name of the the person that lived next to Dr. Emmanuel Krail on Queen lane, whose daughter made fun of your horsemanship. The property is now owned by Sallie Dobson Norris and her husband. When I used to work for John Henry Green, it was owned by Henry Duhring Jr It will probably come to me later. I knew Dr. Jack, but never knew what sort of a doctor he was. He bought the property from Thomas Hood. Later it was made a hotel and roadhouse. I can see Mr. Hood and James Bingham, his brother-in-law, I think, who was over six feet high, walking across the old uncovered pay bridge on their way to the Queen lane railroad station. Harry Bingham, afterward a Congressman, used to walk often with them. James Bingham was treasurer of the Philadelphia Post Office while I was a letter carrier. I became acquainted with Samuel Wagner while he was doing some law business for my wife, when I lived in Manayunk. I also knew his brother John. Wen a little boy I used to help Sebastian Gilbert when he had Stehle's Bakery, to deliver bread and cakes on Saturday afternoons to his School Lane customers. Among them were the Wagners. In those days the sons and daughters of the family were young and I often found them playing games on the lawn with D. Rodney King and J. Vaughan Merrick, both of whom became sons-in-law of the elder Wagner. I became acquainted with J.

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Vaughan Merrick in 1865 when he was having his house enlarged for the celebration of his 10th wedding anniversary. Bob Evans ~~did~~ did the painting and he got me to help him so as to finish the work on time. Mr. Merrick liked the way I did my work and we became warm friends.

R. R. SHRONK

June 10th 1916

Dear James,

----My grandmother Shronk was one of them. No one was good enough to marry her boys or girls. One thing in her favor was that after they were married she never interefered with any of them. She was Christiansa Grim, a descendant of a Bavarian somebody. Grandfather Shronk met her in Frederick, Maryland, where he lived till after father was born. What do you think of the Republican ticket? I like Justice Hughes and hope he will be elected. The Progressives may help to re-elect Wilson.

R. R. SHRONK

June 17th 1916

Dear James, etc

How do you like the Republican ticket of Hughes and Fairbanks? I am highly pleased with the nomination and see no reason why they will not be elected. I had a talk with two Democrats, one a native of Delaware, who said, "I think you Republicans will have the next President!" The other a Pennsylvania Dutchman, said, "Both parties have good men. I think they the German-Americans are endorsing Hughes they will lead many an out-and out American to vote for Wilson."

R. R. SHRONK

June 24th 1916

Dear James, Etc.,

What do you think of the Mexican situation? I think Wilson dallied too long with the dirty Greasers and wonder what his illustrious predecessor Andrew Jackson would have done were he alive and occupying the Presidential chair. Wouldn't there have been some swearing "By the Eternal" and some decided action? Should real trouble come I think every American should stand by the president even though he is a weak vessel and hope the Republicans will display more patriotism than did the Copperhead Democrats towards that greatest of Presidents, Abraham Lincoln. You doubtless remember some of their filthy mud-slingings and shameful conduct. A great deal has been said about Preparedness, etc etc

R. R. Shronk

July 1st 1916

Dear James,

I have often wondered what became of Mrs. Uhler's

brother, Harry Cauffman, who once commanded the S. S. Pennsylvania, of the American Line. I used to meet him occasionally when he would go out to his father's when the ship was in port. I thought him a jolly good fellow and a talker that gave information worth listening to.

I think your arraignment of Woodrow Wilson the best I have ever read and would make a grand political document for the Presidential campaign. I have no doubt but what the Democrats will quote Lincoln in the matter of swapping horses in the middle of the stream, but think Wilson is like Buchanan was in 1860 as depicted on a Republican transparency "on his last leg". I, too, feel like throwing my hat in the air in honor of Theodore Roosevelt, who by his manly action towards Justice Hughes has placed himself higher than ever in the esteem of the American people. What a remarkable man he is? I think he is the greatest man we have in our country today.

R. R. SHRONK

July 8th 1916

Dear James, Etc,

---learned to swim in the Schuylkill back of Old Turf Villa,, John Miller's old home.

R. R. SHRONK

July 29th 1916

Dear James, etc

---In April 1861 the small pox hospital was located in Islington lane a short distance back from the toll gate. The hospital wagon, with a negro driver, passed the toll gate several times every day, frequently conveying patients to the hospital. I was shown the wagon and told what it was and that it passed the gate free of toll. For a time I kept shy of that wagon, would go into the gate house when I saw it coming up or down the pike. One day an Irishman driving a covered furniture car stooped at the gate and asked me to direct him to the smallpx hospital, and then told me to look what he had in the wagon; a man sitting on a chair with a sheet around him, a case of black small pox. After seeing the sight I thought it foolish to get frightened at the hospital wagon and gave up worrying about the disease.

---Do you think a letter by Wilsome, Willing, waiting Wilson would have any effect upon the man-eating sharks which create such interest along the Atlantic coast? He might make good bait to go fishing with for catching the sharks. From Friday ~~xxx~~ we will have seven months of political uncertainty, when I hope Justice Hughes will renew the dignity of that exalted and honored position. The Democrats seem hopeful of electing Wilson, placing stress on the prosperity enjoyed by the textile and other industries. This prosperity is explained by the European war in two ways. Many of the establishments are making supplies for the Allied Armies and other establishments are in operation because the war prevents the European manufacturers from completing sales in the American markets. I have an idea that before Wilson gets through the campaign that will soon open he will not know whether he is sitting down or standing up and his waiting will be like those waiting for the hearse

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to start the funeral procession to the cemetery. I am waiting to see what Theodore Roosevelt will say when he takes the stump.

R. R. Shronk,

August 12th 1916

Dear James, etc

You must remember the explosion of the boiler of the locomotive "Perkiomen" on the west end of the Reading Railroad (Stone) Bridge. I think it was in 58 or 59. The shock awakened me and I found myself sitting up, in bed. ---There is considerable anxiety here over the epidemic of infantile paralysis of which there were two cases at the Falls during the week; one on Fiske avenue a child named Crompton proved fatal; the other the child of an Italian on Ridge avenue above old Jimmy street. Whatever the disease is the doctors do not seem to be able to treat it. By it I am reminded of the strange disease which visited the Falls in February 1863, and which at first was supposed to have been imported from China in silk used in Simpson's Mill. Sarah Mower was the first victim. She worked in the mill and was stricken one night on the Falls Bridge while on her way home. She died the next day. Her sister, Elizabeth, who also worked in the mill was the next victim. She also died as did her sister, Susan, her grandmother Elizabeth Lowry Shronk, two cousins, Isabell and Lewis Shronk, Jr., and an aunt, Mrs. John Miller. My brother, Daniel, ~~was~~ in his fourth year, was taken ill on the last day of February and died at 11 o'clock on March 1st. Sister Elizabeth was stricken on her way home from school. Mother treated her with herbs and she was the first to recover. The doctors worked together. It was in our house where the doctors of the neighborhood, with Dr. Jewell and others of the staff of Jefferson College held a council, with Dr. Jewell presiding. They each went upstairs to see the ~~xxx~~ patient before holding the council. Dr. Jewell said, "Brethren, for the time being we ~~xxx~~ will call the disease 'spotted fever'" later, it was named cerebro spinal meningitis, by which it is still known. I was among those who helped to nurse sufferers, but never thought the disease was "catching". I also helped to prove the disease did not come from China. The silk use for printing handkerchiefs came direct to the mill from China; that is in the original cases. Before the Mower girls handled it the silk had been put through various chemical processes that would have killed any germs it might have contained. None of those who first handled the silk were among those affected by the disease. Most of those who had the disease were relatives of mine.

R. R. SHRONK

Aug 19th 1916

Dear James, Etc

There is a good deal of anxiety here in Philadelphia about infantile paralysis, of which the doctors seem most profoundly ignorant. There have been two cases at the Falls, one in Manayunk and one here in Tioga. Nicetown, particularly the foreign section has had quite a number of cases. There is

some talk of closing the sunday schools to children under 16 years of age. What conclusions have been reached I do not know I do know those having little children, or grandchildren, seem to have no other subject to talk about. Moving picture theatres are almost ruined financially by the keeping of children from going to the shows.

----I was told this afternoon, by a life-long Delaware Democrat, that "Weary Waiting" Wilson, by taking up the railroad mens' strike had added 90 per cent to his chances of being re-elected. So we know what to expect. I shall, however, if spared, go to the polls on election day and do my best to keep him from making any further exhibitions of his lack of ability to fill the saddle he has been sitting in too long already, and help to elect Justice Hughes.

---Owing to the request by the Director of public Health and Charities, our Sunday School decided this morning to close to all children of 16 years and under, until the epidemic of infantile paralysis abates. There was another death at the Falls yesterday, on Ridge avenue below Ferry road.

---Mrs. Weiland informed me of the death of Frank Merideth who died at the State Hospital of consumption. He was buried yesterday from Mamies home, 1307 Green street. I suppose that you know his wife, Louisa Roberts merideth is in the Norristown Asylum hopelessly insane.

R. R. SHRONK

August 26th 1916.

Dear James, Etc.,

---There was considerable excitement at the Falls on tuesday over the shooting and killing of Edward Boland, a young man of Calumet street, who with several companions were on their way to the Philadelphia Country Club grounds to frighten Martin Pinyard, a night watchman, by playing ghost. They came across an automobile standing in a lonely place on Neill Drive with a man and a woman in it. Boland told the man to light his lamps, when he drew a revolver and shot him in the head killing him instantly then speeded away. Boland was a fireman of a west Fall shifting engine on the Reading Railroad. The police have as yet no clue to the party doing the shooting and some of them question the statement of Boland's companions. The place, at the upper end of Hagner's Hollow, is x very lonely and automobilists often resort there with women after picking the women up at Tissot's Hotel, now known as Fairbunt park Inn and bears a clouded reputation.

---Other cases of infantile paralysis have developed at the Falls during the week as they have in Tioga and other parts of the city. The doctors are still at sea as to how the disease should be treated. It seems like yellow fever to flourish in hot weather and may be checked like that fever when frost comes.

R. R. Shronk.

sept. 2nd 1916

Dear James, Etc

----I remember when a little boy of overhearing a conversation between James Mills and a clergyman who was stopping at his home on Ridge avenue. They were down near the river. Mr. Mills was seated in Uncle Peter Shronk's row

boat, and their talk was on the growth of Methodism and predicted it would triumph over all other denominations. In the advance they are making at the falls it looks as if the prediction were being realized, but at that time our church was far ahead in the race and occasionally had to place chairs in the aisles to accomodate the people.

---"Weary Waiting" Wilson, I think, cut off more than he can chew when he undertook to settle the strike single handed. He should have taken his more able predecessor's example and appointed a commission, but that would have been to share the glory. Only six months from Monday for him, when I hope he will have a chance to go back to school teaching, or some other job.

R. R. SHRONK.

Sept. 9th 1916

Dear James, etc

The infantile paralysis still baffles the skill of physicians who seem unable to tell just what causes it. Dr. Attix who has treated me for several years, told me on Monday night that it is not known how the disease enters the bodies of the victims, and that it differs from cerebro spinal meningitis in that instead of affecting the membrane of the brain it affects the brain and the marrow in the spinal column. The disease, as you are doubtless aware, has caused the extending of the school vacations until October 2nd. This gives the boys and girls more time for play while the teachers having nothing to do until the latter part of this month, when they will have to go to school to arrange for making up the lost studies. Some people are growling because the teachers will be paid in full for the time the schools are closed. The making up of the lost work I think will be harder on the teachers and pupils than if the work had gone on without interruption. Some people are born to growl.

--- I was greatly shocked during the week to learn of the death of Samuel H. Mayberry, who died Sept. 6th at his Ocean City hotel. He was a man for whom I had a high esteem from the first time I met him. When he was at the falls he furnished me with a good deal of work painting his store.

----We expect to occupy the upper room of the church next Sunday. The coating of the walls and ceiling are without much decoration and gives the room an enlarged and plain look. The "Hoop Skirt" gas fixture, designed by Harry Pretty, and which for so many years lit the room from the centre of the ceiling, has been removed and in parts now lies in the churchyard. It may be sold to some junk dealer and perhaps used for shrapnel to help kill some of the European warriors. I do not know what will be done for light in case the electric power should happen to give out. Do you remember the pretty camphene lamps by which the church was first lighted. I used to admire them and the twisted square iron rods by which they were suspended from the ceiling, and often wondered how they would pull them up and down to light them. Long after they were abolished I learned the secret by finding they had been suspended from the roof rafters on chains with the other end of the chain weighted. Then the wonder of my boyhood days passed into knowledge and my mind was at rest on that subject.

----- Do you think the Democrats have any right to claim credit for the prosperity the country is now enjoying. I do not.

R. R. Shronk

September 16th 1916

Dear James, Etc

Do you remember the old saying "Maine went, hell bent, for Governor Kent". I think in the recent election in that state Wilson got some of what is coming to him in November. I met Dr. James Magee, of Roxborough, yesterday. He is an old soldier; had a leg shot off in one of the battles of the Civil War. He asked me how he could reach the owners of the Ledger, as he wanted to get their influence towards getting appointed Pension Commissioner by president Hughes, and said he had no doubt that Hughes would be elected.

--- Mary Potter, widow of Zachary Potter, and oldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph E. Sorber, was buried in West Laurel Hill Cemetery this afternoon, from her home in Queen Lane. She died on Tuesday at her other house in Lewistown N. J. where she had resided for quite a while with her son and her sister Kate.

R. R. SHRONK

Oct 7th 1916

Dear James, etc

So I'll wait and watch. I reversed the arranging of the two words so as not to be like weary Woodrow Wilson, who just now is swinging around the circle, like Andrew Johnson blowing himself off, and predicting victory for the Democratic ticket. What a magnificent exemplification of the doctrine "the office should seek the man and not the man the office". One moth from today will settle the question whether he is to continue to study National problems or go back to teaching. I have never known such a quiet Presidential campaign as this one has been. Here we are within a month of Election Day and there has not been a political gathering in this city. It may be all the better in being so, for I have long ago concluded that mass meetings and parades have had their day, and that the people get all the instruction they need from the newspapers. Had the election been held a week after the nominations the people would have known how to vote. (the fact was that Justice Hughes weakened his cause every time he delivered an address A. C.) I used to take a warm interest in political parades when I carried on sign painting because I had a chance to paint transparencies and banners at my own price.

----You remember the little yellow washed house on Ridge Avenue near School Lane in which Jesse Evans and his family lived when you came to the Falls. Like many of the other landmarks it has been torn down. Small as was the house Jesse Evans raised a large family in it. I often wondered how so many could get along in so small a place. Jesse Evans and his wife, two sons, Jesse and Joseph; five daughters, Hannah who married James McClure; Mary Ann, wife of William Hansell; Amy, who married John Hayes; Amanda, wife of Joshua Lake; and Elizabeth, wife of John Hughes, beside the farm and house help. Elizabeth is still living and perhaps Mary Ann. All the rest have gone to their reward.

R.R. SHRONK

Oct. 14th 1916

Dear James Etc.

Your cousin Mary Sherlock, as you say, died in 1862. Weren't there not a young lady named Sherlock who came

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to your home with your Uncle George? Perhaps Mary's daughter? I, too, had a cousin named Sherlock. Pather had two sister, one of whom, Elizabeth married a proud and well-to-do Irishman John Burke. Their daughter Kate, a sister of Christiana Burke Waalley, married John Sherlock, a bricklayer. Their son, Hamilton Sherlock, became quite prominent at the Falls, as a grocer and Republican politician.

-----In thinking of your mishap I thought of a table rapping performance which Mike Arnold, as the mesmerized subject, gave in the Old Academy in the winter of 1859-60 when Professor Yarnall gave exhibitions. The Professor asked me to go borrow him a table. I and Owen went over to the railroad station and borrowed the dinner table of the woman who preceded Mrs. Highley as the ticket agent; carried it over to the Academy and were admitted to the show. Each subsequent night as long as the show lasted we let on we wanted the table and were left in without paying. The mean thing about it was that on the closing night of the show we left early so as not to have to lug the table to where it belonged. It was a long while before I went near the station.

R. R. Shronk

October 21st 1916

Dear James, Etc.,

---After the Old Academy was built in ~~1818~~ 1819 an organization was effected and called the Falls of Schuylkill Sunday School Association, of which good old Abraham Martin, of School Lane, was president. You probably remember his coming to our Sunday School on rare occasions. He was known throughout the city as The Sunday School Advocate. He was a Presbyterian, a relative of his, William Lenning, also a Presbyterian taught a class of small boys in the old Union Sunday School and was my first Sunday School teacher. We sat on curved benches which when together end to end formed a circle around the room and were about a foot in height. I remember how I used to sit on the bench and try to reach the floor with the toes of my shoes. When I started to attend weekday school in the little square building on Laboratory Hill the teacher was James K. Finley, who opened another Union Sunday School which Owen and I attended and were taught by George L. Harrison, at that time a member of the laboratory firm from which he retired at the close of 1853 to devote himself to the sugar refining business. Before Mr. Finley started the Sunday School I was taught for a short time in the Old Academy by Lewis Nettinger. Do you remember Miss Kate Sorber who taught a class in our school? She was the only teacher who was not a Baptist after the Union school became virtually a Baptist school, with Benjamin Marley as the superintendent, and when the school on your 12th birthday moved from the Old Academy to its present home, Miss Sorber moved with it and continued to teach her class as long as her health permitted. She was a Presbyterian.

R. R. SHRONK

October 28th 1916

Dear James, etc

A week from Tuesday ~~we~~ we will have another election. I will do all I can to save Wilson from having to study statecraft in the White House. I feel he will be sent

back to school teaching or to managing his wife's jewelry business. At times, however, I am forced to doubt the accuracy of my beliefs. I am afraid the Germans who are not talking as openly as they generally do about presidential elections. Then many working men have got the idea in their heads that the country's prosperity is due to Wilson's policies. The Democrats have not elected a President since 1856, when Buchanan won the battle of ballots. Cleveland was elected in 1884 by the Mugwumps and Irish Protestants. In 1892 he was re-elected by Matthew Stanley Quay, in spite of John Wanamaker and Wilson's election in 1912 came through the Bull Moose Party running Roosevelt and a dislike of Taft. The campaign has been the lamest I have ever known. Up to date I have had but five ward meetings to report in the 21st, 37th and 38th and 43rd wards, which are in my Ledger district. A Republican rally in Manayunk and another in Nicetown and three Democratic gatherings, one in the 37th Ward and two in the 43rd. There has not been much red fire or brass band use by either party.

R. R. SHRONK

Nov, 4th 1916

Dear James, May the Lord grant that four months from today the present occupant of the Washington and Lincoln's seat may step down and out. Just now there seems to be a great deal of uncertainty in the air, as to whether he will or he will not. I am afraid the labor organizations are being fooled into the belief that the prosperity of the country should be credited to Wilson's do nothing policy. The agony of his watchful waiting will be ended on Tuesday night.

R. R. SHRONK

Nov. 11th 1916

Dear James, etc

at the 60th anniversary of the Presbyterian Church Dr. Seasholes and other pastors gave greetings and Dr. Lower, Moderator of the Presbytery, who presided, was not very moderate with his talk. I thought he would never get through. How some persons do like to hear themselves talk. One thing I liked about him was his telling me before the meeting that he was a Protectionist and had voted for Hughes. The pastor who parts his hair in the middle voted for Wilson because he was a Presbyterian. I guess that clannishness helped to re-elect the misfit. I was elated on Tuesday night over the returns, but knocked down the next morning when I learned the returns had changed in favor of Wilson. One thing about him he will not spend the next four years working for his re-election. I have thought a great deal of the prayer with which the sheriff closes his election proclamations "God save the Commonwealth" and hope it will be answered.

----Yes, I suppose we will be able to endure four more years of Democratic misrule. Should the European War end next year, as some think it will, Woodrow will realize that his policy, if he ever had one, has not been responsible for the country-wide prosperity and that his eight hour law will not work. I do not see where the prosperity comes in; wages are higher than they were; so is the cost of living. Coal \$8 a ton; flour \$11.50 a barrel and other things in proportion. So that the wage earner only has the pleasure of receiving larger pay only to hand it out for his family's use.

R. R. SHRONK

Nov. 19th 1916

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Dear James,

Jacob had Esau by the throat and could make his own terms like the trusts and price-boosters have the poor today. Cold storage for preserving food was a blessing but it has been turned into a curse. Flour selling for \$10 a barral and the President who allows it. If we had a Jackson he would put the price manipulators in jail. Roosevelt told the coal barons if they did not do right he would take the mines from them. The cost of high living is somewhat to blame. It used to be that the farmers lived a simple life, now they have their homes lighted with electricity, heated by hot water or steam, have their automobiles and telephones, all of which we have to help to pay. (The selfish-minded old hypocrite! A.C.C) The producer wants to get closer to the consumer. Oil wells are plugged up to prevent and oversupply, otherwise we could have a barrel of crude oil delivered into our cellars and it would produce more heat than a ton of \$7 coal. The cure is religion in the heart.

Alph
R. R. SHRONK

Dec. 2nd 1916

Dear James,

I just received a phone message of the death yesterday of Fergus Peel, who was 75 years old on October 3rd. He died of Paralysis at the home of his son-in-law on York ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ road near Huting Park Avenue. His wife, Lizzie Harper died some four years ago last June. Fergus was baptized by Mr. Chesshire; attended regularly for a time then strayed from the fold after becoming a policeman.

----I suppose you will not have enough interest to go see the grand plotter Wilson turn the light on the Statue of Liberty. Wasn't that 8 hour law a catching bait for his re-election even though it may be unconstitutional. I give him credit for his plotting and with the Republicans had not opposed him in the passing of the measure through Congress. *Evans then!*

R. R. Shronk.

Dec. 9th 1916

Dear James, Etc

The Forecast as you probably know reprinted a Record article of mine on The Old Academy with slight revision, adding the land grant, furnished by Samuel Garrett. I learned from the grant that my great grandfather, Godfrey Shronk was one of the original trustees? I expected to see the charter printed with the land grant, but it may appear later. After the death of Joseph E. Sorber, in 1872 I was elected a trustee to fill the vacancy caused by his death, and served until I left the Falls in 1878 to live in Manayunk. At my request Dr. Evans who was secretary of the Board, read the charter ~~xxxxxx~~ at one of the meetings. It showed a certain amount of rent could be charged for the use of the building. Prior to that donations were depended upon and they came in small sums and far apart. Jerome Andrews occupied the lower floor as a dwelling. So we made him pay rent. The revenue obtained from him and the societies enabled the trustees to pay for repairing the building, water pipe on Queen Lane, and ~~xxx~~ I think the paving of its part of the lane. St. James the

Less church has sole possession now and had put up the iron fence surrounding the property. I hope the trustees exercise the necessary care so as to not allow St. James the Less to become owner.

R. R. SHRONK

January 6th 1917

Dear James, Etc

Godfrey Shronk, my great grandfather was a son of George Shronk, who I believe came from Bavaria. Godfrey had charge of Fort St. David's Club house at the Falls and was a noted fisherman. He was married at least three times. My mother's ~~xxxxxx~~ people, John Roberts and Gaior Pugh who became man and wife, came here in 1682 with colonists from Bala, Merionethshire? Wales, and settled in Merion. They were the first couple to be married in ~~xxxx~~ the ancient Merion Friends' Meeting. Their descendants became divided into two branches, Phineas and Titus Roberts. Phineas held to his property and one of his descendants George B. Roberts of the Pennsylvania Railroad turned parts of the estate into Cynwyd and Bala. Titus' property was leased and never reclaimed. That property extended along the west side of the river from the Reading Railroad's pumping or watering station down to Mendenhall's Ferry road. An effort was made in 1859 and 60 to recover it, but the original papers had disappeared from the office of the Recorder of Deeds and the movement was dropped by ex-mayor Vaux, who represented the claimants. Unfortunately or otherwise, I belong to the Titus crowd. As the property is now part of West Fairmount Park I, as a citizen of the city am a part owner.

----- the Masonic Temple (secretary) informed me that Past Grand Master Judge Michael Arnold died April 24th 1903, in his 63rd year.

R. R. Shronk

Jan. 27th 1917

Dear James, etc,

I am sending you, with this, two cartoons which Nettie clipped from the North American and the Evening Telegraph, concerning your friend(?) Wilson, the great peacemaker. To think that the American people must put up with him for four years after March 4th, unless a kind providence shall see fit to remove him. I was thinking the next taking of the census in 1920 will be under Democratic management for the first time since 1860 when it was taken under Buchanan's administration. Won't there be a scrambling of the Mickies for the positions as enumerators? In my numerous occupations I was twice appointed a census taker in 1880 by William White, in Tioga, who was removed from the superintendency just after he had made his appointments. His successor put another man in my place so I didn't enumerate that time. In 1890 I was given a division in North Penn village, principally dumb Irish and Negroes. I never had harder work in getting them to answer the necessary questions. That one experience was all I care for in that line. (So!) Mrs. Sadie Green Miller, daughter of Horace E. Green was taken to the German Hospital on Wednesday to be operated upon for a foreign growth on one of her

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breasts. She came out the operation all right. (minus the breast) Her parents are naturally worried. She is their only child. I believe she is divorced from her husband after he had been discharged from a good position with the Pennsylvania Railroad, for some unnatural crime, and so she went back to live with her parents.

R. R. Shronk

Jan 30th 1917

Dear James, etc

John Dwyer was a politician who kept the Rising Sun Tavern at what is now Broad and Westmoreland street. Shortly after you came to the Falls he was a candidate for sheriff and my father worked hard in trying to have him nominated. He did not get the nomination, but became almost bankrupt through the cost of his campaign. He later on was a partner of a man named Murphy and Martin Ulrich in building the South Street Bridge, in which he again came out financially broke. Ulrich was supervisor of roads at the time and with that and what he made out of the bridge job, bought the property on Allegheny avenue which he turned into Washington park. When I was a little boy my father took me to a funeral, I do not know whose and on the way home he drove the carriage to Dwyer's Tavern, a little yellow-washed frame structure. I never saw it again till November 1886, when I moved to Broad street from Mamayunk. Harmon Lake and I stayed in the Broad street house with half the goods. We went across the street to the Tavern to buy our supper. When I entered the barroom it seemed familiar and while sitting in the dining room I told Lake I had been there before. After thinking a while it dawned on me that it was the place father and I had stopped. I ask the waiter if the place had been kept by John Dwyer and he told me it had and seemed glad to find that I knew Dwyer. Those were the only times I was in the little tavern.

R. R. Shronk.

Feb. 3rd 1917

Dear James, Etc

What do you think of the situation our country is in with Germany? I might be mistaken but I cannot help feeling that had we had a suitable man in the White House things would be different. From the commencement of the European War I have been more in sympathy with Germany than with the Allies. It may be owing to my lack of love for England. Germany's taking care of its own interests by keeping shipsloads of munitions from being varried to her enemies is nothing more than the others would do if they could. persons who travel on munition carrying ships do so at their own risk. Wilson's appeals for humanity may be all right, but why does he not stop the shipping of munitions to kill thousands on the battle fields. He asks the people to pray for peace and at the same time encourages the sneding of means to prolong the war. We will as a nation, have to take what comes and God only knows what is in store for us. It may be that we need chastisement for our sins have been many. Look at the prices of foodstuff; coal and other commodities by which the poor for whom God still cares, are made the principal suffererds and advised that people to stand by the President. I wish we had one that was worth standing by.

R. R. Shronk

Feb. 10th 1917

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Dear James, etc

The pretty little Lutheran Church of the Redeemer at 35th street and Midvale avenue, was almost entirely destroyed by fire of unknown origin this afternoon. The edifice was built in 1909 at a cost of \$20,000. At that time the labor and material were cheap owing to the panic (during Theodore Roosevelt's term) At present prices it will take, it is thought, more than that sum to rebuild. The pipe organ was destroyed, but most of the furniture and piano were saved. The congregation met and held services in the Free Library on the opposite side of Midvale avenue. A woman walking on 35th street discovered the fire. She ran to P. H. Kelly's house on the opposite corner and had Mrs. Kelly telephone to the police station. As far as I can learn it is the first church building in the Falls to be damaged by fire.

R. R. SHRONK

Feb. 24th 1917

Dear James, Etc

Nettie got me to go to the store this morning, where I bought a dozen eggs and a pound of butter for a dollar. Potatoes cost 44 cents half peck and all other things in proportion, so that one's money melts away like a snowball on a hot stove. Most of the high prices are due to heartless speculation, but is blamed on the European War.

r. r. shronk

March 3rd 1917

Dear James, etc, etc

It looks as though the elements are protesting against re-inaugurating Woodrow Wilson to the Presidency. Picture the lean school teacher riding a mule down Pennsylvania avenue to the Capitol to be quietly sworn in. It may be in accordance with the design of providence that he should take hold of the helm of the ship of state until 1921. Let us look at it in that light and pray that he may be given wisdom and guidance.

R. R. Shronk

March 10th 1917

Dear James, Etc.,

One of the Falls murder cases was settled on Wednesday when Policeman Peter Dorsey was acquitted for causing the death of James Byrnes, on November 20th 1915. Byrnes and another man, both under the influence of drink, were fighting. Dorsey separated them, when Byrnes went for him. Dorsey pushed him off, he reeled and fell fracturing his skull and died soon afterward in St. Timothy's Hospital. (Note by A. C. The above are not the true facts. True enough, Byrnes was under the influence of drink, at the time of a fire on the porch roof of a house in Midvale avenue. He was always a good natured man, but was a nuisance to the firemen at this blaze. Dorsey, mean natured always, attempted to chase him away from the ~~scene~~ scene, Naturally Byrnes struggled to release himself from the officer's grasp. Dorsey beat him unmercifully over

the head with his club until Byrnes fell unconscious to the street, after which he was taken to the hospital. I was a witness to this cruel and uncalled beating.) Byrnes was the youngest son of the late Thomas Byrnes, who for years kept a tavern in Stehle's Corner building. He was as nice a neighbor as anyone could desire, while Mrs. Byrnes was very ladylike and obliging. The other son, (Thomas) is also a run dumb miserable fellow. I often thought of the Byrnes, Thomas Sr and Patrick . They came to the Falls in 1848 while the Falls Bridge was being built and worked, I presume as laborers, on the masonry. Later he worked in the Laboratory; marrying one of the fine-looking Irish girls employed in the laundry on Jimmy street, near the old Methodist church; one of their daughters becoming a nun. Pat Byrnes, as slim as Tom, was stout, was very proud. He was appointed supervisor of roads during Mayor Vaux' administration, and afterward went to keeping a tavern, and took an active part in Democratic politics. At that time the 28th Ward was formed out of the 21st Ward. In 1870 Billy Morison, Margaret's brother, was nominated by the Democrats for Select Council. Most of the Republicans at the Falls voted for him. I had intended to, but when I went to the polls in Stehle's corner, Pat Byrnes came to me with a ticket and said, "Robert give Mr. Morison your neighbor a vote", I could stand Morison but not Pat Byrnes, so I said, "Excuse me, Mr. Byrnes, I am a Republican", and then voted the Republican ticket. Morison was elected and served one term.

----- Dr. Seasholes gave us a fine sermon on "The Gospel". This afternoon he is going to tell the Mens' Bible Class all about the re-inauguration of Woodrow Wilson, he having witnessed the affair. Which makes me think he is a Democrat without gumption enough to acknowledge it. Tonight he will speak from a text Wilson used in his address. I am not at all sorry that I will not hear either? I do not pretend to know very much, but I know as much about Wilson as I care to know and wish I didn't know so much. I read in the papers of his going to arm the American merchant ~~xxxx~~ marine and wonder where he will find the ships. He might put a cannon or two on the few remaining canal boats which ply on the Schuylkill. I was told yesterday that the Allies will close their munitions contracts with Americans, at the end of this month. Should that happen what will become of Wilson's countrywide prosperity? Perhaps our own country might be forced into letting out similar contracts, so as to be ready for war with Germany.

R. R. SHRONK

--- March 24th 1917

Dear James, Etc.,

---Mayor Smith had policemen to leave notices at the different churches today, inviting and urging the congregations to attend the patriotic meeting to be held on Saturday in Independence Square to rally to the support of President Wilson. It looks as though we are to have war with Germany.

R. R. Shronk

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March 26th 1917

Dear James, etc

It looks like war, everybody here, even the women are talkinh of war. You and I need have no fears t tis time as we are both too old to be conscripted.

R. R. Shronk

March 31st 1917

Dear James, etc, etc

---I see by the papers that Wilson has decided to cast the die of war with the Allies. He is more of an Ass than I took him to be. He called Congress in Special Session to meet April 2nd, but hasn't sense enough to wait till it assembles. Of course he is IT and the only IT in the country. I may be very ignorant, but up to the present I have seen no reason why this country should declare war with Germany. If Wilson is owned by the English influence he should be impeached. During the Civil War the United States captured every vessel it could that brought provisions munitions or aid to the Confederates. Of course we did not blow up ships, but that too, is war. If this country goes to War with Germany it should go alone and not with the Allies. There is to be a big demonstration in Independence Square this afternoon for the benefit of the Rapid Transit Company, and incidentally to drum up patriotism. Senator Johnson, who gave California to Wilson to secure his own election, is to be the orator of the occasion. Our Mayor, one of the worst weaklings to fill the position tried to have Wilson come from Washington to stand where Lincoln stood in 1861 and raise the flag. Time eough to hold such gatherings when needed. My freat great grandfather, George Shronk, came from Germany long enough ago for the German blood to filter out. My great grandfather Godfrey americanized the name, spelling it Shronk, and yet I feel in my heart a sympathy for the Germans and a hatred for the Kaiser and a little more for his son, the Crown Prince.

R. R. SHRONK

April 7th 1917

Dear James, et, etc. ---Yes, the die is cast and war is on with Germany. What it will amount to God only knows. There is no show of patriotism here, like there was in 1861, when people hurried to respond to Lincoln's call for troops. The common people, that is the working class, are not at all enthused; they feel that it is a war brought on by Wall Street capitalists and manufacturers of munitions. With this feeling the Govern-ment can get the required number of men by conscription. I passed a recruiting station yesterday afternoon and saw a crowd in front of it but did not see a single man enter the station to be enrolled. Things are different than in 1861. ~~Men~~ are earning more money and living better so that \$13 a month and found is no inducement for them to enlist. Congress and Wilson should have submitted the question of war or no war to a popular vote. I hope and pray that the war may be short in duration and that few lives will be lost.

R. R. Shronk

April 14th 1917

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Dear James, etc, etc.,

I rode down town with ~~man~~ who thinks ex-Justice Hughes ins the happiest man in the country. He also gave Wilson credit for being a politician, claiming that he knew the present conditions were coming, but kept them under cover lest they might prevent his re-election. His policy before election or rather the credit given him of preventing war led thousands of German-Americans and cowards who were afraid to go to war vote for him. The war is on but there is no great show of patriotism or any hurry or persons to enlist. I fear our greatest trouble will be with the treacherous Germans in this country in their plotting to destroy munition and other plants.

---- I suppose you have learned of the sudden death of the great corporation lawyer, John G. Johnson, who according to the papers today, was born in Chestnut Hill, in 1841 and his father was a blacksmith. Do you remember the article written a few years ago about him by Clifford Smith in which he represented him as being the son of a blacksmith who had the old shop on ridge avenue just ~~XXXXX~~ above Ferry road? And how ~~xxx~~ he described the Falls as a dirty village?

---- According to one of the papers last evening, Morgan & Company predict that the European War will be over by the end of next December. I hope they are right in the prediction. It looks as though the Germans would be starved into submission before the summer crops, if they have any, can be used to feed them. Our Government has ordered or requested the stopping of distilling whiskey so that the corn and rye may be made into bread. That will boost the price of grog and likely prove a strong help to the temperance workers who expect to have a saloonless nation by 1925.

R. R. Shronk.

April 21st 1917

Dear James, etc.

I spoke to a young man yesterday about his enlisting. He said he didn't feel like offering himself as a target to be shot at, but should he be drafted he would do the best he could to perform the duties of a soldier.

Flag raising is again all the go in this city. I only have three to attend this afternoon; one at St. John the Baptist church, Manayunk; which will be a big affair with a monster parade of church societies; one at Tioga Methodist Church, 18th & Tioga streets; and the other at the Transit Company's car barn, 26th & Allegheny avenue.

R. R. SHRONK

April 28th 1917

Dear James, etc

I was told by Mrs. Weiland that Dr. Seasholes had an offer of \$5000 from a church in the West, but doesn't want to go there, if bent upon going the sooner he goes the better. What do you think of we Americans sending troops to help the crowned heads of Europe? And having their envoys coming

over here to play hide and seek with the occupant of the White House? If food prices go much higher we will have to learn how to eat without eating. Think of paying two cents for a white potato? That is the average cost when buying by the pound, and yet the Government is to control the food of the world so as to starve Germany and feed the other Nations. What a great magnificent country this is, and how much better it would be were it not for the sharks who are boosting the price of everything the wage earners have to have. Sometimes I think the war was brought on by a higher power to punish us as a nation for disregarding the poor and permitting the coal and other barons to corner their commodities. Some of the worst punishments inflicted upon Israel of old, was on account of oppressing the poor. Howeverm the war is on and I'm afraid it will last longer than most people think it will. The church is to hold a flag raising on Saturday afternoon when a flag will be unfurled from a 40 foot iron pole planted on the lawn of the parsonage. I do not know what exercises will be provided for the occasion. Next Sunday, William H. Sowden, supervising principal of the Forest-Breck School is to deliver an address to the congrega^{tion} on "The Flag".

---The Presbyterians, I underatand, have invited their pastor, Rev. Samuel W. Steckel to quit his job by the end of August. I do not know ~~what~~ the trouble is so far as I know him he is a pleasant sort of man.

R. R. SHRONK.

May 5th 1917

Dear James, etc.

There are so many flag raising this afternoon I concluded to stay home and get the facts by telephone. The other two besides the one at our church; the one at Pencoyd Iron works, where 25 large flags are to be unfurled simultaneously from different buildings. The ceremonies are to be held at Woodvale, Wissahickon, the one-time home of Dr. Wm. Camac, now the American Bridge Company's club house; and another at the Tioga Presbyterian Church 16th & Tioga streets, where a flag which once waved at Freeport, Ill, on the spot where Lincoln and Douglas held their famous debates before the Civil War. I looked across the street yesterday afternoon from the North American Building, to the Union League, and saw Old Glory flying in company with the English Union Jack and the colors of France, and felt how greatly honored the foreign flags were in such splendid company. They helped to emphasize the beauty of the stars and stripes, the prettiest ensign in all the world. Personally I do not like the lead of taking good American blood across the Atlantic. I am also puzzled as to how the flag and soldiers will get to the other side without being sent to the bottom by German U boats.---The flag raising at the church was a great succes, although the ceremoney had to be held in the church on account of the threatening weather. A little girl, Mary Moorehead, and Little William Sorber, unfirled the flag. Sorber is the ^{great} grandson of Joseph E. Sorber and grandson of William; his father also being a William.

R. R. SHRONK

May 12th 1917

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Dear James, Etc.,

Did you see the great French Marshal Joffre and his party? They made a five hours flying trip through our city on Wednesday so as to spend two days in New York. I did not go down to see them, but Mary and Elizabeth did. They had a fine view of the party from in front of Wanamaker's store. I saw the handsome sword presented by the people of Philadelphia through the North American. It was on exhibition yesterday in the window of Bailey, Banks & Biddle's store. A big policeman kept the crowd walking at a slow pace past the window, so one could not get a very good look. As I walked by I thought of the Sunday morning in April of 1865 when I walked by the casket containing the body of Lincoln, in Independence Hall, when no one was allowed to pause but had to move on. It was the only view I ever had of the greatest statesman this country has ever had. The wretch who shot him caused the greatest loss to the South it has ever known. Had Lincoln lived there would have been none of the Johnson drunken tomfoolery and reconstruction would have been brought about without the carpetbaggers or Ku Klux Klans.

R. R. SHRONK

May 15th 1917

Dear James, etc, etc

In your letter of yesterday you stated that Hugh Scott's father, Samuel Scott, took you into Laurel Hill Cemetery when you first came to the Falls. I have a very distinct recollection of "Sam" Scott, as he was called. In my early boyhood there were two men whom I greatly feared. He was one and the other was Silas Timbers. Just why I feared Scott I do not know, but Timbers was constable in old North Penn Township, and if I did anything wrong Mother would tell me that Constable Timbers would get me. They both lived in Cock Roach Row and I seldom went farther along the river than to the old bridge. If I would attempt to go beyond that point Scott, or his wife, Dear old Hannah, would be bound to call out "Bobby Shronk, where are you going. Does your mother know you are down here?" When I would sneak back towards my home. Mrs. Scott frequently visited my mother and would tell her of stopping me from going down along the river. When the Falls was consolidated into the city, Uncle Robert Roberts was appointed sergeant of police by Mayor Conrad. Scott, who had been accustomed to having his own way in everything defied the police to interfere with him. One Sunday afternoon he was particularly defiant, Uncle Robert came along and informed him that he was under arrest and despite his protesting led him to the steamboat landing put him on a boat and took him to the Manayunk lockup. I believe he was discharged upon promising to obey the law. From that time on he seemed to have lost spirit and never seemed the man he was before. Timbers, no longer in authority, became to me as other men, so that I no longer ~~was~~ dodged him.

---A National guardsman, watching the Wissahickon (High) Bridge, early this morning accidentally received a shot in the head from the gun of his corporal, who it appears stumbled and the weapon went off. The guardsman is in St. Timothy's Hospital and likely to die.

R. R. SHRONK

May 19th 1917

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Dear James, etc.,

I met Horace Richards today. He told me he had sold the Falls house for \$20,000 receiving a little money and a mortgage. He rents the house and has his brother-in-law, Alfred Ford, who is demented living in it with a nurse and cook and gardener. Horace's son has a bug place at Oak Lane.

----There was quite an excitement at the Falls early this morning over the burning of Woodside Park, which I am told was almost entirely destroyed at a loss of half a million. The illumination was very bright and with the sparks flying in the air, very picturesque. I understand the fire was caused by spontaneous combustion in a place where a considerable quantity of gasoline was stored and which added to the fierceness of the flames. Owing to the park being isolated the firemen had great difficulty in getting to the fire. Automobiles were pressed into service to tow the fire apparatus up the hill. The site was once the farm of Nicholas Fulmer, Jacob (Swartz') wife's grandfather.

R. R. SHRONK.

May 26th 1917

Dear James, etc,

The fire at Woodside Park was not as costly as was at first reported, and will not be much more than a fifth of half a million dollars. Despite the burning of most of the buildings the park has been in operation all week.

R. R. SHRONK

June 2nd 1917

Dear James, etc

Before beginning the sermon Dr. Seasholes spoke for quite a while on the condition of our country, particularly about the (draft) registration to be held on Tuesday, for those between 21 and 31 years, urging all to do their duty to suppress the ambition of the German Emperor, who wants to rule the world. He also urged the women to encourage their sons and brothers and denounced those who will fail to register as traitors. I am afraid there will be a good deal of trouble throughout the country on Tuesday. You remember the draft riots in New York during the Civil War. The opposition in those days was by the Democrats (Copperheads) we called them. In this crisis the Democrats are in control of the Government with a not overly strong man at the head of affairs. If there should happen to be no trouble it will be more on account of the loyalty of Republicans than from the good management of those in control. The conscription this year differs from that during Lincoln's time. Lincoln called for so many thousand men. Then the loyal states had their quota or proportions given them. This was divided among the counties and cities, wards, precincts and districts. Then came the Bounty Associations and "jumpers" in efforts to fill the quotas without a draft. In the Civil War the volunteers used to say, and some of them still claim, that drafted men did not make good soldiers. Many of those whom I have spoken of, or heard of, are opposed not so much about going into the army, as to being sent to Europe. It is a terrible thing to look at it as one may, and yet one owes

a duty to his country and ought to do all he can to preserve its honor, whether at home or abroad.

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R. R. SHRONK

June 9th 1917

Dear James, etc

---- I was happily disappointed in there being no disturbances (at the draft registrations) on Tuesday. My fear was based on what I read in the newspapers. It proved groundless as did our friend Mike Arnold's prediction, when he was a Copperhead, regarding the homecoming of the men who were in the Union Army. In his prediction he feared the men having lived a soldier's life so long would upon returning home be a burden to society; a lot of bums and shiftless mortals. When those noble heroes returned home every one I knew, quickly resumed their old time vocations.

R. R. SHRONK

June 30th 1917

Dear James, etc

The Chronicle publishes this week an article on the safe and sane fourth of July, crediting one Samuel Lawson with originating the Sunday School fourth of July picnic. I do not know who wrote the article. I have been under the impression that the picnic originated with the old Union Sunday School (at the Falls) which met in the old Academy. Perhaps the Falls got the idea from Manayunk. I have heard my Mother speak of my father's cleaning up his canal boat and taking the Sunday School on different occasions up and down the river on fourths of July, having extra horses to make the boat go fast.

R. R. SHRONK

July 7th 1917

Dear James, etc

---In 1873 our (Sunday) School held its picnic in Duhring's Woods, on the west side of the river beyond the hill on Falls road. The Methodists were at Chamonix.

R. R. SHRONK

July 14th 1917

Dear James, etc

Policemen distributed here, during the past week, blanks for all women over 15 years of age to fill out for the conservation of food, under the recommendation of Secretary Hoover. Our girls have each subscribed, but if they start to economize on the quantity or quality of the food they dish out to me, I am inclined to think they will hear a howl. I do not require very much but I want it good. It is a knotty problem that President Wilson has undertaken and I hope he may succeed in lessening the heartless graft on the part of speculators.

R. R. SHRONK

July 21st 1917

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Dear James, etc

I heard of Miss Lawney's article on the Mifflin Mansion but have never seen it. Your hurrying by the old place late at night was merely in keeping with an old practice of the young people of that time. I crawled through the secret chamber just before the mansion was torn down and have what is thought to have been a frontlet of a bridle of general Mifflin's horse. It is silver-plated, but the leather is very much gone from age. Henry Stein found it in the secret chamber when he lived in the mansion and gave it to me. I looked in vain for the secret underground passage which people used to say extended from the house toward the river.

-----Little Grace Seasholes was supposed to be lost on Wednesday afternoon, but look where they would her mother and Margaret could not find her. A little before supper time they looked up the lane and saw her walking down the hill holding to a policeman's hand. As she got in front of her home the policeman took something from his pocket and gave it to her. Running up on the porch she displayed a nickel, saying "I know a fine way of earning money for the soldiers. I earned this nickel by helping the policeman to collect papers from lots of houses". She had accompanied the policeman over his beat while he collected the signed Food Conservation cards.

R. R. SHRONK

August 11th 1917

Dear James, etc

I met a man yesterday whom I have not seen since we were boys and then had no acquaintance with him. I however, knew his father, George Minster, who owned and occupied the mansion just above the Wissahickon which was turned into Riverside Mansion. The man's name is William (Minster). He is 71 years old and lives in Germantown. I met him in the Ledger's branch office on Chestnut street, near Broad. He was ordering the paper to be sent out of town. I heard him give the clerk his name and asked if he ever knew the Minster that lived at Wissahickon, when he told me he had been born there. He knows much of the history of the Wissahickon and the Falls particularly of the families who were once prominent in those places. His mother was a sister of Jonathan Moore, who lived in the Robeson Mansion. His father ran the old flour, saw and logwood mills which you doubtless remember. Western flour coming to the Philadelphia market, he said, caused his father to abandon the flour mill, as he could not compete with the western sellers. The saw and logwood mills which stood on the river side of Ridge avenue were destroyed by fire a few years after you came to the Falls. Minster is a pleasant talker and I will get him sometime to furnish me with facts about Riverside Mansion, the original building of which was erected by his grandfather.

-----Everything here just now is centred on the draft, all police stations are used for examining the unfortunates drafted. It is a sad thing to see so many young men on the anxious bench fearing they will be forced to go abroad to fight the Dutch, and yet it is a duty every man should uphold and defend his country.

R. R. SHRONK

George P. Eldridge died at Atlantic city, N.J. on August 17th, 1917

sept. 1st 1917

Dear James, etc

---and because I had to report the drilling of drafted men in the Shibe Ball park.

R. R. SHRONK

sept? 8th 1917

Dear James, etc

---owing to the filling up of the upper schuylkill there has not been a loaded coal boat brought down the river this year. There are quite a number on the way but the channel is not deep enough to float them. The dredgers get one part open and then a heavy rain washes the coal culm, sand and cinders into the river so that the work must be repeated. The same can be said of the river between Manayunk and Fairmount. Cinders from the Manayunk mills and Pencoyd Iron works have made that part of the river almost unnavigable for boats drawing but five feet of water.

---Dr. Seasholes was one of the speakers last evening at a patriotic demonstration held in Dobson's Athletic field, in honor of the young men from the Falls who have enlisted in the Army or Navy. They, with some drafted men, a band of Scotch pipers and citizens paraded from Ridge and Midvale avenues up and down Ridge avenue and out Queen Lane to the field. Charles L. Dykes presided; Colonel Sheldon Potter, State Senator Owen B. Jenkins, and Judge Raymond MacNeille were the other speakers. After the meeting they proceeded to America Hall, where they were given an entertainment, smoker and supper.

R. R. SHRONK.

sept. 15th 1917

Dear James, Etc.

---I see that Common Councilman Benham of the Falls has been appointed Assistant Recorder of Deeds at a salary of \$4,000 a year. A good reward for obeying the powers that be.

R. R. SHRONK

Sept, 22nd 1917

Dear James, etc,

I hope the Lord will forgive you for voting the Democratic ticket. I think you did right under the circumstances. I voted part of the Republican ticket, cutting out those I could not stand, but so far as results are concerned I might have voted the whole ticket. Sunday the 23rd: This is a sad, sad day here in Philadelphia, as in other parts of the country. We are realizing some of the horrors of war. All minds today are occupied on the grave question of our boys going away. Nearly 100 left the Falls, in automobiles, this morning, to join others in the ward at the police station at

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22nd and Hunting park avenue, from where they marched to North Philadelphia station on the Pennsylvania railroad and left for Camp Meade, Maryland. There were four trains of 14 coaches each required to take the drafted men from N. Phila station, each coach carrying 55 men.

R. R. SHRONK

Sept. 29th 1917

Dear James, etc

---I, too, would sing, or try to sing the Doxology were Germany destroyed. From what the Kaiser and his men have done in the way of cruelty I think Germany should be excluded from the enemies we are taught to pray for.

----His brother, Richard Penn Smith was a colonel or general in the army during the Civil War, and is one of the officers painted in Rothermel's picture of Gettysburg, which I now think hangs in the Memorial Hall in Fairmount Park.

----After church was dismissed I called at the home of Harry Conover, to see how he was doing in his illness, and was shocked to see a mourning badge on the door. He passed away Thursday, after a long illness which grew out of a nervous breakdown several years ago. He was for many years an engineer on one of the West Falls "pusher" engines. When a young man he married Emma Sorber, the youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph E. Sorber. Mrs. Conover, a daughter (Mrs. Alfred Nelson) and a grandson, survive. The funeral will be held tomorrow and the interment will be made in West Laurel Hill Cemetery.

---(re Methodist church history) I thought of telling about one of the pastors, Rev. J. S. McGlorious McConnell, who married Lizzie Mills, and how he used to boast of preaching in a pulpit that stood over the stalls in which his father once tended horses; of the family that occupied the Mifflin Mansion and by whom he was employed as coachman, but I refrained fearing it might make some of his offspring unhappy.

R. R. SHRONK

October 20th 1917

Dear James, etc

---Falls bridge. It was at first a white bridge, owned by a corporation and was built in 1848-49. During the record freshet in the river of September 1850 the east span was washed away by part of the Manayunk bridge hitting it. The middle span collapsed in the winter of ~~1860-61~~ 1860-61 by the weight of ice formed by a heavy rain freezing. Dr. L. M. Service had driven over it a few minutes previously and had a very narrow escape. Joseph Shantz, at that time was chief commissioner of roads and had the city buy the bridge. He had a wharf built in front of his property out of the bridge timber. The new bridge was covered and painted red and it became known as "the Red Bridge". On October 23rd 1878 the middle and western spans were blown down, or rather up, for the heavy wind swept them from their abutments and piers and landed them on the east shore in front of Frank Mower's property.

No mention is made either of the Reading Company's bridge built immediately below the Stone bridge in 1893, and which is called "the B & O bridge" owing to the running of B & O trains

over it. ----I have not heard of any Liberty bond mass meetings being held in Philadelphia. In fact it is not necessary, for there are thousands of solicitors. Boy Scouts are working hard and the school teachers have been forced into the work, each teacher being expected to secure purchasers to the credit of their respective schools. I took a \$50 bond on weekly installments at the Record office and was asked yesterday to subscribe for another one. I never thought I would become a bloated bondholder, but one never knows what is going to happen.

-----the Germans seem to be gaining ground in Russia and are playing havoc with their U boats on the sea, and with their airships over England. Our church will comply with President Wilson's proclamation by observing next Sunday as a day of special prayer for the success of our Army and Navy.

---- I have always felt sorry that the Diamond Street Baptist Church had to seel its property at 31st & Diamond streets. Jews became so numerous in that vicinity that other people moved away.

R. R. SHRONK

October 27th 1917

Dear James,

(Re James R. Swartz approaching wedding) I have never been accustomed to attending weddings and have always felt that quiet weddings are best. The only ceremonies I witnessed were my brother Owen's, the day he married Margaret Binkin; and that of my aunt Jane Roberts who became Mrs. Jesse Hansell.

-----The War is coming home here in Tioga. A fine young man, Spencer Lee, 26 years old, who enlisted the day war was declared, in the Coast Defense, was accidentally shot and killed on Friday night at Cape May.

R. R. Shronk

Nov. 3rd 1917

Dear James, etc,

Sunday, (Nov. 4th) was a sorrowful day at the Falls, when the selected drafted men left for North Philadelphia station for Camp Meade. It does not look like Dr. Seaholes' prediction of the war being over in three months will be true.

R. R. SHRONK.

Nov, 10th 1917

Dear James, etc

--- I may be mistaken and hope I am, in the belief that a revolution is coming in this country. When the European war is over there will be a falling off of employment and a slump will come to all industrial plants. This will cause a drop in the high wage scale and then trouble. The Democratic tariff will be to blame for the slump which was beginning to show itself in 1914 when the war began, should the slump come. Farmers would have to pay \$3 a day for men for husking corn or picking potatoes. Neither would they get high prices for their

product, I'm afraid Mr. Wilson will see lots of trouble before he completes his second term.

R. R. SHRONK

11/12/1917

Dear James, etc

The trustees and deacons held and adjourned meeting tonight, with the result that the secretary of the trustees was authorized to communicate with Dr. Seasholes and request him to end the pastoral relations as soon as possible. The condition of the finances are such that the measure was deemed necessary. So many of the members have taken a dislike to him and his methods and remain away from the services and do not contribute and efforts to reconcile them have proved futile. Personally I am sorry the action had to be taken.

R. R. SHRONK.

Nov. 17th 1917

Dear James, etc

(re Schuylkill canal) Its decadence dates from 1870, when Frank B. Gowan president of the Reading Railway leased the canal and put on a number of company boats thus driving away the individual owners of boats. All along the river from Port Clinton to Fairmount the channel is gradually being filled up with coal culm from the mines, cinders from the mills, and other debris.

R. R. SHRONK

Nov. 24th 1917

Dear James, etc

Dr. Seasholes is going to hold a memorial service at the meeting of the Wens' Bible class tomorrow afternoon, for John Hill, who enlisted in the British Army and was killed in France, and for George E. Merkle, a member of the aero squadron who was accidentally killed in France on November 17th. Merkle married Alice K. Sorber, daughter of Wm. ~~Sorber~~ Sorber, (Joseph E. Sorber's only son). She lived with her aunt, Mrs. Harry Conover since the death of Harry. They were married the 13th of last April, two days after he enlisted.

R. R. SHRONK

Dec. 22nd 1917

Dear James, etc

we must, however, remember we are living and

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suffering under a Democratic Administration. I sometimes think if this is the sort of democracy we want to give to European nations that we had better let them alone in their devotion to monarchy. Our nation is a great one but when it comes to juggling with foodstuff and coal we might expect our uncle Sammy to go into the pawnshop business. From what little I read about the proceedings in Washington I am profoundly puzzled to know what's what. May the Lord be merciful and help us through the more than three years that remain of the Administration.

R. R. SHRONK

Jan. 5th 1918

Dear James, etc

I had a ~~thank~~ letter from Jacob during the week, in which he stated that the coal question was a serious problem in Washington. If it is any worse or as bad there as it is here I pity the people. Fortunately I had coal put in my cellar in April. I wanted ~~xx~~ a ton of pea coal to use as a binder to the egg coal and was more than two weeks getting it at a cost of \$8.10. I think I have sufficient to last me through the month of March by which time I hope Wilson and MacAdoo have the trouble straightened out.

R. R. S.

Jan. 12th 1918

Dear James,

Since president Wilson has assumed control of the railroads I make allowance for your letter not reaching me as it once did. While I think every American ought to do all he can to support the President, it seems that we are called upon to do some things that are anything but easy. Through the Government being in control of the railroads have taken off a number of trains thus reducing the conveniences of the travelers. In many instances persons are unable to get to or from their places of employment. The coal question, too, think of a man having to get the approval of a Federal officer before he can receive a ton of coal? Nearly every article of food is more or less in charge of some of Mr. Wilson's agents. I bought a dozen eggs and a pound of butter yesterday for which I paid respectively 72 and 60 cents. I eat one egg a day for supper and have it poached in hot milk with toast bread according to my doctor's orders.

R. R. S.

Jan. 19th 1918

Dear James etc,

The optician did the work at the risk of having to pay a fine of \$5,000 for working when Dictator Wilson's secretary said no work was to be done. This is the land of the free! If German autocracy is worse than Wilson's democracy I pity the Kaiser's subjects. Here we ~~we~~ are in midwinter with nearly every industrial plant shut down, the railroads all tangled up and thousands of willing workers compelled to lose the wages that would help to buy coal and high priced eatables. Wilson should have started after the coal barons last spring, when they kept back the usual shipment of coal. My dealer informed the girls in April that coal would be scarce and high and advised them to lay in the usual supply. How thankful I am

that they did. The cold, weather lasted so long in the spring that we were obliged to use quite a lot of the coal. We have enough to last us well into if not through February, by which time it is hoped the Wilson order may bring coal to the dealers.

R. R. S.

Feb. 2nd 1918

Dear James, etc

---we are still suffering here in Philadelphia from the coal famine, which I do not believe has been helped by the Democratic Administration. It is no longer a question of coal to the consumer and the dealers have taken advantage of that fact, some persons think the price will soar to \$15 a ton before the winter is over. I have enough fortunately to last me well through this month, but I pity those who have not. The laying off of so many trains on the railroads put travelers to great inconvenience and does not seem to have relieved the congestion of traffic. Dealers do not seem to know what price to ask for all kinds of foodstuff. I bought a dozen eggs this morning, which cost me \$1.75; 75 cents for the eggs and a dollar bill which I think came out of my pocket and fell on the floor. At any rate it has gone. I went back; looked over the floor, but did not find the bill. I see by the papers that December and January were the most severe in 98 years, which was the winter of 1815-16. 1816 was what became known as "the summerless year". When a killing frost kept all kinds of vegetables and fruit from maturing. My mother used to tell me what her mother and grandmother told her of hardships people had to endure. Her grandmother has a large farm on the west side of the Schuylkill and being a provident woman had stored up the year before vegetables, fruit and grain, and had ^{only} ~~enough to exist on~~ for herself but some to give to the poor. I hope we are not to have a repetition of that summerless year.

---what do you think of a baptist church deacon having a ton of coal put in his cellar on Sunday morning? Awful, isn't it? But I couldn't help it. I ordered a ton week before last, thinking I might have to wait as others have and didn't want to run out. So it came this morning just as I was getting ready to go to the church at the Falls. It may be selfish in getting the coal, while so many are without any, but I have fortunately enough to last me through March. (Reader, what do you think about it being selfish?)

R?R?S?

Feb. 16th 1918

Dear James, etc

I may get a letter from you before supper time today, owing to the demoralized conditions of the country, including the mail service. I have given up expecting anything until it comes. ~~xxxxxx~~ The coal problem here has been turned over to the police. Anyone wanting to order a ton of coal must go to the nearest police station, order it from the house sergeant, who will send a policeman to see if there is any coal in the cellar. He reports back to the sergeant, who if all

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is well, telephones to City Hall, where the one in charge notifies the nearest coal dealer to send the coal. The driver, however, has to take a look in the cellar, before delivering the coal. One good thing about this arrangement is that it prevents anyone from hoarding coal. Another governmental ~~xxxxx~~ decree has gone out regarding chickens. No one is allowed to sell a hen or pullet until the end of April; only roosters may be sold. This is, I presume, to increase the egg crop.

R. R. S.

Feb. 23rd 1918

Dear James, etc

---I have often thought it a pity that Dr. Evans who was a pretty shrewd man, did not tie up the money he left to Griff, Sam and Sadie, so they could use nothing but the interest. I do not know just how the money disappeared but was told that a great deal of it was used to keep Brooks (Sadie's husband) from being sent to the penitentiary. He and Hubbard were involved in some crooked financial transaction and Abbott went to his rescue. That Dr. Horace Evans generally regarded as a nephew of the elder Doctor has always been a mystery to me, as I never knew ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ of Griffith Evans having more than three children, the Doctor, Mrs. Richards and Mrs. Abbott. Horace Smith used to say the relation between the senior and junior doctor was closer than Uncle and nephew. He used to go to the old Doctor now and again and get a ten dollar bill not to write the family history. Old Griffith was credited with having two families; one in the city and the other at the Falls. Perhaps young Dr. Horace was a child of the city family. Abraham Johnson's pretty sister, Mary, was married to an Evans related in some way to our Dr. Horace Evans. Perhaps you remember her, or did she leave the Falls before your arrival in that once quiet and neighborly village?

R. R. S.

March 16th 1918

Dear James, etc

---How long the war is to last is as uncertain today as it was three years ago. Germany has Russia beaten; Italy almost down and out; France is at her wit's ends, and boastful England is almost on the verge of giving out. While I have no sympathy for the Germans I am at a loss to know how their country holds out, or form where it gets its resources of men, ~~xxx~~ food and munitions. The Kaiser or his head general is as great in marshaling his forces as ever Napoleon was, so far as my knowledge of the latter is concerned. I sometimes think that God has a controversy with the nations; our own included; and may be using the Kaiser as he used the old warriors of old to accomplish his purpose. This government of ours is all right in theory, but for some years past it has drifted away from Lincoln's idea of "a government of the people, by the people and for the people" our Senators are more interested in corporations than they are in the people. This is shown in their action on the liquor question in which the brewers seem to have come out victorious. I am afraid Lord Kitchener's prediction that the war will last 15 years may prove true ~~xxx~~ but hope it will not!

R. R. S.

March 30th 1918

Dear James, etc

---Tomorrow, according to the edict issued at Washington, I expect as a good, loyal and obedient citizen of this great and free republic to push my watch and clocks one hour ahead to help win the war. I think it will be as helpful in saving the war as the fishing of Bob Evans' boy in a tub of water was successful. I admit my profound ignorance as to the clock setting and thus far have been unable to find any one to put me wise. Perhaps you may be able. If you are, kindly let me know the whys and wherefores. One man told me yesterday he intends to move the tube in his thermometer down a peg or two, so that then the temperature rises to 90 degrees in the summer it will only register 70 degrees and he will be able to keep cool. From the terrible slaughter which has been going on in France for more than a week, it looks to me as though Kaiser William still has the best of that terrible game of chess. And that were it not for our getting into the game he could smash every historic building in Europe and I am a little afraid the Americans will not be able to check his destructive career. Sometimes I wonder if his claim that God is with him can be true. In the Bible mention is made of God using cruel army leaders to chasten His people. Perhaps He is chastening us and other parts of the world? Where the Germans get their supplies is to me a mystery. Here in this full country we are suffering for pure bread and have to eat dear knows what for bread.

R. R. S.

April 6th 1918

Dear James, etc,

You are certainly against the German Kaiser as are all other true Americans. If peace ever comes I hope he and his helpers may be brought to justice and that suitable punishment will be given them. Nothing short of death would fill the bill. While so many horrible things have been done to women and children by the Germans, there are some things they are charged with doing that are impossible. For instance, I saw an account in the papers of a woman in Belgium standing at a steamship pier weeping. When asked why she was crying she drew her handless wrists from a muff and said the Germans had cut off her hand. Unless they gave her immediate surgical treatment she would have bled to death. Other stories have been printed about children having their hands cut off. Most, if not all of these I believe to be false. R. R. S.

April 13th 1918

Dear James,

Your large and highly interesting letter came this morning in time for my breakfast. You size up the administration about right. That son-in-law (MacAdoo) is in his own mind doing wonders. The latest I have heard is of his purpose of taking a ride, a free one I presume, over the railroads on the country for special observation. He ought to begin by taking a trip to Wayne Junction on the Reading, so that he might be able to explain why such long lines of empty

freight cars has been standing on one of the freight tracks for more than a week, while the cry is for cars which are needed to ship produce. (Note by A.C.C. This was one of the most favorite arguments of the Republicans against Government ownership of railroads, at a time when they were attempting to point out all sorts of inefficiency on the part of the Federal Railroad administrators. In the first place all of the the great railroads of the country were built on Federal subsidies, and in the second place at the time of the World War, ~~xxx~~ all of the Federal administrators were experienced railroad men of years standing; the particular one in Philadelphia having been brought here from Chicago, which is a far greater railroad centre than Philadelphia, to straighten out the traffic snarls caused by the company managers.) There is a good deal of talk, ~~xxxxxxxx~~ quietly expressed, owing to its being unlawful (another exaggeration) to speak against the President the way the Government is spending money down at Hog Island. (This project was operated on a Congress-passed "cost plus a percentage" plan and therefore each contractor ~~xxxxxxx~~ done his best to boost prices) where carpenters are said to be paid \$9 a day with double pay for working on Sunday or Saturday afternoons. I heard of a case yesterday, a laborer went down to the island to see the work was asked by a man if he were a carpenter, and on being told he knew nothing about the trade, said "Can you saw a board?" "Yes, crooked!" "Well, get tools and go to work, I'll give you \$5 a day to start on." All this lavish expenditure while everyone is urged to purchase Liberty Bonds to help Uncle Sam does not seem consistent.

R. R. S.

April 27th 1918

Dear James,

---When Nunneviller & Company started the Weekly Guide, a 28th Ward paper, in 1885, and made me editor of it I proposed writing the ministers of the different churches to contribute articles, when Nunneviller said "Do not do it, ministers are too narrow-minded to write newspaper articles, but like to air their own particular notions and get up controversies", so I dropped the subject. Our beloved David Spencer, when pastor of the Roxborough Baptist Church, wrote frequently for the Chronicle and got so that he undertook to dictate to Mr. Milligan how he ought to run the paper. That was the beginning of the enmity between them that lasted until Mr. Milligan died. You remember the trouble Spencer had over the burning of the two church edifices in Roxborough and an attempt to burn the parsonage. Milligan always held that Spencer knew more about the fires than he would acknowledge, but has sense enough not to say so in print, or he would have had a suit for libel.

----Yes, the women are now going about growling about the food orders of the Government, re-elected Wilson, because he "kept us out of war". They, like ourselves, did not know that he allowed that slogan to be used for his re-election while knowing the country would be in the war. In that I give him credit for being a shrewd politician. May the Lord lead him so he may get us out of the war with honor to the country.

----During the service an impressive incident occurred. Binkin went up in the pulpit just as the second hymn

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was about to be sung. Dr. Seasholes then announced that brother Edward Auer was present but could not remain as he had to leave for his camp. The services were suspended, Auer walked to the lower platform; Dr. Seasholes came down from the pulpit, grasped the hand of the young soldier and made a brief but cheering address after which all filed by and shook his hand and bid him goodbye. Then the services were resumed. Four youngmen of the Falls left yesterday and 21 others will leave tomorrow morning.

---I had recently been made a member of Falls of Schuylkill Lodge of Odd Fellows and took part in the parade then held for the 50th anniversary. I wore a new black silk hat and a new black suit, both of which were ruined by the dust from the old Ridge road turnpike. I was a sorry sight when I left the procession as it was going east in Girard avenue. That was my last showing off in an Odd Fellows parade. The Falls Presbyterians will greet their new pastor, Rev. William B. Cooke at the Wednesday meeting. He will assume charge on Sunday as regular pastor.

R. R. SHRONK.

May 4th 1918

Dear James, etc

---New York would have a great task to have surpassed the slow city of Brotherly Love here yesterday in the Liberty Loan drive. It has been a long time since I have felt such a thrill of patriotism as I did while down town yesterday afternoon. The air seemed to be charged with patriotism at many points the ~~xxxxxx~~ along the streets men, women and children, soldiers and sailors were engaged in the drive, pleading or singing. I was sorry I did not have the wherewithal to respond to each appeal. Things, as you say, look a little more hopeful, and I hope that incarnated devil of Germany may speedily meet his Waterloo and like Napoleon be driven into exile or like Haman of old be hanged on a gallows fifty cubits high. One German was arrested on Thursday night at 19th and Columbia avenue, for sedition of speech. He boasted that "the Kaiser is supreme and will get them all, Americans included". A motor cycle policeman heard the statement and placed the foolish Dutchman under arrest. He was handed over to the federal authorities yesterday.

----As I walked down to Ridge and Allegheny avenues after the service I was impressed with the patriotism of the people of the Falls. In many windows are displayed service flags, Red Cross emblems, and the Third Liberty Loan flags. In quite a number of the homes. The latter was duplicated at the Falls Bank, where the clerks were kept busy until after 10 o'clock last night receiving subscriptions to the Liberty Loan. Never since the Johnstown flood have the people of the Falls shown such a united interest as that shown in getting money to help Uncle Sam fight the war.

R. R. S.

May 11th 1918

Dear James, etc

---As I was looking through some of my church sketches on Thursday I came across a written copy of a little article our old friend, Horace Smith, wrote for the Sunday

Mercury. Perhaps you will remember the female evangelist, Gailie Wade, a practical nurse, who came to the falls in 1871. She took a liking to my father and coaxed him into letting her have our old front yard to hold open air services. He not only consented but had mother throw open the front room for the choir, Methodists and other particiapnats to sit in. He also put a flight of steps, that had been used at the Lincoln and Johnson 1864 mass meeting platform. On the steps he placed a stretch of carpet. The article may be interesting so I copy it: "A sensation was imparted at the Falls of Schuylkill last Sunday week. In the open air, on the third ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ front doorstep house of Brother D. Shronk an assemblage was addressed by Sister Wade. For the ocassion the steps were carpeted in Brussels. The Sister was followed by Brother Jack Brooks. The sobriquet of this sweet brother is "Jumping Jack, of Simpsons Mill". Should our Methodist brthern keep up until Christmas their present demonstrativeness the devil might as well pack up his valise." ---Sunday Mercury, November 12th 1871.

Poor Horace, how he enjoyed a laugh on his best friends. He kept away from father for quite a while after the article was printed.

----The old falls was in its glory yesterday afternoon when the Patriotic Citizens' Committee held a "monster parade" in celebrating the falls "going over the top" in the Third Liberty Loan drive. I passed through the Falls on a trolley car on my way home from Roxborough and found the place decorated with flags. The affair was a splendid success. The Methodists' new minister, Rev. F. A. Gacks (pronounced G-acks) presided over the patriotic exercises in Dobson's Field. The Falls started out to raise \$50,000 in the bond sale and sold twelve times that amount or \$600,000 worth. Our poor little church's quota was \$1700. It sold \$5000. So you see we are in the swim. In thinking of Horace Smith I remember an article he had in the Mercury a year or so before the one previously mentioned. It was about Brother Joseph Shantz attending the church of St. James the Less, and how he had a spittoon placed in his pew so he could bite away at solace or fine cut tobacco during the services.

R. R. S.

May 18th 1918

Dear James, etc

---I was glad you showed yourself to be a good quitter by stopping writing when you did. It reminded me of one of the few instructions given me by the old French artist, John H. Richard, when I went to work for him in 1871 at coloring the birds of the Pacific slope, after my failure as a store-keeper. The first day I was with him he said, "Shronk, this is art and no matter how much the demand might be for having it done, just as soon as you feel tired, stop. If you do anything after feeling tired it will be work, not art " I have often thought of that piece of advice or instruction and wondered how it would do to apply to all vocations.

R. R. S.

May 25th 1918

Dear James, etc

----This war has developed the fact that most men can be bled and yet live. There is a drive on here this week for the War Chest Fund. A house to house canvass is being

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made to have the people pledge at least one day's pay a month for a year. The fund is to be divided between the Young Men's Christian Association; Young Men's Hebrew Association; Red Cross Society and the Knights of Columbus. The latter seem the more zealous. It is all right for those having a fixed income or a big bank account, but when a fellow is a newspaper man, with a day every now and then that brings not a penny to his coffers, it is no easy thing to be patriotic. I am a little skeptical as to where all the money goes. I heard through a reliable source of a school teacher getting a leave of absence so she could work in the Red Cross movement and is receiving much better pay than the teacher brought her. And yet one ought to do all he can for the comfort of the boys who have been taken from their homes, perhaps to die in a foreign land. For why? To settle a family quarrel between the crowned heads of Europe. At the breaking out of the war I experienced the belief that the best way to settle the trouble would be to turn the crowned heads out in a ten acre lot and let them fight it out to a finish. We are in the war and should do all possible to help the Government even though we might not be in the heartiest accord with those running the Government. The railroads, the coal, and sugar markets, and may before peace comes take charge of the marriage bureau by dictating who a man or a woman should court. There are 35 young men to leave the Falls on Monday. If it keeps up there will be none left.

---St. Bridget's Church is going to hold a patriotic demonstration and parade next Sunday afternoon in connection with the unfurling of a service flag to which our (Baptist) congregation had been cordially invited to attend, a notice to that effect having been read in church this morning. Another notice stated that in compliance with President Wilson's proclamation, a community religious service will be held on Thursday, Memorial Day, in the Presbyterian Church. Rev. Wm. B. Cooke, who was installed on Thursday evening as pastor, will preach the sermon.

R. R. S.

June 1st 1918

Dear James,

---So you think I am mistaken regarding the war in Europe? I hope I am, but it is hard for me to swallow all that comes from Washington. Perhaps in the great national crisis we ought to all become Democrats. I believe in standing by the president but some of his subordinates, if they are such, seem to be running things to smash. Think of men being arrested for sedition of speech because they express their opinions! The jails and forts would have been crowded during the Civil War had Lincoln imprisoned all those who upbraided him. (and probably R. R. S. would have been put in jail if Wilson had done the same)

R. R. S.

June 8th 1918

Dear James, etc

---I agree with all you said in your letter about the Germans and think that whole the war is on that every German ought to be closely watched for too many of them are traitors. Think of friends flashing lights to the U boats. All such caught should be strung up without ceremony instead of being

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out in prison and kept to be pardoned.

****- In referring to the conditions of the world, Dr. Seasholes in his sermon, asked "Can any good come out of the war in which we are now engaged?" and predicted that out of it would come a man greater than any in history. I expected to hear him say "Jesus Christ", but he named Woodrow Wilson. Than I felt like saying "Bah!" Perhaps I am prejudiced or haven't sufficient brain to recognize the greatness of the man in Washington. The war is not yet over and it may last till after Wilson completes his second term, when a man, a Roosevelt, or some other able leader may have charge. But I must be careful what I write or say lest I be held for sedition of speech and punished. I hope to live to see the next presidential election, providing Wilson does not get Congress to extend his term indefinitely, to see some of the campaign literature.

R. R. S.

June 15th 1918

Dear James, etc

---With the U boats cruising along the Atlantic coast and sinking inoffensive ships God only knows, how or when the war will end, or how many of our good young men will have to sacrifice their lives. I am in hopes that the Republicans of the country will come together before the November election so as to elect a Republican Congress so that in case the war might end this year something might be done to protect this country. The present tariff law had closed up so many industries prior to the breaking out of the war in Europe and all the prosperity of the country now enjoys is owing to the manufacture of war munitions. I am tired of the abominable stuff called "War Bread" and hope the day will soon dawn when we can go back to bread made entirely of wheat flour. After this month we are to do without beef or have it dealt out by the Government dictation, 20 ounces to a family each week. It will not affect me personally for I have not eaten an ounce of beef for years. One doctor cut it out of my diet and when the present doctor who looks after me restored it I found it distasteful.

R. R. S.

June 22nd 1918

Dear James,

Are you not glad to be single? Think of a family having to have a sugar card with an allowance of three pounds a month for each member! This is Democracy with a vengeance and I use more than half a pound a day. I like things sweet.

R. R. S.

July 6th 1918

Dear James, etc

---More of our boys left this morning for some military camp. I wonder if we will live to see the end of the war? Some are predicting that it will not last through the coming winter; that it will be impossible for Germany to hold out. We have heard all these or similar predictions before. A year ago, in his Wednesday evening talks on the Book of Revelations, Dr. Seasholes showed "beyond the shadow of a doubt" that the war would end with the then coming January according to the 42 months of Scripture. When the end didn't come, as he

predicted, he said he was misunderstood. The only hope I have of an early ending is in the possibility of our electing a Republican Congress in November. I think that would get the Kaiser to thinking. We will want MEN to run this nation after the war is over; Wilson said a good deal about preparedness while running for re-election. Someone ought to preach preparedness for the coming peace to avert the worst industrial panic the country has ever known. We had an alien parade here on the Fourth, but not as large as the one you had in New York. I hope they are all as loyal as they are taken to be, especially the Germans. I often think of my father, how he used to quote from Washington's Farewell Address, "Beware of foreign influences". It is a good thing to heed the sign seen in the country "Beware of the Dog" even though the dog doesn't bite. Robert Morison in his talks used to say, "put none but Americans on guard". What I'm trying to get at is that we shouldn't trust the foreigners any more than we have to.

R. R. S.

July 20th 1918

Dear James, etc

---The people of this glorious old country are learning under this superbly wise administration what Liberty means; that it means obedience to any order the president may think best the issue and how to live on a lot of baked punk called bread. We see placards and signs all through the city "Save a loaf of bread a week and help win the war". Or "Save Meat". It seems to me that no underfeeding the people here would help beat Germany. The bread we get here in Tioga is simply awful. I do not attempt to eat it unless it is toasted and then a small piece is all I want. We cannot buy flour without buying an equal amount of other cereals. My daughter every now and then bakes a "50-50 cake", which is composed of one half wheat and one half rice flour. Which is all right, but would hardly answer for regular fare. I may be getting impatient anyhow I am tired of being told what to do; what I shall eat and I hope the accursed war will soon be over. Our boys are doing nobly in France and I hope no political pull will be made to check their good work. A veteran of the Civil War told me yesterday that he couldn't understand how our men, who a little more than a year ago were following their respective vocations and are now able to show the French and English soldiers how to fight. They will I think, show Dutch Bill that he is up against a condition such as he never dreamed of before many more moons. I hope there are enough of our men over there to keep up the drive.

R. R. S.

July 23rd 1918

Dear James, etc

---I hope the weather is cooler over in France where our boys are doing such noble work. I do not think the Germans expected such a show of bravery and hope they may be only beginning to find out how Americans can fight.

R. R. S.

August 10th 1918

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Dear James, etc

--- I have just come from the Falls. I went over to get an account of the unfurling of a service flag at Calumet and Cresson street. After securing the facts I walked down Jimmy (now Stanton) street and was surprised at the change in the population; garlic and not codfish tails would now abound on the ash heaps if any were permitted as they once were on that Irish street. Most of the talk I heard from the people as I passed was in the Italian language. Old St. Biddy still looms up prominent and is kept in good repair.

R. R. S.

August 18th 1918

Dear James, etc.,

Mrs. Seasholes phoned me this morning to call at the parsonage before going to meeting. She wants to give me Dr. Seasholes' resignation and to request that it be acted on as briefly as possible. Owing to a rule of the church it was necessary to call a special meeting. This was done by the deacons and the meeting will be held next Sunday after service. The resignation is ~~dated~~ dated August 15th 1918, and reads "To the members of the Falls Baptist Church. Dear Brethern and Sisters, I hereby tender my resignation as pastor of the Falls Baptist Church to take effect at the end of my fifth year, October 1st 1918. May god's blessing be upon your work of extending the Kingdom of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ. Fraternally yours, Charles L. Seasholes."

R. R. S.

August 24th 1918

Dear James, etc,

---After prayer meeting on Wednesday night I walked to 35th street below Clearfield to attend a Catholic wake held over Mrs. Harry Furlong. She was Maggie McCarty before her marriage and a member of one of the best Irish families at the Falls, and was a daughter of Patrick McCarty, one of the first residents of Jimmy street and who helped to found St. Bridget's Church. Poor old Father Cullen preached McCarty's funeral sermon and about all he said was to reiterate over and over again, the sad fact that "Patrick McCarty is dead. Ittëll you he's dead". Johnnie McCarty, Maggie's oldest brother, was drafted during the Civil War. His friends got up a raffle and raised the required \$300 release fee. Johnny took it to the United States Marshal's office, where he was exempted on account of having varicose veins in his legs. Returning home he told his wife of his good fortune and said he would turn the money over to some other drafted man. Then his wife replied, "Divil a bit will ye. You'll hand it over to me and I'll put it with the other \$300 I have, which you know nothing about, and we'll buy the house we are living in". And she did. It was a small plastered frame house built and once occupied by Alexander McBride. So Johnny got a home instead of going to war.

R. R. S.

August 31st 1918

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Dear James, etc

There was some little excitement at the Falls this morning, when the High Bridge Hotel, at Ridge avenue and Wissahickon Drive, was found to be on fire. You will remember the building as the home of the late Jonathan Moore. You may also recall that Jonathan Robeson, the hunchbacked Quaker who lived in it, James Dobson bought the mansion and property in 1864 and had it fitted up for his residence and occupied it until his present home was built. I do not know how badly the building has been damaged. I believe it has been vacant for some time. It was erected long before the revolution.

---This is a quiet and safe Sunday here owing to the edict issued by the autocratic administration at Washington stopping all unnecessary running of automobiles to save gasoline. How much we are learning about what is to be governed! I am waiting to hear of an embargo being placed on Marrying. That seems to be about the only realm in which the Wilson power has not been felt.

R. R. S.

Sept? 7th 1918

Dear James, etc,

---If our men and the other Allies do not soon succeed in ending the war I do not know what will become of this country. We see everyday, the effect of the drafts that have been made, in the scarcity of men. What will it be when the next draft take men from 18 to 45 years of age? Women are running elevators, clerking in stores, acting as telegraph agents in railroad stations, and filling many other positions, which a short time ago were held exclusively by men. I hope you and I who are beyond draft age will ~~not~~ live to see the end of the war and what will happen. Then, if a Democratic congress is in control ---. We have both lived through some pretty bad financial and industrial panics, but I fear the worst is yet to come, unless we elect a strong Republican congress in November. Some tell me I am a croaker, but I cannot help it if I am and sincerely hope I am mistaken. (Just what made this old bird believe that God made Republicans better persons than Democrats is more than I can figure out. A.C.C.)

R. R. S.

Sept. 21st 1918

Dear James, etc,

I had a trip to Manayunk this morning to get a photograph and sketch of a young Polish soldier who was killed in action in France. He was not 17 when he enlisted in the early part of the last year, and is one of too many who have lost their lives for humanity. What an awful account will await the Kaiser at the Judgment Seat! No wonder he is reported to be losing his nerve.---at the Falls on Thursday evening, two boys, William Ford, 11 years and James Farrell, 12 years, were in the carriage house of John Dobson's residence. Farrell's father

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is watchman of the premises. He, the varrell boy, took his father's revolver from a closet and while showing the Ford boy how it worked, accidentally shot him through the head, from which he died a short time later on the Samaritan Hospital. ---Singer told me of his receiving a letter from his grandson, who is in the thick of the fight in France. He is a tank man, and told in his letter of seeing the air ships up in the air, and bombs falling all about them, and that he was so busy he hardly had time to write. He also spoke highly of the work of the YMCA. I believe when the war is over that those who survive will come home better men from the experience and discipline.

R. R. S.

October 13th 1918

Dear James, etc

I received no letter from you yesterday. It was Columbus Day. Because he discovered some island 426 years ago and because there are many Italian voters in this country, the business-smashing policies of the Jackass administration at Washington ordered no mail delivery, with the result that no letters are delivered from Friday afternoon to Monday morning. Wilson will want those voters if he runs for a third term. What do you think of his peace parleying? He is the only man since the Crucifixion of Christ who thinks so much of himself as to intimate in his talks "a greater Solomon is here". I have always felt a sympathy for the under dog, but I never believed in allowing the whipped dog to dictate terms.

R. R. S.

October 19th 1918

Dear James, etc

---Philadelphia is working hard towards filling up its quota of the Fourth Liberty Loan. I think Woodrow's letter to "the Imperial Government of Germany" had a chilling effect on the sale of the bonds. I am looking forward with great interest to the November elections hoping that the Republicans may succeed in electing a majority of the Congressmen. If they do not and the war in Europe is brought to an end, God healp the Commonwealth. With the munitions manufacturers clsong their mills, there will be the greatest panic this country has ever known.

R. R. S.

October 26th 1918

Dear James, etc

---Adam Mettinger passed away shortly before six o'clock last ~~xxxxxxx~~ evening. He will be buried on Monday afternoon in Mount Peace Cemetery, after a quiet service at the house. The health board prohibits public funerals. (On account of the Spanish Influenza epidemic)

R. R. S.

November 3rd 1918

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Dear James, etc,

---Twenty six years ago today, it snowed. It was the day after Cleveland's second election. Then came the business slump, when things got so bad that a soup kitchen had to be opened in Manayunk and the factory hands turned their dinner pails into soup kettles. (I wonder what old Bob would have thought of the fact that the afterwar slump was stalled off by Wilson's ~~Republican~~ successors, Harding, Coolidge and Hoover until 1930-31, and the country financial and industrial institutions collapsed and the populace elected a Democrat, Franklin D. Roosevelt, to save the nation; and that every move that Roosevelt made was venomously oppped by the prudish and hate-engendering Republicans. A.C.C.) On Tuesday a new Congress will be chosen. May the Lord incline the people to vote for Republican candidates, so that, should the war end a suitable protective tariff may be enacted. I think of an address I heard Senator Penrose make in 1915, when our present figure head was running for Mayor (Smith). In his speech the Senator told of his canvassing the slate and how he saw the industrial plants shutting down and the workmen starting out in search of employment. Then came the war and huge contracts for munitions which started up the factories. He predicted that a direful condition would prevail if the war would cease while the Democrats had control of Congress. The present tariff law is ruinous to American industries. (Since that day in 1918 when Old Bob moaned over the tariff law, the people have learned that that old and time-worn Republican bugaboo of high tariff is and never was anything but a myth, used to enslave the American workmen to lower wages.)

R. R. S.

November 10th 1918

(The Day before the Armistice with Germany, etc)

Dear James, etc

---Dr. Otto A. Rath, who came to the Falls about 40 years ago and assisted Dr. Beary and who married a daughter of Jacob Hess, received a telegram from the War Department this morning notifying him that his son(George) had died in France of pneumonia. Dr. Rath is a German, but I believe is loyal to this Government.

R. R. S.

November 16th 1918

Dear James, etc

Like yourself I, too, was awakened on Monday morning by the noise of whistles and like you I joyfully turned over and took another nap. I did not go down town to see the jam, my sight being bad I was afraid to venture in the crowd lest my glasses might be jolted off. I have always enjoyed crowds and delighted in working my way through them, but that day is past. Perhaps I lack the energy and strength I once had. I like your terms of treating with the Huns. Extermination is what they need. The cowardly Kaiser should be treated as the King, the prophet Samuel treated. Have you

noticed how meek and sheepish the Germans here look and act since the Armistice? They look as though they are ashamed of their nationality.---When the news came of the fall of Richmond in 1865 I went to the church to help Lewis Mettinger ring the bell. We were joined by Mr. Chesshire, sergeant of Police John Cameron, and several others. We fastened a rope to the bell, tongue and made a great noise.

---I suppose Hoover will be after us to save more food so as to help feed starving Germany and there is no telling what the Great and Mighty Wilson will do towards lessening the suffering of the defated Huns. I am thankful that a Republican Congress was elected but sorry it will not go into power for a year from the first Monday in December, so as to prevent the industrial panic that is sure to come if there is a sudden stopping of munitions work.

R. R. S.

November 23rd 1918

Dear James, etc

St. Bridget's priest, Father Bernard Gallagher, died on Thursday. He will be buried Monday morning after the Archbishop absolves him.

R. R. S.

Dec. 7th 1918

Dear James, etc,

I heartily agree with all you said about the Great Royal Highness Wilson that is on the seas, to give the people of Europe a chance to see what we make Presidents out of. In my mind not a very good sample, but the first that took upon himself the important mission. If he crosses the briny deep in safety I hope his wife will keep him from making a bigger donkey of himself than he is. I am glad Philadelphia is not on the route he took to start his self-imposed voyage. Perhaps that is why our city escaped the snow storm that I am told visited New York the day after he sailed. (Fine Christian gentleman, was Bob! A.C.C.)

Dec. 21st 1918

Dear James, etc

----I was pleased in learning of our DEAR President purchasing a wreath from a Paris florist and placing it personally on the tomb of Lafayette. That is the noblest thing he has done in my estimation.)

R. R. S.

Dec. 14th 1918

Dear James, etc,

---I wish Lake was alive today. You know he was an old-school Democrat. I wdld like to hear his opinion of Wilson's trip to France. I feel sure it would be interesting. If there was anything Lake detested it was ostentation.

---I have not put my eyes to any strain trying to read what accounts the papers have given of his trip. Neither have I tried to read his ORATIONS, which if you have noticed, slobber over with sincerity, a word that seems to stick in his majestic brain.

R. R. S.

DEC. 28th 1918

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Dear James, etc.,

---Wilson is having the time of his life in merry old England. Think of an American president escorting an English Queen in to dinner! Wonder he wouldn't be willing to annex the United States to Great Britain. Perhaps he is sorry Washington licked the blooming crowd, of course the honors heaped upon him and his second-hand wife (shronk himself married a widow, under somewhat clouded circumstances, too. A.C.C) are intended for this country, which could get along without them. How glad I was ~~glad~~ when I heard of you going ~~with~~ to dine with your friend Mrs. Leech, and that you have such a friend and hope you may live to enjoy each other's company many a year, I would have liked to have seen the coming in of the fleet of war vessels. It must have been an inspiring sight. Even such an event could be pulled off while the great thinker, Wilson, is away from home.

R. R. S.

January 11th 1919

Dear James, etc.,

--I am again sorry you did not have a chance to see Dr. Evans, so as to get his views on Mr. Bray (the new pastor of the walls baptist church). We took him as we found him without investigating his life and I feel we have made no mistake.

so
----Have you become/disgusted with the lordly Woodrow as to make no mention of his great doings in your letters? I see by the papers that he cabled his regrets to Mrs. Roosevelt over the sudden death of her illustrious husband, the greatest man, in my estimation, the world has produced in recent years.

R. R. S.

January 18th 1919

Dear James, etc:

---so you think the airships have come to stay! I have never seen but one and that was Hamilton who brought his ship over from New York through an arrangement with the Public Ledger. They pass over Tioga daily, but beyond the limit of my vision. When I saw Hamilton circle around in the air and then light on the ground I felt that great things were coming to us in time.---yes, it looks as if Prohibition was coming to the country; that is as far as legal enactments go, but will prohibition prohibit the sale or manufacture of liquor?

R. R. S.

Feb. 1st 1919

Dear James, etc:

---I will try not to say too much again about our Royal president, fearing that mention might awaken bad feelings within your breast.

R. R. S.

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Note: James G. Swartz was about 15 years old when he first came to the walls in 1855. He was 80 years old in 1919

March 22nd 1919

Dear James, etc:

---William Martin Birkmaire is a fine young man, six feet four in height, and is a son of Robert Birkmaire whose sister was the wife of William Whartenby.---Singer and his son, Charles, are happy men because their grandson and son, Charles, came home from overseas on Friday. He was home on a brief furlough and had to report back to Camp Meade, Md yesterday. Edwin Singer told me that the grandson said the war was too horrible to talk about.----Jennie Reed told me her mother was born on March 1st, 1840 and is just three weeks older than you (?)

R. R. S.

April 27th 1919

Dear James, etc,

Everything here is victory Liberty Loan. They had a large demonstration at the walls last evening in which Mrs. Bessie Dobson Altemus and her Emergency Aid aides took part.

R. R. S.

May 10th 1919

Dear James, etc:

I had a call during the week from Miss Lulu Righter, a daughter of John Righter. She came to get information of the Stritzell family, her grandfather who had at one time a cooper shop at Wissahickon. As my knowledge of them is limited I could give her but few facts. The only Stritzell I knew was George Stritzell, a shouting Methodist, who for a time lived at the walls with his brother-in-law, Lambert Shuster, and worked with him at coopering in the laboratory. Miss Righter's great grandfather was a member of Captain John Levering's company of Roxborough, in the Revolutionary war.

R. R. S.

May 17th 1919

Dear James, etc

--We had a great day here in old Philadelphia on Thursday over the parade of the Iron (28th) Division of returned soldiers. Cars, steam and trolleys, were packed and walking home from town became popular, if not a pleasure, to many people that afternoon. I do not believe there will be such doings again for many years here in Philadelphia, unless His Royal Highness Woodrow the first deigns to come home by way of this city, from his wonderful trip abroad. I think he is the limit of gigantic gall (Poor Old Bob--a dyed in the wool bitter ender. If he had lived to see this day, March 15th 1939, when Europe is again in turmoil because the sore-headed G. O. P. caused the United States to stay out of the League of Nations, when entry into it would have given it the backbone to frustrate Hitler, Shronk would probably

deny that the Republicans, such as Henry Cabot Lodge and Hiram Johnson had anything to do with the mess that the world is in)

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R. R. S.

May 24th 1919

Dear James, etc:

Death of Robert M. Laycock, Manayunk reporter in Tioga, and of Charles K. Sorber, at the Falls.

R. R. S.

Dear James, etc:

May 31st 1919

---Perhaps you have heard of the death of Frank Morison's wife. She passed away on Monday night, after a long illness. She was, you are aware, the last and youngest of five sisters, Jennie, Mary Ann, Elizabeth, Sarah and Susan Harper; all splendid women. When a young woman Jennie died; Mary Ann was married to Richard Reed; Elizabeth to Fergus Peel; Sarah to John Garrett; and Susan to Frank Morison.

R. R. S.

June 7th 1919

Dear James, etc:

(Re the telephone) I was talking with a friend a short time ago when he said during the Centennial Exposition he asked the man who had charge of the telephone exhibit how far he thought one person could talk with another over the phone. The demonstrator replied he did not want to exaggerate but thought they might carry on a conversation over a distance of two miles. He did not exaggerate, for today talks are made from Boston to San Francisco. (Note by ACC I wonder what Old Bob would think of oceanic and transoceanic sea phone talks; or of the marvels of short wave radio transmission with television coming into use?)

----Do you ever come across William Moore Smith, who I believe was named after William Moore Smith who donated the land in 1816 on which the Old Academy was erected in 1819?

R. R. S.

June 21st 1919

Dear James, etc:

The trustees of the Old Academy at the Falls are arranging to celebrate on Saturday, July 12th, the Centennial anniversary of the building. The anniversary will be on the 13th, but as the churches are all expected to take part, the celebration will be held on the 12th.----The Falls seems destined to again be without a newspaper as The Forecast has suspended publication. The Chronicle since it went under the new management (Northwest Church Federation) has paid no attention to the Falls, which I think is a mistake.---Dr. Service began practicing at the Falls in 1850. My mother was his first patient, and my sister, Elizabeth, was the first child he brought into the world. His wife always called her "the Doctor's first baby".

R. R. S.

October 4th 1919

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Dear James, etc:

So you saw King Albert of Belgium and his suite! I care little for nobility but I would go a good ways to see him for the noble stand he took against the Germans. ---Riverside Mansion, which for years was a den of iniquity, has been torn down by the American Bridge Company, and the grounds leveled off for an athletic field for employees of the Pencoyd Iron Works. The mansion was built in the early part of the past century by Peter Robeson, for his daughter, whose daughter Mrs. George Minster occupied it when I was a boy. Her husband ~~was~~ was the proprietor of the old grist mill which stood on the east side of Ridge avenue on the lower side of the Wissahickon Creek. He also ran the saw mill and logwood mill that were on the upper side of the creek west of Ridge avenue. I used to go to the logwood mill just before Easter, when John Sheetz, the manager of the mill would give me a paper bag filled with logwood to dye eggs. Every Thursday I had to go to the gray grist mill for a quarter (or 28 pounds) of flour and didn't that bag get heavy before I had arrived at my home with it!

R. R. S.

October 11th 1919

Dear James, etc

---I was glad you had an opportunity to do honor to Cardinal Mercier, the Belgian hero.

R. R. S.

October 25th 1919

Dear James, etc:

--We are having a great time here over labor trouble and sugar famine. Everything is soaring in price: 86 cents for a dozen eggs and 90 cents for a pound of butter. I went on a sugar hunt this morning and was fortunate enough to secure two pounds at two different stores. The third store I tried had none. Only one pound is given in any store to each customer. We will have to wait until next March a year before getting rid of the abominable Administration at Washington, unless the Lord calls the Chief Disturber to his reward.

R. R. S.

November 2nd 1919

Dear James:

Miss Mary Schofield as she entered the church this morning gave me the sad news of the death yesterday afternoon of Mrs. Elizabeth Scott, wife of our old friend, Hugh Scott. She was formerly Mrs. Dunkerly, and I think her first husband was killed in the Civil War. Her maiden name was Elizabeth Whitaker and her brother, William, left her the house on Queen Lane. Sometime ago they moved to Hugh's smaller house on Haywood street. She will be buried on Monday.

R. R. S.

Nov. 15th 1919

Dear James, etc:

---In the letter I received on Monday you asked

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me to tell you who Judge Arnold's wife was. Her name was Covington, but whether Elizabeth or Louise, I cannot tell. Both of them were fine looking women, half-sisters of the late Dr. Service. One married Arnold and the other Dr. Stockton. Which is which I do not know, but think Mrs. Arnold was Louise. They had a brother, Jacob, who disappeared about the beginning of the Civil War. The last I heard of Mrs. Arnold she was somewhere in Virginia.

R. R. S.

Dec. 6th 1919

Dear James, etc

---I was glad you happened to be at the Union League on Thursday to receive the sad news of Dr. Seaholes' death from Harry Binkin rather than through my letters. So you had a chat with James Dobson. I have not met him for a long while. Mr. Bray asked that the church give him a recommendation and look for another pastor. He said unless he is given better interest he would sever his relations with the church.

R. R. S.

Dec. 13th 1919

Dear James, etc

Harry Bentley, over 30 years a manager of Dobson's Mills, died this week. Of late years he was in the wool business on Front street. Twelve weeks ago he was run over by a motor truck at 15th & Market streets, and was recovering, only to have a relapse and died.

---Dr. Christopher Frame, of Roxborough, died on Monday morning of heart disease. In 1884, during the Blaine and Logan campaign, he was a political speaker of note.

---Miss Elizabeth Peltz died at 11 o'clock last night. She was in her 88th year. Mary Peltz (Mrs. Henry Weiland) is the last survivor of their old and large family.

R. R. S.

JANUARY 17th 1920

Dear James, etc.

Poor Mr. Abbott brought about the improvements on what was then Fairview avenue (lower Ainslie street). General Thomas got the best of him. Do you remember the fight Thomas had with John Dobson? It was in 1872 on the eve of an election. Thomas, a Democrat, was addressing a meeting held in the yard of ~~xxxxxx~~ Tissot's Hotel. In the course of his remarks Thomas said something that Dobson did not agree with, at which Dobson yelled out: "You are a damned liar!" Thomas, who was a large man, ceased speaking and lurched in the direction of Dobson to attack him, but instead got knocked down before peacemakers could interfere. The next day a constable came out from the city with a warrant for Dobson's arrest. Someone told the constable that the man he wanted worked in Simpson's Mill, whither he went and arrested a John Dobson, a machinist from Manayunk who was himself a Democrat. Notwithstanding the mistake the Manayunker was hauled off to the city and locked up. I believe before the error in the matter

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was finally settled the Falls Dobson paid the Manayunk Dobson liberally for the trouble he had been put to.----Wehn Dr. Evans gave Griffith Abbott and Horace Richards the last fronting on Queen Lane, Grif, according to his Uncle showed great enterprise by erecting a row of dwellings on Sunnyside avenue. He lost the row and the property. Horace held on to his land and it increased in value and Charley Sorber sold him an additional lot every once in a while. The last heard of Grif was when he was clerking in a Boston book store. I did not blame his wife for leaving him, even if there was no other woman in the case.

R. R. S.

[Note: The letter dated January 21st 1920 was the last one written personally by Robert Roberts Shronk---on account of badly failing eyesight. From that date on until his death in 1921, he dictated his letters to his daughter, Nettie Roberts Shronk. A.C.C.)

Feb. 8th 1920

Dear James, etc

The Mrs. Hannah Johnson mentioned in the clipping you sent me, is a person that I have been unable to identify. The North American, in a brief article, stated that she was born at the Falls of Schuylkill, January 6th 1818, but failed to give her maiden name. The only Benjamin Johnson that I have known in the Falls died about 40 or more years ago and was nearly 90 years old. He was known as "Uncle" Benny Johnson and lived in a little frame house in the woods at the end of Bowman street. His wife was Nancy Garrett. After her death her sister ~~XXXXX~~ Mrs. Sarah Hutchison kept house for him, and her son, John, a brother-in-law of Edwin Singer, inherited the property.

---Mr. Bray told me of the death of our old friend, Hugh K. Scott, at his home, 176 Haywood street. He will be buried in Leverington Cemetery tomorrow. He died of old age, following a heart attack two weeks ago. His is survived by a daughter, Mrs. William Jones, and a granddaughter, Elizabeth Jones. He was an unusually proficient carpenter by trade.

R. R. S.

Feb. 22nd 1920

Dear James, etc:

M. A. Ferris, the flour and feed merchant of Ridge avenue and Queen Lane, died on Friday after a long illness.

R. R. S.

March 7th 1920

Dear James,

---you also wished the date of John Dobson's death. He was buried on June 30th 1911. I have no record of his death and tried to find out from his brother, James, but he couldn't recall the date.---I had a talk with Mrs. Weiland

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(Mary Peltz). All she knows about their old home is that it was built before the Revolution and that there were bullet marks in the window shutters, but she does not know how they came to be there.

R. R. S.

March 14th 1920

Dear James: etc,

---Did you know Robert S. Smith, who lived in the old Henry Hill mansion known as Carlton? He was buried yesterday afternoon. His brother, Cornelius Smith, died last fall. They had a sister who married one of the Newhalls, but she died some years ago.

R. R. S.

April 4th 1920

Dear James, etc:

(re Frank Corman of Roxborough who was largely responsible for founding the Wissahickon Baptist Church) Corman's wife, Mary Jones, a daughter of Captain Charles Thomson Jones. (grandmother of Mrs. G. Lloyd Wilson)

R. R. S.

April 11th 1920

Dear James, etc.

--What is your opinion of having Herbert Hoover for the Republican candidate for President? I would be pleased to cast my vote for him and would like to know what you think of him. There is no doubt the present Big Man in the chair would be willing to serve his country another term.

R. R. S.

May 2nd 1920

Dear James, etc;

Had I my sight I would like to accompany Dr. Mills on his hike along the East River Drive, from Robin Hood valley. I suppose he is acquainted with the old Robin Hood tavern and its surroundings. Just below the tavern, at what is now the entrance to Fairmount Park (below Huntingdon Street) was an old lane known as Wendenhall's Ferry Road that led to the river. You remember Mansley's old rope walk on the west side of the Schuylkill at the lower end of Cookskey. The lane, on that side of the river, ran up the hill to Chamounix and down into what was Bennett's Hollow and transversely across the hollow to the bend in what was afterwards known as the Falls Road, the latter having been opened in 1850.

---Miss Estelle Reed is the daughter of Richard Reed and the granddaughter of Mary Ann Harper Reed.

R. R. S.

May 23rd 1920

Dear James, etc: ---Mrs. Singer, who, you know, was Josephine

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Porter, is recovering from a serious attack of pleurisy. She has been an invalid for years.

---Rev. David Spencer (one time pastor of the Roxborough Baptist Church) was born in Leicestershire, England, May 23rd 1839. He came to Germantown in 1850. His father Charles Spencer, was a textile manufacturer.

R. R. S..

May 30th 1920

Dear James: etc.

You will find in the Chronicle a notice of the death on May 21st, of Harry P. Wills. He was born at the Falls 63 years ago. He was engaged in the oil business and for a number of years had resided on 12th street above Lehigh Avenue. He was a brother of Dr. Charles K. Mills. Harry, the last time I saw him, could not tell me whether his brother Jim was living or dead. He had gone to Los Angeles, California, several years before and had not been heard from. A relative of Jim's first wife who was Ann Root, had told me prior to meeting Harry, that Jim had died in California.

----There will be a grand demonstration at the Falls this afternoon. A memorial service for the boys of the late war. There will be a parade over several streets to Dobson's Field where the exercises will be held.

R. R. S.

June 6th 1920

Dear James, etc,

On Thursday, my sister, Margaret, of Germantown buried her husband, Charles Young, he having died on Monday.

R. R. S.

June 27th 1920,

Dear James, etc

It must have been young Bergdoll's (Grover Cleveland Bergdoll, the draft dodger of 1918) who with a man named Psota bought the Mifflin mansion property from Sam Winpenny in 1853 for \$7000 and converted the old barn into a brewery. My father had sold the property (as an agent) to Winpenny the same year for \$3500 and James Clark who had owned the place was so happy over the deal that he gave father \$50. Our church and St. Bridget's Church had each been offered the property for \$3000 and each had refused the offer. St. Bridget's afterwards secured part of the property and built their church. At that time the Mifflin property extended beyond the Norristown Railroad and included what was known as McMackin's Dam.

R. R. S.

August 1st 1920

Dear James, etc,

Your letter giving an account of the growth of locomotives was very interesting. At the time of the Chicago Exposition they took the old locomotive "John Bull" over the

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Pennsylvania Railroad. Nettie and I spent most of the day at North Philadelphia station waiting to see it pass. You remember, of course, the old locomotives "Hercules" and "Atlas" that used to be housed on the Reading Railroad at West Falls. They were wood burners and when the large "Pennsylvania" with its four immense wheels on each side, and the "Phoenix", almost as large, took their places and were run by Richard Yahn and John Major, people thought them wonderful. Large as they were they were nothing compared to the modern locomotives.

R. R. S.

October 3rd 1920

Dear James, ----a demonstration at the Falls over Kelly and Costello (winning Olympics rowing contest)----

----as far as this house is concerned there are four votes for Harding and the whole Republican ticket. (after berating and condemning Woodrow Wilson for eight years, Bob and his kin voted for the despicable and weak kneed Harding who was controlled by unscrupulous Harry Daugherty and Albert B. Fall, resulting in the Teapot Dome oil scandal and proving Harding to be the worst president the nation ever had)

R. R. S.

October 10th 1920

Dear James, etc:

---It might interest you to know how I became acquainted with Father Fox, ~~xxxxxxx~~ early pastor of St. Bridget's Church. Shortly after he came to the Falls I bought a shot gun and took it out one day to try it. At School Lane and Gypsy Lane, a large bird perched on the topmost bough of a high tree on Powers' place. I stood on the upper side of the lane, shot at and missed the bird. Then I heard "Ha! Ha! Ha!, that was a fine shot!" I looked around somewhat indignant and found the speaker was the new priest. He looked very dignified in his long frock coat and high hat. He carried, as he always did, a heavy hickory cane. I explained to him that the gun had just been purchased and it was the first time I had tried it, and that I was not surprised in its not carrying the shot far enough to kill the bird.

He said, "That's a good excuse!" and I told him I would reload the gun and let him try what he could do with it. I handed him the gun and he gave me his cane. We walked along School Lane a short distance, when a Tom Tit lit on a blackberry bush. I told him there ~~xxx~~ was his chance. "Oh," he said, "That is too small a bird". I told him the smaller the target the better the marksman that could hit it. He then shot at it, and killed the bird. I dragged it out from the briars with his cane and handed it to him. He said, "poor little thing, it was a pity to kill you!" He then said if I did not want it he would take it home, as he was practicing the art of a taxidermist. He put the bird in his pocket, gave me the gun, and took back his cane. From that time to his death we were warm friends.

When you asked me to try and get a copy of the little book his predecessor Rev. James Cullen had published

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on "Baptism" I asked him if there were any of the books in the parish library, as I would like to have a copy. He said he did not know, but if there was one in the parish he would get it for me. More than a week later he met my father on the street and told him to tell me to call at his house, he wanted to see me. Father went home and said to mother: "What in thunder does the catholic priest want to see our bob for?" I had some explaining to do when I arrived home. I went to the priest's house that evening and got the book and gave it to you.

The time when Mr. Chesshire had a course of lectures and it was decided to give two tickets to each of the pastors in the neighborhood I asked for two for Father Fox. When I gave them to him he said he felt greatly honored and while he would not be able to attend the lectures personally he would be represented by worthy men of his parish.

R. R. S.

October 17th 1920

Dear James, etc,

---what do you think of Sam Riddle, Lizzie Dobson's husband, and his horse "Man-o-war" which won a five thousand dollar gold cup and a purse of \$72,000 from the Canadians? Did you read how Mr. Riddle when he received the cup filled it with water and gave the horse a drink! The papers say he refused an offer of \$400,000 for the horse. There is to be a dinner in the Astor House in honor of the victory. Would not our old friend, John Dobson, be tickled over having such a horse in the family? (Note by A. C. C. Even though John Dobson was known to be a horse lover, I doubt whether he would have liked to see his money spent for a race horse. Sam Riddle, of Glen Riddle, and his mills were very much on the rocks until John died and left most of his money to his daughter.)

---Miss Jenny Reed has disposed of her dry goods store, which is now occupied by a person named Brown as a florist shop. Jenny still occupies the dwelling part of the house, but is going to move into another house on Queen Lane.

R. R. S.

October 31st 1920

Dear James, etc.,

I never knew Otis Wood, but I am glad you met him, for what you wrote of the meeting and his relationship to the Smiths awakened in me many pleasant memories. I have often wondered what his wife's full name was, presuming the "pepe" was a nickname. I can see her with her light hair and spit curls. Her sister Belle, I think, was the prettier of the two. I remember when she met with the accident on the railroad, and if I recollect aright there was no station on the Norristown railroad, only an open shed on the west side of the railroad a short distance below Queen Lane. While I can remember the accident I cannot recall what year it happened, can you?

The two girls, with Richard P. and William M. were the children of Penn Smith's second wife. You said they were

relatives of Arnold's. Mrs. Arnold, I believe, was twice married. I know there was a young woman named Coughland who died at the hotel when I was a schoolboy. I believe she was a half-sister of Mike Arnold. While I knew the Smith family I do not ever remember seeing Mrs. Smith. When we moved to Broad street, next door to the Masonic Home, in 1885, among the residents of the home was an elderly gentleman named James Master, of the family for whom Master street was named. After we moved to Tioga Mr. Master called to see us and once, in the course of our talk, I happened to mention the falls of Schuylkill, when he asked me if I had known Richard Penn Smith, a particular friend of his. He then told me that Smith had married a sister of John Kneizel, who at one time kept the Falls Hotel. I have often wondered whether Mrs. Arnold and she were sisters.

-----John R. Scott, a cousin of the late Hugh K. Scott, and one of the ~~xxxxxx~~ pillars of the Methodist Church, is the only one our real old friends that I occasionally see. He is older than I, is a widower and lives in the house in which Lewis Shronk lived for many years, on the Laboratory property.

R. R. S.

January 3rd 1921

Dear James, etc,

Dallas Peltz and his brother, Dr. Philip Peltz, did not know of their Aunt Mary Weiland's death until notified to remove her body from a ward in the Pennsylvania Hospital. They said they were three days in locating the grave of their Uncle Henry Weiland, in a churchyard at Milltown, Bucks County, Pa. They will bury here beside him on Wednesday.

R. R. S.

January 16th 1921

Dear James, etc:

In regards to the Peltz affairs it seems to me to be a mix-up. I was always under the impression that the family was well-to-do, but not wealthy. Elizabeth, poor woman, practically died of starvation. She would not eat butter, eggs, meat or sugar because they were so dear, and lived principally on toast bread.

The morning Dr. Philip Peltz and his brother Dallas came to see me they told me that their Aunt Mary Weiland owned a ten-acre lot up in Bucks County which was thought, together with her interest for a year in her sister Elizabeth's estate, would more than pay for her funeral expenses.

---At the church Dr. Saylor is occupying the pulpit. Why they do not call him for the permanent position I do not know.

R. R. S.

Feb. 20th 1921

Dear James, etc:

Did you see the departure, on Saturday, of Rev. Dennis Dougherty, Archbishop of Philadelphia, when he sailed from your city to Rome where he will be made a

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Cardinal? Mayor Moore called and congratulated him on his promotion.

R. R. S.

Feb. 27th 1921

Dear James, etc

--before I receive or send another letter Wilson will be an ordinary citizen. I hope Harding will be a success.

---You will see by the chronicle that the church last Sunday, gave a call to Dr. Saylor.

R? R.S.

March 6th 1921

Dear James, etc.

---I am glad we are once more under a Republican Administration and that we have a man in the white house who is able to cope with any issue that may arise. (Poor old sob. He didn't live long enough to see what a mess Harding made of things.)

----You will notice in the chronicle of a notice of the sudden death last Sunday of Samuel Abbott Boardman. Perhaps you remember his mother, Sarah Boardman, who was my half sister.

--My nephew just phoned me that Dr. Saylor has accepted and will begin his duties as pastor at once.

R. R. S.

The last letter signed by R. R. S. was sent on April 3rd 1921.

April 19th 1921

My Dear Mr. Swartz,

I want to tell you how deeply my sisters and I appreciated the beautiful tribute you paid father last Tuesday. We hope the exertion of coming on from New York to the service did not retard your ~~xxxxxxx~~ recovery from your recent illness. I am enclosing a letter received from Dr. Mills and which I thought would interest you. I am so sorry his sight has failed. Two years ago when at the old Academy celebration, he told father he had the last glasses that would help his sight.

I also send you the notice of the funeral service, from Wednesday's Ledger. In the editorial in last week's Chronicle there are two errors. I shall not mention them to the editors but want to tell them to you. Father did not telephone the papers on Wednesday night. I did it at his dictation. At 10.30 o'clock I had finished and he said goodnight to me. A half hour later he was taken with a chill, and while unconscious all day Thursday did not leave us until 6 o'clock in the evening when he simply fell asleep. It is so hard to take up the threads of life again.

Whenever you feel able to write us we would be very glad to hear from you and if at any time when in the city

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you could come out to see us, we would all be glad to welcome
you.

sincerely yours,

Nettie Roberts Shronk.

Chronicle 5/10/1895

—With the exception of the carpet weavers all the employees of John & James Dobson's carpet and plush mills, resumed work on Wednesday morning. When the gates were opened the operatives in the other departments walked quietly through, all seeming glad of the opportunity of starting to work again. A few of the weavers mingled with the other employees in front of the gate, but in no wise interfered with them, nor endeavored to dissuade them from returning to work. The weavers held a meeting in the afternoon in Chamounix Hall, but the result was not given out.

As the mills were started up by order of the firm it is thought that other weavers will be employed should the strikers persist in their refusal to return to work by the time the material is ready to be woven.

Sept 13, 1895

James Dobson, of John & James Dobson, manufacturers of woollen goods, said on Wednesday:

"Under the McKinley law," said Mr. Dobson, "this country manufactured 75 per cent. of the woollen goods consumed by it, as against 25 per cent. manufactured abroad and imported. To-day we are making 35 per cent. of the home consumption and importing 65 per cent. of it. The effect of the new Wool Tariff law seems to have been to transfer the bulk of the industry in this country to Europe." *Mianayunk Chronicle*

Oct 11, 1895

—Those who were fortunate enough, last Friday evening, to be present at the sixth anniversary of Miss Ann Dobson's birthday, would be perfectly willing to have the event happen at least once a week. Shortly after the lights blazed forth in her father's (Mr. William Dobson's) residence, in the old Cadwallader mansion on Scott's lane, near the Norristown Railroad, the guests began to arrive, each being received by the little hostess who was as pretty as a picture in her dress of white. To tell just how the evening was spent, with its vocal and instrumental music, its jelly conversation, merry games and hearty congratulations, would require more space than I command. The occasion, of which the little lady's father has every reason to be proud, will be long remembered by the following who were among those present, Dr. Hall, Master Hall, Mrs. Alfred Snowden and daughter, Misses Nettie and Bertha Mitchell, Bessie Snowden, Lizzie Shronk, Edith Greenwood, Maud Dirkin, Lillie Griffith, Florence Wooley, George Mitchell, Fred. Greenwood, Robert Wooley, Mr. and Mrs. Angel Greenwood. There was a plentiful supply of all kinds of seasonable refreshments, to which full justice was done.

R. R. S.

January 31, 1896

—The fire at John Dobson's Blanket Mill last Friday morning, of which the first printed account appeared in the CHRONICLE of that date, wrought about \$25,000 worth of damage, the two upper floors of the 4-story structure being pretty well gutted, and the second floor was badly damaged. The burned mill, 90 by 120 feet, was used for the manufacture of cloth and blankets. The first floor is used as a fulling and gig room. On the second are weaving, gig and burling departments. On the third floor, carding and spinning were done, while the upper floor was used exclusively for weaving. Much machinery on the two upper floors is ruined, while on the lower floors considerable damage resulted to the stock and machinery by water. The origin of the fire is unknown, but it is supposed to have been caused by spontaneous combustion. Mr. Dobson carries his own insurance.

The work of repairing is being pushed forward as quickly as possible, and is expected to be completed in a month or six weeks. Hardly had the firemen ceased squirting water on the building, on Friday morning, before Mr. Dobson put a force of men at work clearing away the debris. Considerable of the machinery, which at first was thought to be totally ruined, can be repaired.

Since January 15, 1891, when the great fire destroyed the carpet mills fires have been frequent at Dobson's Mills. February 16, 1892, the clock mill was destroyed, together with "Battery Pa's" muskets, used in 1862 and 1863 to help repel Lee's army from Pennsylvania. Since then the eastern part of the Blanket mill and the south portion of "Sebastopol" were partly destroyed.

Chronicle R. R. S.

Unique Demonstration in Color.

There is now on exhibition in the West window of John & James Dobson's establishment, Nos. 809 and 811 Chestnut street, a strikingly colored affair arranged as if ready for the floor, and which represents what might be called the latest triumph in the making of carpets. In this instance it is asserted that Philadelphia has succeeded in eclipsing any effort made in the same direction, even when the famous mills of Europe are taken into consideration.

The carpet shown in this window is a perfect blaze of color. The ground-work—solid, even, perfect—is bright cardinal, and is bordered by an Egyptian design, in which harmonizing gold is conspicuous. The real beauty of this piece of weaving, however, lies in the absolute evenness of then one solid color. It is said that this is unique in itself, as carpets of a single color are rarely produced entirely free from some defective strain or uneven tinting.

This perfection of coloring is a secret process, controlled by the Dobsons, and may well be considered a triumph in the art of the dyer. Those who have studied the beautiful work of the Gobelin will at once appreciate the rare uniformity of color that marks the Dobsons' carpet.

This is not the only example that can be seen in the establishment. In fact, on one of the floors there is a display of these monochrome carpets, in which 30 positive colors have been secured, including royal blue, bottle green, indigo red, copper, apricot, peacock blue, old blue, baby blue, rose and other favorite tints. The color has been applied to a weaving that shows an extra heavy pile which has strong firm backing similar to a Royal Wilton.

All these exhibits were made in the Dobson mills, at the Falls of Schuylkill, and if they were displayed abroad would undoubtedly open the eyes of the European makers. Huge rolls are unwound, and, although hundreds of yards come into view, the solidity of color is never broken. This is something which carpet manufacturers claim has never before been absolutely secured.—*Record.*

"Mr. Dobson's Disclosure."

An editorial from the New York Tribune of Monday, April 13th, with the above caption, shows which way the wind blows in the estimation of some prominent leaders of popular sentiment, and is well worth reading as a tribute to the far seeing intelligence of our near neighbor, Mr. James Dobson, of Falls of Schuylkill. Says the Tribune:

Mr. James Dobson, the well-known woolen manufacturer of Philadelphia, who is now, as he ever has been, a Republican of great influence, gives an entirely new explanation of the Washington conference which he attended. It was not designed to promote a new party, or a bolt from the Republican Party, and Mr. Dobson says, in emphatic words: "No other party for me. No, sir; I am a Republican, and I believe that the Republican party is the best as the most available agency to accomplish public good." Why, then, did he and others go to Washington to confer with the silver bolters? His own declaration is of importance:—

"Whatever interpretation may have been placed upon the conference, that was not its purpose. The original idea, as it was broached to me, was to show the silver Senators who had blocked the passage of the Dingley Revenue bill that higher customs duties are of as much consequence to the mines, the sheep, and the lumber of the West as to the mills and factories of the East. It seemed worth while to make an effort to convince the silver Senators that they were only injuring the material interests of their States, without advancing the cause of silver, by holding up the Revenue bill. Why, there were several manufacturers invited to the conference who do not favor bimetalism."

This statement is entirely consistent with the fact, now very well known, that several manufacturers who were present flatly disavowed the next day any sympathy or accord with the silver Senators and their purpose, while others are known to have been present who are emphatically opposed to free coinage. But Mr. Dobson's disclosure of the real purpose of the manufacturers—the purpose which they were led to suppose was the only object of the conference—exhibits in a stronger light than ever the dishonesty of those who contrived the conference with deliberate intention to misrepresent it, and afterwards did falsify its character and action. Mr. Dobson himself, though exceedingly earnest in urging the restoration of silver to use, does not believe in free coinage by this country without agreement with other countries, for he says:—

"These results, in my deliberate judgment, can only be accomplished, first, by higher tariff duties, which shall furnish the running expenses of the Government; and, second, by the remonetization of silver, by an international agreement, if possible."

The word "only" and the subsequent remarks of Mr. Dobson entirely exclude the idea that this country by separate action can fix the relative value of silver. He goes on to say that "England is ready to join us as soon as we make an effort to bring it about;" that "all the members of the Government wish to see bimetalism restored throughout the world," and that they are ready to "reopen the India mints and to open negotiations with other Governments to restore the relative stability of the two metals." Whether he is mistaken in this or not, the belief he holds is given as the basis of his efforts to "remonetize silver by international agreement," and not by separate action. It follows that the position of Mr. Dobson himself has been absolutely misrepresented by the silver men, who have pretended that he was in accordance with

the silver bolters.

It is only just to Mr. Dobson to say that his argument for restoration of silver to monetary use is altogether more forcible than has been made by any silver Senator or journal. It presents points which deserve consideration hereafter. But the immediate question is whether a sensible demand for separate free coinage in this country shall be presented as a condition without which the wool-growers of Montana and Utah and Colorado, and the woolen workers of the Eastern States shall not be permitted to have needed protection. That line of action is not only condemned by Mr. Dobson, but it was precisely the course which he attended the conference to protest against and prevent, if possible.

His picture of the prostration of great industries is in itself a terrible arraignment of the bolting Senators, who had the power to pass a bill giving material, though not complete, relief, and who have obstinately refused. Mr. Dobson's payroll was \$136,000 per month in 1893, and it is now only only \$60,000. Not half the people, he states, who were working full time with good wages in Dolan's mills in 1893 can get any work at all there now. The *Textile Manufacturer's Journal* shows that out of 42,287 employes in the woolen mills answering circulars, only 23,206 are now at work, or 64 per cent., the payrolls also showing an average reduction of 13.8 per cent. since 1892; and similar results are shown in other branches of the woolen industry, in dress goods, carpets, blankets, yarns, and knit goods. What the silver bolters have done for the wool-growers of their own State the *Tribune* has already shown.

BRUSSELS, April 20.—The bimetallic conference called with the view of paving the way to international negotiations on the subject, assembled here to-day.

Delegates from Germany, the United States, Great Britain, France, Austria, Russia, Belgium, Denmark, Holland and Romania were present.

Chronicle 6/12/1896 Rep. News 3/16/1937

Germantown Telegraph Oct 9/1931 124

James Dobson Takes Hold

Mr. Jas. Dobson, of the firm of John and Jas. Dobson, Falls of Schuylkill, took hold of Schofield's Economy Mills last Monday morning and will be most likely to run the establishment for the good of all concerned. If the employees know on which side their bread is buttered they will co operate heartily to make the enterprise a profitable one both to themselves and their employer. The fact gave great pleasure to our storekeepers when it became known.

Last evening Mr. Dobson delivered an address on "Money" to the members of the Twenty-first Ward Republican Club.

Oct 9 - 1896

—Mr. William Dobson gave a party on Monday evening in honor of his daughter Ann's birthday. The residence on Scott's lane was one of the happiest for the time the Falls has ever known. Lots of young ladies and gentlemen were present and games of various kinds were played. There was plenty of music and the tables were loaded with refreshments, to which full justice was paid. The "birthday" came on Sunday but the party a day later. When the party broke up everybody felt as though it was too long to wait for a full year to pass before a similar gathering can be held.

**MRS JAS. DOBSON
87 YEARS OF AGE**

On Tuesday, March 22, Mrs. James Dobson, widow of the late carpet manufacturer of the Falls of Schuylkill, will celebrate her 87th birthday.

The role that Mrs. Dobson has played in the development of "the Falls" is no less shining than that of her recently deceased husband.

While of a most retiring nature, this lady has been back of practically all public movements of a charitable and churchly character, in the neighborhood in which she has so long resided.

In the greatest of life's vocations—motherhood—Mrs. James Dobson stands among the leaders. There may be times when the kindly old lady will look back through the long span of years and remember with pride the meritorious achievements of her husband, of her children and her grandchildren, with recollections, too, of the hours of anxiety that she passed through during the illness or misfortune of any member of her household or any of the other thousand and one cares that come to every mother, no matter what their station in the early scheme of things.

Mrs. Dobson, as Mary Ann Schofield, married James Dobson in 1862 and is the mother of five daughters, all of whom are still living in or near their old home. All of them are well known as social leaders in Philadelphia, as Mrs. Bessie Dobson Altemus Eastman, Mrs. Thomas J. Jeffries, Mrs. Richard Norris, Mrs. John C. Norris and Mrs. Arthur Spencer.

Mr. and Mrs. James Dobson started housekeeping in a little house on Mill Creek and later moved to the building which still stands at the southeast corner of Wissahickon drive and Ridge avenue. When Mrs. Dobson was in her thirty-second year, the house in which she now lives—known as Bella Vista—was built at Henry and Abbotsford avenues. At that time it was situated on a hill, overlooking the town and surrounded by woods and fields. The woods and fields are fast disappearing with the grading of new streets around the old mansion.

The many friends and admirers of Mrs. Dobson wish her the continuance of health and happiness on this anniversary of her birth.

Mills and Hills

The Bradford-Dobson Mills, situated at Stenton avenue and Godfrey street, were an important factor in the growth of this locality. We believe the first owner was "Honest" John Bardsley. When running full they employed a large number of people in their spinning and cloth weaving departments. There are several other smaller mills on Townsend Hill.

The Bradford-Dobson mills stand on what was the north bank of old Mill creek, on part of the former site of Forepaugh's winter quarters. Here was the winter home of Jumbo, the largest elephant in captivity, and a whole herd of others. Then there were the camels and other animals, which caused us kids to grip each other's hands as the "big things" would pass us on the street.

We have mentioned several villages located on Townsend Hill, most of them being on the pike. Just above the site of Germantown's first mill on the old Redman's trail, opposite the old terminal of Limekiln pike, is the very ancient village of Fenian Hill. Why it is called Fenian Hill we know not. We know that in ages past the ground upon which it is built was owned by Mr. Armstrong, but that does not explain its name. We know it adjoined Butler Place the home of the Butlers and Wisters, but we see no connection between Butler Place and Fenian Hill. We know that the descendants of John Martell the First, claim that their illustrious sire "lit the first fire" on the hill, that fine hogs were raised here, that the hillsides overlooking Harper's and Tomlinson's mill-dams were covered with goats, that there were two taverns, around which all kinds of scraps took place, but none of these things explain the name Fenian Hill.

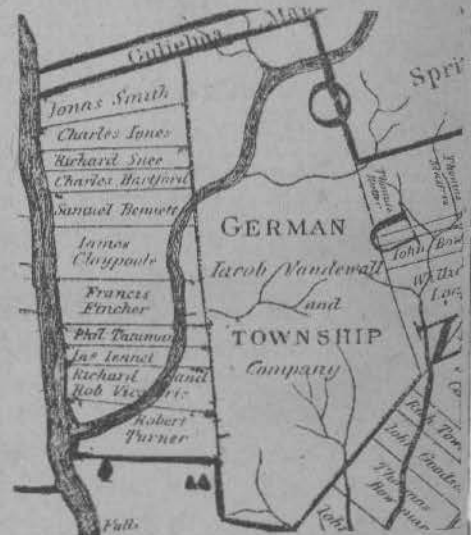
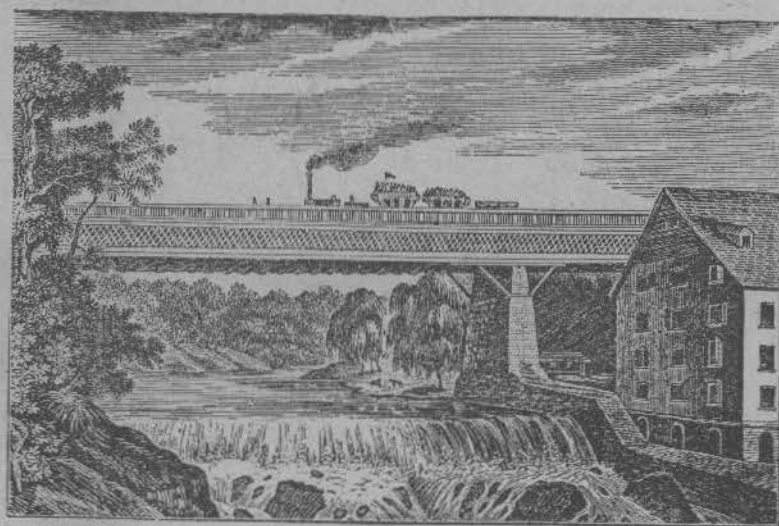
Can it be because it had the only authenticated ghost of a yellow cat with green eyes, that would sit on a table close to the bed of one of the leading ladies of the hill and pat her cheeks and lips, while all doors and windows were closed, that the name was given to the place? Is a ghost a Fenian? But we have failed to discover that the place was called by any other name than Fenian Hill. Will some one rise up and tell a waiting world "Why is Fenian Hill?"

Near the newer terminal of the pike is another settlement known as Goat Hill. It is opposite the House of prayer, the North Star Hotel was its capital when these notes were made. Space forbids us to dwell upon the romances that had their origin on its perfect drainage system. The system reminded one of open plumbing. It was visible to the naked eye.

It obtained its name in this wise. A boy resident was asked by his teacher to give an original declamation before the class and he did by using a personal and local incident as his text: "On yonder beautiful hill, me father feeds his flock of goats. One night as father and meself were doing our usual work we were set upon by a band of Fenian Hill Comanches. Me father was out, still he was boldhearted. He ran away. But I, being brave, strong and lion-hearted, I ran after him." Since then the place has been called Goat Hill.

Suburban Press, July 27, 1933

OLD SURVEY MAPS AND FIRST WISSAHICKON RAILROAD BRIDGE



SECTION SURVEY OF 1850: ROXBOROUGH TOWNSHIP

The western 200 acres of the 500 acre tract at the mouth of the Wissahickon Creek. Note the position of the Hessian redoubts. "William Penn, by the grace of God and King, Proprietor of Pennsylvania," granted this land to Robert Turner, on "the 20th day of the 1st month," 1683, for an annual rental of one shilling a year for each 100 acres; 500 acres called "Sumac Park" in "his manor of Springettsbury, (afterward Roxborough township.)"

OLD-TIME RAILROAD VIADUCT

Robeson's Grist Mill, 1686-89. Showing the Philadelphia, Germantown and Norristown railroad bridge, built in 1834. The first locomotive passed over this bridge October 20th, 1834, running from 9th and Green streets, to Manayunk. The passengers, out on the upper decks of the cars, are probably viewing what Baedeker aptly termed "the miniature Alpine gorge of the Wissahickon."

SECTION SURVEY OF 1681

Section of Molmes' Map of Philadelphia county in 1681-1688, giving the names of the eleven purchasers of land in Roxborough Township. Robert Turner's grant was the lower one, and extended considerably below the Wissahickon Creek. The four Rittenhouse mills were on the Vicaris tract.

EARLY ROXBOROUGH MILL-OWNER



PETER ROBESON

Thomas Sully's painting of Peter Robeson, 1748-1833, and also the "Crag," on Robeson's Knoll, Sumac Park. This is a great loose boulder, weighing many tons, still resting on other rocks, near the northern approach to the City avenue bridge, along the East River Drive.

The Robeson And Vanderen Mills of The Wissahickon

Interesting Tale to Be Found in History of Ancient Industrial Venture at Mouth of Much-Storied Stream

By JAMES F. MAGEE, JR.

Sumac Park, a 500 acre tract of land, was the southern part of the eleven divisions of land granted to the first settlers of Roxborough township.

Robert Turner, a Quaker, native of Cambridge, England, later "a Linen Draper" of Belfast, was with William Penn and others, one of the Proprietors of the Province of East New Jersey, February 1st, 1681-2.

"William Penn by ye grace of God and King, Proprietor of the Province of Pennsylvania, 20th day of first month 1684" granted to Robert Turner, 500 acres of land called Sumac Park in Penn's Manor of Springetts-berry (now Roxborough) at a yearly rental of 1 shilling for each 100 acre.

A street in this section is now named Sumac street, and the sumac tree grows profusely on the hills above the Wissahickon.

Robert Turner was also part owner, in 1690, of William Rittenhouse's first paper mill.

On June 19, 1686, Robert Turner leased for 101 years, 50 1/2 acres along the Wissahickon to Joshua Tittery, a broad-glass maker, and Richard Townsend, a millwright, late of London the partners agree-

ing to build mills and improve the property.

Richard Townsend embarked for Pennsylvania in the "Welcome" with William Penn, and stated that he brought with him the material for a grist mill all ready to erect, also the mill stones.

The grist mill, saw mill and dwelling were erected between 1686 and 1689 as they are mentioned in a deed of 1689 when the new owners sold a third interest in the mills and land to John Tysack, a broad-glass maker, of London.

The grist mill with three pairs of stones under one roof was to the south of the Wissahickon (marked Flour Mill on accompanying map) and the saw mill on the north. In 1690 and 91, the several partners sold the two mills and land to Andrew Robeson, Sr., of West New Jersey, and Charles Saunders, a millwright.

As the Robeson family for over one hundred and fifty years owned

the mills, and the Robeson Mansion is still standing, on Ridge avenue, their biography is of interest.

Andrew Robeson, Sr., with wife Elizabeth, and nephew Andrew, 2nd, arrived in West New Jersey in 1676; in this same year William Penn conveyed to him one share of the Proprietary rights in West Jersey. He is mentioned in the deed as "late of London, Merchant, now of Clonmellin, Ireland."

In 1699, the heirs of Andrew, Sr., left most of his estate to his two brothers, Thomas and David, in the Kingdom of Scotland, so it is probable that the Robesons were originally of Scotch ancestry.

In 1676, Andrew, Sr., was Surveyor General of West Jersey and in 1706 was appointed one of three Surveyors to lay out the line dividing East Jersey from West Jersey.

He settled in the County of Gloucester and was one of the "First Council Proprietors of West Jersey" in 1687.

On June 15th, 1685, he purchased from Thomas Rudyard 5000 acres of land in Pennsylvania, and in 1690 he removed to Philadelphia, and in 1693 became a member of the Governor's Council.

In 1691 Robert Turner sold to Robeson and Saunders the remaining 449 1/2 acres of Sumac Park.

Andrew Robeson, Sr., died in 1694, he, his wife and son Samuel, were all buried in the Friends' Burying Grounds at 3rd and Arch streets, although they were not Friends.

In 1696, Samuel Robeson, executor, sold his half interest in the 200 acres of western Sumac Park, and the mills to his cousin, Andrew Robeson, 2nd. The 300 acres of the eastern section were sold to Joseph and Benjamin Morgan. In 1703, Sara Saunders, widow, wished to sell her half interest in the 200 acres and mills to Andrew, 2nd, but the Court decided that the 8 acres at the mouth of the Wissahickon could not be divided, so she retained her half interest in the 8 acres but sold another 96 acres to Andrew, 2nd. At this date the Corn Mill and Saw Mill were mentioned as "The Wissahickon Mills."

Of the twenty-five Colonial mills erected on the Wissahickon and its branches in Roxborough and Germantown Townships, but one building remains today, and that is the famous mill built on the above mentioned 8 acres of land at the junction of the Schuylkill River and Wissahickon Creek.

This mill was built before 1733 and then called the Wissahickon Grist and Bolting Mill, but before 1748, it was known as "the Roxboro Mill." From 1703 until 1748, the 8 acres were owned jointly by the heirs of Andrew Robeson, 2nd, and Charles Saunders. The mill is first mentioned in the will of William Saunders in 1733, "A Grist Mill—two pair stones under one roof—named the Wissahickon Mills erected on 8 acres of land." In 1748 the mill was rented to Thomas Tilberry.

In a deed of 1752, an interesting

description is given of the Roxboro Mill, now "Colony Castle," the headquarters of the Philadelphia Canoe Club. "A certain Water Corn, or Grist Mill, (being two grist mills with two pairs of stones under one roof) sometimes called Wissahickon Mills now Roxboro Mill.

Which 8 acres of land, with consent of former owner, was left for necessary use of the said mills, messuages, stables, mill house, Bolting Mills, buildings and improvements, thereon erected, dam banks, water courses, mill race to said mills, also a half acre on the west side of the Dam of said mills, to take away enough sand and rock to repair the said mill dam or dams."

At this time there was no road leading into the hidden valley of the Wissahickon; a great mass of rock formed a natural dam just above Ridge avenue. A mill race over 500 feet long carried the water from the dam through the mill and emptied into the Wissahickon near the Schuylkill river.

The part of the mill that contained the water wheel is now a large cellar-like stone room under the first floor of the Canoe Club. Even in the last few years the waters of the Wissahickon have risen above the top of the wheel room. From the Club House porch at low water, can be seen a stone in the middle of the creek marked with a circle. Tradition states that this stone was so marked by the Indians to indicate that fishing was very good in this locality.

In 1755, John Vanderen purchased the mill and 8 acres.

A. C. Chadwick, Jr., editor of the Suburban Press, and historian of The Wissahickon Valley Historical Society, says:

"There is a legend of the Revolution connected with this Mill. Doane and his seven brothers, the outlaws who terrorized the inhabitants of Philadelphia and Montgomery County by their depredations, were said to have used the old building as a rendezvous."

And verses, penned by the same writer, go on to say:

"COLONY CASTLE"

"Revelers gather within the walls,

Of a structure old in years,
Which once vibrated with toil-
some sounds,

And the crunch of meshing
gears.

For the waters, that pass its
aged doors,

Were harnessed to drive the
wheels,

For a miller, who ground the
garnered grain,

Or a wright with his tensiled
steels.

"An ancient heap of stones, 'tis
true,

But romantic tales are told,
Of events, enacted inside its
rooms,

By men who were brave and

bold,
It served, one time, as a hid-
ing place,
For a crew of thieves, who
planned
To make the wealthy neigh-
bors fear
The Doane Boys outlaw band.

"And sometime later, the fish-
ermen,

Of the State in Schuylkill
Club,
Assembled under its fabled
roof,

And made the pile their hubs
And epicures, 'round the fes-
tive board,

Were wont to eat their fill,
Of fish, and fowl, and viands
rare,

In the old and vine-clad mill.

"Though many years have run
their course,

It stands as though 'twas
new,

In use by water-loving youths
Who ply the light canoe.

Where Wissahickon's spring-
fed stream,

Joins with the Schuylkill's
flow,

Old Colony Castle conquers
Time,

While mortals come and go."

Mr. Chadwick states that this Mill was the first cut nail factory in America, and also later the rolling mill of Amos Jones. In the Survey of 1850, it is called a Log-wood Mill.

In 1869, the Mill and 8 acres were purchased by the city and is now part of Fairmount Park. From 1877 to 1887, the famous "State in Schuylkill" founded in 1732, occupied the building before moving to its present quarters at Andalusia, on the Delaware River.

Now let us return to the Robeson Grist and Saw Mills on Ridge avenue.

Andrew Robeson, 2nd, (1654-1719) married in 1685 Mary Spencer. She is buried in Gloria Dei (Old Swedes') Church yard, Philadelphia. He was Judge of Gloucester County, West Jersey, in 1692, and Chief Justice of Pennsylvania from 1693 to 1699. After 1702 he

lived near the mills at Sumac Park, where he brought up his eleven children.

He was a large land owner, purchasing over 100 acres at the Falls of Schuylkill. Later, on this land was built the home of Dr. William Smith, the first provost of the University of Pennsylvania; Fort St. David's Fishing Club; Powers and Weightman's Chemical plant, and John and James Dobson's mills.

In 1714, he purchased 1500 acres of iron ore land near Reading, in Berks County. His daughter, Magdalena, married Thomas Potts, and Andrew and his son-in-law helped to promote the newly developed iron industry in that region. His son, Andrew, 3rd, remained in Roxborough, and continued the business of the Wissahickon Mills.

Judge Andrew Robeson, 2nd, and his wife, attended the Swedish Church. He died in 1719, and was buried in the church yard of the

Swedish Church of St. Gabriel's, near Douglassville, Pa.

In 1706, a primitive road was laid out from Robeson's Mills to the city following an old Indian path-way.

Andrew, 2nd, willed his Sumac Park lands and the mills of the Roxboro Milling and Bolting Company, to his eldest son, Andrew 3rd, (1686-1740.) The latter married Magdalen Rudman the daughter of the Rev. Andrew Rudman the first minister of Swedes' Gloria Dei Church.

The heirs of Andrew 3rd, in 1752, sold the Wissahickon Grist Mill and Saw Mills, also the Roxboro Mills to Henry Shellenburg. In 1755, John Vanderen bought the three mills and added considerable adjoining property to this estate.

Before 1772, Nicholas Rittenhouse and he owned jointly "The New Mill" (below Hermit lane). In 1783, Rittenhouse sold his half interest to Vanderen—37 acres, corn or grist mill, bolting mills, mill dam, etc. This mill was on the original Sumac Park tract, and stood on the site of the Maple Springs Hotel, in 1794, Michael Rittenhouse being the sole owner.

An important engagement between the American and Hessian troops took place at the Ridge avenue bridge and Vanderen Mills during the battle of Germantown, on October 4th, 1777.

Captain Ewald, of the Hessian forces, gave the following account of the engagement, "The alarm of Washington's approach having been given a battalion of the German Jagers was hurried to the bridge over the Wissahickon. The Jager Corps was attacked by 4,000 men with four 6 pounders.. (General Armstrong's account states they had but 1500 men and two field pieces).

"So the Corps was forced to leave the bridge, but took position on the hill opposite and defended this post with its rifles against the repeated attempts of the enemy to force it. The enemies' four cannon played constantly on the Jagers, while our 3-pounders could not reach the enemy. Meantime the firing became general and very strong on the right wing, until about nine o'clock when Lieutenant General Knyp-hausen sent us word that the enemy's left wing was beaten. Hereupon, Lieut. Colonel Von Wurmb attacked the bridge again and drove the enemy both from there and from the opposite heights under a heavy fire. As the attack had to be made through a long defile, the enemy had time to retire." (Note position of the Hessian redoubts in the survey of 1850). The mills were considered of great value by the British army, and that their right wing was around the Lukens' mill, on the Wingohocking, and their left on the hills above Vandrews' mill, is a coincidence, for both had been built by Richard Townsend about 1636.

Before 1786 John Vanderen was the sole owner of four mills in Sumac Park: the Roxboro Mill, the Grist and Saw Mills on Ridge avenue, and "The New Mill" below Hermit lane. In this year he placed a mortgage for 2500 pounds sterling

on the mills and 200 to 300 acres of land with Peter Care, the owner of the Monastery Mill, at Kitchens lane.

On June 6th 1798, the mills and lands again came into the possession of the Robeson family.

At a sheriff's sale, Peter and Jonathan Robeson purchased the fourteen adjoining pieces of property, in all 263 acres, for 5900 pounds sterling, subject to Peter Care's mortgage reduced to 2000 pounds. The land included the western part of Sumac Park, Falls of Schuylkill in Northern Liberties, and 20 acres across the river in

Lower Merion township of Montgomery County.

Peter and Jonathan were the great grand sons of Andrew Robeson, 2nd. In 1795, The Duke de la Rochefoucault, Liencourt, a Frenchman, and Caleb Lownes, a brother-in-law of Peter Robeson, set out on horse-back from Philadelphia through Ridge road to Norristown. They were entertained at the Robeson Mansion and in his diary the Duke gives the first account we have of the falls of the Wissahickon, as it was before 1826 when a great mass of rock was removed, where the Reading Railroad Bridge now crosses the Creek. The diary reads:

"The Wissahickon flows between hills which are high and covered with wood. A fine waterfall of about 7 or 8 feet, and as broad as the bed of the rivulet, supplies Robeson's Mill with more water than would be required for running many more mills.

"The banks of the Rivulet bear a wild and romantic appearance, and the brook meanders in the most beautiful manner through the woods and rocks, forms a grand yet gloomy prospect, which catches and delights the eye, and disposes the mind to pensive reflection.

"Robeson's Estate consists of 250 acres; four oxen and two horses do the work of the farm. He is a skilled miller.

"The water from the Wissahickon turns twenty-five other mills before it reaches Robeson's. The mill has three separate mills, two for manufacturing and one for the public. He grinds yearly 45 to 50 thousand bushels of corn, which is procured from Virginia and New York and some from Pennsylvania. The mill will hold 10,000 bushels of corn. Six horses are continuously employed in carrying meal to Philadelphia and bringing back corn in return. The water of the Wissahickon is never frozen, nor does the mill ever cease working."

The water that ran the mill was carried by a mill race that ran from the dam that is several hundred feet above the present one at Ridge road.

In 1832, Fanny Kemble, the actress, wrote of her horseback rides along the Wissahickon, and of the great beauty of the mill, dam, bridge, etc. "I stopped for a long time opposite the Wissahickon Creek. The stone bridge with its grey arch, mingled with the rough blocks of rock on which it rests, the sheet of foaming water falling

like a curtain of gold over the dam among the dark stones below, on whose brown sides the ruddy sunlight and glittering water fell like splinters of light. The bright rich tufted cedars breaking in the warm glow, the picturesque mill, the smooth open field, along whose sides the river waters, after receiving this child of the mountains into their bosom, wound deep and bright and still, the whole radiant with the softest light I ever beheld, formed a most enchanting and serene subject of contemplation".

The bridge she describes must have been the Ridge avenue bridge as the railroad bridge was not commenced until 1833, and the dam was not the artificial one we see today.

Peter Robeson's brother, Jonathan, and his father, Jonathan Robeson, were all members of Friends' Meeting. Upon the death of Jonathan, his brother, Peter, purchased his half-interest in mills and lands.

In the early 1800's, Peter Robeson built and gave to his son, Andrew, 4th, as a wedding present, "Milverton" a double dwelling with large central hall, surrounded with unusually fine trees. It was afterwards known as the Riverside Mansion, a public hostelry.

Peter Robeson married, first, Martha Livezey, daughter of Thomas Livezey, of "Glen Fern", now the home of the Valley Green Canoe Club; second, Elizabeth Heath, also of the Livezey family, she was an able preacher in the Friends' Meeting.

Peter Robeson died November 9th, 1833, and willed his mills and land to his sons, Andrew, 4th, and Jonathan.

Andrew Robeson, 4th, settled in New Bedford, Mass., and was a manufacturer of cotton goods and connected with the whaling industry. His sister, Catharine, married Dr. John Moore; a sister Sarah married Joseph Lee; and his Aunt Margaret married Caleb Lownes; and the daughter of the Lea's married George Minister. The Lees lived at "Milverton" until 1845, and the Ministers until 1880. After the death of Peter, the Lownes lived in the Robeson Mansion.

About 1834, one of the relatives

of Peter Robeson made a black and white sketch from the Montgomery County side of the Schuylkill, of the mouth of the Wissahickon, showing the Roxboro mill, the long approach and wooden bridge of the Philadelphia, Germantown and Norristown R. R. To the left is shown Milverton, with seven of the Lea children on the porch.

August 13, 1862, the Robeson Mill was destroyed by fire. At the time it was owned by Andrew, 4th, and rented to John and James Dobson, who were making blue woollen cloth for the soldiers of the Union Army. Shortly after this the Dobsons purchased the property and erected a large modern stone woollen mill. It was in the center of the present Wissahickon Drive.

In 1869, the city purchased for Fairmount Park all of the land through which the Wissahickon

flowed, and removed the Dobson Mill.

Fortunately, the Roxboro Mill was left standing as a reminder of the early industries and Colonial Days.

In closing let us refer again to the glories of the Robeson Mansion and the superbly designed railroad bridge.

It is very probable that a dwelling was erected on the site of the present Robeson Mansion, as early as 1689—a deed of that year mentions a building, grist mill and saw mill. A dwelling is again mentioned in deeds of 1708 and 1733. Scull and Heaps map of 1750 give the position of the dwelling just below the Robeson Mill. The house is also mentioned in many other deeds down to the present time.

Another descendant of Peter Robeson drew a black and white sketch in about 1834 of the Grist Mill and Robeson Mansion; in front of the dwelling is passing a covered Conestoga wagon and to the left is a large oak tree. For over one hundred and fifty years, many of the Robeson family were born, lived, and died in the old homestead.

In the early 1870's, Mr. and Mrs. James Dobson resided there. It was afterward sold and conducted as The Highbridge Hotel, and is now known as Barnett's Gardens. The dwelling has been greatly added to and modernized, but the third story and hipped roof are the same as it appeared in the sketch of just 100 years ago.

The Philadelphia, Germantown and Norristown Railroad Bridge over the Wissahickon, was contracted for September 25th, 1833. The first bridge was completed in October 1834. Regular traffic to Manayunk began October 20, 1834. The first locomotive and passenger cars started from 9th and Green streets.

The account of the first trip, as related in the Germantown Telegraph, is as follows:

"Cars at length approached that magnificent structure over the Wissahickon at Robeson's Mill. The construction of this viaduct in the firm and substantial manner in which it appears to be built is certainly an extraordinary undertaking; and has been accomplished in a manner which has given entire satisfaction to the Railroad Company. Height is about 70 feet above the surface of the water, and length 473 feet, and cost of construction about \$30,000."

The bridge was of wood with trellis work frames on the side resting on stone piers.

Extract from Annual Report, November 1st, 1842:

"A tract of edgerail, supported upon continuous bearings of white oak timber has been laid upon the Wissahickon Bridge, together with a new floor of hemlock planks; and that important structure, about which so much solicitude was felt has been greatly strengthened by additional braces, by arches of white pine in all the spans, added on the outside of the lattice frames and secured to them by screw-

bolts. This work has rendered the bridge abundantly strong and a good coat of whitewash has improved its appearance.

"On the afternoon of August 13, 1862, the bridge over the Wissahickon Creek was entirely destroyed by fire. The bridge took fire from the mill adjacent, known as Roberson's Mill. An arrangement was immediately made with Mr. Stone for the erection of a trestle-work as a temporary bridge. The whole work was satisfactorily completed in thirteen days; and in nineteen days the trains were regularly passing over the bridge. Proposals having been invited for the construction of an iron bridge. The bids were few and exceedingly high (Civil War times) owing to the increased price of iron and the present difficulty of procuring it . . . and instead passed a resolution authorizing the erection of a substantial wooden one."

The present Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Bridge was commenced in 1872 and proceeded therewith to build a double track stone railroad bridge over the Wissahickon Valley.

The bridge was completed in 1875 in time for the opening of the Centennial the next year.

In 1927, extensive repairs and renewals were made to the bridge and in 1932, electrification was completed.

Locally this bridge is called "The High Bridge" and in his manuscript "Songs of the Wissahickon"—A. C. Chadwick, Jr., dedicated this verse to the structure:

"Five arches, each of vaulting length
Leap o'er the little river's vale,
To form a roadway, high and strong,
Sustaining on its floor, the rail
Which locomotives speed upon.
But beauty too is in each span,
And causes passers-by to praise
The genius of the human clan."

In "The Wissahickon Valley" by Mr. F. B. Brant, he describes the bridge as "A scene crowned by a magnificent span of arches worthy of a Roman gauseway."