

LETTERS OF ROBERT ROBERTS SHRONK.

Philadelphia and Falls of Schuylkill Newspaper  
Reporter and a Deacon of the Falls of Schuylkill  
Baptist Church.

Written to  
His Life-Long Friend

JAMES SIMMONS SWARTZ, L.L.D.

Transportation Executive, President of the Board  
of Trustees of Bucknell University, a Deacon of  
the Falls of Schuylkill Baptist Church, and for  
more than 25 years the Superintendent of the  
latter's Sunday School. In his later life a  
resident of New York City, to which address all  
of the following letters were directed.

Dated From 1904 to 1914 Inclusive  
In This Volume Number One.

Letters presented to A. C. Chadwick, Jr. following  
the death of Dr. Swartz, by his nephew, James R.  
Swartz, on March 20th 1932..

Copied, Arranged, and Parenthetical and Marginal  
Notations by A. C. Chadwick, Jr.

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1804 Tioga Street, Philadelphia.  
May 13th 1904.

Dear James,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 6th and the great favor of financial aid. I have been in a sort of stupor for more than a week, owing to the strain and worriment. Things are a little brighter with me than when I last wrote. I started work again on the Ledger on Sunday, and while the position is not as it once was it is better than being idle. I was very sorry to learn of the trouble you have had and hope the end may be near. I know of none whom I think more deserving of prosperity and peace than yourself. All through the fifty years I have known you, you have been a helper of others.

In our home we are very sad, yet rejoicing in our sorrow over the peaceful departure of the loved one. Dr. Stidham was with us as much as possible and greatly comforted us.

Thanking you again for your kindness, I am  
Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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1804 Tioga street, July 20th 1904.

Dear James,

Your letter, received yesterday, show that you appreciated the Fairmount Park article I wrote for The Chronicle. The trip I took through the park that Saturday afternoon was more work than pleasure. I had called up the Ledger on the telephone to report my being on duty. The City Editor requested me to go to Belmont Mansion to report the Cobb family re-union. It was easy getting to the mansion, but to find the Cobb family was more of a task than I had expected. Park Guards could give me no information, so I had to start on what proved a long and tiresome search. I think I tramped more than two miles over hills, through ravines and across fields, before I found the party, not more than a hundred yards from where I had started. The Cobb family are the descendants of Paul and Priscilla Cobb, who came to this country early in the 18th century and settled in New Jersey.

From what I could learn at the re-union the family is one of the old Jersey stock; a quiet people who hang their greatness on their being so old. They have as historian a New York woman, who knows very little about the family affairs back of the present generation. It is merely a yearly gathering and they have, each year, a jolly good time in seeing each other, thus preventing the different members from having excuses for visiting. Not a bad scheme!

In my journey homeward I forgot to get off the trolley car at the proper place, consequently I was taken back to Chamonix, which accounts for my walk to the Falls. Had you been with me the trip would have been all

right, but being alone, I felt lonely even while seeing so many (people) enjoying the great and grand park.

What you said to me in the seventies, concerning the park's (then) future, had been fulfilled, more so, perhaps, than you expected. While the Commissioners have beautified the shores of the dear old Schuylkill, they have robbed nature of some of its most attractive features. How I used to enjoy spending the holdidays in rowing from the Falls to Fairmount, keeping close to the east ~~shore~~. Now, if one should row over the old course, he would see nothing, but the river wall. While the old coves have been filled in to make the park drives. You say you live in the past. So do I, and I thank God that the past means so much to me. We have both passed the meridian and cannot expect very much from earth's future. How many places have there been in our pasts, where we could raise <sup>Cam</sup> and Ebenezer? Financially, I have known more of loss than gain, and yet, I have much to be thankful for. As I look backward the greatest pleasures I can recall are those enjoyed in your sainted mother's home, and some of the most useful lessons I have ever learned came through my listening to the wise counsel of your Uncle James Simmons. What a wonderful amount of knowledge he possessed! Let us cherish the past; do our duty as best we can in the present and leave the future to Him, who will never forsake us.

Hoping that you are well and that all things may come to your liking, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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2131 West Ontario Street, Philadelphia.  
December 12th 1906.

Dear James,

This is the season of the year in which business people cast their balances and other folks indulge in reminiscences, which too often bring on severe attacks of the "blues". Memory is a blessed thing; one of the best gifts God ever gave to man. By it we bring back from out of the past, the best experiences and delights, to help us for what may come tomorrow. The dying year makes poets out of most of us by forcing us into contemplation.

But we, also I fear, have more sympathy for ourselves than for the passing year. 1906 has been a year of considerable sadness and of loss. In the beginning I started with the grippe, which kept in the house till each of us had a share. A little later my daughter became ill and has had a serious time, but is now gradually, but slowly, recovering. "So wags the world". Since getting over the grippe, I have personally had good health most of the year, of which I have worked every day, Sundays not excepted. Even when ill managed to attend to my district by using the telephone. Had to do it, for with me, no work means no pay.

The close of the year, while always sad, becomes the more sad to me, as I grow older. Old folks, you know, are

said to live in the past, but please do not infer from this that either you or I are old. We recall other years and their conditions, and when those conditions were better, than those of the present, one naturally feels a little longing for those that are forever gone.

Tomorrow will be the anniversary of one of the saddest experiences you have been called upon to endure. On the other hand, what an immeasurable gain has been the blessed lot of the lost one. The years bring us varied experiences, and as they pass, leave us a little more lonely. With each year passes some of our old time friends and loved ones, leaving the ranks of those remaining to grow thinner and thinner. In a little while we, too, will have passed into the "Beyond", as your father used to say "Beyond the river, where the surges cease to roll". A little more struggling against adverse circumstances; a little more worrying over insufficient means to meet demands; and then---peaceful rest!

I sincerely hope that with you, the year 1906 has been a good one and will close greatly in your favor. Christmas time used to be a glad time, when I could afford to give gifts to those I loved, but of late years I have been prevented from indulgences in such pleasure.

I met the Rev. David Spencer, D.D., on the street a few days ago. He inquired particularly about you and asked to be remembered when I again wrote to you. He is pastor of Chelton Avenue Church, Germantown, and last Sunday celebrated his fiftieth anniversary as a preacher. He is quite gray, but active. His first attempt at preaching was made December 10th 1856, in the old Price Street Church, Germantown. While at church at the Falls, on Sunday morning, I saw Joseph Johnson, who is 91 years old, but in nowise shows it. His mind is clear, and he walks with a dignity that us younger folks might covet. I don't know that you will think of this rambling letter, perhaps I have given too loose rein to my thoughts! With the compliments of the season, I am sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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2131 W. Ontario street, Dec. 17th, 1906.

Dear James,

Your letter which came with this morning's mail is both interesting and comforting. I did not intend being so "blue", when I last wrote, but there are times when one cannot help but give way to his feelings. In the case of good old Paul, who was able to say he had learned "In what ever state I am to be content", I think does not apply to some of the conditions of the present time, when finances form nine-tenths of life's worryings.

The John Dollard of whom you inquired, his school, was a son of Patrick Dollard, who attended Mr. Mackie's school with us. He was a son of James Dollard, whose

Copy for Mr Chadwick

42 WEST QUEEN LANE  
GERMANTOWN  
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

29th December, 1932

Dear Mr. McMaster:-

Should you learn of a position which a young married man (29) of the following qualifications could probably fill acceptably, will you kindly let me know?

Jared Wolfe is his name. A graduate of George Washington University, Washington, D.C., where he continues to reside with his wife, who has a government position.

He has worked for the government, first as a chemist (Department of Agriculture), second, on the office staff of the R.F.C. when first organized. I understand that their initial organization overestimated their requirements, and that they soon pared this down, so that my young friend, induced to leave one department on the promise of a much better paid position in another, found himself out of both so long ago as last June. Nor can he obtain any other government job (and there is no other sort to be had in Washington), due to his wife's employment. One wage-earner to a family is the rule there, and is perfectly understandable, but works a hardship sometimes. He is industriously using the interim in an effort to sell metal polish on commission, but is hardly covering expenses, I am told.

Could he obtain work in Philadelphia, it is thought that his wife could be transferred here, and they would then be near his mother, the very capable Admissions and Bill Clerk of the Woman's College Hospital (who is assisting them financially), from whom, if you so desire, you may obtain further particulars of Jared. I have met him on more than one occasion. He has a forceful, pleasing personality, and would be likely, in my judgment, to do with energy, integrity and discretion whatever he would undertake.

With best wishes,

Ever sincerely,

Mr. Leonard McMaster,  
c/o John & James Dobsón, Inc.,  
East Falls, Philadelphia.

let's discuss that, and  
other, weightier, matters  
before our log fire.

Sincerely

Arthur McKeeney

AC Chadwick Jr Esq  
East Falls.

brother Michael was a stone-cutter, and was employed by your father. Michael married Catharine Delahunty, mother of Thomas, the marble man. She and Delahunty died, I think, on the same day, several years ago. Philip M. Dollard, her son, is unmarried, and his widowed sister, Mrs. Mary May, Michael's only children, live at Ridge avenue and Scott's lane. Marion Scott was the daughter of the late George L. and Fannie Mower Scott. She had been an invalid for some years. It does not seem possible that you have been away from the Falls for twenty years! What changes have taken place in that section, which seems to be dying. Back a short distance from the Falls, along Midvale avenue, west of the Old Township Line, now known as Wissahickon avenue, a large number of handsome dwellings are being erected, similar to those in Overbrook, and other suburbs, and extend west to within a short distance of Garrett's old woods. This may perhaps benefit the Falls, and I hope good Baptist families may become occupants of the houses, and that they may help to build up the church. I have managed for quite a while past, to get to the Sunday morning services, and last Wednesday evening, for the first time in years, I attended prayer meeting. Something seems to be lacking. Dr. Stidham's sermons are good; very good, and he seems intensely in earnest. We want more spirituality. Mrs. Wieand, and I, rode home together yesterday by way of Midvale avenue, down Wayne avenue and out Hunting Park avenue, she alighting at Pacific street, about three squares from her home. When the weather is fine I often walk home with her and her sister, Elizabeth, either being an interesting companion walk with.

Thinking of your mentioning Paul's content, I am reminded of an occurrence that happened while Captain John Dobson's Battery (Company) "I" was keeping the Confederates from overrunning Pennsylvania and Maryland in 1862 and 1863. I think it was in the latter year. The members learning where the line was, that divided Pennsylvania and Maryland, stood with one foot on either side of the line, so as to say they had stood on two states at the same time. John Rhoades, a wit, was thus standing one day, when Captain Dobson approached and said "What are you doing, Jack?" "Why, Captain", he replied, "I'm in three states. My right foot is in Pennsylvania, my left in Maryland, and my body in the state of starvation".

Neddie Wild, the Welshman, who once thought he sang in the choir, and who after burying his first wife, remarried, and then disappeared from his friends, had a way of looking upon life's uncertainties and would quote "'Tis all for the best, let's be sanguine and cheerful, for sorrows and troubles are but friends in disguise", founded doubtless on Paul's statement that "All things work together for good". It is good to be able to philosophize, and yet, dear James, there are conditions which nothing but cold cash will satisfy, and as Shakespeare says "There's the rub".

The little Forecast is a good local paper, largely devoted to the Catholic church and sports. It seems to be prospering. Do you remember Bridget Hennessey, who married William Dowdall. She was a sister to Rosy McCabe, for so many years servant girl at Joseph Shantz'. Mrs. Dowdall's son, Bernard, a letter carrier, is the chief writer and

part owner of the little paper. What a change came over the Shantz family! He died, so far as the world knew, a poor man. Mrs. Shantz languished at the home of her brother, Bob Evans, and then passed away. Josephine, raised in luxury, married Philip Woodhouse, and is ending her days in the State Insane Asylum at Norristown.

Glad to answer any questions I am able to, that you might desire to know about. I am sincerely yours,

R. Roberts Shronk.

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2135 W. Ontario Street,  
May 21st 1907.

Dear James,

I was highly pleased in receiving a letter from you this morning, and was agreeably surprised to see you were able to write so soon after passing through such an ordeal. I do not remember of my having been the first to greet you upon your coming, in the long ago, to the once dear, old Falls. I do know that we have been long been acquainted with each other and that all through the years not an unpleasant word has been spoken between us. It may be through your always commanding my affectionate esteem by your unusual manliness. I remember how you cheered you, now sainted, mother, when the great calamity of your father's sudden death darkened your home. The Saturday following that sad event, my father took me to "town", as we then termed going to the city, and according to the old custom, we walked. At Ninth and Vine streets, we were met by Nicholas H. Maguire. Father told him of your father's sudden death, whereupon he made this remark, "This is indeed sad news, Daniel, and I am particularly sorry for James". After a brief pause, he added, "James is one of the brightest and most manly boys I have ever known. In my varied experiences, and they have been many, some of them very trying, I have always tried to keep from injuring others, and to be as helpful as I could. While I have the consciousness of having suffered in doing so, I do not regret what I have done. In two instances I came out second best. You know something of the long services I gave to Harmon Lake, often at a sacrifice. He promised me much and I got little. Our old friend, Dr. Horace Evans, used to say, "Shronk has done more for the Falls than anyone I have known, and I will see that he is rewarded". Just before he died, Ellen Campbell, who was angry with me on account of that Free episode, persuaded him into dropping me. What the reward might have been I have never attempted to guess. William Williams, who told me of the Doctor's statement, said it would have been worth receiving. The above my interest you. I am so glad, my dear James, that you have come out of the critical operation so well. The effects will now soon wear away and I shall look for your becoming stronger physically than you have been for years. Only do not get down to hard work, too soon. I would suggest that you take a good long rest. I stole a couple of hours last Tuesday evening to go listen to Dr. Henson deliver his lecture on



"Backbone". When he stepped on the platform, in Memorial Church, I did not know him. He is as stout as he once was thin, but he retains much of his old time fire as a speaker. It was the first pleasure I have indulged in for nearly three years.

I am glad you appreciated my little sketch of the Falls Hotel. I thought you would, owing to the intimacy you had with the late Judge Arnold. With my best wishes for your speedy and complete recovery, I am  
Sincerely yours,

R. Roberts Shronk.

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2135 West Ontario street,  
December 5th 1907.

Dear James,

Your letter of the 3rd came to hand this morning. I have just finished reading it. Found it very interesting in several respects. First that you have moments of seeming discontent. Glad to know that you are still mortal. It is good occasionally to unburden oneself, to speak, or write out the feelings. I have been pent in the house for two nights, with cold, headache and stomach troubles. I walked over to Mrs. Dobson's funeral (Mrs. John Dobson) on Monday afternoon. I was cold when I left home to walk to Germantown and Erie avenues and from there to the Church of St. James the Less, about three miles altogether, I could not get warm, and wedged my way into the crowded church, which seemed like a barn. After the services I went to Manayunk, feeling all the time, nearly frozen. Tuesday I had to go down to the office for money, so as to pay my rent. That evening I had to return home. Was kept in yesterday and shall keep close to the house today. I am feeling better now, and may be able to do my work tonight. I sometimes envy those who do not have to work, or who, when they do not work, do not lose their pay. Another thing in your letter that struck me, was your opinion of Mrs. Mary Little. She was pretty, but always put me in mind of a black crow, or Poe's Raven. I am glad you were pleased with my little article on the Mifflin Mansion. The space you mention between the first and second stories, is the one that was found by the men who tore the old mansion down. The closet trap door had been closed. That underground passage to the river was a myth. William Albright, who bought the property from the Steins, had a number of men go all through the cellar with him, one day, before the work of tearing down began. I, and several other reporters were there, and vainly searched for the "secret door to the passage". Charlie Lesh (Lash) used to talk of one a good deal, when he lived in the mansion, so that I thought it really existed. When a boy, I was always afraid of the old place. I did not have any desire to see ghosts. Do you remember the ghost story of 1863? How Amanda (Sis) Shronk, Uncle William's daughter, created an excitement one night after attending one

one of the "protracted Meetings", Mr. Chesshire was conducting? She left the church, walked up to the steps that led up to the Mansion. She waited for the others to come along, the old turnpike, then catching up her outer white skirt, raised it over her head, and quietly stepped out into the road. She ran zig-zag to James street, with a number of men chasing her. Turning the corner she quickly dropped her skirts and had just turned toward Ridge road, when the men turned the corner, and asked her if she had seen a white figure. Of course, she said "No!" Thomas Barler, who kept the little saloon, saw the "ghost" flit across the pike; ran into the barroom for his gun, but didn't shoot. Amanda was greatly frightened over her trick; more so, I think, than anyone else. She could not keep from telling about it.

I suppose you have learned of the death of Harry Pretty? He passed away last Wednesday, at his home 2005 East Clementine street, of paralysis. The funeral services were held Sunday afternoon, in East Allegheny Avenue Baptist Church, in which he had for fifteen years been a deacon. Harry had for sometime conducted a grocery. He had a stroke during the past summer and was not expected to recover. In his departure, James, you alone remain of the celebrated Quartette Choir. Singular, isn't it, that the members have gone in the order in which the parts are always printed. Sarah S. Jones, soprano; Mary A. H. Reed, alto; Henry Pretty, tenor. Such is life with its many phases, so full of surprises and mysteries. I do not wonder at you feeling lonely, and wish you were so situated that there would be no room for such feelings. I am just now alone in the house. Nettie, my daughter, with her sister (Step-sister) Elizabeth Storey, have gone in a coupe to the office of Dr. James, 2005 North 12th street, where she will try the effects of the violet ray upon her side. I hope it will prove a success. She has suffered nearly a year. You say, Dr. Stidham writes you occasionally. I often pity him. Things are so different to what they were when he first came to the Falls. I have for some time made it convenient to attend services there on Sunday mornings, as much to encourage him, as for any other reason. I like his sermons. Intellectually they are grand of late. They seem to be more spiritually comforting. While I never was an enthusiastic Stidhamite, I have never sought to hinder those who are. There is a great need of something in the Falls church. We each want, as individuals, to get right with God, and then we will be right with each other. There have been so many deaths and removals that but few Baptist families are left at the Falls. Then there has been so much talk about "The Brotherhood of Man", "Christian Tolerance", "Church Unity" and such stuff that the old time truths and doctrine have been forgotten. I have never known a union service in which Baptist did not do most of the work without credit. The church wants a Clark, or a Chesshire to awaken the other congregations into a howling over its success. You remember those glorious occasions, do you not?

Hoping this will find you in the best of health, and happy, I am

Your old friend,

Robert R. Shronk.

2135 West Ontario street,  
December 8th 1907.

Dear James,

What a delightful day this is, the air is springlike and were it not for ice and snow on the shaded sides of the streets, one might think the season was any other than winter. I attended church this morning and heard a good sermon on "United Worship", by the Rev. C. E. Cordo, of Manayunk, who exchanged pulpits with Dr. Stidham. After service I walked home, accompanying Mrs. Wieand to her home. I send you a copy of the Mifflin Mansion article as requested. My cold has almost left me, but I still have occasional pain just below the stomach, which may be caused by dyspepsia. When we crawl up the ladder of years, beyond the half century rung, it seems to me we lose our recuperative abilities, and more easily become fatigued. While in church this morning I could not help but look at Joseph Johnson, who is, I think, 92 years old. He is white-headed, but very active, while his mind does not appear in the least to be impaired.

I have written this before starting out in my afternoon quest for news. Hoping it will find you both well and happy, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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2136 West Ontario street,  
December 13th 1907.

Dear James,

In reply to your interesting letter of the 11th, regarding the old blacksmith shop at the Falls, I think the blacksmith's name, at the time mentioned, was Duncan. His son, Uriah, attended school in the pay school on Laboratory Hill, with me. Your ride, you say, was several years before you moved to the Falls, which I believe was in 1853. Uncle William Shronk bought the shop from Duncan, later I think than the time indicated. He previously had his shop on the Shronk fishing lane, the lot adjoining his home just above Tissot's Hotel. While on his last visit to the Falls, your Uncle Henry called on Joseph Shantz and as he was leaving Shantz accompanied him to our old home to visit my father. I happened to be at the house at the time. The two came in and Shantz introduced your uncle to my mother and he told her he used to know father. It was the first day father had not come downstairs. Mother asked Shantz if he would go up stairs; he said, "I would like to, but my heart is in such a bad shape, I'm afraid to climb the stairs". Your uncle was then asked, and he said he would, so mother and he went up to father's room. Entering the room, mother said, "Dan, here is an old

friend come to see you". Your uncle then said, "Mr. Shronk, I am sorry to see you confined to your bed". Father, as you know, was blind, but when he heard your uncle speak, said, "Hold up there, I know that voice." The after a brief pause said, "It is Henry Swartz!" The two talked together quite a while. It had been forty years since they had met each other. Your uncle told Shantz, my mother and I, that he never knew of so remarkable a memory. A few days later, father died, and the next week Shantz breathed his last. Then came the sad news of the sudden death of your Uncle Henry. He, Shantz, and father dying within three weeks. Father had been well acquainted with your Uncle Henry and your other uncle, Henry Rankin, while the latter was engaged in building in connection with the Schuylkill canal. He also had a very strong admiration for your father, but he never liked John Binkin. Why, I never knew. Sorry I cannot be more definite concerning the owner of the old blacksmith shop, and hoping you are in good health, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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2135 West Ontario Street,  
November 21st 1907. \*

Dear James,

I have just finished my morning task of looking over the papers, and as it will be some time before dinner, I thought I would devote that time in having a written talk with you. How are you getting along, after your painful encounter with appendicitis?

The last time I heard of you, there were after effects troubling you. I hope they have all disappeared and that your health has been fully restored. Health is indeed a great blessing, and we too often fail to appreciate it, until we have started to lose it. I have been very fortunate, so far as health is concerned, considering the exposure to which I am subjected. Week before last I awoke one morning with my head and throat all choked up with a grippy like cold. I took some medicine I had on hand, but it gave me no relief. Last week I was a witness in a lawsuit against the Reading Railway. I was for the Company, and with other witnesses was taken to the Windsor Hotel for dinner. On the bill of fare was "Boiled Salmon", which I selected and enjoyed. That night it seemed as if the salmon had returned to life and was trying to swim up the Niagra Falls. I think it had been canned and I know it made me a victim of Ptomaine poisoning. The physicking which resulted, to my great surprise and delight, cured my cold. Here, in old Philadelphia, we have had a delightful autumn. What a magnificent picture was to be seen along the Wissahickon. I have never seen the valley more beautiful in autumn coloring, then it has been this season. Today is rainy and gloomy and looks as though there

would be several days of it, the ending, I fear, of Indian summer.

I was surprised last evening while at prayer meeting to learn that Joseph A. Boothroyd is in the Samaritan Hospital, dangerously ill from an operation for kidney trouble. I called at the hospital later in the night, and was told he was delirious, and likely to die. He was brought to the hospital from his home in Ocean City, nearly a month ago. Joe lost his wife about the time I lost mine. He has two children and is reported as being rich. I suppose you remember the Hope boys, James and John F.? They lived on old James (Stanton) street, the same time you did. John died on Tuesday of apoplexy, at his home Wayne avenue and Hansberry street, Germantown. He was at one time head of a splendid fancy, or art sign, business, but champagne got the best of him. I had a talk with him some time ago, and found him agnostic, and self-important. He blamed his father's strictness to religious duties for his own condition. A case of what Mr. Chesshire called "past feeling".

Another of your early Falls acquaintances was buried several weeks ago, Emma Hoyt Snodgrass. She died of Bright's disease, poor Emma, what a fall was hers! You remember when she was the belle of the Falls? I had lost sight of them for years. I think it was 12 years ago, one day when riding to the city on a Germantown horse car, I met her but could scarcely recognize her, she was shabbily dressed, and had a careworn appearance. I did not know till then that she, with her sisters, Mary Little and Eliza, were living in Tioga. At that time she had been separated from her husband. We met occasionally afterward, and one day about four years ago, as I was passing her house, she called me in, and told me she had good news to tell me; that she and Sylvester had been re-united, and for their children's sakes would live together. Do you remember what a pretty and proud little girl she was? She is the last of the family.

Hoping, dear James, that you have fully recovered and may long continue in good health, I am  
Sincerely yours,

R. Roberts Shronk.

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2135 West Ontario street,  
March 2nd 1908.

Dear James,

I wish you could have listened, with me yesterday afternoon, to a sermon preached by Dr. Stidham in the Masonic Home, on "Pillars of the Temple". The pillars of Solomon's Temple and those spoken of in Revelations. It was a splendid discourse grandly delivered. Some parts, owing to my not being a Mason were a little mystical to me. It was enjoyed by the 80 aged residents of the Home.

At the morning service in the dear old church at the Falls, Dr. Stidham gave me the right hand of fellowship as a deacon. Samuel Wyatt, for some cause or

other, resigned, and the church elected me. I tried to prevent it, but failed. I know no reason why I should be so greatly honored, for it is an honor. My position prevents my having the time to give that should be given by a deacon to the work of the church, but I shall do the best I can. Nothing would give me greater joy than to have a position that would allow me to devote the needed time to the office. In these times one should be rich to be a deacon, so that he could do a lot of visiting and look after the members as he should. It was just 45 years yesterday, to the day, since I, looking upon a little brother dying of spotted fever, in my mother's arms, that I received conviction of my sinfulness that led to my conversion. You remember that February and March of 1863, when so many died suddenly, at the Falls, of the then un-named disease. Nearly every one of the victims were in some way related to me.

I presume you are aware of the fact that this March will mark the fiftieth anniversary of your baptism, an event, which I think, ought to be recognized by both you and the church. If I mistake not, Dr. Walker (Rev. Dr. Jacob Garrett Walker) was baptized at the same time as was your sainted sister. Fifty years a member of one church is an honor few enjoy, and I congratulate you not only on your being spared so long, but in the abundance of good you have accomplished during those years, for the dear old church.

We had a very disagreeable beginning of March here yesterday and today is almost as bad; rain and sleet made walking dangerous, especially in the night. Having a call to dinner, and then to start out to work, I have to close.

Hoping you are in good health as this leaves me, I am, as ever,

Sincerely yours,

R. Roberts Shronk.

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2135 West Ontario street,  
December 26th 1908.

Dear James,

As the year draws to its close one naturally becomes inclined to look backward, not only at the year itself, but on other days. Being in such a mood today, I have thought a great deal of you, and your old home. It may, as some claim, be an evidence of advancing age, when one dwells on the past. Well, what if it is? So long as one enjoys the retrospective? I have not heard from you for a long while, but through your niece, Nellie, I learned of your trip abroad during the summer, and of your having returned. I hope the outing was beneficial.

In my retrospections I can see the old time Falls, with its old time folk still peopling the streets, while in reality the place has passed into the realm of Have Beens. Everything has changed, A few weeks ago I had occasion to call at Abbotsford to see a Mr. McCrea, a dairy farmer who occupies the once delightful home of

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**Reformed Church.**

Rev. CORNELIUS SCHENCK, Pastor.

Preaching 10.30 and 7.30. Sunday School and Pastor's Bible Class, 2.15. Wednesday, Social Worship 7.45.

ALL ARE CORDIALLY INVITED.

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,  
MANAYUNK.**

Rev. CHAS. E. BURNS, Pastor.

Sunday services at 10½ A. M. and 7½ P. M. Sunday School at 2 P. M. Prayer-meeting and Lecture on Wednesday evening at 7:30 sharp.

ALL ARE INVITED.

**Leverington Presbyterian Church.**

Rev. JAS. W. KIRK, Pastor.

Lycsum avenue sb. Mitchell street.

Service, at 10½ A. M. and 7½ P. M. Sabbath School, 2½ P. M.

A CORDIAL WELCOME TO ALL.

**Roxborough Presbyterian Church,  
RIDGE Avenue, below Ship Lane**

Rev. W. E. WESTERVELT, Pastor.

Preaching every Sunday, morning and evening. Lecture and Prayer Meeting, Wednesday evening at 7:45.

ALL ARE CORDIALLY INVITED.

**MANAYUNK NATIONAL BANK.**

Philadelphia, December 22, 1896.

The Annual election for Directors of the Bank will be held at the Banking House on Tuesday, January 12, 1897, between the hours of Eleven A. M. and One P. M.

JNO. J. FOULKROD, Cashier.

**Annual Meeting.**

Manayunk, September 25, 1896.

The Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the

**MANAYUNK TRUST CO.,**

will be held at the Trust Company's Building, MONDAY, OCTOBER 12, at 3 p. m. At such meeting Five (5) Directors are to be elected to serve three years.

THOS. H. ASHTON, Secretary

**MT. ZION M. E. CHURCH.**

Rev. J. S. J. McCONNELL, Pastor.

MORNING SERVICE 10½.  
EVENING " 7½.  
Wednesday evening. Lecture and Prayer Meeting at 7½.

**EBENEZER M. E. CHURCH.  
GAY STREET, MANAYUNK.**

Rev. R. WHINNA, Pastor.

Preaching on Sunday at 10½ A. M., and 7 P. M. Sunday School at 2 P. M.

**Central M. E. Church,**

GREEN LANE, ROXBOROUGH.

Rev. P. S. MERRILL, Pastor.

Sunday services,—10.30 a. m.; 7.45 p. m. Sunday School at 2 p. m.

Prayer-meeting on Wednesday evening. Sacraments, 1st Sabbath of each month, a. m. All are welcome, and cordially invited.

**ROXBOROUGH BAPTIST CHURCH.**

Rev. J. W. WILLMARTH, Pastor.

Service as follows:

Morning at 10½ o'clock.  
Evening at 8 o'clock.  
Afternoon—Sabbath School at 2 o'clock.  
Bible study Wednesday evening at 8.  
Prayer-meeting Friday evening at 8.  
A WELCOME TO ALL.

**St. Alban's Church.  
ROXBOROUGH.**

Rev. J. J. JOYCE MOORE, Pastor

CALENDAR OF SERVICES.

Sunday Morning, at 10½ o'clock.  
Sunday Evening, at 7½ o'clock.  
Wednesday Evening, at 7½ o'clock.  
Sunday School at 2½ P. M.

Seats all Free, Strangers cordially invited.

**JOSEPH MILES,**

—DEALER IN ALL QUALITIES OF—

**Lehigh and Schuylkill  
COAL.**

**YARD—WEST MANAYUNK.**

Orders left at No. 129 Gay street, George Day's Cigar Store, No. 305 Green lane, and Wm. Donald's Cigar Store, 4447 Main Street, will receive prompt attention.

the Abbots. I found decay and dilapidation on all sides; the whole place seeming but a phantom to what it once was. The place, like the family, has gone to wreck. On my way to Abbotsford, I called on William R. Williams, who lives in the large house, east of Dr. Evans' old home (Abbotsford avenue and Fox street) He is nearly blind, otherwise in good health. During the year a number of our old time acquaintances have gone into the "land Beyond". Most prominent of these being James Milligan (owner and editor) of the Chronicle, who died just before his 86th birthday, which would have occurred on November 3rd. He was a remarkable man. The Rev. Wm. Walsh, rector of St. Bridget's Church, aged 74, was buried with the usual pomp on Wednesday. He had been at the Falls 24 years. At Dr. Ritchie's death, he became the oldest pastor in point of service, at the Falls, an honor that now falls to Dr. Stidham. One of the greatest physical changes of the year, was the tearing down of Sorber's old blacksmith shop (Indian Queen lane and Ridge avenue). On part of the site, Harry Conover has had erected a front porch, two story, dwelling, fronting on Ridge avenue. I have been kept busy all through the year at reporting. In August I was laid up nearly three weeks from a contraction of the muscles at the neck of the bladder, and had to have a doctor come three times a day to relieve me of water. My daughter today completes the second year of her suffering, and is in constant pain from the internal adhesion. She has had to use crutches and seldom goes from the house. My step-daughter, Elizabeth C. Storey, who has been most faithful in her attention to Nettie, broke down and for months has been under a doctor's care. So you seem I cannot afford to lose any time. The dear old church keeps going on as usual. Mrs. Alexander Thompson passed away several weeks ago, making the number one less. Despite the business depression, which prevailed so long and so many out of work, the church will close the year with but a small deficiency. A remarkable condition considering everything. Wish I could say the same as to my own affairs.

With the compliments of the season, I am,  
Sincerely yours,

R. Roberts Shronk.

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December 30th 1909.

Dear James,

I met your nephew, James, last evening in the railroad station at the Falls, and was glad to hear of your being in good health. I had been wondering for sometime as to whether you had returned from your travels or not, which if I am not mistaken included a trip abroad, and a tour of the Pacific coast. In all of which I hope you have had an enjoyable and profitable time. As I am getting on in years, I naturally, like the rest of humans, am getting retrospective, and do a lot of thinking of the past; a past in which we have been pleasantly associated. The years keep on rolling one upon the other,



each to me seeming shorter. Here we are on the threshold of 1910, almost 60 years since we first got to know each other. All that the years have brought to, or taken from us, I hope is for our good.

I suppose you are aware of the death of Joseph B. Walker, who fell asleep on Christmas, the 75th anniversary of his birth. I was unable to get to the funeral on Tuesday which was conducted at the Nugent Home, by Dr. Stidham. Joe was baptized by the Rev. Mark R. Watkinson, and was the oldest male member of our church. His death leaves that honor to you. Aunt Belle Roberts was received by letter from Blockley Church, by Watkinson, and is the oldest in point of membership. Lizzie Miller Mettinger, widow of Lewis Mettinger, was baptized by Dr. Richards in 1850, in the Schuylkill (River) I Believe she is living, but no one seem to know where. The Christmas storm was fierce hereabouts. I had my full share of it getting around in search of news. Sunday morning I had to go one and one-half squares to a drug store, and had hard work making the journey. I then made my way to the 22nd street station, rode to the Falls, and attended the morning services at which there were about a dozen present. The snow was so drifted against the front of the church that the doors could not be opened so we met downstairs.

I have managed to keep well, perhaps the extra exertion has been helpful. It wouldn't do for me to give out, or I do not know what would become of my home. I do not think there has been half a dozen weeks this year in which a doctor has not had to come here to care for my daughter, or her sister, Elizabeth Storey, who gave out tending to Nettie. Both I'm glad to say, are just now improved. There have been times during the year when I fought hard to keep up? Once I had to lay off nearly a week, from what I feared would be pneumonia. I hope you had a good year everyway, and that you may see many more. How I would like an hour's chat with you! I meet many persons in my work, but have no one to whom I would like to talk confidential.

Hoping you had a Merry Christmas, and that you will have a Happy New Year, I am  
Sincerely yours,

Dec. 30th 1909.

R. R. Shronk,  
2135 West Ontario street.

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2135 West Ontario street,  
January 27th 1910.

Dear James,

I was greatly surprised and saddened in glancing over the Ledger this morning, when I read the notice of your cousin, Mary Simmons' death, as occurring yesterday, at her residence, the Buttonwoods. Dr. Stidham told me of her having an attack of pneumonia, but said she had passed the crisis and was on the way toward recovery. Last night I walked down Queen Lane with your niece, Nellie, and she told me that the latest account thou had from Devon, was that

Mary was getting better, so you can imagine how I was shocked in reading of her death. In the sweet days of other years, I formed a very high opinion of your cousin, whose intellect was far above the average, very much like that of her noble father. I delighted in listening to her talk. Her father was to my mind, one of the best conversationalists the city has ever produced. As I think of Mary's departure my mind goes back to the little house you occupied on Ridge avenue, where she was a frequent visitor, and from where she and I occasionally took short strolls. While I have not seen her since before you left the Queen Lane House, I have frequently seen mention of her in the newspapers. How quickly the ties of earth are being sundered. One after another of the loved ones pass on, leaving us all the more lonely and sad. I heartily sympathize for you, my dear James, in this, another blow which has come to you. May God impart to you a full measure of His comfort and blessing. Only a little while longer to wait, then we, too, will be summoned home.

Sincerely yours,

R. Roberts Shronk.

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(April 12, 1911)

(Beginning of letter is missing)

with others, I was attracted by the music, and heard your mother dispatch Jacob to bring you home. You arrived soon and when the band ceased playing you made your speech, and as Theodore Roosevelt would say, it was "a bully good one." How I used to like to sit on a bench at our old shore and listen to that band play. The water had an effect on the music that I cannot describe. Fifty years have passed since that war started, and yet you and I are not old men; just advanced a little more than we were. What experiences we have had, and what changes those years have brought. As the years increase they bring us nearer the goal, each day's close finds us a day's march nearer home. To us comes the glad assurance "Fear thou not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed for I am they God. I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness". I had a day off yesterday, suffering from what I think was ptomaine poisoning, and had anything but a quiet day. Am feeling pretty

good today.

Hoping this will find you in good health, I am  
as ever,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

Mr. James S. Swartz,  
No. 11 Broadway,  
New York.

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2135 West Ontario street,  
February 24th 1910.

Dear James, It is just ten days since I received your interesting letter, which gave me a complete account of your dear cousin Mary's suffering and death, and of your cousin Ella's trouble, which I hope is subsiding. It was brave of her keeping the knowledge from her sister. I often think of you, and the way you have cared for those belonging to you, ever since that sad, sad, day in which your father was so suddenly taken from his loved ones.

There was an incident that occurred the day following your father's death, which I have never forgotten, and which I once told to your now sainted mother. On that day I was taken "to town", as we then termed going to the centre of the city, by my father, at 9th & Vine street, we met Professor Maguire, an intimate friend of father's. In the course of their talk, father told him of your father's death. His reply was "I am sorry for James Swartz, he is a good young man, and I believe he will look after his mother". He then added, "Daniel, I have taught a great many boys since I began teaching, but I have never had a brighter, or better pupil than James Swartz". I tell you this, now, that it might comfort you, for the professor's prediction as to your caring for your mother was fulfilled. The old Falls with its old-time neighborly conditions, are now no more, and but few of those we once knew and loved, remain. It seems to me that as we advance in years, the earthly ties are severed, so that when the time comes for us to be called home, there will be less to bind us here. Have you ever noticed that the friendships made when we were young were more lasting, closer and warmer, than those formed in later life? To me there is a something lacking I cannot describe, and I presume it is the same with others. I was glad to learn by your letter of your health being good. I have, I think, been very fortunate thus far this winter, in that I have had fairly good health. I had two pretty severe colds, the last turned out to be the grippe, and laid me up more than a week. Had it not been that my daughter and one of my stepdaughters were down at the time, I believe I would have been laid up longer. I simply couldn't afford to be sick. They are still ailing, but I think slowly recovering. Nettie has had more than two years of constant suffering, so you can imagine what a time we have had.

We are having great trouble in this city of Brotherly

16.

Love, over the carmen's strike. It keeps newspaper reporters "on the jump" to keep up with the proceedings so as to get all the news. There being no cars running at night, people away from the railroads have to walk, unless they are able to hire conveyance. Walking is all right when one wants to walk, but it is different when it is compulsory. "Brookton", the home of David Peltz, (on Hunting Park avenue, near the Budd factory) has been sold by his estate for \$12,000, about half of its value. Mrs. Wieand (nee Peltz) and her sister Miss Elizabeth Peltz will occupy the house until Spring, when they will probably secure a house here in Tioga. Their brother, Dr. George M. Dallas Peltz, had charge of the selling. These three, with the two children of their deceased brother, Dr. Josiah Peltz, constitute the heirs. Hunting Park avenue, on which "Brookton" fronts is being widened and will in a short time be a fine 100-foot-wide thoroughfare

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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2135 West Ontario street,  
April 27th 1910.

Dear James,

It has been a long time since I have heard of, or from, you. Today, while indulging in anything but pleasant contemplations, I have thought of how kind you have been toward me in past seasons of distress. As I view my career, it seems I have had my share of trouble and disappointment, but it seems the cup is not yet full. For more than three years my daughter has been a sufferer from the after-effects of appendicitis. Then her sister, Elizabeth Storey, broke down and is suffering from nervous strain. This not being enough, five weeks ago, I was taken with a chill, and was thrown on my back the best part of a week, all causing additional costs, which has eaten up all I had, and more. On Saturday I will have to meet an obligation of nearly \$50 with less than half that sum in sight. It seems that as I get older I am less able to earn money. Worriment, perhaps, has been a great handicap. I do not want to ask you to help me, but if you could, it will be appreciated. Hoping you are well, I am

sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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2135 West Ontario street,  
April 29th 1910.

Dear James,

Your kind letter came to hand this morning, and is a great relief to me, for which I heartily thank you and hope I may sometime be able to reciprocate the favor.

I have just written up the wedding of Miss Ethel Dutton Stidham, for tomorrow's papers. She will be married by her father, at noon tomorrow, in the parsonage, to Mr. Leonard O. Ritter, of New York. Her sister, Mrs. Stanley Mortimer, of New York, will be matron of honor, and Miss Laudonia Colton, also of New York, will be bridesmaid. Stanley Mortimer will officiate as best man. After a trip to Niagra Falls, Ferd Stidham you know lives in Buffalo, they will reside in New York. I met Mr. Ritter, Wednesday night, after prauer service. He seems to be a nice young man.

Thanking you again for your kindness, I am  
Sincerely yours,

Robert R. Skronk.

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September 14th 1910.

Dear James,

I had the pleasure last Friday evening of spending an hour with Jacob and his wife, at the home of Harry's widow. I also saw Jacob again at the church, Sunday morning. What a pity it is that his sight is so poor; otherwise he appears to have changed little for his years. Seeing them probably accounts for my having thought so much about you during the week. There are so many things that bring you in mind. It seems to me that the friends we make in early life are closer and better than those won in later years. A great deal of comfort comes to the "aged", you know, by retrospection. We live over again, both while awake, as well as in dreams, those happy days of yore. I was glad to learn through Jacob of your being in your usual health. How is your heart? Dr. Stidham told me some months ago you were troubled a good deal. Have you ever tried slow, deep, breathing? Mr. Milligan, of the Manayunk Chronicle, used to say that such breathing kept him young when he was well in the eighties. Dr. Stidham, Edwin Singer, Harry Binkin and I met, as a committee, last evening, to go over the list of members of the church, so as to get as near as possible to the correct number to report to the Association. We found quite a number of names that cannot be accounted for, in that their present whereabouts is unknown. Among these is Mrs. Loud. No one seems to know what has become of her. Some have passed away.

In September 1885, while living in Manayunk, at the request of a committee from Mount Vernon Mission, I conducted a Sunday morning service, and continued doing so after I had moved to Tioga, until students from Crozer Theological Seminary took up the work. The mission is now Mount Vernon Church. On Sunday the 25th, the 25th anniversary will be celebrated. I have been invited to deliver the morning address. Dr. Humpstone, while pastor of Manayunk Church, conducted Sunday afternoon services at the Mission, as did Rev. James Parkes, his predecessor, but

the work ceased, and was well nigh dead when the members urged me to start the Sunday night meetings. Dr. Willmarth is to preach the evening sermon. I feel highly honored in being asked to speak again to the people there, who call me "the father of the church".

I send you a clipping from last week's Chronicle, in which you will see brief sketches of Mrs. Charles K. Sorber, and Mrs. Adam Mettinger. I was one of the carriers at Mrs. Sorber's funeral on Saturday afternoon. Mrs. Mettinger died of an internal tumor. She had been ailing a long time but did not know the cause until it was too late for an operation. She only a short time ago buried her sister, who for many years was in an asylum for the insane, and told me she was so glad the sister died first.

Sincerely yours,

R. Roberts Shronk,  
2135 West Ontario street,  
September 14th 1910

Mr. James S. Swartz,  
No. 11 Broadway,  
New York.

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January 7th 1911.

Dear James,

I presume you have heard of the departure of my sister, Elizabeth, and thought you might like to know some of the facts. "Lizzie", as she was known to her many friends, was taken ill on Sunday evening December 11th. I had seen her in the morning, when she was attending to her duties in the police station. She complained of a pain in her chest, but thought it would pass away. Late Tuesday night, I learned she had not been to the station for two days. Early the next day I visited her, when she said she had been very sick, but was feeling better. That night Mary Jane Shaffer informed me that a physician had suggested being taken to a hospital. Thursday there seemed a little improvement, so she was not removed to St. Timothy's Hospital (Memorial Hospital) until the following day, Friday. The physicians said she had a light case of single pneumonia, and was removed to the convalescent ward, and was doing well until meningitis developed and proved fatal, she passing peacefully away at three o'clock Thursday morning. I had her body brought to my home, from where she will be buried tomorrow, Sunday afternoon, the services to be held in the church at the -----

I received a telephone message at 2 o'clock on Wednesday morning to come at once to the hospital, so I hurried out in the freezing sleet and hail, toda livery stable for a carriage. I there telephoned to the hospital and was told that a change for the better had taken place, so I did not go to the hospital till after daylight. My sister, Margaret, of Germantown, and I reached there together, and found Elizabeth unconscious. Dr. Stidham called during the morning. Margaret and I remained most of the day and were with her all through the long hours of the

night, alone, until the end came. Just at 3 o'clock she raised her right hand upward as if reaching for someone, while a smile, the most beautiful I have ever seen, lit up her face with a radiance that plainly told of her entrance into her Master's Eternal presence, to go no more out forever. With the smile upon her face, the color and distortion all gone, her spirit took its flight. How we, and many others who have known trouble, will miss her. She was a staff on which many leaned when sorrow came to them.

Yours sincerely,

R. Roberts Shronk,  
2135 West Ontario street.

Mr. James S. Swartz,  
No. 11 Broadway  
New York.  
Jan. 7th 1911.

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2135 West Ontario street,  
February 17th 1911.

Dear James,

I read your letter of Wednesday, with both interest and indignation, particularly the clipping from the Boston Evening Transcript. John G. Johnson, the great corporation lawyer, is very close-mouthed concerning himself. I had the North American's Information Bureau look him up yesterday; all I could learn concerning him was that he declined to say anything about himself regarding his early life. As to his father having had a blacksmith shop at the Falls, I think that is all together in the imagination of Clifford S. Kempton. Many years ago, when I was but a child, Joseph Johnson had a blacksmith shop on the east side of Ridge avenue, near the little yellow dwelling that used to stand at the bottom of Smith's hill. You remember the old path up through the woods to Forest School. On one end of the shop John R. Johnson and a man named Thompson conducted a feed store. Joseph Johnson afterward had his shop on the west side of the avenue. This shop was subsequently owned by a named Duncan, whose son, Uriah, attended the pay school on Laboratory Hill. William Shronk, my uncle, who had had a shop in front of his home, bought out Duncan and moved his business to that shop. After selling his shop to Duncan, Johnson went to work in Baldwin's Locomotive Works. Later he had a blacksmith shop back of his home. These blacksmith shops were the only ones at the Falls. Joseph Johnson's only son, Dr. Charles Johnson, is a surgeon in the employ of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Clifford S. (Kempton) built his Johnson story on fancy. How he came to write the other stuff which you designate as libel, I am at loss to know. I never had any acquaintance with the Kemptons; simply know Jim and that is all.

You remember Robert and Cornelius Smith, do you not? Their father, Cornelius Smith, Sr., owned and occupied the large white mansion at Queen Lane and Township line

road ("Carlton"), now Wissahickon avenue. Thomas Smith a brother of Cornelius, Sr., and who lived on School lane, had a son Clifford, whose sister James Kempton married, so the Clifford S. Kempton who wrote the article might be a son of that marriage. Jim Kempton must have been ~~somebody's~~ *older than you. George Blight, one of the* founders of St. James the Less Church, whose place adjoined "Old Oaks" (site of Atwater Kent offices) whose palatial brown stone mansion your father erected for President Tucker of the Reading Railroad, married another daughter of that Thomas Smith. Another Thomas Smith was a brother of Richard Penn Smith, and father of lawyer Randolph Smith. The Kemptons had a factory at Manayunk, and I believe managed to get rid of a good deal of money belonging to George Blight and Cornelius Smith Sr. Archibald Campbell, manager of the Kempton Mills, got possession and had a large home built on School lane. The Kempton home became the property of Ellis Yarnall, who sold it to C. C. Harrison, late head of the University of Pennsylvania. He occupied it a short time, about 20 years ago, when he was school controller from the 21st ward, of late years the house has been vacant, and has, on two occasions, been damaged by fire, caused by tramps.

I have copied the clipping and will have it reprinted in the Manayunk Chronicle. I may send a reply to it to the Springfield Republican, or to the Boston Evening Transcript.

Joseph Johnson was 94 on January 24th, and is remarkably well preserved. On the Sunday following his birthday, Dr. Willmarth (pastor of Roxborough Baptist Church) came down and Dr. Stidham had him preach his sermon on the "Sovereignty of God". Was one of the finest I have ever listened to. At the close of the service, Johnson was invited forward and given a reception. This was repeated again after the February Communion service, when Mary Clouse and Mrs. Wieand were included in the reception. Aunt Belle Roberts was not present or she, too, would have been included. Dr. Charles K. Mills, I see by the Forecast, is to lecture on March 10th, in American Hall, on "Historic Facts", for the Colonial Dames, and the Falls of Schuylkill Business Mens' Association. I shall endeavor to hear him, ~~to hear him~~. He is preparing a history of the Falls which I believe will soon be in print.

I received a copy of the rules and a blank for application to the Nugent Home, but find is not eligible as to age, which must be 65, and in other respects. The same conditions exist in all other homes I have tried. What to do with him I do not know, poor fellow, he is all alone in the house in Scott's lane. I had to pay another month's rent on Wednesday and bought him coal to keep himself warm. Margaret and my daughter keep him in victuals. It is a pretty hard proposition. I fear it will require a mighty influence to get him into any home. Outside of the age question, I really think George has as much right to the Nugent Home, as had Joseph Walker.

Dr. Stidham is far from being a well man. I feel greatly concerned about him. As far as I can learn, the operation he underwent last fall (Appendicitis) may have to be repeated. If it does I fear the result. On Wednesday night he told me he was feeling better than he had been, but the Doctor (Rath) had not reported definitely on the



case. I do hope another operation may be avoided. The church has done nobly in the matter of repairs, and the old building looks well on the outside. The inner walls ought to be re-frescoed, but will have to wait till the work done is paid for.

I hope, dear James, that in this lengthy letter you may find the information desired, and that it will also find you in good health and prosperity. As to my health, I have much to be thankful for. I think I stand the buffeting of all sorts of weather seven days a week, about as well as any of my winters could be expected. What a real rest there will be by and bye.

Sincerely yours,

Robert R. Shronk.

P.S. I return the clipping as requested. S

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2135 West Ontario Street,  
March 14th 1911.

Dear James,

I have just returned from a trip down town and have concluded to keep indoors until morning and doctor a cold I contracted Sunday. I cannot tell how glad I was on Friday night, to once more take you by the hand. How I would like to have spent some time with you before your departure. I suppose you enjoyed the, to me, very interesting, lecture. Dr. Mills has certainly dug pretty deep into the past history of the dear old Falls. His showing "Bobby" Evans' Fountain Park Hotel as a Revolutionary relic was a mistake. The central, or main part of that old hostelry (Cafe Riviera) was owned and occupied as a dwelling by William Griffiths, who sold the property to James Spencer, for whom James (Stanton) and Spencer (Calumet) streets were named. Evans previously conducted the Old Falls Hotel. He built the wings and sheds to the Griffiths' dwelling and then opened the Fountain Park Hotel. In a talk I had some time ago, with Hugh Scott (father of Mrs. William Jones, of Haywood street) about ancient history of the Falls, he informed me that soon after John Dobson bought Arnold's old Hotel (Whalen's) one of the colonial mantelpieces on the second floor had to be repaired. Nathan Jagers, the carpenter, found it necessary to take it down in order to place it back securely. On the back of the ~~mantle~~ <sup>mantle</sup> was found the date April 13th 1731, and the name of the supposed maker of the the mantle. The name Scott could not remember.

No one seems to have enjoyed the lecture more than our venerable friend, Joseph Johnson. After leaving you I took Johnson's arm and we walked to Midvale avenue, where he and his daughter took a trolley car for their home. He wanted to walk home, but the girls would not permit him. I asked him on Sunday if he felt any the worse for being out so late Friday night? His reply was "not at all," but there is one thing I greatly regret, and that is that I shook hands with James Swartz and did not know him. What can he think of me?" I suppose you took a night look at the

church, and saw how much it has been improved. I wish we might have a larger congregation. It pains me to see so many empty pews, which seems a constant reminder of the departed loved ones, who once filled the little church. Mrs. Wieand, upon learning of your being at the lecture, said she felt all the more disappointed in not being able to come over to the hall.

With best wishes I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. Roberts Shronk.

P.S. It is now raining and I am glad I arranged to remain home for the night. S.

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2135 West Ontario street,  
March 24th 1911.

Dear James,

Your letter of the 21st came to hand yesterday, and was read with more than usual interest. It does not seem possible that 53 years have passed since the Sunday you and your sister were baptized by the Rev. N. Judson Clark. The occasion was your 18th birthday, so I congratulate you on having rounded out another year. Years, however, do not count. "man is as old as he feels, and a woman as old as she looks", gives one a better idea of life, than the simple statement that he or she is so many years old.

I see, by this morning's papers, that our friend Peter Bechtel, is again a widower; his second wife having died yesterday. You remember his first wife was Jennie Palmer. Poor Peter, he has been unfortunate and I believe has lost his business. What you said in your letter about Horace Smith made me think of the time in April 1865, when Lee surrendered. Mr. Chessshire, Lewis Mettinger, Sergeant Cameron, and I, went up in the church spire and clanged the bell, making all the noise possible. In the midst of the din, I thought of Ella Smith, Horace's daughter, who was very ill in the old house on the hill almost opposite the church, and telling the others we quit the noise. Later that afternoon, Horace saw Mr. Chessshire entering the parsonage, and gave him a tongue lashing. "Why you scamp, I'll box your ears!" said Mr. Chessshire, and hurried to the gate, but before he could get it open, Horace was running up the steps toward his home. When Mr. Chessshire preached his farewell sermon, from the text, "In my Father's house are many mansions", Horace was present and at the close of the service said to me, "Bob, Chessshire selected the text to show Abbot that his is not the only mansion in existence". The best thing I ever heard about Horace was told me a good many years ago by Policeman Thomas Short. He and Bill Illingsworth, letter carrier, were down in Tissot's meadow (front of Cafe Riviera) before the Park drive was built. It was a summer's night. I saw Horace walk out of Tissot's dining room carrying something white. He walked down to the stone steps that led to the kitchen, and walked to the lower side of the hotel, where he placed

what he was carrying under one of the evergreen trees, then walked back toward the front of the hotel. Short said, "Illingsworth suggested that we go see what Horace had placed under the tree. We did, and found he had stolen a finely broiled chicken from the dining room. We each ate half of the chicken, then placed the bones on the plate; covered them with a napkins, and hid ourselves in the old garden. In a little while Horace and Sam Winpenny came down the path. We heard Sam say, "Horace, if you're fooling me I'll punch your d--n head". "I'm not fooling you, Sam; it's done a splendid brown. Here we are!" And stooping down he reached under the tree, drew out the covered plate, and handed it to Winpenny. Lifting the napkin, Winpenny saw only a lot of chicken bones, and just as Horace had raised up from his stooping position, Sam gave him a slap on the face that sent him rolling down the hill, saying, "Da-n you, take that, you loafer!" and walked back toward the front of the hotel, leaving Horace to sneak off toward the river. I never could tell why, but I always had a liking for Horace Smith. He always treated me right, and often in our talks, he would speak well of the church. He despised hypocrisy. He received his badness from his father, whom I think was the most wicked man I have ever known. He would boats of getting drunk three times a day, but was one of those men who only got drunk in their legs. When he was on his death bed he sent for my father. I shall never forget the expression on father's face when he returned home that day. He walked in the house, sat down on the old white settee, placed his face in his hands, and sat there a long time without speaking. Finally mother said, "Dan, what is the matter?", and his reply, "What do you suppose Penn Smith wanted me for". When I reached his bedside he raised himself up and said, "Dan, I'm glad you came. I'm going to die!" and then raising the bed clothes said "I wanted you to see what a da-n pair of legs I've got to go to hell with!" It was a long while before father got over the effect of that visit.

When I last wrote you I had just returned from down town and was feeling wretched. I not only remained home that Tuesday night, but was kept home by an attack of the grip all the rest of the week, and am not yet fully over the trouble, but am gradually getting all right. One does not recuperate so quickly when he gets on in years. With one being kept from work and having his revenue stopped it does not pay to be sick long. In this week's Chronicle I expect to find a little account of the fall Dr. Mills spoke of in his lecture, as having been in Falls run. If the article is printed I will mail you a copy on Monday, when I get to the office. You remember John Timbers, I suppose. He was buried last week, from his home in West Philadelphia, and was 75 years of age. He left the Fall soon after the close of the Civil War.

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

R. Roberts Shronk.

Mr. James S. Sawrtz,  
No. 11 Broadway,  
New York.

March 29th 1911.

Dear James,,

Did you ever have an attack of the "Dumps"? I am having one just now, which almost keeps me from thinking. So far this has been an unusually trying year. It commenced on January 5th in the death of Elizabeth (sister) in the St. Timothy's Hospital, then my having to give up work to nurse myself without a doctor's help, over an attack of the grippe, from which I am slowly recovering. Just as I was able to get out, my step-daughter Elizabeth, who has been ailing for more than a year from nervous prostration, brought on through attending to Nettie, took down with the grippe. All together the trials seem to come, but the cost never ceases. All through my life I have never had a position in which my pay would continue in case of sickness or forced illness, and in all my years the only vacations I have had were the six weeks holidays while attending the old Forest School. Sometimes I think it would be well if the Osler system (of chloroforming all persons upon reaching sixty) would be carried out. And yet life is pleasant even with its bitterness. Hoping you never have, or will have such a case of "dumps", I am sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

P.S. You are the only one I could write as I have. I feel better for doing it.

S.

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April 12th 1911

Dear James,

Your letter reached me Saturday morning. Sorry you have that old pain on the upper part of your chest, which interferes with your writing. Have you ever tried deep breathing? Fill your lungs as full of air as they will hold, then after a brief period exhale it slowly from a partly closed mouth. I find it to be helpful to many complaints. It starts the blood circulating. In a talk I had with a Manayunk atheist, a short time ago, about ailments he said, "There is no ailment but what can be traced to the stomach. That there is no such thing as heart disease, and that if a person would take care of the stomach, all the other organs would remain normal". He, Hugo Watson, a jeweler, is nearly 90 years old, and is about as healthy looking as anyone I know. We have known each other for more than thirty years. At first we used to argue a great deal on religion, until I convinced him that Baptist have never persecuted. He then agreed not to argue. Mr. Milligan attributed his good health to deep breathing. It helped him to overcome stammering. If you have not tried it, I would advise you to do so, and hope you may find relief.

Last Saturday afternoon I attended the funeral of

Harriet Carr Crooks, at her late home on East Park Drive, at the Falls. Dr. Stidham conducted the services, and was assisted by Rev. Walter Oakford, pastor of the Grace Reformed Episcopal Church. Harriet, or "Hal", as she was generally called, was a good-hearted, helpful woman.

On Wednesday evening I made a short call on a widow here in Tioga, in whom I am greatly interested. She is the oldest Baptist, I presume, in the world, and on Friday will celebrate her 103rd birthday. She is a dear old woman, remarkably well preserved and retains full control of her faculties. Her name is Mrs. Ann Elizabeth Magill. "My only trouble", she said, "is my sight, which is slowly failing. As it is my second sight, the Doctors can do nothing to save it." She goes up and down stairs unassisted, takes daily walks on the porch, or in the yard, for exercise. She was born April 14th 1808, in Castle Valley, Bucks County.

How swift is the flight of time. Tomorrow, April 12th will be the 50th anniversary of the Confederates firing upon Fort Sumter, thus starting the Civil War. You remember how the Falls was stirred by the news of that bombardment? How the copperhead Democrats were forced to put out flags to show their colors. By the way, it was in 1861 I heard you make your first outdoor speech, or I should say it was the first outdoor speech I heard you make. Do you remember the occasion? The 88th Regiment was encamped in Robeson's meadow. (Queen Lane Pumping station site) The celebrated Ringgold Band, of Reading, was the regimental band. One bright evening of that summer the band marched down to your home in Laboratory road, for the purpose of serenading you and your sister-----

(Rest of letter missing)

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May 28th 1911.

Dear James,

Forty-eight years ago tonight, the last Sunday in May of 1863, you waited upon me when I was baptized by Mr. Chesshire. Hence I enter upon my 49th year of jubilee next Sunday, as a member of the Falls Church. What tremendous changes have taken place during these years? As one contemplates them, they are appalling. Only a few who then occupied the pews are living. Others have come and gone. On June 7th, next Wednesday, efforts will be made to have special services, and to get the members together, for that evening, with a view of getting a better attendance to the regular prayer meetings. I presume you have heard of the death of Mrs. Sarah Abbot Brooks. She was buried on Wednesday afternoon, from an undertaker's parlor on Chestnut street. Interment was made in North Laurel Hill Cemetery. I knew nothing of her death until Wednesday evening, when Edwin Singer told me of his having attended the funeral. We have what is known as a Permanent Council, here in Philadelphia. It takes action on examining candidates for ordination, and in considering new churches seeking recognition. I attended a meeting of the Council last Tuesday night, in the Roger Williams Building, 1701 Chestnut street. I questioned the candidate, John Matthias, of

Frankford Avenue Church, on his belief in the resurrection. At the conclusion of the meeting Dr. Rowland came to me and said, "I am glad you are an old-fashioned Baptist like myself." Pity there are not more of the old fashioned type; something has crawled into the church which is leaving its impress, and not for the church's good. We are to have a world-wide Baptist gathering here, next month, when delegate badges will cost \$2, and then will not insure the holder admission to Grace Church Temple. They want the money to help defray the traveling expenses of foreign delegates. Guess I will not invest in a badge.

My brother, George, is still in the Samaritan Hospital, much better of his kidney trouble, but is to have a cataract removed from one of his eyes on Tuesday. Dr. Stidham informed the congregation this morning that Dr. Willmarth is seriously ill at his home in Wissahickon, with heart disease. The church was prettily decorated today for the memorial services to be held this evening by General G. K. Warren Post No. 15, G. A. R., of Manayunk. Dr. Stidham is to speak at the memorial services on Tuesday in Westminster Cemetery.

I have written this since having my supper and must now start out in search of news, a nice occupation for a 48 years old Baptist on a Sunday night, isn't it? Wish I could do without, but I can't.

Hoping you are well as this leaves me, I am as ever,

Sincerely yours,

R. Roberts Shronk.

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May 13th 1911.

Dear James, Your highly interesting letter of the 9th reached me on the 10th. So James Pennypacker, who married your cousin lives in Germantown. Did you not have a cousin Sallie? Somehow I had the impression that was the name of the young woman who used to visit your house on Ridge avenue, and who became Mrs. Pennypacker. I had a talk on Thursday night, with the secretary of the Centennial committee of the Roxborough Lodge, No. 135, F and A.M. and told him of DeGroot having a son whom he might find in this city. In thinking about Cornelius DeGroot, I remember his going to Bobby Evans', between hymns. His son, Cornelius and I sat on the same bench in Mr. Mackie's school, in which you figured. One day upon reaching the school, by way of Smith's Hill, I saw a crowd of boys at the top of the steps leading up "School Hill", close to the old pump. I found a man sitting on the step, and asked him to come in the school. He said he would, after the boys were seated. The spelling class had just been called in front of the platform, when "Johnnie", as I had called him, walked in. He took the first seat and when Mr. Mackie gave the word to be spelled, he rose and spelling it, advanced to the second seat. He spelled the next word, and then walked to the third seat. Mr. Mackie came down to where I was sitting, and asked me to go for Mr. DeGroot, a director, who lived in the Stoever Stone House, near the Reading railroad, near Scott's lane. I ran to the house and learned

Mr. DeGroot had gone on the stage to the city. Running back to school I found the boys all on the outside, many of them crowding the doorway. I ran around on the lower, or girls' side and climbed through a window. You were the only one beside "Johnnie" and the teacher in the room. I can see you now, sitting on top of one desk, your feet up on another, with your arms folded on your knees. Mr. Mackie repeatedly asked you to help him put the visitor out, but you refused. When I had told Mr. Mackie that Mr. DeGroot had gone to the city, he called to John Drennan, who stood in the door, "Pussy, go down for Hogan!" Hogan, a stout and powerfully built man was a dyer in Nugent's little mill. "Pussy" brought him to the school, as he entered Mr. Mackie became courageous and catching "Johnnie" by the neck, and the seat of his trousers, shoved him down the aisle to the advancing Hogan. Then the fun was over. That afternoon, while standing at the corner outside of Shantz' store, "Johnnie" came up the road and talked to Shantz, who called him John. Shantz told me later, that the men's name was John Dyer and that he had recently been in the Blockley Insane Asylum. Perhaps you will remember "Johnnie's" visit to the school. You, I believe, at the time had a grudge against Mr. Mackie for whipping John "Pussy" Drennan a few days previous, when he had a sore hand, and when you coolly told the teacher that if he struck Drennan again, you would hit him with a slate you stood, ready to throw.

I have no doubt but what Dr. Mills would appreciate the Hagner letter you mentioned. We have had several days of summer weather with the mercury at 90 degrees.

The churches of Germantown, Chestnut Hill, Logan, Falls, Wissahickon, Manayunk, and Roxborough, organized a Northwest Baptist Social Union, on Thursday, in Roxborough Church. I was present a little while at the evening session, as a reporter. I had to take my brother George to the Samaritan Hospital on Thursday. He is suffering from kidney trouble. Hoping this will find you in good health as it leaves me, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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May 6th 1911.

Dear James,

I see in todays Ledger the death notice of James Pennypacker, in Phoenixville, and am wondering if he might be the James Pennypacker who married your Cousin Sallie. Another of the older residents of the Falls, Mrs. Rosanna McCabe Riley, was buried on Thursday after High Mass in St. Bridget's Church. You will remember her as "Rosie" Shantz, by which name she was long known owing to her having lived with the Shantz family for many years. She was in her 75th year, and died Sunday after a brief illness of pneumonia. I called at the house on James, now Stanton street, while the wake was being held, to pay my respects and was warmly received by Mr. Joseph Riley, her husband. They have two sons, Joseph, who is a musician, and a very fine young man, and Bernard, who, poor fellow, is afflicted with the drink habit, and was a source of much trouble to his mother.

Do you ever have dreams? I had one last night, in

which I was at your old home and in which some of the then happy life I knew was lived over again. Your mother and my mother and your sister were all alive and figured in the dream. Strange, is it not, how one's mind, or soul --- I believe it is the soul that dreams---sees and experiences so much in the brief space of a dream? And, when the awakening comes, what a difference to the dreamer to find himself alone.

Do you know anything about Cornelius DeGroot, that would go towards making up a biography of him for Roxborough Lodge No. 135 F. and A.M.? While I am not a member of the order I have been asked to give facts concerning a number of past masters, for a history in 1913, when the lodge will celebrate its 100th anniversary. DeGroot is one of the past masters. I have been summoned to supper so will bring this to an end. Hoping it will find you in good health, I am sincerely yours,

R. Roberts Shronk.

Mr. James S. Swartz,  
11 Broadway,  
New York.

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June 5th 1911.

Dear James,

We are having one of those cold June rains and it is very disagreeable. Of late years I have made it a point not to change underclothing in May and I feel today a little sorry that I changed in June. I think you were right in spelling our old schoolmaster's name Mackie. The last time I saw him was on a Sunday afternoon in the early seventies. I was on my way to Sunday School, and met him just below the church on Queen lane. He was on his way to the Old Academy, where he had charge of Holy Trinity Mission (Grace Reformed Church) that was on outgrowth of the Church of St. James the Less, and which Thomas Powers, of the Laboratory firm captured and from it formed what is now Grace Reformed Episcopal Church. Mr. Mackie looked at me quiet awhile that Sunday before recognizing me. When he knew me, he asked, "Are you any better than when you were a boy?" Poor old man, while he was not much of a teacher, I have always thought he had generally a pretty hard lot of boys to deal with, and earned his salary of \$600 per year. I think you were going to High School, at the time Mr. Mackie took Squire William Sorber by the arm, and thrust him out of the school door. Sorber had been elected School Director, and came on Tuesday to school to dictate to Mr. Mackie how he should teach permanship. After a brief argument Sorber found himself outside the school. Several days later Sorber, accompanied by Nathan Nathans, controller; Cornelius DeGroot, Robert Morison, and several other directors, walked into the school. After a Did and Didn't conversation between Sorber and the teacher, Mr. Nathans, with his squeaky voice, addressed the school, telling us boys about George Washington and the little hatchet, and of the importance of telling the truth. He then told us that Mr. Sorber and



the teacher had agreed to let us decide whether Mr. Sorber had been forcibly ejected from the school. To his question: "Did Mr. Mackie put Mr. Sorber out of the school?" every boy of us yelled out an earnest "No!" I can see Sorber yet, as he left the school, his face red with anger. Why we lied for the teacher I have never been able to say, for none of loved him too well. I suppose we wanted to help him out of his trouble. He never treated us better than he did the rest of that week.

On Wednesday night the church will hold a social re-union in celebration of its 73rd anniversary. The celebration will be continued Sunday morning. Wednesday the 7th is the anniversary. It will also be the 48th anniversary of my receiving the hand of fellowship. The church was just 25 years old the day I was received. I was then in my 19th year; was 19 on the 18th of October. There is not much difference between our ages. During most of my boyhood I suffered from the result of brain fever, which I had when 9 years old. I could not play as other boys did, owing to headache. Owen (Shronk) was 16 months older, yet everybody thought I was the older. I wish it were possible for you to be with us on Wednesday evening. I have just been called to supper, after which I will make my nightly round in quest of news. Hoping you are well, as this leaves me, I am, as ever,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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August 30th 1911.

Dear James,

I have been thinking of you frequently today. There are times when I seem to dwell more in the past than in the present. On such dreary days as the one we are having, the retrospective takes hold and I recount the good old days that are gone forever. A few days ago, while on my way to the Ledger office, I stepped on a trolley car in which Mrs. Wieand, and her brother, Dr. Dallas Peltz, were seated. The Doctor, you remember, married a daughter of the Rev. Thomas Malcolm, a former pastor of Nicetown Baptist Church. They seem to have separated and he is living on his farm, somewhere down in New Jersey. He has been much afflicted with gout, but was looking fine the day I met him. In our talk he spoke of our school days, and of Mr. Mackie. He was he often thought of the boys who attended the school with him and Josiah, and wondered how many of them are living. I took up the thought after he left the car, and can recall at least 40 who are still living. Wouldn't it be a pleasant thing if the survivors could come together in a re-union? James F. Hope, president of the Union League, and who was mentioned as a candidate for Mayor, attended the 50th anniversary, which I induced the School Board to hold in 1901, when Forest School had occupied the site that many years. The anniversary should have been held in 1900, but delays put it off till the next year. Rev. Dr. Walker was also present. Wouldn't the teachers if us old boys would get together and march into the school?

How are you? Are you well? I hope that you have had a pleasant summer and that the fall which will soon be here may find you in good health and prosperous. I have been very fortunate at my work. Sometimes I get tired and a little discouraged, but such feelings pass. Since the second week in July I have been working for three daily papers, Ledger, North American and Record. It keeps me pushing the pencil pretty close, but it also helps me to meet the expenditures of life, By the three I do as well as I used to in the palmy days of the Ledger during Mr. Childs' times, when one's work was appreciated and paid for. Everything now is commercialism. You know, of course, of the death of John Dobson. Poor fellow, he went off suddenly. Things go on at the mills and at the Falls, just as they did while he was living. Samuel Wyatt buried his wife several weeks ago. He has, I believe, three daughters, who care for him. Sam is a good man and I have always had a high regard for him, ever since he came into my class in the Sunday School. We are having a mix-up in politics here in the city, and the fight is turning into one of religion. William S. Vare is a Methodist. I do not know what Mr. (George F.) Earle is religiously, but the Catholics to a man, seem to be for him. I do not think Vare capable for the job (Mayor) judging from a little talk I had with him, and from an attempt he made to deliver a speech. Rudolph Blankenburg, the "old War Horse" for reform, may be elected through the trouble in the Republican camp. I must stop today, to obey a call for supper.

Your old friend,

R. R. Shronk.

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October 14th 1911.

Dear James,

Your letter of yesterday, "Hoodoo Friday", the 13th, came to hand this morning. I read it before eating my breakfast, at 10 o'clock, my usual time. Aristocratic, isn't? Yes, we are having a political love feast, here in poor old Philadelphia. I opposed the nomination of "Brother Bill" Vare, because I thought him incapable, and like others voted for Earle, but will not help his election. Your comparing his humility with that of a Uriah Heep, is a good one. As Uriah was for Uriah, so Earle is for Earle. From what I hear, I think Rudolph Blankenburg has a good chance of being our next Mayor. You mentioned my being reminiscent. It seems I always have been. If its a sign of advancing age, mine has advanced slowly, for I will be only 67 years old on next Wednesday, October 18th. All we have we owe to the past, and what we are was achieved in the yesterdays of our lives. When the Apostle Paul spoke of "Forgetting the past", he did not mean its history, but his religious career. Without the past there would be no friendship. How fast the friends we gained in the past are disappearing, and what a difference there is in the old time friendships, to those formed in recent years. The latter are, it seems, only acquaintances and not friends. Even in church there is not the close fellowship once experienced. I delight in the retrospective

to recall those good old days, when my heart was young, before the clouds of loss and adversity came to darken the days of life. In my experiences there are so many things occurring which brings up the past. In my newspaper writing I am greatly helped at times, in knowing something of the historical, and I have been able to help others in the same line of work, which to me is always a pleasure, often without any other remuneration. On Thursday evening, Mr. H. C. Lincoln came out with his Atlantic City Chorus, and gave a splendid musicale at our church. Among those who enjoyed it were Miss Rebecca Uhler, who was also present last Sunday morning. She is living in the city again, with "Little Eliza", who was with her on Thursday evening, but who is no longer Little Eliza. Lizzie Mettinger Stine came down from Norristown. These two naturally carried one back into the good old past. We planned to have a Rally Week. There was a good attendance Sunday morning. The Sunday School held its rally in the afternoon and evening. On Monday evening, the Baptist Sunday School Superintendents held their monthly meeting for which the teachers and officers prepared supper. Thursday evening we attempted to hold an old-fashioned tea, and made provisions for 100; less than 50 came. When the tea was proposed there was a good deal for fear lest the money needed would be hard to collect, the cost being estimated at \$16. To allay the fears I volunteered to raise the money, and without asking anyone in the Falls, collected \$19, which I gave to Edwin Singer to pay the bills. I wish something could be done to bring the people out, and break up the cold indifference of too many of the members. Those who do attend, do nobly financially and otherwise. Sometimes I wish we had another Chesshire, who with all his "bull-head English ways" organized his forces for work and kept up the congregation. Personally, I owe much to him, and to you, for what I know religiously. He forced me to work and you gave me profitable advice and encouragement. How things have changed in the Falls. But here I am again getting back into the past. Do you blame me? Hoping you are in good health, as I am at present, I am, as ever,

Sincerely and gratefully yours,

Robert R. Shronk.

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11/11/11  
( November 11th 1911.)

Dear James,

Notice please the manner of dating this letter. For the eleventh time this has been possible since the new century came in, in 1901. (The Writer must have intended to say "the first time") Next year, if spared we may in December write it 12/12/12. None of <sup>ings</sup> will be ever again write them, for a century must pass before the can be repeated. You are jubilant over the result of the election we had here on Tuesday. I do not feel so elated over Mr. Blankenburg, or those back of him; ex-Judge Gordon and others. Had Reyburn submitted to their terms and allowed them to dictate his appointments, what a different kind of a Mayor he would have been in their estimation. While I am

hoping the best from the incoming administration, I fear the city will take a step backward. I am glad Tustin pulled through and that Acker is to be the next sheriff. I have seen so many alleged reforms, that I become a Doubting Thomas.

I hope to be able to attend Dr. Mills' lecture on the night of the 17th, and shall endeavor to push my work back an hour further into the night, as I do Wednesday nights in order to get to the prayer meetings. Dr. Mills wrote me a couple of weeks ago, desiring me to send him my photograph and stated he would in his lecture quote me and other historians of the Falls. I presume he wants to have a slide made of the photo. I am anxiously waiting for him to publish his history as I am sure it will be as interesting as it would be complete.

We had a little fright in church on Sunday evening, Dr. Stidham had almost concluded the second prayer, when he suddenly stopped; then in a faint voice began the Lord's Prayer; then stopped again. Harry Binkin in a very nice way, walked up into the pulpit and placed Dr. Stidham in a chair. Mrs. Stidham, Singer, John Wyatt, and I, also went up to the pulpit. Dr. Stidham had become unconscious for a brief period, but was all right again by the time the choir had sung a hymn, Binkin had announced, and insisted upon continuing the service. I remain seated on a chair immediately behind him, ready to grasp him should he give out, but he went through the sermon without trouble and later celebrated the communion. He cannot account for the attack and on Wednesday night, when I last saw him, was none the worse for the experience. He says it must be a sign of age, and told me he will be 74 next month. I did not think he was so much older than I, but we can never judge from appearances. I saw Jennie Reed last evening. She has recently undergone an operation for appendicitis in St. Timothy's Hospital. She shows she has suffered, but says she is gradually getting all right again.

This leaves me in good health, but I am troubled somewhat with my sight. I had to get new glasses but cannot get accustomed to them, and am taking stomach toning drafts which seem to help me slowly. As it is I read as little as possible. Hoping you are in good health, and may long continue to do so, I am.

Sincerely yours,

R. Roberts Shronk.

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November 18th, 1911.

Dear James,

I was very glad to see you looking so well last evening, but am sorry I was compelled to leave the hall without a chance for a chat. Two things annoyed me, very much, during Dr. Mills' highly interesting lecture. That alarm of fire meant that I might been needed, and I was suffering a great deal with urinal trouble. I was very much afraid the latter would have kept me from attending the lecture, but fortunately I obtained a remedy which gave me relief and great comfort. The thing is a mark of age, and comes on with the slightest cold which settles there. So much for my hurrying away. I have long thought the

word, "History", ought to be spelled with another "S", so that it would be "His Story", because all historians have their own versions of facts. Without any thought of criticising the lecture of last evening, there were a number of things said which would not bear the light of fact being turned on them. For instance: that old tumble down building presented as "Cock Roach Row". The structure shown was "Paddy McGowan's Row" and was on the opposite side of old Ferry Road from "Cock Roach Row". You will remember that the old row had little front yards and there were dormer windows on the roof of each house. Samuel and "Aunt Hannah" Scott, parents of Hugh, George and Harriet, lived in the one nearest the bridge. Silas Timbers and the Bennetts occupied others of the houses. The Dr. Mills said that Josiah Whites' wire mill stood near Cock Roach Row. It was on the lower side of the bridge. You will doubtless remember the two stone arches that stood near the river, until they were torn down by Henry Becker, when he helped construct the Park Drive. As to the Laboratory, the grounds were bought from James Spencer, who owned the old barn, and from George Shronk, Elizabeth Winpenny, Mary A. Miller and Sarah Mower. Thomas Shronk, of Manayunk, who owned the Shantz property was another son. The works were built in 1847-48. The alcohol distillery on the lower side of Ridge avenue, was built in 1850. No mention was made of George L. Harrison, as a member of the firm. He retired at the end of 1853. Through him the building back of the old barn was erected in 1848, as a school house for children of the employees. The second floor was fitted up as a library and reading room for the workman. As soon as he quit the firm the school, library, and reading room were discontinued by the great philanthropist Thomas Powers, and Mr. Weightman, who had the building formed into four dwellings, as it is today. I enjoyed what he said about the Reading Railway's magnificent Stone Bridge and the little he said about your father, whose character I have always regarded as being as near perfect as any I have ever known. All together the lecture was a good one and I think well delivered. He had a splendid audience and everybody seemed pleased. After leaving the hall I hurried with my daughter, thinking to put her on the train, but we missed it by a few minutes. We then walked down to Ridge avenue. I went to the police station, and learning the fire was a trifling one at Dobson's Mill came home with Nettie, phoning my work to the papers from a drug store.

Goodbye till next time,

R. R. Shronk.

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Christmas, 1911.

Dear James,

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year having a little spare time this afternoon, I thought I would devote it to indulging in a written chat with you.

What a difference the years make in Christmas and other festive occasions? I thought as I sat at the table today, of what I would give to have, for just a little

while, the appetite I had when I was a boy. As that is one of the has beens. I have to comfort myself with plain victuals, which after all, are best for those getting on in years. We are having spring-like weather here today, and it seems that most people are out-of-doors to enjoy it. Here we are, about to the close of another year, and as usual I am thoughtful of the past. The year has been a good one to me in many respects. I have enjoyed good health and been able to attend my work without interruption. It has also brought me, as it has to many others, sorrows which at times cause sadness. A year ago today, my favorite sister, Elizabeth, was in the Hospital with bright prospects of recovering from pneumonia. Just as we were most hopeful, meningitis set in and took her from us. Such are the penalties of life, humanly viewed. Are we not blest in having a better and a brighter view? I often think of you and the losses you have sustained, and wonder how you have managed to bear up under them. I have a home, with those who care for me most lovingly and tenderly, making me as comfortable as possible. I hope the closing year has been a good one to you in every respect, and that you are better off spiritually, physically and financially than at its beginning. I was over to church yesterday morning, and enjoyed Dr. Stidham's Christmas sermon, and the music of the choir, but it was not the old time choir, by a great deal. Christiana Whalley came to church, she said, to celebrate her 81st birthday. At the close of the service Dr. Stidham had her taken to the lower platform, where she received the congratulations of the congregation as the men and women passed by and shook hands with her. Her mother was a sister of my father. Dr. Stidham spoke in the afternoon at the Baptist Home. There are two young girls from the Sunday School awaiting baptism. They will come before the church on Wednesday evening. Here is a clipping from the Nicetown Sun, which I wrote for last week's issue. The proof reader was not overly careful, as you will see by the correction I made.

Hoping this will find you in the best of health, happy and prosperous, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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January 25th 1912.

Dear James,

I have just been looking over the little book, published by the church in 1888, when the 50th anniversary was celebrated. I looked up the date upon which the first service was held in the present building and find it was March 21st, 1852, your twelfth birthday. As it will be 60 years this coming March, I have thought it might stir up some interest in the church and Sunday School by a simple celebration of the anniversary. Our old, but not aged friend, Joseph Johnson as you are aware celebrated his 95th birthday yesterday. I called on him on Tuesday afternoon, and had a long and pleasant chat with him. I have prepared a little sketch of him, to be printed in Sunday's Record, with his photograph. The latter I borrowed from Dr. C. K.

Mills. Uretta (Johnson) called to see her uncle yesterday, and spoke last night, of the many letters he had received, mentioning one from you, which she said was greatly appreciated. Mrs. Rebecca A. Garrigues, of 32nd and Spring Garden streets, a sister of Brother Johnson died on Tuesday evening, on the eve of his celebration. This sad occurrence marred the celebration. He now has a sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Jewett, in Lima, Ohio, and a brother, George Johnson, who with him survive of a family of twelve.

Not having heard from you for a long while, I thought you had gone to California, or somewhere in a warmer climate, to get away from the terrible cold weather. The longer I live the more I dislike the cold, of which in my business I get a full share. I have been very fortunate so far this winter in having had but one cold. I find that wearing a skull cap in meeting is a great protection.

Hester Bechtel has been very ill as has my Aunt Isabelle Roberts. Hettie is in the Gorgas Home, Roxborough, and Aunt Belle is at her daughter, Belle's, home in Roxborough. Hoping the winter has been good to you, and that you are enjoying good health, I am,

Yours sincerely,

R. R. Shronk.

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February 29th 1912.

Dear James, It has been sometime since I received your last letter, about the time of Joseph Johnson's 95th birthday anniversary. I have not seen him since, but have learned that he is doing nicely. The death of his sister, the day before his celebration, was a great shock to him. He has not been out of the house since. Well, we had the Washington Birthday Party at the church, when birthday offerings were made so as to lessen the \$350 debt on the improvements. About one-sixth of the amount was contributed. That doesn't sound much, but considering the small number and the high cost of living, I think it was pretty good. As I have previously stated, it will be 60 years on March 21st, since the church moved into the present building. On that Sunday in March 1852, the Sunday School became known as the Falls of Schuylkill Baptist Sunday School, instead of the Union Sunday School. It had practically been a Baptist School for years before leaving the Old Academy. Benjamin Marley had been superintendent and continued until 1863 when Mr. Chesshire succeeded him. All the teachers, but one, Miss Kate Sorber, a Presbyterian, were Baptists. She came with the school to its new home and taught her class several years. I suggested to the church last night that a celebration of the anniversary be held on the evening of March 21st, by the school and church jointly, when a little more interest might be awakened. Dr. Stidham had just gotten over a spell of illness: Some bladder trouble. He was unable to get out a week ago. But last night and showed his weakness on Sunday. He goes to the Masonic Home on Sunday afternoon to preach for the Ladies' Auxiliary of Mary Commandery, Knights of Templar. Hope he may get right strong for the occasion. I am heartily glad that today ends February, which with January has been very trying to those

seen 36.

of us who have the biggest half of our pilgrimage. Personally, I have been greatly blest, having gone through thus far in the winter with but trifling ailments. How has it been with you? I hope just as well if not better. Could you not be able to be present at the celebration on your birthday; a letter from you to be read on the occasion would be greatly appreciated by the many who remember your successful administration of the Sunday School, for so many years.

With best wishes I am,  
Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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March 20th 1912.

Dear James,

I write this hoping you will receive it tomorrow, the anniversary of your birthday. Did I not know that you have seen twelve half dozen years, I would never believe you have seen so many. So please accept my congratulations on your being so young despite the summers and winters you have seen. Remember that a woman is only as old as she looks and a man as old as he feels. There are a few of the people I know who I like to think about, and you are one of them. We have known each other a good many years; have lived at the old Falls, where the dear people talked a great deal about each other, and where one's faults never lost anything in the gossip, and yet we loved those dear men and women, who made up that neighborly community. Much as I have known and mingled with that people, I have never heard a word spoken against James S. Swartz. In your youth you won the respect of all by the devotion shown to your mother. You have been and still are noble in the little church in which we have shared so many blessings. While life is so sweet and we love it so well, we have the consciousness that while it is fleeting, the years are bringing us nearer home, to be welcomed by loved ones gone on before. The church has decided to celebrate the 60th anniversary of occupying the present home, on Sunday. In the morning, Dr. Stidham will preach an appropriate sermon and I am to read a brief sketch. The Sunday School, which began March 21st, 1852, as a Baptist School, will hold its celebration in the afternoon, when the programme will include an address by the Rev. W. B. Forney, pastor of the Mount Vernon Baptist Church. Special services will also be held in the evening.

In looking over the list of charter members I find that Peter Bechtel is the only one now living. I called on Joseph Johnson, week before last, found him well and in good spirits, still enjoying the kind birthday letters received from you and other friends. He presented me with a pretty sterling silver cigar cutter with my monogram engraved upon it in script.

Wishing you a joyful birthday, and hoping you may have many peaceful years, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.



March 28th 1912.

Dear James,

I have just arrived home from Roxborough, where I attended the annual meeting of the Overseers of the Poor, of Roxborough Township, and partook of a roast turkey dinner. Your letter of yesterday came to hand this morning. I was glad to learn of your having taken a trip South and hope it may be of lasting benefit to you. I do not remember the freckled faced boy, McCoy, your spoke of. There used to be a family of Maloys at the Falls. During one of his visits home from California, Uncle William Roberts told me of the Maloy boys, who he said used to slide barefooted on the ice. One of the boys became a boatman on the Schuylkill and was noted for his blowing the long boatman's horn. It seems that my Uncle spoke of one of the boys being at one time Mayor of Chicago, but I have never thought of it, until I read your letter this morning. The next time I see Hugh Scott I will ask him, He is a walking history of the Falls.

The celebration on Sunday was quite a success, every one seemed pleased with the sketch I prepared and read. At the conclusion of the service I handed the sketch to Mrs. Stidham, who being deaf could not hear it. She promised to return it on Wednesday, but instead she informed me the proprietor of the Forecast had called at the parsonage; asked for, and received the sketch, I called the proprietor on the telephone and he told me he would print the sketch next week, with a portrait of Dr. Stidham and a picture of the church. It was rather a display of gall, but as it may benefit the church, I made no objection. So when I receive the extra copies he promised to send me, I will send you one.

We had a very pleasant service at the church last night; the attendance was better than it has been for some time. A young man, Frederick Hodson, and two young women were successful for baptism, on Sunday evening. I hope these will prove the droppings that will precede a copious shower.

I was greatly surprised and saddened last evening to see in the Bulletin that our friend and former school mate Thomas K. Arnold had died yesterday following an operation for stomach trouble, after a brief illness. The last time I saw him was on the night Dr. C. K. Mills delivered his last lecture in American Hall. He is the thirteenth of my friends, including Rear Admiral Melville, who have died this year. Should you call on our venerable friend Joseph Johnson anytime you may be in the Falls, I assure you the visit will be appreciated by him and his daughters.

Hoping this will find you in the best of health, as it leaves me, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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April 4th 1912.

Dear James,

Your letter of yesterday awaited my coming to the

fully recovered but have to be careful as to what I eat. One does not recuperate as quickly when the years are piling upon him. What a blessing it is to have a telephone on one's house, when he is in a weak physical condition. With it I was able to keep up my work, with the assistance of a Germantown reporter who kindly assisted me in getting news that could not be obtained by the phone. How is your health? It seems an age since I have heard from you. Have you been able to get away to some more comfortable retreat? Hope you are enjoying good health. In all my years I have never had a vacation, and never felt that I needed one. Home has always been good enough.

On Sunday we had a pretty heavy rain, with the usual result, a small congregation at church. In the small gathering was James Dobson, and I do not think he had ever heard a better sermon than the one Dr. Stidham preached on "Paul's Thorn in the Flesh". Tonight the trustees are to hold a lawn fete in the rear of the church. From present appearances I am afraid they will have a rainy night. Three candidates will be baptized on Sunday evening. All females. Some in the Sunday School are hesitating.

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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November 9th 1912.

Dear James,

It seems an age since I have seen or heard from you. I am taking a little rest today, by spending the afternoon at home. The girls have gone to the city leaving me to take care of the house, with instructions not to leave the fire go out. After telephoning to my papers I got to thinking when you came to mind, so I concluded to have a little chat with you on paper. How do you like the result of Tuesday's election? I was not surprised in Wilson being elected, but I did not expect to see so great and wide a sweep. I voted for the Washington Party electors, and the Republican State and County ticket. Where all the Philadelphia Democrats came from is a mystery. I had thought them all dead. In attending the few meetings held in Manayunk, as a reporter, I was much amused in seeing many of my old Democratic enemies lined up against their own party. Last year every one of them were out and out Republicans and voted for Earle, at the behest of McNichol. In the beginning of the late campaign every Catholic with whom I talked was strong for the re-election of Taft. They all turned in favor of Wilson. Even those on the police force, and their name there is legion, quietly voted the Democratic ticket. The die being cast, we will have to wait for the result. By the way, I was accused during the fall, of being a Democrat. At 19th and Butler streets, is all large and handsome new public school named after Grover Cleveland. Oliver P. Ely, formerly of the Forest School, is the supervising principal. I visited the school a year ago last May, and expressed my disappointment in Ely, in not seeing a picture of Cleveland on the walls. I wrote to Mrs. Cleveland, as a Ledger reporter. She, I learned later, was abroad. In July of this year a fine photograph came to me, from a Princeton, N.J. photographer, by

breakfast table this morning. The Mrs. Boardman whose death notice you read in the Ledger is not connected with the Boardmans of the Falls. Edward Boardman, rather an intelligent and good looking young Irishman, came to the Falls about 1850 and was employed as coachman at Abbottsford, then in its glory. My half-sister, Sarah Shronk, about the same time went to Abbots as nurse for Griffiths. She and the coachman got married. "Sallie" as we called her, died in 1882. She and Mary Pretty, Harry Pretty's wife, were sisters, and daughters of my father's first wife. John Shronk, who carried on carpentering in the city, and widely known as a fiddler, was a brother. You may have known him. He lived for a time, in Mower's Row, and used to have his carpenter shop on the Shronk fishing lane. The day John moved to the city, Owen and I helped with the moving, and thus were kept from being in swimming with Dr. Mills, when he came so near being drowned. That was one of the exciting events I missed? John William Pretty, Harry's youngest son, was buried last week. I knew nothing of his death till just before the funeral. Owing to my eye trouble I do very little reading. My eye doctor is treating me for bladder trouble, which he says he gradually leaving. I'd like to say goodbye to it forever. So your niece is going over to St. James the Less. Which, in once sense, is getting up in the world.

I have only met Dr. Edward Ritchie once, that was in a Ridge avenue trolley car. He nodded as I entered the car. In was on my way to Manayunk to see the new priest of the Holy Family Church. Thinking Rev. Ritchie might be the priest I asked, "What parish are you in charge of, Father?" "I am rector of St. James the Less" was his reply. His brother (Rev. Robert Ritchie) and I were warm friends for many years. I always thought a great deal of Mrs. Ritchie, who by the way, is back to the rectorage as housekeeper for her bachelor brother-in-law.

I have not met Hugh Scott to ask him about the Maloy, or McCoy boys.

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

R. R. Shronk.

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July 26th 1912.

Dear James,

I have mailed you a copy of last week's Chronicle, in which I make mention of a talk we had way back in the seventies, about the extending of Fairmount Park. I presume you will remember the conversation. Haven't we had a hot July?, I do not know of a summer in which I have felt the effects of the heat more than I did this month. On the morning of June 30th, after my night's work, I took a walk and retired about 12,30. Sometime later I was awakened with a great thirst; going to the hallway, where a pitcher of ice water is kept, I was seized with dizziness and came near falling. I drank a glass of water, returned to bed, and took a chill. Was laid up two days. Wednesday I had two fire to report, and overdid my strength. Got better again, and on the following Thursday had what the doctor pronounced a heat stroke. For three successive Sundays I was unable to get over to church. I have almost

fully recovered but have to be careful as to what I eat. One does not recuperate as quickly when the years are piling upon him. What a blessing it is to have a telephone on one's house, when he is in a weak physical condition. With it I was able to keep up my work, with the assistance of a Germantown reporter who kindly assisted me in getting news that could not be obtained by the phone. How is your health? It seems an age since I have heard from you. Have you been able to get away to some more comfortable retreat? Hope you are enjoying good health. In all my years I have never had a vacation, and never felt that I needed one. Home has always been good enough.

On Sunday we had a pretty heavy rain, with the usual result, a small congregation at church. In the small gathering was James Dobson, and I do not think he had ever heard a better sermon than the one Dr. Stidham preached on "Paul's Thorn in the Flesh". Tonight the trustees are to hold a lawn fete in the rear of the church. From present appearances I am afraid they will have a rainy night. Three candidates will be baptized on Sunday evening. All females. Some in the Sunday School are hesitating.

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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November 9th 1912.

Dear James,

It seems an age since I have seen or heard from you. I am taking a little rest today, by spending the afternoon at home. The girls have gone to the city leaving me to take care of the house, with instructions not to leave the fire go out. After telephoning to my papers I got to thinking when you came to mind, so I concluded to have a little chat with you on paper. How do you like the result of Tuesday's election? I was not surprised in Wilson being elected, but I did not expect to see so great and wide a sweep. I voted for the Washington Party electors, and the Republican State and County ticket. Where all the Philadelphia Democrats came from is a mystery. I had thought them all dead. In attending the few meetings held in Manayunk, as a reporter, I was much amused in seeing many of my old Democratic enemies lined up against their own party. Last year every one of them were out and out Republicans and voted for Earle, at the behest of McNichol. In the beginning of the late campaign every Catholic with whom I talked was strong for the re-election of Taft. They all turned in favor of Wilson. Even those on the police force, and their name there is legion, quietly voted the Democratic ticket. The die being cast, we will have to wait for the result. By the way, I was accused during the fall, of being a Democrat. At 19th and Butler streets, is all large and handsome new public school named after Grover Cleveland. Oliver P. Ely, formerly of the Forest School, is the supervising principal. I visited the school a year ago last May, and expressed my disappointment in Ely, in not seeing a picture of Cleveland on the walls. I wrote to Mrs. Cleveland, as a Ledger reporter. She, I learned later, was abroad. In July of this year a fine photograph came to me, from a Princeton, N.J. photographer, by

express, without any other reply to my letter. I had the picture framed at Ely's expense, and he arranged a Grover Cleveland night at the school, on October 22nd, with this programme: Brief address by Principal; Music by Grammar girls; Address by Holman White, district superintendent; presentation of portrait, in behalf of Mrs. Cleveland, by "yours truly"; address on Grover Cleveland, by his warm friend, William U. Hensel, former attorney general of Pennsylvania, and acceptance of the picture by Mrs. Edith Heaton, a School Visitor. You see I was put between two intellectual lights. I feel a little proud of having secured the picture when William F. Harrity and others, tried and failed. Nothing like "reportorial Gall". Things are moving along in the same old rut at the church. Only a few take interest in the services. It must be very discouraging to Dr. Stidham. We had to have new cylinders placed in the heaters and it was only last week that the country men got them made. Despite the heavy rain on Thursday night, the annual meeting for returning the mite boxes was well attended, I am told. I couldn't get off and do not know the amount received. Dear old Sister Jones was buried last week by the church. She was 93 years old, and died in the Baptist Home. Joseph Johnson, who is in his 96th year, still keeps his youthful appearance, and attends church Sundays when the weather is favorable. I saw Jacob several times while he was staying at Hallie's house. Too bad nothing can be done to help his sight. He is too young to be useless. I have had fairly good health, and hope you have been in the best of health, and that you had an enjoyable summer.

Sincerely yours,

R. Roberts Shronk.

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December 23rd 1912.

Dear James,

It is now close onto midnight, but I thought I would say a few words to you on paper before retiring. I am a regular night hawk; never in a hurry to get to bed; and never in a hurry to get out of it in the morning, hence my work is congenial.

I called on Dr. Stidham this evening. He has had a severe attack of the grippe, but is somewhat better than he was yesterday, and thinks he will be all right again in a little while. He telephones me on Saturday and asked me to go to the Baptist Home Sunday afternoon to speak to the old saints there, in his stead. It would have been his 14th consecutive Christmas talk at the home. I complied with his request and had a delightful visit. I spoke to them on "Comfort", and my talk was appreciated. Mrs. Wieand was at the Home before I arrived and in a very gracious speech introduced me. At the conclusion of the service one of the aged women asked me if I knew anything about James S. Swartz. She told me she was the widow of Frank James, who used to teach singing at our church. I remember him well. He was a good singer and a fine teacher, but he could not teach me to sing. She begged me to remember her to you, when I next wrote, so you see I have complied. How have you been? It seems a long time since I saw or heard from you. Hoping you

are in the best of health and wishing you may have a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year, I am sincerely yours,

R. Roberts Shronk.

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January 2nd 1913.

Dear James,

Your letter of yesterday I read at breakfast. As I was favored with the first letter you wrote this year, I return the compliment by writing this, my first letter of the year, to you. What a flood of recollections your letter awakened in my mind! From my boyhood I have been a friend of Mark Watkinson. I never knew a minister who made me think of Christ, as he did. Mr. Watkinson, I have always thought, was a greatly wronged man, and that the church made a mistake in allowing him to leave. I remember his coming to our old home, just before his departure from the Falls, and of my father asking him to stay and preach in the old School House, assuring him as much of a salary as he had received from the church. There were a number of men back of father's offer. Watkinson refused for the sake of peace. I never look upon Abbotsford and the desolation that has come to that once beautiful place, but what "Vengeance is Mine, and I will repay saith the Lord", comes up in my mind. I admired Mr. Abbot, as a Biblical scholar, but always thought he was headstrong and liked to have his own way, especially when Margaret Morison was urging him on. Sadie, poor girl, died in poverty. Griffith is somewhere in the New England states, farming; while poor Sam is eking out a miserable existence as a book agent. Mark Watkinson drew more worldly men to his preaching than any other who has succeeded him at the Falls. I have always thought that had he not been driven away, my father would have become a member of the church. Do you remember how Chesshire went for me, the time I bought a dressing gown at a church fair, for Watkinson? The day I took the wrapper to him at his home in Camden, he showed me the large Bible the women of our church had presented to him. This Bible, with other of his belongings had been confiscated by the government while he lived at Norfolk, Virginia. It had been bought in a second hand store by a woman, who upon reading the inscription, wrote to Watkinson and upon learning he was the one to whom it had been presented, expressed it to him, at her own expense. Of the many baptized by Watkinson, only three are now in the church: Mrs. Christiana Whalley, Mrs. Wieand, and her sister, Elizabeth Peltz.

I stopped for a minute last evening at the Sunday School's New Year celebration. A large congregation was present and everybody seemed to be delighted. Dr. Stidham, still weak from the grippe, was there. Edwin Singer had had another carbuncle on the back of his neck, an affliction of which he has certainly had his share.

From the manner in which Mrs. Frank James inquired about you, I thought there had been an intimate acquaintance between you. I was thinking this morning of Mrs. Mary Loud. Do you know what become of her?

I thank you for your kind wishes for my welfare this

year. I hope it may bring you health, peace, prosperity and many friends.

Sincerely yours,

R. Roberts Shronk.

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January 25th 1913.

Dear James,

I received your letter yesterday morning, and was glad to hear from you and to learn that my post card reminding you of our friend Joseph Johnson's birthday was appreciated. I called at his home last evening, and was sorry to learn he had been suffering for a cold and was out of his bed but a short time during the day. I did not see him. I had walked through a light drizzling rain, and thought it would be imprudent to go to his room in my damp clothes. His daughter, Elizabeth, told me he had received a letter from you, which he appreciated very highly. I hope he may recover, but colds are bad for the aged. I presume you have learned of the death of our friend Peter Bechtel, who died suddenly while retiring on Tuesday night, presumably from heart trouble. He had been ailing several weeks, but the end came very unexpectedly. He taught me in Sunday School before you took charge of the class, and was in my estimation a noble Christian man. The funeral service is to be held in Roxborough church, of which he was senior deacon, this afternoon.

Dr. Mills sent me a copy of "Old Penn" containing his article on the Falls of Schuylkill's relations to the University of Pennsylvania. He is a little off in dates regarding the old School House, which was erected in 1819 and not 1813, as he has it. I have a little 36 page book "Memoir of the Rev. William Ward, one of the Serampore Missionaries", which on the inside of the cover bears this label: "Presented by The Falls of Schuylkill Sabbath School Association, to William Roberts, Christmas 1838". Uncle was then in his ninth year. I have often wondered if he ever read the little book, which was anything but appropriate for a boy so young. I have an article awaiting publication in the Record, on the Old School House, but I do not know when it will be printed. Edwin Singer is recovering from a large carbuncle on the back of his neck. Hoping this will find you in good health, as it leaves me, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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February 17th 1913.

Dear James,

Your interesting letter came in time for me to read it at the breakfast table this morning. I breakfast alone at ten o'clock. The letter has kept me wondering all day who the John Bechtel was that was drowned in the canal

at Pottstown. While Rev. N. J<sup>U</sup>udson Clark was pastor of our church, Peter Bechtel had four brothers; John, who served through the Civil War, came home and married a Catholic widow, Mrs. Byrnes. She still resides at the Falls. Jacob, who is living in Jersey. Frank, who was killed during the Civil War; and Henry, who was fatally scalded by falling into a vat of boiling water at Simpson's Mill.

So you see, the John you mentioned, and through whose drowning you had such a pleasant drive with your lady friend, was not Peter's brother. I have been unable to recall anyone from the Falls being drowned at Pottstown at that time.

Joseph Johnson's daughter, Elizabeth, was at church yesterday morning. She informed me that her father is in good health, having recovered from the cold that kept him from seeing callers on his birthday. I would like to see him round out a full century. The article I wrote on the Old School House at the Falls, appeared in today's Record. It contains two errors which the compositor failed to correct after I marked the proof. Samuel Garrett is mentioned as "Samuel Grant", and an "O" instead of an "A" is used in the name of William Marley. I shall try and hear Rev. Faulcomer, the evangelist, when he holds forth in the Presbyterian Church. I often wish we had a Watkinson, a Clark, or a Chesshire at our church. Do you remember how the church prospered when the opposition of the other bodies was aroused? You have, or had, a little book, published by Father Cullen, of St. Bridget's Church, when Mr. Clark was pastor. Father Fox gave me the book and I gave it to you. It shows somewhat the condition of affairs at that time. Poor old Father Cullen! I met him about twenty years ago at the Falls, and was introduced to him by Peter Morris. He told me he had suddenly lost all the knowledge; that his mind became a blank one day while ministering at the altar, and that by hard study he had fitted himself to conduct services. A short time later I read of his being fatally injured by being run over by a large truck in Chicago.

I have a set of "store teeth", which it seems I will never get used to eating with. I had my own extracted last September, since which time I have lived on machine ground meats and soft victuals. It is one of the penalties of getting old. Old Dr. Hooker, of 10th street, above Vine, did the same to my teeth that he did to your cousin Mary Simms'. Scraped till he injured the enamel.

As it is nearly midnight, I will not take up any more of your time, this time.

Sincerely yours,

Robert R. Shronk.

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February 20th 1913.

Dear James,

I telephoned to Hetty Bechtel at the Gorgas Home. (East Leverington avenue, Roxborough) She cannot talk over the phone. Another lady acted for her. She does not recall the Bechtel drowned at Pottstown. The next time I



am at the Ledger office, when the librarian is in, I will look over the files. Your date, May 14th 1859, will be a great help in my search. I presume a notice of the drowning or a death notice was published. I got several extra copies of Monday's Record and send you a clipping of my article on the Old School House. I remember the service in the "Jimmy" (James) street Methodist Episcopal Church, when Dr. (Joseph) Beggs, (of the Falls Presbyterian Church) pitched into the Baptists. His speaking of the filth of the converts offended my Uncle William Shronk, a Methodist, and Samuel Birkmire, a Presbyterian,--the father of John Harvey Birkmire, who married "Uncle Bill's" daughter, Mary Ann, (Shronk) both of whom were members of our church. My mother used to tell an amusing incident that occurred in the early history of our church. She and Sarah Pugh, another constituent member, frequently attended Methodist services in the Old School House. One night the Methodist minister, a Mr. Henry, from Manayunk, preached and had an infant christening after the sermon, and asked "How many have come to an untimely death by immersion? I pause for an answer." He repeated the question three times, when Rev. Samuel Creswell, who was supplying the Baptist Church, stepped in the room, and shaking his fist at the Methodist minister, said, "Not one, sir!" Mother said if an angel had appeared, she and Sarah Pugh could not have been better pleased. Creswell challenged Henry to debate the question but he declined.

I do not know whether the Forecast will print the article, or not. I sent the editor an article on the Falls "Fifty years ago", when the spotted fever made its appearance and how it was named. I saw him Tuesday night and he said he had given the article to Dr. Mills to be used in its place in his history of the Falls, soon to appear in the Forecast. Dr. Mills wrote me last week, and wants to have a talk with me, early in March, on Falls history. I went to his house several years ago, when he pumped me till I thought the pegs would be drawn from my shoes, his stenographer jotting down the questions and answers. I shall be glad to give him another talk. He got me into a lot of trouble, if it can be called trouble, over the 100th anniversary of Roxborough Lodge No. 135 F and A.M. by sending a committee to me that sought information from him, regarding some of the past masters of the Lodge. I furnished facts concerning a large number and expect a copy of the book, as a reward for my work. Sometime in the spring I want to have Dr. Mills come out and have lunch with me, and if possible would like you to join us on the occasion, with Dr. Stidham. Dr. Stidham sent me a postal yesterday, requesting me to conduct the prayer service last night. He has a severe cough and Dr. Rath advised his staying in the house and not to talk. I am afraid he will be a long while getting over the grippe, unless he is very careful. Sunday morning he had me to assist him in the service, and then preached a long and splendid sermon on "Seeking and Finding". Guess this will take up as much of your time as you can spare, so I'll quit.

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

March 4th 1913.

Dear James,

I have just returned from the Ledger Building. I happened to see the Librarian and had a look over the files. In the Ledger of May 17th, 1859, I found this death notice:

"Suddenly, on the 14th Inst, Mr. William Bechtel, in the 40th year of his age.  
"The friends and relatives are invited to attend the funeral this -Tuesday-morning at 9o'clock, from his late residence, James street, Falls of Schuylkill. Funeral to proceed to Roxborough."

I called up the Gorgas Home for Women, in which Hetty Bechtel resides. She, through another woman, told me she does not remember having a brother William. I fear she is in the age of forgetfulness. Personally I have but a faint recollection of a William Bechtel and of his being drowned somewhere up the ~~550~~. At that time the Bechtels lived on James street, and in the following year, on Election Day, November 1860, Henry Bechtel was fatally scalded by falling into a large tub, or vat, of boiling water in Simpson's silk dye house. I do not know of any other Bechtels living at the Falls. There was a Paul Bechtel who lived in Roxborough where he drove a hearse for Enoch Levering, the undertaker. I shall try to dig up facts regarding this case. Should I succeed I will forward the same to you.

In a letter to you last week, I sent you a copy of my article printed in the Philadelphia Record. In last week's Forecast was a communication I sent the editor about the visitation of the "spotted fever", fifty years ago, which I signed "Survivor". I am anxiously waiting for the Forecast to begin the publication of Dr. Mills' History of the Falls. Dr. Mills wrote me a short note, when he said he would like to have a talk with me on his history. I have called him up several times on the phone, to arrange a date for such a chat, but he has not been home. I fear he will make a mistake if he prints the names of all the men who enlisted in the Civil War, from the Falls, some of whom have records which had better be kept in the dark.

Dr. Stidham is slowly recovering from an attack of the gripe. He preached Sunday morning and evening, and in the afternoon preached for the Ladies' Auxiliary Association of Mary Commandery, K.T. at the Masonic Home. Hoping you are well and that everything may go well under Woodrow Wilson's Democratic administration, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

March 8th 1913.

Dear James,

Last August I wrote to a newspaper friend of mine in Chicago, asking him to find out something for me concerning ex-Mayor Malloy, of that city. This morning I received a reply. The letter had been mislaid. He tells me there never was a Mayor Malloy of Chicago. You remember asking me if I knew anything of Michael Malloy, who sounded the gong at the time your father was building the bridge at the Falls. I shall write Edmondson and ask him to give me the name of those who have been mayors of Chicago. I am so sorry that the print of the sketch I wrote on the Old School House was lost, that I secured another copy, which I enclose. I had a long talk on Thursday, with Dr. C. K. Mills, at his home. I arrived there at 1.30 and by the time we got through it was almost 4.30. Then he wanted me to stay and have dinner with him, so we would continue the talk, but I could not. I think his history will prove highly interesting reading to the people of the Falls, even though most of those whom we once knew and loved have been called to their reward. The Falls of today is so different from the Falls you and I knew so well. Sometimes I go through it without seeing anyone of the old-time residents. I look at the houses and think of those who once occupied them and the thought makes me sad. I am preparing a history of our church, for its 75th anniversary, which will occur on June 7th next. Much of it will be a re-write of what was published in 1888, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary. At that time three of the original members, Mrs. Eliza Mills Singer, of Manayunk; Mrs. Sarah Pugh Hansell, of West Philadelphia; and my mother, were living. Mother was confined to her bed, by what proved her last illness. The other two attended the celebration. How many have joined the great majority during the 25 years that have intervened. They have passed on a little way ahead around the bend of the road, where they are enjoying the harmony and seeing the beauty of the celestial city, while waiting our coming to join them.

I was talking to a Chestnut street jeweler yesterday, when he told me that everything is standing still waiting for the Democrats to take action on the tariff.

Hoping you are in good health, as this leaves me, and that your trouble in writing may disappear, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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April 24th 1913.

Dear James,

In your letter of yesterday, you wish to know something concerning Bernard Dowdall. His father was William Dowdall, and when I first met him he was employed on the Reading Railroad, at West Falls, as a repairman. He married Mrs. Bridget Hennessey, who with her sons, Joseph and John, live in Smith's Folly. She was a sister of Rosie and Bernard McCabe, both of whom were employed by Joseph

Shantz,. She was a domestic, he a coachman and assistant in the store. I presume Bernard Dowdall was named after his Uncle Barney, who died long before he was born.

Dr. Mills is certainly giving full measure in his weekly sections of Falls History. I wondered last week, when I read the sketch, how he came to take a photograph of the rear entrance to Abbotsford and not of the front, which is so much better known. I thought you would appreciate and sanction the little piece I wrote about Edwin Singer. I do not know how the church would get along without him. I called on Dr. Stidham last evening before taking charge of the little prayer service. He was somewhat better, but not well enough to go out of the house. He expects to preach on Sunday, but I am afraid he will not be able. William H. Merrick, having been so long abroad, was well nigh forgotten. I was more acquainted with his brother, J. Vaughan Merrick, who was one of the most practical men I have ever known. Yes, we are on the firing line, and there too, without any weapons of defence, just to wait our turn, that's all, and that's enough. Beyond the sunsets of night, are the dawns of bright glad days. So let's be hopeful.

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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May 26th 1913.

Dear James,

I have been having another of the only kind of vacations I have ever known; that of being ill and compelled to drop work and take it easy. I took a ride to Manayunk this afternoon, to get a haircut, and to attend to a little business. It was my first outing since Saturday week. On that day I went to call on friends in Germantown, when I broke completely down and had to be helped home by my daughter. The rest, the quiet and the medicine had made me feel almost myself again. The doctor said it was a general collapse, with cold and congestion. Whatever it was, it was very weakening. I will resume work tonight but will do it principally by the telephone.

I thought of you last night, while courting sleep. Fifty years ago, last evening, on the last Sunday in 1863 you waited upon me, when I was baptized by Mr. Chesshire. I have often thought of the advice you gave me about attending the church services regularly, and never to allow anything to keep me from those services. Fifty years is a long time to look forward to, but retrospectively the time seems short. The little church was prosperous in those happy days. How the week night services in the lower room were well attended by the men and women! Those quarterly tea parties introduced by Mr. Chesshire, I have often thought helped to keep up the other interests. How the noble women used to work on those and all other occasions. They, with most who enjoyed their suppers, have been called home. On the seventh of June, the church will have been constituted seventy-five years. Arrangements were made for properly

celebrating the Diamond Jubilee, but the illness of Dr. Stidham, which I fear is more serious than he thinks or admits, caused the celebration to be postponed, perhaps, until next year.

I feel much concerned about Dr. Stidham, and am afraid he will never be able again to go into the pulpit. The church voted him a two months release from all responsibilities, on the first Sunday of May. I suppose an additional two months will have to be added, so as to give him the summer. He has not taken any vacation for a number of years and is deserving of all that can be given him now.

I presume you are reading and enjoying Dr. Hills' Military History of the Falls. I read them as soon as they appear in print, and then clip them for my scrap book. Rev. Dr. Gordon informed me on Saturday, that Dr. John Humpstone will sail for England on June 7th. A fact which I presume you are aware. Hoping this will find you in good health, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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May 28th 1913

Dear James,

It was indeed strange that our letters of Monday should cross each other and that both had been thinking alike. Mr. Chesshire came to the Falls in February 1863, at the time the spotted fever had cast the community in gloom. The special, or revival services, began before the month was out, and lasted until the end of May. I was the last convert of that successful series of services. At the time of your baptism, I was in my 14th year, and was as much convicted then as I ever was. Henry Bechtel and I were chums, and both thought of joining the church, but thought we were not old enough. I have always had a strong admiration for Mr. Chesshire, although he was somewhat overbearing. He certainly knew how to get young people to work, a grace in which all his successors were lacking. I remember Dr. Stidham's first coming to the church, although I was not as enthusiastic over him as were the other members. I felt that man Padelford, of Massachusetts, should have received the call. He was, in my opinion, a Godly man, like N. Judson Clark. Dr. Stidham won my admiration and all the help I could give him and I am profoundly sorry that his work seems to be nearing its close.

You wished to know what I think of the news from Washington. So little that I do not waste time in reading much of it. I am of the impression that President Wilson is undertaking more than he can accomplish. The sooner he and Congress gets through tinkering with the tariff, the better it will be for the country. But then, we must remember he is a Democrat.

I should like to dine in the quaint Colonial restuarant you described in one of your letters. I have a great liking for old buildings. Several years ago, on a

dark, threatening day, in February, I happened to be on Arch street, near Second, and paid my only visit to the Betsy Ross building, or "Home of the American Flag". As I entered a young woman met me. I enquired, "Is this the home of Betsy Ross?" On learning that it was, I asked if she was at home. "Why, no!" was the reply, "She's dead!" "When did she die?" I asked. "I haven't seen her death in the papers!" Just then a man, who proved to be J. Quincy Adams, secretary of the Flag Association, came from a rear room. To him I applied the same questions. Both looked at me, and must have thought me an escaped lunatic. I then went for Adams, on the history of the first flag, and got him so tangled up that he became cross. I then explained who I was and had a very pleasant visit.

Yes, Dr. Mills is getting down to our day in his history. In his last section he gave a fine description of what is now Midvale avenue valley. I wish he had not given such minute details. For instance in mentioning the streams which coursed through the woods, he said the largest ran to the laboratory, an utter impossibility, owing to the topography of the section. Then again, he stated that the water flowed through a tunnel under the Norristown railroad. You will remember McMackin's Dam, and the large iron pipe through which the overflow poured, and also the trough in the rear of Frederick Reichart's flower garden. You will also remember, I think, that there were two dams. One, the upper and smaller, was there long before 1834, when the railroad embankment across the valley formed the larger dam. The first is said to have been built by Governor Mifflin. Some distance back of these dams and on the upper side, about where 35th, or Conrad street, intersects the avenue, was a pool of water, known in my boyhood as Dunlap's dam. (The Duck Pond) William Merrick bought and occupied the Dunlap house, which fronts on School lane.

Midvale avenue is becoming an important thoroughfare. Back over near the old Township line, now Wissahickon avenue, is a cluster of beautiful homes, known as Queen Lane Manor, which extends Fallsward to the old camping ground of the Corn Exchange Regiment, or Scott's 20-acre Lot. On the corner of 35th street is a pretty little edifice of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. On another corner is the handsome residence of Contractor P. H. Kelly, while on another corner is the almost completed Carnegie Library building, erected on ground given by Mr. Merrick, and the Warden Estate. Then the Reading Railway's pretty station beautifies what was on Patrick Dougherty's cow stable, and little farm. Adjoining the property of St. Bridget's Catholic Church is the one-story post office building, which was opened for business last week, and which will be formally opened on Memorial Day, with a flag raising. Near Ridge avenue, are a number of one-story shacks, which are a disgrace to the Falls. They are used by sellers of newspapers, soft drinks, candy and light lunches.

I have wondered if you had heard of the death of my Aunt Isabelle Roberts. She died of heart trouble after a long ailment, at the home of her youngest daughter, Mrs. Frank Ward, on Leverington avenue, Roxborough, and was buried three weeks ago on Saturday. Her older daughter, Louise Meredith, had to be placed in an insane asylum

her mind having become unbalanced. Her husband is a shiftless fellow, and I think it is a great blessing they have no children. Hoping this will find you in good health, I am  
Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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May 31st 1913.

Dear James,

I feel highly honored in receiving three letters from you within the week. In the one of yesterday which came this morning, you spoke of my Aunt Belle. She was my favorite aunt, owing to the fact that I lived at her home, while tending the toll gate for Uncle Robert, when he expected to go to war with Captain Charles Thomson Jones' Pennsylvania Dragoons, and on the two occasions when he went out with Captain John Dobson's "Battery I" (Company "I") I however could not reconcile myself in her relation with Harmon Johnson, particularly while Uncle Robert was alive. Johnson got the best of me in the old grocery store when I was foolish enough to take it at his appraisal. I lost all the money I had and nearly two years hard work, and yet he constantly dunned me for the \$500 good will he claimed I owed him. The house Aunt Belle occupied belongs to Harmon's daughter, Nellie, who inherited it, on condition that Aunt Belle was to live in it as long as she wished to. Nellie, I think lives somewhere in Tioga, with her affinity, Dr. Charles Trites. I think she also owns the old house lower down on Queen Lane, in which Harmon lived before Sam Winpenny built the two houses for Matilda and William.

You mentioned the McNeills' call to the pastorate of the church. That, you know, was through Margaret Morison, and the Abbotts, because he was a friend of Jacob. There are many things in the history of the church, which would not do to be included in any sketch written. That mortgage you mentioned is one of them. As I think over what has been told me, and what I have observed, I think God has dealt very graciously with us.

I see by tonight's (paper) that Alexander M. Service, in his 83rd year, passed away last night. He had for several years resided in the Presbyterian Home for the Aged, at Bala, where he died. He was the oldest member and past master of Roxborough Lodge No. 135, F and A.M.. The lodge celebrated its centennial in April, but he was too ill to attend the celebration.

In Dr. Mills' History, this week, he states that the 88th Regiment encampment in Robeson's meadow was named Camp Stokley, after the Mayor of the City. Stokley was not mayor until January 1st 1872. I called on Dr. Stidham this afternoon, but did not see him, owing to his being asleep. Mrs. Stidham told me he was a little better today, but his doctor will not allow him to come downstairs. Four were baptized by Dr. Seashole, last Sunday night, and others will be tomorrow night.

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

P. S. (June 1st 1913) I wrote the letter last night, and as I have not yet mailed it, I concluded to add this postscript. I attended church services this morning, the first time in three weeks. Dr. Seasholes preached a magnificent sermon on Samson finding honey in the carcass of the lion he had killed. At the conclusion of the sermon, he gave the hand of fellowship to two young men and two young women. Others are awaiting baptism, but the ordinance will not be administered tonight, owing to the candidates wishing to wait for others who are coming to the conclusion. Dr. Stidham is having a good day, and is feeling much better. I did not go the house, but got my information from Mrs. Stidham, and Edwin Singer. Singer is greatly concerned, as are others, over the additional expense made necessary by Dr. Stidham's illness. The supplying of the pulpit during the two months' vacation of the pastor, will cost at least \$50 or \$60. It looks as though the vacation will have to be extended. The Sunday School began holding morning session today, and many from the school attended the service, which gave Dr. Seasholes a good-sized congregation. Elizabeth Johnson, daughter of our dear old friend, Joseph Johnson, was present. She told me her father was in good health, but that his eye-sight is failing. He told me sometime ago he was unable to get glasses that would benefit him. This is an ideal June day, and one feels good in being out of doors. The sun is pretty warm, but a breeze from the west keeps the day from being hot.

I was glad to be able to get to church this morning, as it is the fiftieth anniversary of my being received into ~~the~~ the church by Mr. Chesshire. It was the first Sunday in June 1863, but Sunday came on the 7th that year. The day was the 25th anniversary of the constituting of the church. You stated in one of your letter that Tillie, or Maude Chesshire, is still living in Bridgeton, N.J. I have not seen her since the family left the Falls. I have often wondered why she never got married to the man for whom she changed her name (first name). I had better stop, or the postscript, like a woman's, will be longer than the letter.

R. R. Shronk.

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June 10th 1913.

Dear James,

Your letter of yesterday came to hand this morning. By the time I was reading it, you had probably received the one I sent you last evening, so I did not send you a telegram. Dr. Gordon called me upon the telephone just as I was getting ready to retire last night and told me who would take part in the services. A representative of the Ministers' Conference will read resolutions. Dr. Samson, of the 2nd Church, Germantown; Rev. Champion, of Roxborough; Rev. Warwick, of Diamond street church; Rev. Benjamin Bunn Royer, of the Falls Presbyterian Church, and Rev. A. Percival Hodgson, of the Falls M. E. Church, and he wishes me to write and read a tribute for the church. (All the above refers to the funeral service of Dr. I. F. Stidham) Marys Commandery, No. 36 Knights of Templar;



Roxborough Lodge, No. 135, F. and A.M., and Falls of Schuylkill Lodge of Odd Fellows are invited. I am afraid the little church will be too small. The body will be left in church all night, and will be buried privately Thursday morning in Leverington Cemetery. I do not know whether Dr. Stidham received your letter and check, or not. He was not stricken until about five o'clock in the afternoon, and may have been able to read it earlier in the day.

I did not keep up my acquaintance with James Horne, and only remember seeing him twice since he left the Falls. I went into the Potter's Oil Cloth Company's office, on Arch street, more than 20 years ago, when I was recognized by him. The other occasion was when I read the history of Forest School, at the celebration in the Fall of 1901 of the 50th anniversary, of the occupancy of that site by the school. Hope (or Horne) was present and we had a brief talk after the exercises. I wrote the sketch which appeared in last week's Forecast. I see by this evening's Bulletin that Hope left an estate valued at \$100,000 and upwards. I suppose you will attend the funeral services tomorrow evening. I shall take the time to do so. Hoping you received my letter in time this morning, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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June 23rd 1913.

Dear James,

Your letter of the 21st came to hand this morning. Charles H. Cramp died June 6th. He was born May 9th 1828, according to information from the North American Information Bureau. Having the date of his death, I will try to get a copy of the Ledger of the 7th, which would have an obituary notice. I go to the office every Tuesday to get my pay, so I will try to get the paper tomorrow. I have stopped keeping an account of friends and relatives who have fallen from the ranks. They became too numerous. Of the many who have passed on I miss none so much as Dr. Stidham. For a long while I had been accustomed to call at the parsonage on Friday evenings for an hour's chat. On last Friday evening we had a terrific storm during which I was marooned in a drug store at Broad and Erie avenue. I would not venture in the storm owing to my impaired health, and found myself regretting my not being able to get to the parsonage that night. Then I realized that there would be no more of those pleasant calls, and I was sad. It will indeed be a dreary home-coming for Mrs. Stidham and others of the family returning to the parsonage. I, too, think it very fortunate in having Dr. Seasholes during the present crisis and only wish we could afford to call him permanently. We will soon be hearing candidates, I suppose. In a talk with John Roy, yesterday, he thought it would be the best thing for the church to allow Dr. Gordon to suggest a man. I don't know but what he is right. The tribute

I read at the funeral service is printed in last week's Chronicle. I am going to Manayunk this afternoon and will mail you a copy. A rheumatic, or other pain, in my right elbow makes it difficult for me to write this morning. Mrs. Wieand and her sister, Elizabeth Peltz, attended services yesterday morning. They are both greatly distressed over the death of Dr. Stidham. His last pastoral call was made at their home, when he was accompanied by Mrs. Stidham and Edna. They made a short call at my house on their way home. So you witnessed baptism in the old church. I have been present but once since going on the Ledger, 25 years ago, to a baptism service. My work keeps me from church on Sunday evenings. Hoping this will find you in good health, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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June 24th 1913.

Dear James,

It was impossible to secure a copy of the Ledger of June 7th, containing the obituary of your friend, Charles H. Cramp. I went through the old papers I have in the cellar, but the one of June 7th had page 10, on which the sketch was printed, torn off. I found the Record, of that date, and send you herewith the sketch printed therein. Hoping it will prove satisfactory.

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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June 27th 1913.

Dear James,

With your letter of yesterday, I received a communication from the Rev. John Compton Ball, pastor of the Metropolitan Baptist Church, Washington, D.C., and a post card from Mrs. Hallie K. Swartz. The letter from Washington bore this address on the envelope:

"Baptist Church,  
Falls of Schuylkill,  
Philada,

c/o Pa.  
Mr. James S. Swartz,  
or Robert R. Shronk."

It had been delivered at Hallie's house and she had it forwarded to me. The letter is addressed "To the Pulpit Committee" and tells of a nephew of Dr. Stidham, Rev. A. W. Graves, of Ferrell, King George County, Virginia, desiring to supply the pulpit for a Sunday. Mr. Ball says, "I would most heartily recommend him to you. He did good work in and

around Washington, and is greatly loved by the brethren".

I shall retain the letter in case it may be needed. Hallie, on her post card, mentioned the recent death of Mrs. James Grime, at her home in Frankford. She died a week before Dr. Stidham. At the meeting on Wednesday evening the death of another of our old members was announced. Mrs. Elizabeth Harper Peel, wife of Fergus Peel. She died on Wednesday, after a prolonged illness and will be buried tomorrow afternoon from her late home on 16th street above Erie avenue. She was I think, baptized by Mr. Clark, about the time you were. I am glad the clipping from the Record of the sketch of Charles H. Cramp, answered your purpose. I know of nothing that affords me more pleasure than in being able to favor you, to whom I am so greatly indebted. We are having another hot day here today, while the temperature is about normal for the time of the year, the humidity is excessive. Elizabeth Singer, a grand daughter of Edwin, came before the committee on Wednesday night, and will be baptized by Dr. Seasholes on Sunday evening. Others may meet the committee Sunday morning. I do not see the Examiner, and do not blame you for feeling vexed at its not giving a respectable notice of so worthy a man and preacher as Dr. Stidham. Hoping you are well, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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July 10th 1913.

Dear James,

Your letter of the 8th came to hand yesterday afternoon, and found me in comparative good health. I had a setback on the Fourth of July, which I attribute to the heat. Just before noon I went less than two squares from home to see a friend. I felt all right until returning home, when a weakness came over me. On reaching home I was completely exhausted and spent the rest of the day, most of Saturday, and Sunday on my back. I have recovered from that and am slowly getting over my other trouble. The Rev. Greaves, I wrote you about, is not a nephew of Dr. Stidham, as I learned from a talk with Mrs. Stidham. He is her brother-in-law, having married her sister Dollie, or Donnie Dutton, whom you will remember, she having lived at the parsonage quite a while during Dr. Stidham's first pastorate. According to what Mrs. Stidham said, he is a good pastor, but not much of a scholar, and has done successful work in Washington, D.C. and Virginia. I will take your advice and write to Rev. Ball, of the Metropolitan Church, Washington. Edwin Singer, who has been attending to the pulpit most faithfully, thinks it will be best not to hear any candidates until September. Dr. Seasholes will continue his splendid service till the end of July. During August the Sunday evening service will be omitted. So it would hardly do to have candidates for a single service. Dr. Seasholes gave the hand of fellowship to eleven converts on Sunday morning. A young English man was before the church last evening, and will be baptized Sunday night. He was formerly a member of the Reformed Episcopal Church, but changed his belief on baptism. At

the service last evening he played the piano accompaniments, and I think will make an active and useful member.

At the church meeting following the service, resolutions on the death of Dr. Stidham were adopted and Singer and I authorized to collect funds for a memorial tombstone, to be placed on Dr. Stidham's grave. Singer obtained an estimate from Alonzo (Lorenzo) Goshow, John Humpstone's brother-in-law, of Roxborough. It will cost in the neighborhood of \$150, for a fine granite stone with polished face. Singer started the movement which I think the people will help to carry out. Mrs. Stidham and Edna attended service last evening. They are occupying the parsonage alone. Mrs. S. told me that it seems so much like home, that she wants to stay in it as long as she can. As it will be better occupied than closed up, the trustees will let her have possession until it will be necessary to begin some badly needed repairs. Mrs. Stidham thinks the church ought to secure a pastor as early as possible, and declares that she will never sever her relations with the little church. Hoping this will find you in good health, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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July 24th 1913.

Dear James,

While attending the prayer meeting last evening Edwin Singer informed me that he has received subscriptions for a memorial tombstone for Dr. Stidham, amounting to nearly \$100. He has consulted Alonzo (Lorenzo) Goshow, John Humpstone's brother-in-law, as to the probable cost and finds it will be about \$150. It is Singer's intention, if possible, to have the stone in place and dedicated sometime in September. He, and all others interested, would like to have you preside over the ceremonies. Singer informed Mrs. Stidham about the tombstone and she wept, saying "It is so kind. I never thought of such a kindness!" I am afraid the stone, with the lettering, which on granite is expensive, will exceed Singer's estimate. Kindly let him know whether he may expect your coming on to ~~the~~ conduct the dedication, and any other word you may have on the subject. Dr. Seasholes lectures tonight in the church on "The Man With the Pick". He will close his supplying the pulpit on Sunday, and in the evening will give certificates to the members he has baptized. These will be signed by the Acting Pastor, deacons, and clerks. During August, when there will be no Sunday night service, the pulpit will be filled with students from Temple University. A son-in-law of Rev. Dr. Charles Warwick, will preach one morning.

I presume you received an announcement card from Loudon, England, announcing ~~the~~ Rev. John Humpstone's second venture in matrimony. I received one and was greatly surprised, because I had not known of his being a widower.

My brother, George, called on me last week. He has for sometime been living in Germantown Public Home, and would like to get into the George Nugent Home. Do you know

what the regulations are for getting admitted? George thinks you might be able to help him. He will be 65 years old in September, which I think, is the age required.

Adam Mettinger has sold out his mens' furnishing store. Odd Fellows (Palestine) Hall is to be remodeled and enlarged, with stores to front on Midvale avenue. Adam was asked to vacate by the end of July, after being a tenant for about 46 years. He is old enough to retire and is also, I think, financially able to spend the rest of his days on "Easy Street".

Sincerely yours,  
R. R. Shronk.

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August 9th 1913.

Dear James,

In answer to your question in yesterday's letter concerning the John Bechtel, mentioned in Dr. Mills' history, I would say he was a brother of Peter and I think was the eldest. The John A. Bechtel mentioned, I did not know. There was a Baptist family in Roxborough, with whom I had no acquaintance except with Paul, who drove a hearse for Enoch Levering, the undertaker. So John A. may have been a member of that family. John was of sandy complexion, but it was William Bechtel who was drowned at Pottstown in 1859, and was buried from his late home in the old James street. The interment was in Roxborough Baptist Church grounds. You asked me about him sometime ago, when I sent you a copy of his death, or funeral, notice, copied from the Ledger. I had since been waiting to see Jacob, or his sister Sallie Mowrey, both of whom come once in a while to church, to see if William was not their brother. Hettie, who is in the Gorgas Home, at Roxborough, seems to have no recollection concerning a William Bechtel.

I have experienced another set back this week. On Monday I awoke with a chill; kept close to the house until late in the afternoon, when I went to cover a fire at Wissahickon and Hunting Park avenues. On my way back I stopped and had a chat with Mrs. Wieand and her sister, Miss Elizabeth Peltz, on the porch of their home, 2235 Hunting Park avenue, less than a square from where the fire was. An old frame livery stable. Arriving at home I had another chill, which brought the doctor, who was attending my daughter who became a victim of the excessive heat on the last day of July. She is about the house again, and I am almost back to myself once more. I was too weak to go to church on Wednesday evening, so I do not know what progress Singer is making on the memorial tombstone fund. On Sunday he told me he had \$108 in sight, and was very anxious to hear from others, so he could arrange the contract. Dr. Seasholes will conduct the services tomorrow morning. During August there are no Sunday evening service. We have had a very hot spell here in old Phila., and while I like summer, I shall be glad this year when cooler weather comes. The heat, owing to my weakened condition, is hard to bear. Mrs. Wieand called yesterday to see Nettie, as she was on her way home from the Falls. She had been to see Mrs. Stidham, who is selling

off most of her household effects, prior to taking a little house in West Philadelphia, near her daughter Ethel's home. Hoping this will find you in good health, I am,

Sincerely Yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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August 10th 1913.

Dear James,

I wrote you last evening and I am writing this in request of Edwin Singer. He asked me this morning if I would write and tell you he has in hand about \$130 for Dr. Stidham's memorial tombstone, which he thinks will cost about \$165, and is anxious to hear from you. Quite a number of the women of the congregation have asked that the memorial stone be made large enough to contain the name of Mrs. Stidham, a proposition he has accepted. The stone will be placed in the centre of the lot. Singer is anxious to have the dedication take place sometime in September. The cost mentioned will not include the expenses of the dedication, which will require some printing.

I never felt the heat in church as I did this morning. After the second hymn, Dr. Seashole invited the choir to come down out of the gallery, saying, "We will dispense with the last hymn!" The invitation was readily accepted.

I am feeling considerably better and stronger today, but the heat is very oppressive. Hoping you are well, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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August 17th 1913.

Dear James,

I delivered your check to Edwin Singer, this morning, for which he asked me to convey to you his thanks. He has in all about \$145, and said he will come out all right. The stone, without the lettering, is to cost \$165, and the lettering will run the cost up to \$175. He has, or is arranging to have the dedication take place on Saturday afternoon, September 20th, and would like you to be present and conduct the ceremonies. I do not know what his programme will be, further than that Rev. Dr. John Gordon will deliver an address. Singer took Mrs. Stidham up to the marble cutter's yard on Friday afternoon, and showed her a number of tombstones, requesting her to select the one she would like best. She picked out the one Singer and other members of the church had selected. Judging from the description Singer gave me, of the stone, it is to be of polished granite, about 4½ feet high, nearly three feet wide, and about a foot thick, and with the base in two pieces. Rev. F. M. Shepherd, brother-in-law of Rev. Charles Warwick, preached this morning. We arranged to hold a church meeting next Sunday to arrange for filling the pulpit and an effort will be made to elect Dr. Seashole pastor for a year. He intimated to Singer and to me Wednesday evening that he would not accept a call from any church but for one year. Dr. Gordon told me last night, over the telephone, that he thinks we can get Dr. Seasholes for a year, as he is desirous of remaining in Philadelphia, till his son gets through the high school. Under the circumstances I believe it would be best all around if we could get him for a year.

So you are going away for two or three weeks? Whether

for pleasure or for business, I hope the trip will prove beneficial. I am feeling almost like myself again, and think I will be alright in a little while. We do not recuperate so quickly as when we were younger. I see they have moved your sister's piano from the parsonage into the church, where it stands at the end of the westrow of pews. Hoping this will reach you before your departure, and find you well, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

P. S. Mrs. Stidham and Edna are still occupying the parsonage. She is selling Dr. Stidham's books at ten cents each, and other articles accordingly.

R. R. S.

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September 4th 1913.

Dear James,

Presuming you have returned to New York, I thought I would have a little chat with you on paper. I wrote you the day before your expected to leave, and hope the letter reached you before you started. A week ago last Sunday, at a special meeting of the church, we decided, unanimously to call Rev. Charles L. Seashole, D.D. as pastor for one year. This may seem unique, but he had intimated that he would not consider a call from any church except for one year. At the end of the year, he argued, if things did not turn out all right, it would be easy for the pastor to retire. He has not yet accepted the call, but will do so on Sunday morning, according to what Mrs. Seasholes told me last Sunday. I think we will be very fortunate in securing such an able man. Dr. Gordon on learning of what the church did, told me he thought it was a very wise thing to call Dr. Seasholes. Edwin Singer has arranged to have the memorial tombstone to Dr. Stidham dedicated on Saturday afternoon, September 20th, at 3.45 o'clock. You are expected to preside. The Rev. John B. Champion, of Roxborough Church, will offer prayer. Drs. Gordon and Seasholes will make brief addresses. The choir will sing three selections and to doxology, and Rev. Charles Warwick will pronounce the benediction. The cost of the stone completed, will be \$175. Mrs. Stidham and Edna are still occupying the parsonage, but expect to soon secure rooms in West Philadelphia near Ethel's home. Our friend, John Roy, is in great sorrow over the death of his wife, who died at 6 o'clock yesterday morning, of tumor of the brain. They would have been married 39 years on the 19th of November, had she lived. The funeral will be held at two o'clock Saturday afternoon. They have two sons, John and William, and one daughter, Nellie. William is married and has three children. I am getting to be myself again, so far as health is concerned. Hoping you are in good health, and that you may be able to be present at the tombstone dedication, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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September 11th 1913.

Dear James,

That must have been a glorious trip you had with

Mr. Leech. Too bad you had to return by train. I have never found anything more comfortable for riding than a good motor car. A motor boat is all right, but does not come up to a motor car. Dr. Seasholes' letter of acceptance was read at the communion service on Sunday. He will assume charge October 1st. I believe his coming is Providential and that he will do a good work at the Falls. Some of Mrs. Stidham's household goods are in the parsonage. She and Edna are in West Philadelphia. The parsonage is very much in need of repairs and will have to be repainted inside and outside, re-papered, and the front porch repaired. It ought to all re-plastered on the outside. The porch has rotted away and arrangements have been made to have a stone front and cement floor to take the place of the wood-work. It will cost \$150, or but \$25 more than renewing the wood, and will be a lasting job. Dr. Seasholes is anxious to move, as his lease in Germantown expired at the end of August. Nothing has been done, I believe to the inside of the parsonage since long before Dr. Stidham returned to it. As the work will have to be done, the money to pay for it, will have to be raised and the people as usual will go to work cheerfully in raising it. I think, all things considered, that our little church has done nobly in meeting necessary expenses. Everything has been arranged for the dedicating of Dr. Stidham's memorial next Saturday afternoon, September 20th, at 3.45 o'clock. You are expected to preside, and with Dr. Gordon, Dr. Seasholes and myself, are to meet at Edwin Singer's home, to be conveyed in an automobile to the cemetery. Singer has managed the affair splendidly and deserves great credit. I was sorry to learn of your being lamed by a fall on greasy asphalt, and hope you have by this time fully recovered. It takes but a little thing to put one out of commission. Some weeks ago, I foolishly stepped from a trolley car before it stopped. I strained a tendon of my right foot, and was kept in the house three days. My health is still improving and I am gradually getting stronger. I attribute the improvement to a glass of porter taken at night, before retiring; a bitter dose but a helpful one. Hoping you are in good health, and that I may see you at the dedication, I am,

Sincerely,

R. R. Shronk.

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September 26th 1913.

Dear James,

Dr. Gordon informed me yesterday that he had mailed you a copy of the Baptist Commonwealth, and that he highly appreciated the little notice I wrote for it, of the dedication of Dr. Stidham's tombstone. I think you will like the article. At Singer's request I wrote the account of the dedication for the Forecast. Singer has acted nobly and I could not refuse the request. To him is due all the credit of the magnificent action of the church in erecting the tombstone. The church appointed him and myself a committee to carry out the scheme, he originated, all I did was to prepare the programme for the printer. I left him negotiate with the stone cutter, and feel I made no mistake in so doing. At his request I had those present at the prayer service on Wednesday night, which I conducted, to adopt a vote of thanks to Roxborough Church for the use of the Sunday School room, and to



Rev. John B. Champion for assisting in the services.

It rained very hard here on Sunday evening and Dr. Gordon was delighted in having 54 persons present at the evening service. He told me yesterday that on a previous rainy Sunday night when he preached for Dr. Conwell, that less than a dozen came out to the service. Isn't that a good showing for our little church, compared to the largest in the city?

I went into the parsonage on Wednesday evening before church service and found there a number of young men and women as busy as beavers, painting and cleaning up the house so that Dr. Seasholes could move in today--Friday. I like the spirit of these young people, and believe Dr. Seasholes' coming will be crowned with the Master's approval. From personal experience during Mr. Chesshire's ministry, I believe it is a good thing to have the young people work. As to the placing of the beautiful tombstone on Dr. Stidham's grave, I feel that the church has honored itself, and shown to the world a splendid and forceful evidence of practical religion. In the whole proceeding nothing pleased me more than your being present to preside over the ceremonies. Judging from the cordial manner in which you were received, I believe everybody interested was just as glad as I was that you were present. Hoping your foot is all right again, and that you are in good health, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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October 3rd 1913.

Dear James,

I have been thinking of you ever since receiving your last letter in which you said you were not feeling well, and hope you have recovered from the indisposition. The weather we have had here had been very trying to any who are at all weak. By the papers I see you had a very heavy rain in New York on Wednesday. It rained hard here on that day, and yesterday afternoon a bolt of lightning struck and demolished the stone cross on the tower of the Tioga Methodist Church. Today is cloudy and the air is chilly and looks as though more rain was coming.

Dr. Seasholes assumed charge on Wednesday evening, when we had one of the most interesting services we have had for a long time. He and his family are domiciled in the parsonage, which they like very much. I wish you could be present on Sunday morning to extend to Dr. Seasholes, his wife and four of their children, the hand of church fellowship; a duty and pleasure which will fall to me. Singer, while senior deacon, always insists on my taking the part belonging to him. The parsonage will look much better when the stone front of the porch is completed. The church will vote Sunday morning and evening for the additional deacons. This is done to enlarge the board and to provide against anything happenings to Singer or yours truly. I think the people will take to Dr. Seasholes, who is very plain spoken and earnest. He proposes to give an outline Sunday morning of the work he will undertake. This

I suppose will also include what the members ought to do. The congregation is getting larger and I believe the church is about to enter upon a season of prosperity. It is not hard to see now, why it got behind during the past few years. Dr. Stidham's condition, physically, was such that he often labored when he should have been in bed. He would often come to me on Sunday mornings and say, "Shronk, I wish you would help me out this morning, by offering prayer". His work is ended and Dr. Seasholes has already garnered some of the fruits of his ministry. There will, I think, be no trouble in the people following and co-operating with his successor. In England, on the death of a sovereign, the people say, "The King is dead. Long Live the King!" In this spirit of loyalty we can continue to love Dr. Stidham, while we love and aid Dr. Seasholes.

Singer, on Wednesday, had gathered in all the money for the memorial tombstone, ~~xxx~~ with the exception of about \$10. This we will make up. Hoping you are feeling all right again, I am,

Sincerely yours,  
R. R. Shronk.

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October 6th 1913.

Dear James,

Your interesting letter of the 4th came in time for me to read at the breakfast table this morning.

Well, Dr. Seasholes, his wife, daughters and two sons are now members of the church, having come on letters of dismissal from the Third Baptist Church, of Germantown. In his sermon yesterday morning he gave an outline of the work he proposes doing at the Falls. It was based on the motto, "Expecting great things of God and attempting great things for God". I believe he is what we term a hustler, but I do not think he will try to drive the people. We will, however, have plenty to do in following him. I had the pleasure of welcoming him and his family and of extending the hand of church fellowship. In doing so, I referred to the fact that it was the first time in the 75 years history of the church, that a pastor was welcomed to take the place of one called Home by death, and of Dr. Seasholes coming at the request of Dr. Stidham during his illness, and how he had carried on the work so successfully and that while the church will show its love to the memory of Dr. Stidham, it will be loyal to his successor, illustrating by the custom of the loyal subjects of England, who on the demise of a sovereign, cry out, "The King is dead! Long live the King!"

Mrs. Wieand was greatly pleased with my little address and allowed that I improve with age. Caroline Mettinger Stine, of Norristown was present and congratulated me for doing so well, all of which is very gratifying and makes one feel glad of being able to do his part satisfactory. I often think of the advice you gave me, when I came into the church, to allow nothing to interfere with the appointments of the church. I handed the same advice down to Edwin Singer, when he entered the church, and only a short time ago he thanked me for the advice then given. Mrs. Stidham and her daughter Edna attended the morning service. She is bearing her great loss well. As she could not hear what I said, I have written her a short account so she can know something about it. She always thanks me for my helping

Dr. Stidham so often while he was unable to go into the pulpit. The church has set apart Thursday evening, October 16th, for tendering a reception to Dr. Seasholes and his family. Singer, who is the senior deacon, tells me I will have to preside, an honor I would like very much to transfer to you, if you can make it convenient to be present. I do not think Dr. Seasholes cares for having any installation service. Your not mentioning your former indisposition, I take it for granted you are better. I am getting along nicely and am feeling much like myself again, although I felt at one time that my turn would come before Dr. Stidham's. Hoping you are well, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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October 9th 1913.

Dear James,

I have just read your highly interesting letter of yesterday and am sorry your condition is not what I would like it to be. Owing to Dr. Seasholes having to deliver a lecture at Fox Chase Baptist Church, on the evening of the 16th, the reception has been postponed one week, and will be held on the 23rd. It's too bad that such a dear, good, and learned man as Dr. Gordon should make such a blunder as to mail a letter in New York, which was written here two days before. It only proves the old saying that we are all apt to make mistakes. I would like very much to take the trip you are contemplating, in going over the roads you traveled in 1862-63 as a member of that glorious Company "I" under Captain John Dobson. I was much interested in the account of the same by Dr. Mills in his history. I was not a member of the company. When it first went out I was an apprentice learning painting. I used to come home Saturday night, then tend toll gate for Uncle Robert Roberts, on Sunday, so he could go to church. On the Sunday the company departed I went down to the toll gate as usual, but instead of his going to church, Uncle Robert enlisted and went with the company, leaving me in charge of the gate and his family. He came home ill, and was laid up two weeks before I could go back to painting. I went to the shop, had a quarrel with the boss, and left. This ended the apprenticeship, which I had started three months before. Having some knowledge of the trade, I went to work later as a full fledged journeyman, and held my own with some who had been long at the business. I hope in your travels this year that you may not have anything like the storm Dr. Mills describes when you were last in that part of the country.

The church on Sunday elected John Wyatt and John Fields as deacons. Fields lives at Wissahickon and left the church there, sometime ago coming to our church. (1932: John Fields is member of Roxborough Baptist Church)

Everything talked of here, as I presume it is in New York, this week, is the World Series of base ball games. Personally I have neither the time or money to waste on the great national game, which is one of the many great sources of gambling. I have reported a good many horse races for the Ledger, but never could get interested in the sport, nor accustomed to the company I was obliged to mingle with.

I think the outlook at the church is very promising. There was a good turnout last night, despite the fact that

some were attending the Association, while others attended a Union parade and convention of Young Peoples' Societies in Manayunk.

As the reception has been postponed, perhaps you may find it convenient to be present. Take good care of yourself, so as to get back to your real self again. Hoping you may have a pleasant trip and come back greatly benefited, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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October 20th 1913.

Dear James, Presuming that you have returned from your trip over the tramping grounds of 1862-1863, I concluded to have a little chat with you on paper. Things are looking unusually promising at the church. At a special meeting yesterday morning, Harry B. Binkin, president of the Trustees, made a statement, in which he showed that needed improvements to the parsonage and church spire, will cost about \$600, and asked that the trustees be authorized to borrow that amount. This was granted without any opposition, and the work will probably be commenced without delay. It will include re-plastering and re-painting the parsonage and the placing of an up-to-date bath tub and wash basin in its bathroom. The spire has become dangerous owing to slates falling from it. I believe the police have complained about its condition. From what Binkin stated yesterday, it looks as if the spire, above the part where the bell is, will be removed and a different finish given to the tower. By covering the spire with sheet copper it might be saved, but that would entail a heavy cost. The removal of the spire would change the appearance of the dear old building, particularly to those who have known it so long. But as it is merely ornamental, why should we grieve over it? A friend of Dr. Seasholes will do the planning without cost to the church. At his request I sent out a number of invitations to some of his friends to be present at the reception on Thursday evening. I hope you may find it convenient to be present. If you do, please come prepared to preside. Dr. Mills' interesting Military History of the Falls, was concluded in last week's Forecast. I hope he will have his other history printed the same way. In the last chapter he spoke of the armory in "Dutch Hollow", in which the muskets were placed. They were subsequently removed to Dobson's Cloth, or Clock Mill and placed in the tower. (Later, in the time I was a boy working in the New Mill, some were stored in the office, which had been the old Hagner Mansion. A.C.C.) There they remained until February 1892, when the mill was destroyed by fire, and they were burned beyond repair. I have often thought that the muskets should have been given to the man who were prepared to use them on the two occasions when they went out to the front.

Riverside Mansion was closed last Saturday, by order of the courts, for selling liquor to minors. Many a young woman and young man, as well, have been morally ruined at that notorious resort.

Hoping you had a pleasant trip and that you have been greatly benefitted thereby, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

October 24th 1913.

Dear James,

In compliance with the request in your letter of the 22nd inst., I send you this account of last evening's reception to Dr. Seasholes and his family. It was the happiest occasion I have known in way of a church function, since the time when Dr. Stidham was greeted. When he first brought his wife to the Falls. The Sunday School room was filled, quite a number of Dr. Seasholes' friends from Germantown being present. I had the honor of presiding and called the meeting to order at 8.30. After an opening prayer and a brief address I called on Rev. Walter E. Oakford, of Grace Reformed Church, who made a happy address. Other greetings were extended by Rev. A. Percival Hodgson, of the Methodist Church; Rev. B. B. Royer of the Presbyterian Church, and Rev. Henry F. Hale, Lutheran Church, and Mr. Charles Chipman, of Tioga, who was for years a neighbor of Dr. Seasholes, in Germantown.

The addresses were interspersed with singing under the direction of John Field, Harry B. Binkin, on behalf of Benjamin (?) Greer of Germantown, presented Dr. Seasholes with a large box of fine flowers. At the close of the speech-making all present walked to the front of the room and shook hands with the pastor and his family, being introduced by Uretta Johnson, and John Wyatt. This was followed with ice cream and lady finger cakes, served by members of the Ladies' Aid Society. Dr. Seasholes, in receiving the flowers expressed his and his family's thanks for them and the many kindnesses shown since they came to the Falls, asking his Germantown friends to call and see how comfortably they were settled in the fine parsonage. I have never seen a greater show of sociability than was displayed last night. Everybody seemed pleased and happy. I left at 10.30, when the room was still well filled. Dr. Seasholes complimented me for the way in which I presided and for inviting his friends to the reception.

Altogether the affair was a splendid success and will doubtless lead to a stronger and better feeling in the church. I do not know how or from whom the trustees are to borrow the \$600. From the spirit manifested last night I think the people will work hard to repay the debt. I am sorry you have the burden to carry intimated in your letter, and fervently pray that the deliverance may come speedily. I have often thought that your heart has been too large for your own good, and that your reward will be great. All you write regard as strictly confidential. Hoping you are in good health, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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November 3rd 1913.

Dear James,

I have just reached home after a trip to the Ledger office, and then out to Manayunk, a tiring journey. Your letter of Saturday and yesterday came to hand this

morning. I was glad to learn you had entertained Dr. Gordon. He is a noble man and a hard worker. I suppose he will call me up on the phone to tell me about your kindness. In the selecting of Dr. Seasholes, I do not think the church did anything but what was right. Notice has been given repeatedly by Singer and myself of action to be taken to supply the pulpit, after Dr. Seasholes' engagement as a supply would end. We were happily surprised to learn that such a good and able man as he would accept a call for a year at the small compensation the church could afford to give. On the morning the action was taken, the only objections offered were by Brother Roy, who thought it was breaking precedents to call a pastor for a limited period. Mrs. Wieand rose and stated that the church had established just such a precedent when it elected Rev. Emerson Andrews for six months, in 1852. He preceded Mark Watkinson. The other objection was by John Field, who thought a committee on pulpit supply should be appointed. He came from Wissahickon Church, and is active in the choir and other work. It has been said that he was anxious to have Rev. Harra, a former pastor of Wissahickon Church, heard as a candidate. When the vote to call Dr. Seasholes was taken, it was unanimous. I believe his coming was Providential, and that the church will be built up under his ministry. He is arranging to have a church directory printed, and is setting a splendid pace in general work. Next Sunday evening the recently elected deacons, John Wyatt and John Field, are to be installed. Whether the enthusiasm will cool down or not, would be hard to say. I think it is of the kind that will last. I suppose you read an account of Dr. Seasholes' reception in last week's Forecast, which I wrote at the request of Singer. The publisher has my name on his free list, and I like to return the compliment. I also wrote a little notice for our church, published in last week's Commonwealth. It was appreciated by Mrs. Stidham. She and Edna were at church yesterday morning. They are boarding at 5938 Pine street, which is two squares from Ethel's home. Mrs. Stidham looks well and is bearing her great loss bravely. She likes the little old church and is liked by all its members. The work of replastering and repainting the exterior of the parsonage will likely be started this week, and I hope the weather will continue favorable till the work is completed.

Hoping you are in good health, as this leaves me, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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November 6th 1923.

Dear James,

The Gang is still here in this City of Brotherly Love. There was too much office-seeking among the Reformers and the dear women who went about electioneering for their husbands and friends did not impress the public as well as they expected. Personally, I wish we could get back to the old-time elections, when the two parties, each fighting

for the principles they held, fought for supremacy without any of the modern side issues. I had a talk with Dr. Gordon, over the telephone, Monday evening. He is delighted over the splendid manner in which you entertained him and his friend from Chicago, but said he would have liked it better if you and he could have been alone. His Chicago friend accompanied him to his hotel Sunday night, and talked until midnight. It was decided at the business meeting of the church last evening, to allow the trustees to remove the upper part of the spire. The sheathing boards on which the slates are nailed are so rotten that the nails will not hold the slates on. Some of the timbers are also decayed. All above the part where the bell is, will be removed and a peaked copper-covered finish will be given to what will then be the tower. An estimate for doing the work, for \$225, has been received from a city contractor. The trustees were requested to obtain bids from local contractors before giving out the job. Dr. Seasholes is what might be called a cracker-jack in conducting a church business meeting. On Sunday morning, there will be a general exchange of pulpits by Baptist pastors; Dr. Thomas S. Samson, of the First Church, Germantown, will preach for us; Dr. Seasholes goes to First Church, Manayunk, Frank Meredith, who married my cousin Louisa Roberts, and who has been dissipated, rose for prayers Sunday evening. He was at the service last night, and is struggling after the light. I suppose you know his wife has been in the Norristown Insane Asylum. She was taken there a short time before Dr. Stidham's death. Frank told me last night, that she is getting on finely and that he expects to have her home for their Christmas dinner. Your letter of Tuesday reached me yesterday. With best wishes I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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November 23rd 1913.

Dear James,

I am glad you appreciate the Chronicles I mail you. It is an easier way of letting you know of the general happenings at the old Falls, than to re-write in form of a letter. Your letter of the 21st came to hand yesterday morning, and was read with great interest. Horace W. Smith, once told me that it would pay Mrs. Abbot to allow Mr. Abbot \$2,000 per year, to do nothing. Poor man, what a number of financial troubles he had! Withal I had a strong love for him and from his teaching learned much of the Bible. What a change has come over his old home? I never look at it, but what a feeling of sadness comes over me. Sadie died in poverty; Griffith is farming in Massachusetts; while poor innocent Sam is eking out a miserable existence in West Philadelphia. Raised in luxury, it must be hard for him to be in want. I have not seen him for a long while. Just before Dr. Stidham was taken to his bed, he told me of Sam coming to him to borrow 75 cents, when he gave him a dollar.

You wanted to know the meaning of extending the church to Midvale avenue. It is a scheme Dr. Seasholes has taken up, and which he hopes to see carried out. He spoke of

it this morning, and showed a plan prepared by Rev. Clarence Larkin, pastor of Fox Chase Baptist Church, who is an architect. It looks fine on paper and would be a great improvement. When asked the probable cost, Dr. Seasholes said, "I have not advanced that far". The "Old Flag" has been lowered, and the church spire is now a thing of the past. As I looked up at where it stood this morning, I wished I were rich enough to have it replaced. It looked to me like a man raising his arm upward after the hand and forearm had been amputated. I was told an examination of the spire timbers showed that they were badly decayed and they they could not be repaired. Above the belfry, there will be a cone-shaped finish, surmounted with the old ball and star. To me it will never look as graceful as it did. I wish you could have seen the bouquet of handsome chrysanthemums Singer got from Weightman's gardener this morning, for the table in front of the pulpit. After the evening service he is going to present them to Joseph Johnson, who has been somewhat in the dumps the past week; spirit of melancholy. His eyes are failing and he seldom leaves the house. So you are not sorry that Sorber got Dobson to buy the Uhler lot from Weightman. I have always thought that Charley served you a mean trick in going to Dobson after you had agreed to take the lot. Sorber has been successful, so far as money getting is concerned, but what else has he? Dobson had to go and leave his \$60,000,000 or more. He could have built and provided for the keep of a public library without feeling the cost, and had a lasting monument in the place he made his money. That, however, is his affair, and not mine.

Dr. Seasholes will preach the union Thanksgiving sermon, in the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. It will be the first time for the Lutherans to join in the service.

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

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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November 27th 1913.

Dear James,

I am having a quiet Thanksgiving Day. Instead of tramping about to get accounts of what is doing at the fraternal homes, as heretofore, I have traveled today by way of the telephone. Which is a great help in my business. During most of the day I have been living in the past. This, I suppose, is owing to the fact of my meeting Robert M. Maycock, the Record's expert horse reporter. He and I have worked together for years. He told me that he was married 44 years ago on Thanksgiving Day, and that the day that year came on November 18th. (Not the last Thursday in the month!) In looking back I recalled what I did on that day of his wedding. You will probably recall the day, as the one when I gave you a strenuous half day's work in your Queen Lane home, into which you had recently removed. You and I spent the morning polishing up the furniture in your bedroom, a work I was more accustomed to than you. After dinner, you, with your mother, sister, Cousin Mary Simmons, and I, went up to the dedication of the new edifice of the



Roxborough Baptist Church. Dr. P. S. Henson preached the sermon, While I do not remember anything of the sermon I shall never forget his introduction. He said, "It was the custom of physicians some years ago to bleed their patients, I am going to bleed this congregation this morning". Which he did without mercy, raising the required sum to pay for the building. What changes have come to us since that faraway day?

Dr. Seasholes is optimistic and believes in doing things. At last night's service the choir was authorized to see what the cost of securing a leader would be. I suppose that and the service is to be made artistic. I have always thought that the church never appreciated the choir you so ably led for so many years, as much as it should, and of which you are the sole survivor.

Joseph Johnson had quite a bad spell on Sunday but was better yesterday according to Edwin Singer's statement to me last evening. If Dr. Seasholes' predictions come true the dear old church will be doing great things within the next few years.

Hoping you are having a pleasant day, I am,  
Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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November 28th 1913.

Dear James,

As our letters of yesterday crossed each other it is evident we were thinking of each other. You said you hoped I would enjoy my turkey. I did, to a small extent. I ate a small slice of the breast, or light meat, and a little of the outside of a drumstick. That was the first of any kind of meat I have tasted since the 17th of last May, when I was taken ill, and my doctor put me on a strict diet. He told me a few weeks ago that poultry is not considered meat and that I might eat chicken, or turkey. I unfortunately have lost my taste for poultry and very seldom touch chicken. I used to think that nothing better than roast turkey could be brought on the table. That was when I was a boy. At one of the old time Sunday School's New Year festivals, we boys of your class bantered each other as to which could eat the most turkey legs. Dear Old Aunt Hannah Scott, whom everybody loved, provided the turkey legs. Some of the boys stalled on two; some got away with three; a few ate four; and I won by eating five and was called the hog of the class. Oh, but I did suffer that night, but through my mother's treatment was all right next morning. That spoiled my taste for the noble bird. In addition to doing without meat I was deprived of sugar of which I was a great consumer. Dr. Stidham once told me that I liked a little coffee with my sugar, when he saw me sweetening a cup. I tried both coffee and tea raw, but didn't like either, so I have discarded both, drinking milk or cool water, and am feeling all the better in doing so. I enjoy the simple food and am thriving on it. I do not think any effort will be made, for sometime to come, to have the church extended to Midvale avenue. It is all well enough to talk of improvements, but I do not think they ought to be made without our knowing where the money to pay for them is to come from. As a choir leader, of which I told you in my

letter yesterday, I do not think it would be right to pay for such a luxury until the \$600 to be borrowed for needed repairs is paid. The church is not able to attempt or keep up the style. Were the revenue large enough I would not oppose the making of any effort to fill the pews. While I believe in expecting great things from God and attempting great things for God, I do not think He would favor our getting in debt. Hoping you enjoyed your turkey, I am,  
Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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December 15th 1913.

Dear James,

Your letter came in time this morning for me to read at the breakfast table. My breakfast, which is seldom earlier than 10 o'clock, except Sundays when I rise an hour earlier.

You fully expressed my sentiments in what you said about the present occupant of the Presidential seat, which we will have to endure until March 4th 1917, by which time our dear friend, Joseph Johnson, should he live, will have rounded out a century. I also agree with you in regards to the enlarging of the church building. The plan showed, looks very pretty, but I think it will be a long while before it is carried out. We had splendid spring-like weather yesterday, but the old church wasn't half filled. Dr. Seasholes preached a magnificent sermon from the very unusual text, Genesis 4-14 "Pitch it within and without with pitch", it being part of the instructions to Noah regarding the ark. In the sermon he showed that God begins from within by cleansing the heart by regeneration, which must precede reformation. With a cleansed and regenerated heart the man by proper conduct shows the without, or outer part. We should so live that others observing our conduct, might see that we have been with Jesus, and leaned on Him. "What the church wants today", he said, "is to get down on its knees and pray for an old-fashioned revival". He closed with a beautiful and forceful declaration that what God has begun He will also complete.

Dr. Gordon called me on the telephone last Friday night for a chat. He told me of his having written to you, informing you that Dr. Conwell was to preach in Calvary Church, New York, on Sunday. Mrs. Stidham and Edna attended the morning service yesterday. Both are looking well. She told me they were nicely situated in a boarding house, not far from Ethel's home. Mrs. Wieand was also at the morning service. Things look promising. Four from Dr. Seasholes' former charge, in Germantown, have joined our church; a good and hopeful spirit prevails. The parsonage looks fine, but I do not like the cut-off steeple. Hoping you are in good health, as this leaves me, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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December 22nd 1913.

Dear James,

I have been on my back again most of the time since last Wednesday, I went down to the Record office that morning, and then did a little shopping for my daughter at Hoskins, on the lower side of Chestnut street. Before I got back to 9th and Arch streets, to take a trolley car for home, I was in terrible agony from a double rupture. I was, as the darkie said, "Mighty glad to be home", when I arrived. I went at once to bed and Nettie telephoned to the doctor. He came late in the evening and fixed me up temporarily until next morning when a truss maker came out from the city and fitted me with a torturing harness. I never before understood why a horse kicks over being harnessed for the first time. The pain from the rupture brought on an old fashioned bilious attack which was supplemented with a cold. The only consolation Dr. James could give me yesterday was, that I will have to become accustomed to the harness. As a result of my ailments I did not get to church Wednesday night, or yesterday morning. John Roy called in the afternoon, but did not come up to my room. Dr. Seasholes telephoned last evening and expressed his sympathy. He told me the weekly meeting will be held this week on Friday evening, postponed from Wednesday, Christmas Eve. I am feeling better today, though somewhat weak. Poor Roy, his will be a sad home this Christmas, with his beloved Jane's mortal remains in the cemetery, as her's was the first death in the household; the loss will be much greater. These are parts of the penalties of life. We live to die and if we live right we will die to live. Withal its ills and pills and bills, this is a grand old world to live in. Each of us have much to be thankful for, and at this glad Christmas season should be grateful for the greatest gift God ever made to hopeless man.

I telephoned John Milligan to send me extra copies of last week's Chronicle, which I generally get at the office on Mondays. I will mail you one. This is a gloomy letter, but please do not let it prey on your peace. Hoping you are well, and that you may have a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

P. S. My daughter got me some cards and handing me the one enclosed said, "This is for Mr. Swartz". Should you send out cards, remember Joseph Johnson, 4500 Ridge avenue.

S.

December 28th 1913.

Dear James,

I went over to church this morning and was joined at 22nd and Allegheny avenue by Mrs. Wieand. We heard a splendid sermon by Dr. Seasholes, on the prayer of

Elisha to Elijah: Second Kings 2:10; "And Elisha said, 'I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me'; the subject being "The Transmission of Personality". The Catholic popes, when elected, follow some particular line of popes, hence we have Pope Pius X, the present pontiff. Kings of England do the same, so we have the present King George V. Lincoln so absorbed the life of Washington that he followed him in administration; Roosevelt's "Square Deal" was from Lincoln's honesty. Wilson is copying Jefferson. The trend of the sermon was for us each to follow some well known saint who was known for his or her faithfulness, and piety. Paul taught this doctrine when he said, "Follow me even as I follow Christ"; Copy the good and strong points but shun the evil. Dr. Seasholes announced that he had divided the Falls into three working sections, or districts. Section "A", below Queen lane; Section "B", above Queen lane; and Section "C" above the Norristown railroad. He has arranged a meeting for workers in the sections, at the parsonage on Tuesday evening. He is very optimistic and I believe will in a little while get the young people enthusiastic. I do not like the looks of the chopped off spire; it gives the front of the building a squatty appearance. The work in the parsonage is slowly, ~~very slowly~~, being done. The new bathtub has been put in, but the plumber now has to wait for the carpenter to put up a partition before he can install the washstand.

While the weather was cold and threatening this morning the attendance was good. Thursday will be Sunday School Day, when the Primary Department will hold its entertainment in the afternoon; the other classes in the evening. Miss Elizabeth Johnson was at church this morning. She said her father is doing nicely again, and they are in hopes he will be all right before his birthday, January 24th, when he will be 96 years old. She told me her father was much pleased in receiving a Christmas card from you, and asked me for your address. I resumed work yesterday and am feeling much like myself again. One, I believe, can become accustomed to almost anything. A year ago I was greatly bothered in using "Store Teeth", now I am becoming used to a strong girdle, or truss. The trouble is they all cost money, besides the discomfort. I am glad you appreciate the Chronicle. In this week's issue I wrote an editorial on the completion of Volume 45. Hoping you are well and that you may have a Happy, Healthy, Peaceful and Prosperous New Year, I am

Sincerely yours,

R.R. SHRONK.

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January 13th 1914.

Dear James,

I do not envy your being in New York, if the weather is any worse than it is here this morning. The thermometer is registering 15 degrees and a cold southwest wind blowing. I have just had a walk of six squares and I thought my ears would be frozen before reaching Rome. The suddenness of the change from spring-like mildness makes

one feel it all the more. I have never been much of a friend of cold weather, and the older I get the less I care for it. I am feeling pretty good again, and am getting accustomed to being harnessed with a truss. In a recent letter you wanted to know what causes a rupture. They come from straining--often from lifting--and may result from a sneeze or a cough. My Doctor told me they sometimes come from general weakness. Mine had been coming on for quite a while, but as it caused no inconvenience or pain, I gave it no attention till the day it almost killed me. Then I was glad to reach home and send for a doctor. It is one of the most distressing pains one can experience. I suppose you are aware of the 24th being our dear old friend, Joseph Johnson's 127<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary, and will join in giving him a shower of birthday cards. I have not heard of him for more than a week. He was then recovering from a cold. I hope he will be spared, in good health, to round out a century. If he is, he will be the first, in my knowledge to live that long at the Falls. I know a woman here in Tioga, who will be 106 years old on April 14th, if she lives. She is a member of the Fiftieth Baptist Church, and is remarkably well preserved. She remembers the War of 1812, and on her wedding day was driven in a carriage from Doylestown to Norristown, from where she rode to Philadelphia on one of the first trains run over the Norristown Railroad. Dr. Seasholes has had the church pews re-numbered, not for renting, but to give all a chance to select a sitting. He will talk, next Thursday evening, on "Who Discovered the North Pole?" the proceeds to be used in repairing the organ. There is to be a dinner on Washington's birthday, or the 23rd of February, Monday, and arrangement are being made for holding a grand bazaar. I learned last week that the \$600 borrowed by the trustees, was loaned by Christian Verbeck for one year. I suppose there will have to be something done to repay it on time. Everything has a hopeful air and it looks as though the old church will again become a power for good in the community. Dr. Seasholes' wife and four of the children have been laid up with grippe and are slowly recovering. Hoping this will find you in good health, and comfort, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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January 15th 1914.

Dear James,

I consider myself most fortunate in receiving two letters from you in as many days. Great minds do work together psychologically, I suppose. I did not refer to my own thermometer, as I do not happen to have one outside the house, but thought 15 above zero was cold enough. Yesterday the same party said it was 3 below at Roxborough and at Chestnut Hill it was reported 8 below. It is much warmer here today but it looks as though a snow fall was coming. I am no friend of cold weather, and the older I get the less I care for it. On the other hand it has to be very hot before I complain.

I remember the bookcase and books which our

Sunday School obtained from the Laboratory Hill School, but I do not recall ever having seen the little biography of Christian Swartz. I wonder if he could have been a relative of yours. I have always had a warm spot in my heart for your noble father. I took a liking to him the first time I met him by the kind way he spoke to me. The more I knew of him the stronger my admiration grew. And I never knew a man who was more considerate for those in his employ. He cared for them as a fond parent would care for his children, and naturally had the respect and love of all who worked for him. I remember railroad men comparing him to John Binkin, who was regarded by them as a tyrant. They were ready to do anything for your father, but only feared Binkin. I always thought it strange that two men being so different in disposition could be such close friends, as your father and Binkin. I also recall the universal expressions of sorrow of the people at the Falls when the sad news of your father's death was received. There are some living at the Falls who still think that the day and Sunday School, with its reading room and library, on Laboratory Hill was there through Mr. Power's philanthropy. They forget that the school and library closed the very day Mr. Harrison (George Lieb Harrison) retired from the firm. Mr. Harrison taught the Sunday School class of which I was a member. After that Sunday School closed, I thought I would go to the Methodist School with Andrew Gilmore, the two John Shronks, and other boys. I went there one Sunday, when Sidney Smith, who married Sallie Hess, the teacher, scolded me for looking at the little woodcuts in the question book. When I went home my mother asked me how I liked the school. I told her of the scolding I had received, and that I would go to the Baptist School next Sunday. I did, and was placed in Jacob Dietrich's class. That scolding may have prevented me from becoming a Methodist, for which I am devoutly thankful.

Edwin Singer told me last night that Joseph Johnson has had another bad speel. The old brewery building in "Dutch Hollow" is to be torn down and the stones are to be used for a foundation for a new edifice St. Bridget's Church is to erect fronting on Midvale avenue (Nun's house or rectory). This will likely spur up Dr. Seasholes in his scheme to have a Midvale avenue front on our church. You will see by the papers that General Louis Wagner passed suddenly away this morning. I have been associated with him a great deal since I began reporting for the Ledger. Hoping you are thawed out and are well, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHROEK.

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January 18th 1914.

Dear James,

It may be that you have already heard of the death of our old friend Joseph Johnson, who passed quietly away on Friday at his home, 4500 Ridge avenue. He was conscious up to the end. I knew nothing of the sad event until yesterday afternoon when my daughter told me the Ledger had a brief obituary of him in the day's issue. He will be buried on Tuesday afternoon, privately, in Laurel Hill Cemetery. Dr. Seasholes will officiate, Singer, always ready for any good work, began a collection this morning for sending a bunch of 97 carnations, as a token of regard from the church. He

thinks he will have no trouble in raising the amount needed. I was greatly shocked on learning of our friend's death. I was in hopes he would be spared to round out a century. And yet, when it is considered that his condition was such that he had to be kept in his room, and no one allowed to see him, and his sight failing, life must have been a burden. I learned while in church this morning, that Mrs. Margaret Richards Hubbard died suddenly yesterday, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she was residing to be near her son who is attending Harvard College. She passed part of December at the home of Mrs. Clara Ogden, on Hunting Park Avenue, opposite Peltz' House, where she was confined to bed a week from rheumatism.

Miss Elizabeth Peltz, and Mrs. Wieand both went to church this morning, but did not remain to the service. In walking along Ridge Avenue, and when near Queen Lane, Elizabeth tripped on a cellar door, and fell, injuring her left arm, right chest, and nose. She went to the church to get warm and then her sister took her home. I called after returning from church, and found her sitting in the dining room, showing but little effects of the fall.

This is rather a doleful letter, but I thought you would wish to learn the facts. Hoping you are well, as this leaves me, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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January 27th 1914.

Dear James,

I suppose I am getting careless as to replying to letters. More than a week ago one came from you and I have just realized that it has not been acknowledged. In it you stated that you expected to attend the funeral of our aged friend Joseph Johnson. I had an engagement that afternoon and was unable to attend the funeral. I wrote a letter of condolence to Miss Elizabeth and her sisters, in which I told them of my not being able to be present. Dear old man! I was in hopes he might be spared to round out a century. And yet his condition for the last two years was such that it must have been a burden for him to live. Is it not a blessing that a higher power has control of our affairs? I suppose you know that Maggie Richards Hubbard was cremated. Mrs. Wieand attended the services at the family vault in Laurel Hill Cemetery, and saw the urn containing her ashes carried into the vault. I see by the papers that she left an estate of \$20,000; much less than I thought she was worth. I called at Peltz' house last evening to see Miss Elizabeth. A week ago, on Sunday, she had a fall, by tripping on a cellar door in front of the new store at Queen Lane and Ridge Avenue. She went to the church, but after a brief rest there Mrs. Wieand took her home. She has suffered a great deal from contusion of her chest and left arm. She was much better last evening, but still unable to use her arm. She told me that her nephew, Dr. Philip Peltz, could not understand why the arm had not broken, as it is greatly discolored from the elbow to the shoulder.

Dr. Seasholes had a full house last Thursday evening, when he delivered his lecture, on "Who Discovered The North Pole?" I was not there but I was told it was very interesting and instructive. The proceeds will be used in repairing the church organ. There is to be a dinner given

Monday evening February 23rd, by men, who are to do the serving; the women having nothing to do but eat. How would you like to come and help in the serving and dish washing? About as well as I would like to do either, I presume. I don't think either of us have had much experience in either line, and I feel too old to begin.

The Forecast man went up to Johnson's to get data for a sketch, but the girls did not want to give it, so be appealed to me, and I wrote him the sketch published in last week's issue. I am feeling like myself again, and am accustomed to using the truss. Hoping this will find yo in good health.

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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February 13th 1914.

Dear James,

I know you are not so superstitious as to object to receiving a letter written on Friday the 13th, so I shall fill out a few leisure moments in a paper talk with you.

Old Philadelphia is in the grip of a cold wave, which has frozen her well up and makes sitting close to fires very agreeable. I guess I am thin blooded for I no sooner get out in this almost zero weather before I begin to shiver. At the Falls there are quite a number of people laid up with the grippe; among them is Dr. Seasholes, who has been confined to the house since Monday. On Sunday morning he looked bad, and told me he was filled to the neck with quinine. In the afternoon he officiated at a funeral over on Sixth street, and in the evening baptized three converts. He was somewhat better on Wednesday, but was not able to attend the prayer meeting.

Things are moving along nicely at the church, everyone seeming interestedg in the George Washington dinner to be given Monday evening, February 23rd, when the men are to do the serving. I will not be included in the servers. The only time I served at a public dinner was at the jollification dinner over President Lincoln's re-election in 1864, which Mr. Chesshire was the originator, in the old Lincoln and Johnson Club, Shantz' Hall. I was on the committee and in serving coffee in a large pitcher I managed to pour it over Mr. Clouse's leg, causing him to yell. I never learned whether his leg was scalded or not.

Joseph Miles, aged 77, one of the oldest members of Manayunk Baptist Church, whom I have known and admired for many years will be buried tomorrow afternoon. He was a members of your ("Meade) Post No. 1, G. A. R., which I suppose will be represented at the funeral. Miles' cast his first vote in 1856, for Fremont and Dayton, who had been nominated in Musical Fund Hall, at the first Republican Convention. He continued voting Republican the rest of his life. Wasn't that a fine picture of our friend Joseph Johnson in last week's Forecast? It is worth preserving.

I have received notice that dinner is ready and as I have to go into the city this afternoon, I will close by hoping you are in good health, as this leaves me,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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February 16th 1914.

Dear James,

I had your interesting letter this morning at my breakfast table, a little after 9 o'clock. My work keeps me up late at night, so I make up for it in the mornings. In this respect the work suits me, for I never was much of an early riser. Your getting ready to get tucked under the covers at 2 A.M. beats me to a frazzle, as Roosevelt would say.

Illness did not keep me from attending Johnson's funeral. Tuesday is Ledger pay day, and aside from wanting the cash, I have to report to the City Editor that afternoon. The day is unfortunate so far as funerals go, for I do not know how many of my friends have been buried on that day, without my being able to attend. I think Singer was thinking of the spell I had about Christmas, when I became acquainted with the meaning of being ruptured. At the time of Johnson's funeral I was in pretty good shape.

Your mention of having met Engelhart Brehm, makes me regret all the more my not being at the funeral. I have not seen him since early in 1862. When we went to the Forest School, he and I were very chummy. We sat together and helped each other do "sums". He always seemed more like a girl than a boy, and I used to defend him in fights other boys would pick with him. I remember when he and Richard, my brother Owen, and I were in your Sunday School Class. Richard married Elizabeth, of Lizette Stehle. She, with her brother Henry, and sister Emma, live over on Frankford avenue and has an interest in a large dye works. She has a son, William, living in Tioga. I do not know what Engelhart is doing but believe he lives in Norristown. It has been ten years since I last saw Maggie Richards Hubbard. I then met her at Coulter street and Wayne avenue, Germantown, while waiting for a Midvale avenue trolley car on my way to the Falls. I always liked her and regarded her as being more sensible than her brother Horace (Richards). He always impressed me as a bad boy wanting a good whipping. He, however, knows how to take care of his money, much better than the Abbot boys did. You said in your letter that you were afraid of becoming a bore. Please banish the thought, and write whenever you feel inclined, for I enjoy your letter very much. I will take all back I said, about modern winters. You will see in the "Laughing Gas" column of the Chronicle I mailed you this morning, why the winters have changed.

Dr. Seasholes was able to occupy the pulpit yesterday, but was feeling weak from his attack of the grippe. His son, Charles L., graduated from the Central High School with honors, last Friday, and the Doctor went with the rest of the family to attend the exercises. Last evening he preached a special sermon to the Young Mens' Association, an organization of young men which purchased Charles Boothroyd's property on Queen lane, and built a club house back of the dwelling.

Tonight the Baptist Young Peoples' Union meets in our church. Rev. Dr. Frank Dobbins will make the address. Tomorrow the Northwest Baptist Social Union meets in the Temple Church, Tioga. In both these, Dr. Seasholes takes a warm interest.

Mrs. Wieand was over to church yesterday morning despite the dangerous walking. Her sister, Miss Elizabeth Peltz,

has not yet recovered from the fall she had several Sundays ago at the Falls, while on her way to church.

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

R. R. SHRONK.

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: FEBRUARY 20th 1914 :

Dear James,

I will say no more about late breakfasts, leaving the laurels for you. It must be pleasing, in a lonely thing, to have breakfast served in one's own cosy room. I have what I think is an unique breakfast every morning. A good sized dish of grapenuts, with cream, well salted; a saucer of stewed evaporated peaches, and a piece of toasted bread, well buttered. With this I have a cup of warm milk. On Sundays I have instead of the bread, a plate of buckwheat cakes. I am a regular vegetarian, having eaten no meat since the spell I had last May, and am feeling all the better for it. I confess, however, that I miss country sausage and scrapple these winter mornings. I have also become accustomed to doing without sugar.

I believe you are right about Benjamin Miles, father of Joseph Miles, being a deacon in the Manayunk Church, with John Wolfington, Sr., At the time of your Uncle Henry Rankin's death, there was no church in Manayunk. The church there was not constituted until 1851. Was ~~he~~ not he the husband of Aunt Sarah Rankin, whom I used to meet at your mother's home? I attended her funeral in Reading, and at your request went in one of the carriages to the cemetery. The day was very hot, and having an umbrella I sat on the box with the driver, holding the umbrella over us both. Upon returning from the cemetery and while descending a steep grade the harness broke and the horses started to run away. I told the driver to pull them into an embankment at the side of the road, which he did, and came near overturning the hack. Having some strong cord in my pocket, I tied the broken harness together, and we then proceeded back to the house without further trouble. I don't know as I have ever told you about your Uncle Henry Swartz, and Joseph Shantz, visiting my father at the time of his ~~last~~ last illness in 1883. They called one morning and mother asked then if they would like to go up stairs to see father. Shantz was suffering from a weak heart and said he was afraid to climb the stairs. Mother took your uncle up and told father an old friend had called to see him. Your uncle spoke and father said, "I know that voice? Are you not Henry Swartz?" It has been forty years since I last saw you. You were then working with Henry Rankin on the canal" Father, you remember, was blind at the time. Your uncle regarded it as a remarkable stretch of memory. A sad coincidence of the meeting occurred soon after. Your uncle, Shantz and father all passed away within a few weeks of that meeting. I believe your uncle Henry had come to the Falls to attend your mother's funeral.

You stated in the letter I had at breakfast this morning, that you thought our mail here was faulty. It is simply rotten. I mailed an important letter, while at Manayunk, before two o'clock on Monday afternoon, putting a

special delivery stamp upon it. The letter was addressed to the Public Ledger. At five in the afternoon, the Ledger telephoned me about the letter. I found upon ~~xxx~~ inquiry at the Central Postoffice, that it did not leave Manayunk till 5.30 and it was nearly 6.30 before it reached the editor. The blame of the delay was placed on the lateness, that afternoon, of the Pottsville express in reaching Manayunk. I have the same trouble in the Nicetown post office, from where Tioga letters are dispatched, and often take the letters to Broad and Cambria streets, to the North Philadelphia post office, which is connected with a compressed air tube through which the mail is shot to the Central Office.

I presume you are having the same trouble in *New York that we are bothered with here; by the streets beings* filled with snow. Yesterday was somewhat warmer and the rain out the streets in worse condition than ever. I had to go to the installing of a Presbyterian minister last night to 25th street and Indiana avenue, only seven squares from my home. I rode to 22nd and Cambria street, and then walked three squares west and one north, and it was slow and tiresome going.

I don't suppose you will be able to get on to the George Washington dinner, to be given on Monday evening, in the church, by the men of the congregation. I am not certain whether I shall go, or not. The little church was crowded on Sunday evening, when Dr. Seasholes preached a special sermon on Abraham Lincoln, to the Young Mens' Association. This Sunday evening he will hold a patriotic service and speak on certain qualities of George Washington. A young woman was before the meeting on Wednesday evening. She will be baptized on the evening of March 1st, when others are expected to join her. Dr. Seasholes was pretty well recovered from the grippe on Wednesday night. He shows a strong interest in everything that is being done in the church.

Hoping this will find you in good health, as it leaves me, and that your causes for worrying may all pass away, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

P. S. I thank you for the compliment of comparing my letters to those of Dr. Stidham, who was an expert in everything he did!

R.R.S.

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February 27th 1914.

Dear James,

Having a few minutes before dinner will be ready, I thought I would indulge in a little talk on paper with you. The bright sun makes one feel good, after the severe weathet the month brought us this year. On Sunday March 1st, the Ladies' Auxiliary of Mary Commandery K.T. will hold its annual service at the Masonic Home. The announcement brought a pang to me, as I thought how, for sixteen successive ~~XXXXX~~ first Sundays in March, Dr. Stidham so able preached for the organization. I do not know who they will have this year to take his place, but I feel confident they will find no one who

will excell him , or equal him. I heard him on many of the occasions and while some of his talked being "Masonic" was a mystery to me, and others not of the craft, they were masterful discourses.

I had a telephone call from Mrs. Seasholes yesterday telling me of the death that morning of Miss Maria Schofield, sister of Mary and Alice. You will remember Maria; she was a hunchback, who for many years attended services in our church with her sisters. She was 78 years of age and died of pneumonia.

I did not get over to the George Washington Birthday supper, on Monday night, but it was a magnificent success. The church was crowded and everything went off splendidly. Dr. Seasholes aid the snowstorm helped the supper as it kept people from going away from the Falls. James T. Whartenby, grandson of William Whartenby, who succeeded Lewis Mettinger as sexton of the church, and a young woman will be baptized Sunday night, and others are expected to follow soon. In this week's Forecast is an article on Old Oaks, John Tucker's Mansion, which I wrote for the Record. It helped fill up the little local paper. Mary Jane Shaffer told me on Wednesday evening that her Aunt Lizzie is recovering nicely from her serious illness, at her home in Norristown. I shall be glad when the blue birds come as harbingers of spring, for I have had all I want of this old fashioned winter.

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

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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Marhh 1st 1914.

Dear James,

Your letter of February 27th reached me yesterday afternoon, instead of being delayed till tomorrow morning. I cannot account for its getting here so soon, and hope it may prove the beginning of better mail delivery. You must not allow your contemplations of the days that are gone to make you despondent. I, too, get in the same mood and I guess all others do, who have seen so many years. "Hitherto has the Lord helped me", shows that one of the sacred writers had his retrospective moments. Yes, there are many things in those good old days , which we cannot forget, and I believe it is good for us that we are unable to forget them.

Your probably received my letter about the time I received yours. Another case of our letters crossing each other. The old man you read of in the Chronicle and the Forecast is the same, Timothy McMonigle, an Evening Telegraph reporter, who lives at the Falls, wrote the account for the Forecast, but got somewhat mixed up in his statement. I met him in Manayunk and he asked if I knew anything that would make an interesting article for the Forecast, for which he occasionally wrote. I told him of the stranger's visit. He then asked me about the Smith residence, and I told him about Horace Smith shooting at Gabriel, the weather-vane of the (Baptist) church steeple. I suppose he thought by taking the man up Queen lane, would make the story the more interesting.

Until you wrote your letter I never knew that John

Tucker had only lived one summer in Old Oaks. It has been quite a while since I have been near the grand old building, but at my last visit, the masonry seemed to show no sign of giving way, though it was done, as you said, in freezing weather. While the cemetery company owned the property the fine large parlör was turned into a chapel for funeral services. Later, it was used as a meeting house for a Congregational Church, and still later, for a Polish Catholic Church, but has not been occupied, I believe, for several years. With industrial plants built on the property it has lost most of its old time charms. Horace Richards splendid home (adjoining Mrs. Dobson's house) has been ruined by the building of the Queen Lane Reservoir, and filtration plant, so close to it, and by the cutting through the grounds of McMichael street and Roberts avenue. He has been for years trying to sell the property, but appears to have been unable to find a buyer.

Deptsite the stormy weather, there was a good attendance at the communion service this morning. Two young men and a young woman were received into the church and others will be baptized next Sunday evening.

Mrs. Stidham usually comes over on Communion Sunday, but I suppose the weather kept her indoors today. Hoping this will find you in good health, as it leaves me, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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March 12th 1914.

Dear James,

I have been wondering as to what has become of you, not having heard from you since before the blizzard of March 1st and 2nd, which from newspaper accounts was much worse in New York than in this city, where it was bad enough.

I went to the Record office on Sunday evening, March 1st, and while walking down Ninth street from Arch, had a strenuous time making headway carrying an umbrella with the cover close to my head. At Filbert street a terrible roar was followed by a loud crash, the tin roof of a high building fell in the street opposite to where I was walking. I, fortunately got back home without injury and just as the worst of the blizzard began. Today is the 26th anniversary of the 1888 blizzard. I was to go down to James Dobson's office to get a letter of introduction to the city editor of the Ledger that day, but was unable to get down till three days later, when I began my reportorial career for a daily paper. On the morning of the 12th I left my home, 1804 Tioga street, to go to the Manayunk Chronicle office, for a little needed cash, and to turn in my Falls letter. I left home at 7 o'clock, reached the Falls, by the Reading Railroad, at 11; went to mother's; then back to the railroad station where I waited until 4 o'clock for an uptrain; reached Manayunk before 5; saw Mr. Milligan in his office; went back to the railroad station where I boarded a train at 7, reached the old 16th street station in good time, but didn't get away from there till nearly 9; then the train stopped a long while on the way, so that it was 9.30 before I reached home. I was more than

fourteen hours making the trip. That Monday morning when I walked down Queen lane I had to zigzag around the high snow drifts; at Harmon Johnson's and your old home, the drifts reached up near the second floor windows, in walking up Ridge avenue I had to go by faith, as the snow blown by the fierce wind was blinding. It was the first time I had a realization of the terrors of a blizzard. I went to Manayunk this year on March 2nd, without any of the difficulty I had encountered in '88. I hope you have not suffered any ill effect from this year's great storm.

I received an eight-page pamphlet "Catholic Abstainer", this morning. It is published monthly by the Catholic Abstinence Society, at 1328 Chestnut street. On the first page in a reprint, without credit, of an article I wrote several months ago for the Baptist Commonwealth, on Bartender's Drinks, which I suppose you saw at the time.

We are having real wintry weather here today, which is bright and cold. How I long for the bluebirds and other welcome harbingers of spring. The older I get the less I like cold weather. The only thing I envy Horace E. Richards is his ability to get away every year from the frost line to the Sunny South.

On Sunday March 1st, the Ladies' Auxiliary of Mary Commandery No. 56 K.T. held their annual service at the Masonic Home. Dr. Stidham preached for 16 years at this service. This year his place was taken by the Rev. John G. Wilson, D.D. pastor of the Union M. E. Church, one of the ablest preachers of the Methodist Church. He and the Rev. William H. Sivel, of the Church of the Brethern, and superintendent of the home, each paid a warm tribute to Dr. Stidham, for his long and efficient services to the Auxiliary. I did not attend the service, hence I am unable to quote what either of them said, although I suggested to Mr. Sivel that such a tribute would be appropriate.

They expect to clear about \$70 from the George Washington dinner, held February 23rd, in the church, on a stormy night. The recently organized literary association will give an entertainment on the night of St. Patrick's Day, when there will likely be another stormy night (Pessimistic, say we)

Dr. Seasholes baptized three converts last Sunday evening, and two others, young men, will be baptized on Sunday evening; a very encouraging growth and others are to follow. As dinner is announced I will stop. Hoping this finds you safe and sound and in good health, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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March 20th 1914.

Dear James,

I have purposely delayed replying to your letter of the 16th so that I might include in it, my greetings and congratulations on your 74th birthday anniversary, the 56th anniversary of your baptism, and the 62nd anniversary of the first service held in the lecture room of our church. These important events in your life, and I sincerely hope you may live to see many returns of the day. You will receive with this letter if the mails work right, a letter of congratulation from Harry B. Binkin, church clerk, who was authorized

on Wednesday evening by an unanimous vote of the church, to convey to you its greeting and congratulation. I hope you will pardon the liberty I took in calling the attention to the church of your double anniversary. The spirit in which the suggestion was adopted made me feel glad that I offered it. You have a strong hold upon the love of the church and the opportunity for an expression thereof was joyfully embraced. I was glad to learn in your letter that you can see light ahead in your financial troubles, and hope the light will lead to the dawning of a bright and happy day.

That man Hipple, by his suicide, caused my next door neighbor, Thomas C. Fluke, who conducted a fancy grocery at 1324 Chestnut street, great worryment. He had \$16,000 on deposit in the Real Estate Trust Company, but succeeded in withdrawing most of it, before the crash came. His worrying, I think, helped to end his days, for he died the following winter. I do not know, neither do I desire to learn, who your would-be debtors at the Falls are, but I know one who wishes he had some means of liquidating his long standing obligation. Your assuming the moral obligations was a noble act for which a reward ought to be realized before you wear the golden crown in the world where among other blessings there will be neither borrowing or lending. I have a long list of cases in which my being easy has cost me both money and worryment. Persons seem to know who to strike. I have long ago learned that I cannot afford to carry any more money than what will meet expenses, because I will not lie, and cannot refuse helping people with heart stories. I could write a long article on how I have been "touched" by poor creatures claiming to be hungry. I have often taken men to eating houses, intending to buy them a meal, but as I stepped in the door, they hurried away. I have always found pleasure in giving a hungry man a dinner, but it is impossible to know whether hunger or thirst has the greatest claim on the beggar.

Dr. Seasholes will baptize six more candidates on Sunday evening. It is beginning to feel like the good old time again in the church. Hoping you are well, that you may soon be relieved of your cares, and that you may have a joyous birthday, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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March 26th 1914.

Dear James,

I was very sorry on Wednesday in receiving your letter to learn of the trouble coming back in your chest. I had hoped it had left you for good, and hope it may quickly be controlled by your physician. I do not like the "dope" remedy, because of its danger, so please be very careful how you use it, and be careful of lighted cigars. You might have a serious burn. Have you ever tried deep breathing? My old friend, James Milligan, of the Chronicle, used to think it was one of the best and most profitable exercises a person could take, and to it attributed his cure from stammering. I have found it very beneficial. I never knew so much about the Mr. James, who formerly lived in the house J. Vaughan Merrick gave as a Memorial Hospital and House of Mercy for St. Timothy's Church, and which I abbreviated to St. Timothy's

Hospital (1932 : Memorial Hospital, Roxborough) I knew an Israel James, who lived in Roxborough, who conducted a flour mill in Manayunk. He was a Methodist and I think was one of the trustees of the Falls Methodist Church. He and my father were warm friends. I used to like to watch him taking pinches of snuff, when I was a small boy. I was with Nathan L. Jones, Jr., today, at the annual meeting of the Overseers of the Poor of Roxborough Township. He was the retiring secretary, having been voted out of office at the last election. The poor house is a full mile back from Ridge avenue on Shawmont avenue. I started to walk, but was picked up by the man who furnished the ice cream for the annual dinner. I ate very sparingly of the dinner. On leaving the home I was driven in an automobile down to Wissahickon entrance to Fairmount Park. On the back part of Shawmont avenue, the snow is several feet deep, along the road. On Tuesday night I went up to the First Baptist Church, Germantown, to have a talk on "A Reporter's Side of a Newspaper and Some of His Experiences", for the Mens' Club of the church. I had a very pleasant visit, and think my talk was appreciated? I was greatly pleased with the club which is composed of quite a number of gray haired men. I was invited to return in June for another talk.

I begin to think from your letters that you are better posted on the past affairs of the Falls and vicinity than I am. I enjoy your references. I was talking with James Dobson yesterday, while returning from down town in a trolley car. He said he reads my ancient article in the Chronicle and thinks I must be living in the past. I suppose you saw in the Forecast the account where the Dobsons are going to erect a \$250,000 mill at the Falls. Mr. Dobson said yesterday that it was merely in contemplation and would likely be carried out. It will be the concentrating of their numerous plants into one as an act of economy, and convenience. It will, however, I think bring an increase of other business to the Falls by increasing the population. The firm now has plants in Manayunk, Germantown, and Kensington.

I am glad to learn that Dr. Seasholes sent you a letter on your birthday. Harry Binkin read your reply at the close of the services on Sunday morning and it was greatly appreciated. A young woman, named Mary Singer, a grand niece of Edwin, was before the church last evening, and will be baptized Sunday evening. The weekday meeting is growing stronger and a marked increase is seen in the Sunday congregations. I have never known a pastor who is more popular in the community than Dr. Seasholes, unless it was Dr. Stidham. Every one has a good word to say of him, and of his earnestness. I hope your next letter may contain good news concerning your chest trouble. Take the best care of yourself. Hoping the news may be good, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. Shronk.

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April 7th 1914.

Dear James,

This will more of a note of inquiry than a letter. Have felt a great deal of concern about you since receiving your last letter, in which you told me of the pain in your chest having returned, and of the doctor's dope making you drowsy, so much that you fell asleep while



smoking a cigar, which burned a hole in your trousers. My not having a line from you since, I am forced to fear that we too often look upon the worse side of things when our deepest interests are awakened? Kindly let me know just how you are feeling, so as to relieve the suspense. Nothing could give me greater satisfaction than to learn that my fears are unfounded, and that you are all right.

Dr. Seasholes gave the right hand of fellowship to twelve new members on Sunday morning. At the communion nearly all of the centre pews were occupied, and most of them filled. Others will be baptized on Sunday evening, among them is a niece of Dr. Jacob Garrett Walker, a Mrs. Dodge, and her son. Hoping for a line of good news, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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April 8th 1914.

Dear James,

It would be no easy task for me to describe the pleasure I received from your letter, and hope the pain may never return to your chest, and that the weakness may disappear. I had not noticed the sale of the Devon Inn. I do not read very much on account of my bladder trouble having affected my eyes. I am glad the property has been disposed of, as it will relieve you and your Cousin Ellen, much of the worryment you have experienced. I have never seen the place since long before your Cousin Mary took possession of it, and displayed her great executive ability in managing the large resort. It has been so long since I last saw your Cousin Ellen, that I do not think I would know her should I meet her. This old world moves along, bringing constant changes, and what is worse from a physical sense, keeps making us mortals grow older. I am writing this at 5.10 P.M. and the room became so dark, owing to a shower, that I had to light the gas. The shower brought the first thunder and lightning of the season. In a former letter you mentioned Abraham Martin, the old Sunday School advocate, and of his coming to our Sunday School (From Roxborough: For whom Martin street is named) One of the earliest pleasures I can remember was his giving magic lantern exhibitions. He always showed a picture of a little curly-headed boy kneeling upon a pillow, as "Little Samuel", and would hold the picture on the screen while the audience sang, "When Little Samuel Woke and Heard His Master's Voice". I never saw the picture but what I thought of Little Samuel Abbot. Dr. Jacob Garrett Walker has a little pocket Bible, which Mr. Martin gave him in the old Union Sunday School, in the Old Academy. One day when a boy, ~~with~~ with your Harry, and Charles Lesh, I went gunning along School Lane. On Mr. Martin's lawn (when he then resided on that thoroughfare) the trees were well covered with robins. I climbed the fence and was just about to shoot when Mr. Martin, the dear old man, raised a window, and called "Come here young man, I have something important to tell you". I walked to the open window, where he read to me an article out of the Ledger about shooting insect-eating birds, and the fine that would be imposed. I listened patiently till he had concluded the reading and the long

lecture which followed. He ended the talk in asking me if I knew who he was, and seemed glad when I told him he was Father Martin, the great Sunday School advocate. We shot no birds that day. I used to be fond of shooting birds until after I read the handsome book, "Birds", you gave me one Christmas. When I next went gunning and while taking sight to fire on three fine flickers, I thought of the book and what it said about a bird's helplessness, with the result that I lowered the gun and never shot another bird.

I received a letter from Adam Mettinger on Monday. He is visiting his son, John, in Sanford, Florida. He told me of the summer-like weather, they are having; What a mild and pleasant winter he had had, and of his picking strawberries.

I think, too, that the church was very fortunate in getting such a man as Dr. Seasholes to succeed Dr. Stidham. It was an old-time sight on Sunday morning to see twelve persons standing in a row to receive the hand of fellowship. Others are to be baptized Sunday evening and I expect others will come before the deacons this evening.

I had a talk on the telephone on Monday night, with my sister Margaret, who lives in Germantown. She told me of the death last week, of our cousin, Amanda Whitaker, a daughter of Uncle William Shronk. She lived on Scott's lane, above the Railroad. I knew she was sick with dropsy, but was not aware of her death till after her funeral. We Shronks do not put much stress on relatives. Why, I do not know. Perhaps it is from the way we were brought up. Hoping this will find you much improved physically, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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April 13th 1914.

Dear James,

I have been wondering again as to how you are getting along with your chest and the dope, so I concluded to have a little paper chat with you this cold April afternoon.

When one is glad to walk on the sunny side of the street. Yesterday I wore a light overcoat and thought I was done with a heavy one for the season, but was glad to get it on again today. I sent a letter to Jacob last night, your niece, Nellie, having told me of his not being well. Dr. Seasholes preached a splendid Easter sermon yesterday morning on "A Scientific View of the Resurrection", from the text Matthew ~~xxx~~ 20-28, "And Thomas answered My Lord and My God", and treated Thomas as an investigator or scientist, and not as a doubter. In the evening he baptized seven more converts, then went home and to bed, suffering from another attack of the grippe. He looked bad and was scarcely able to preach but heroically went through the day's services. I called him up on the telephone this morning. His daughter, Margaret answered and told me he was in bed, but feeling better and that he expects to go to Scranton tomorrow to hear Billy Sunday preach. I hope he will not venture out if he is not able. I was very sorry to learn of the sudden death of your cousin James M. Pennypacker, whom I always regarded as a very fine man. On my way back from Manayunk this afternoon I met Charles L. Dykes, who informed me that he had three funerals this afternoon. The first was that of Bright Pinyard, aged

70 years, but I think more. He was the oldest son of George and Mary Shaffer Pinyard, and worked most of his life at the Laboratory. He served through the Civil War. While he was in the army I used to go to his father's home frequently to write letters to him. His father would say, "Just you go on and write. You know better what I want to say, than I could tell you". Dykes also told me that he has had 56 funerals since the beginning of the year. He seems to be getting a full share and ought to be making money. I had a letter this morning from Joseph B. Gleason, a former policeman, and a member of Dr. Conwell's church, who is now farming in South Dakota. He tells me that the spring is very backward there and that he only started plowing last week. The temperature there is, according to his writing, about the same as in Philadelphia. He had to drive 20 miles to hand in the election returns to the county officials, after a recent election.

I expect to call on a lady friend tomorrow, to congratulate her on her 106th birthday anniversary, Mrs. Ann Elizabeth Magill, of 3059 North 16th street. She is a member of the 50th Baptist Church, and is likely the oldest Baptist in the world. I called on her a month ago, and found her in good health and sound mind, but she said she feels herself growing weaker and her sight is failing.

Hoping this will find you much improved in health, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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April 19th 1914.

Dear James,

I was glad to learn in the letter that came to me yesterday morning of your having no pain in your chest, and hope it may never return again. I had a letter from Jacob on Friday, in which he told me of his ailment and asked me to say nothing about it to any of his friends. I feel very sorry for him, his loss of vision is not enough of an affliction, and the knowledge of the other ailment, will not tend to his happiness. He did not mention the ailment but said it was what caused Will's death. I agree with you regarding the stupidity of the physician, and of the kind of men doctors are made from. It seems to me as though we are losing the old time Doctors, who were men that commanded the respect and confidence of everyone. I have seen so many young physicians in the hospitals, I visit, who seem to be fitted for anything beside the profession they have chosen. I have also lost confidence in the hospitals, which in my estimation ought to be called corpse factories, for in them human life does not seem to be appreciated. Think of Dr. J. K. Uhler, or Dr. L. M. Service allowing a patient to have tuberculosis without their knowledge of it! I hope that in Jacob's case the ravages may be stayed. In his letter he stated that ~~sixty~~ it is sixty years this month since he came to the Falls. I was under the impression you came here in 1853. While not sure of the exact date, I remember very well when you came to the Falls, and of the family coming to church. I often think of an incident that occurred in the Old Forest

School. Your father came there one day and requested Mr. Mackie not to punish Harry or Jacob, saying that if notified he would chastise them at home. A few days later Dr. Philip Peltz came to the school and made a similar request concerning his sons, Josiah and Dallas. That night I told my father of their visits and requests. He said, "I suppose you would like me to go see your teacher". I told him I would. And then he replied, "Well, I will not, but you tell me when Mr. Mackie whips you, and I'll whip you again". Of course, I never told him of the many floggings I received, for I didn't want them repeated.

Dr. Seasholes went to Scranton last Tuesday with other ministers on the North American's special train, to hear Billy Sunday, the evangelist. He was suffering from grippe when he left; came home sick on Thursday, and was in bed till this morning, when he got ready for church and preached a fine sermon, saying he was feeling fine again. Dr. David Spencer has just got out of bed from grippe, bordering on pneumonia. He told me last night on the phone that he intended preaching this morning and evening, and that his wife is laid up with a heavy cold. In the announcements made in church this morning, was one to the effect that the Mens' Bible Class is to hold a "Parcel Post" entertainment on Friday night, and want everybody to send a package valued at least ten cents.

I met your cousin James M. Pennypacker, a number of times in your home on Ridge avenue, and took a strong liking to him. Was he any kin to ex-Governor Samuel W. Pennypacker? With best wishes I am,

Sincerely yours,  
R. R. SHRONK.

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April 27th 1914.

Dear James,

We are having a spring-like day and it makes one feel well to get out in the sunshine. Everything here as you might suppose, is Mexico and the crisis which faces us as a nation. I am in hopes that the mediation spoken of in the papers may lead to a settlement of the trouble and that no more good American lives shall be sacrificed for that greasy horde of Mexicans.

I was amused the other day, over a statement in one of the papers, of an Italian paper comparing Woodrow Wilson with Abraham Lincoln. They might as well stand "Mouthful" Bryan up beside William M. Events. I sometimes wish the American people had elected Roosevelt instead of Wilson. I believe he would have made short work with the Mexican trouble. But then, the Mexicans know with whom they are dealing. (I wonder what our dear old Republican advocate would think of these piping days of 1932, with Hoover in the chair?) Acc

Dr. Seasholes in a prelude to his sermon on "Judas Iscariot", yesterday morning paid a warm tribute to the American flag, a synopsis of which I had printed in this morning's Record, the North American and the Inquirer. I gave a copy to the Press (Philadelphia), but do not know whether they used it or not, as I have not seen that paper. The Ledger was too crowded with other matter to use it. I enclose the clipping from the Record, for your perusal.

I went over to the parcel Post entertainment on

on Friday evening, given by the Mens' Bible Class, which has about forty members. The affair was a very pleasing one and netted about \$20. Packages of all sizes were sent by parcel post, or carried to the church, where they were sold for ten cents each. Had they auctioned them off, more money might have been realized. I only remained a short time. I bought five packages, and had a little fun seeing them opened. It happened that two women friends had called during my absence and they shared the amusement, no one knowing what was in the packages until they were opened.

Dr. Seasholes teaches the Mens' Bible Class which seems to be growing in numbers every week. I put in a good deal of time lately in preparing a historical sketch to be read at the 76th anniversary to be observed on May 24th instead of June 7th, the date of the anniversary. I had prepared most of it a year ago, when the 75th anniversary was postponed owing to the serious illness of Dr. Stidham. Dr. Seasholes had practically recovered from the grippe. He will speak in the First Church, Germantown, on Thursday evening, where they are celebrating their 52nd anniversary.

Hoping this will find you much improved in health and that you may forever be free from the trouble in your chest, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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May 4th 1914.

Dear James,

I would like very much to see the portrait you have had painted for Bucknell University. The continued sittings must have been trying to your nerves. I am a pretty good sitter, but nothing likes me more than to sit for a photograph, and I fear I would collapse should I have to pose for a portrait. Washington must have had a lot of experience in that line with different artists, no two of whom painted him alike, consequently we have so many portraits of that distinguished head that we do not know just how he looked. As you said yours will be identified by the name on the canvas. Can you not have photographs taken of it? for distribution among your friends? I am sorry you have so much trouble in writing and hope it will soon pass away.

We had a joyful day in the church yesterday. Dr. Seasholes welcomed nine new members among whom were a Mrs. Dodge, a niece of Dr. J. G. Walker, her son and daughter, representing the fourth and fifth generation of Morison, who have belonged to the church. There were present at the communion three of Mark R. Watkinson's converts, Mrs. Wieand, her sister Elizabeth Peltz, and Mrs. Sarah Bechtel Mowery. Mrs. Stidham and her daughter Edna were also present. It was a year yesterday since Dr. Seasholes first occupied the pulpit, when he came to preach for Dr. Stidham. In his sermon he told of the talk he had a year ago with Dr. Stidham and now the latter had spoken of 30 persons who were thinking of coming into the church. During the year these, with 21 others have been added, or a total of 51. In the evening there was a patriotic service in which Dr. Seasholes gave a very interesting history of Mexico, which he said was never successful in war with the United States, they having lost in two wars Texas, California, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico. Should there

now be war that country, he said, would become part of the American Republic. He gave me a synopsis of the sermon, but I was unable to get much of it in the daily papers. It will likely appear briefly in this week's Chronicle. It is ten years today since my wife was taken from me, and naturally I am living over again the sad events of that day. People say that time heals all wounds. That may be true, but the scars remain. Ten years of loneliness has not taken away the poignancy of my loss. This, however, is one of the penalties of life, and must be endured. Hoping you are feeling better and that you may enjoy a long season of peace and freedom from pains, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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May 7th 1914.

Dear James,

I wrote an obituary today of Charles Maxwell Peterson, who died at his home, 3354 North 22nd street, this morning but a short distance from my home. He was in his 83rd years and had been chief accountant for Peter Wright & Son, shippers, and later for the International Navigation Company. He lost his sight ten years ago and was forced to retire. His death was due to locomota ataxia. Thinking you may have known him, I concluded to let you know of his death. Although living within so close a distance I had no acquaintance with him. His daughter and son frequently led him in his walks. He was for more than 50 years a vestryman in Trinity Episcopal Church, Southwark, and a warden for 38 years. Two sons, a daughter, and a grandson survive. He will be buried on Monday afternoon on West Laurel Hill Cemetery.

I learned something last night at prayer meeting which greatly pleased me. I told you of the Mens' Bible Class that Dr. Seasholes has organized; well they have adopted a name and will henceforth be known as the "James S. Swartz Bible Class". And seem proud of the name.

Dr. Seasholes was given a two months' vacation at the business meeting. He goes to the Pacific Coast, and will be absent during June and July. He will fill the pulpit during June. That I presume is why he wished to have the 76th anniversary celebration held May 24th instead of on the anniversary, June 7th. While writing this tonight, I will not post it till morning, as I find I have run out of postage stamps. Like the foolish virgins lacking oil, it is too late to go out to buy. Hoping you are in good health and happy over the honor of having the class named for you, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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May 11th 1914.

Dear James,

Of the two photographs, that of the oil painting, or your natural self, I have no hesitation in choosing the latter, much as I would like to see what the painting looks like. I am very much like you in this Mexican affair. Dr. Seasholes is too young to know anything personally about the copperheadism of the Civil War, or he wouldn't keep on

praising Wilson and Bryan. I do not know what his politics are, neither do I care, but he will never be able to create any enthusiasm in me for either of these statesmen(?). I attended a portrait presentation, last Friday, in a Roxborough public school, The building was erected in 1878 and from the beautiful view from its location was called Fairview School, a name retained till last year when the Board of Education changed it to the Joel Cook School. His family, through his brother-in-law, Henry R. Edmunds, president of the Board, presented a large photograph to the school. I presume you knew Joel Cook. In 1864 he and our old friend, Michael Arnold, went around electioneering for McClellan against Lincoln's re-election. They each spoke so bitterly about Lincoln, at a Falls meeting that an Winpenny, himself a Democrat, offered to buy a woman a new apron, if she would throw eggs at Cook and Arnold. Cook afterward became a Republican, and was elected to Congress. For many years he was financial editor of the Public Ledger, and is said to have owned more than a million dollars when he died.

I often wonder how Mrs. Stidham can keep coming to church. Poor woman, her heart must bleed when she sees another occupying the pulpit. Dr. Seasholes gracefully says he is reaping the harvest of Dr. Stidham's planting. This time he is trying to get enough to place a handsome wreath on Dr. Stidham's tomb, on Memorial Day. Mrs. Wieand told me yesterday morning that Ethel Stidham Ritter is in the German Hospital (Lankenau) slowly recovering from child-birth. She gave birth to a little girl last Tuesday morning, but it died before the day was over. They are all heartbroken over its death. Do you remember when Dr. and Mrs. Stidham lost a baby while they were at the Falls in his first pastorate. At his request I went to the city and asked Dr. Henson to come out and conduct the funeral service. These were held in the church and Dr. Henson began his touching and comforting address by saying "Only A Baby". Dr. Stidham told me afterward that he had never listened to such a splendid and comforting address. Both great lights are now in Heaven, reaping the reward of their work on earth. I wish I could find it convenient to be present on the 24th, when the church will celebrate its 76th anniversary. It will be confined to the one day. An anniversary offering will be made towards paying the \$6000 borrowed last year to improve the church and parsonage. Hoping you are in good health, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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May 18th 1914.

Dear James,

Dr. Seasholes asked me yesterday morning if I thought it possible to get you to be present next Sunday evening, to make an address at the 76th anniversary service. I told him I would write and ask you to comply. He stated from the pulpit that I would read the historical sketch in the morning and that you would probably speak in the evening, so you see it is up to you, to make his announcement come true. It was decided to confine the celebration this year, to one day, as it has been found out that too little interest is shown in prolonged celebrations. This was particularly shown at the 52nd anniversary of the First Baptist Church of Germantown. Dr. Seasholes spoke there one night, when very few were present,

and yet they have a large congregation. I go over to that church on the night of May 28th, to give a Chalk Talk on Light, to the Mens' Club. I gave a talk there in March, on "The Reporter's End of a Newspaper", which seems to have been appreciated.

I thought of you, and your remarks on the present Democratic administration, last Friday, while getting John A. Kinsler, a Chestnut street jeweler, to regulate my watch. I asked him if the tariff law has affected his business. "It has practically killed it", was his reply. He is a veteran of the Civil War, and a strong Republican, and went on to tell how the present administration is crippling business. He declares that Wilson considers every business man a rogue. What may happen before the administration is forced to get out on the 4th of March 1917, would be hard to imagine. The papers are daily telling of large commercial or manufacturing concerns, and railroads, laying off workmen by the thousands (We wonder what poor old Bob would think of business conditions in these days of The Great Depression, 13 years after the Republicans regained control of the country from the Democrats?) and yet the Democratic papers print cartoons and lying statements about the country being prosperous. We are, I think, getting back to the "good times" of Cleveland's administration, when the working man's dinner pail was used as a soup kettle to carry soup from dispensaries to feed hungry children. (Oh, Ye 1932 Welfare Workers! And State appropriations for unemployed and starving families) When the mills run only on orders (1932 also, with the orders few and far between) no one is certain of continued employment and that seems to be the case with the mills at present. I hope you may find it convenient to come over to both services on Sunday, for I know your presence would be appreciated. Hoping you are in good health, as this leaves me, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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May 22nd 1914.

Dear James,

While I hope to see you on Sunday, I thought I would write this acknowledgement of your letter of the 19th. I was greatly pleased in your saying you expected to attend the anniversary. The proposed address is just what the people will be interested in, and I know it will be more appreciated than my dry historical facts. I, too, have heard some of those great orators you mention. Nothing gave me more pleasure than going to the Academy of Music to listen to Phillips, Gough, and others lecture, or to hear Mrs. Scott Siddons, Samuel and James Murdoch, recite. I have often wished I had the ability to express myself as they expressed themselves. I have long ago given up caring for criticism, especially fault-finding criticism. The dear little church has been pretty well advertised regarding the anniversary. I wrote an article for the Commonwealth, which is published in full. I expect a notice in the Chronicle and have sent notice to the Ledger, Record, and North American. While eating supper on Tuesday evening, the Forecast telephoned to know if I could get them up a notice that night for this week's paper. Of course I complied, and you will find the article which though written so hurriedly is not so bad in my situation. I told those present on Wednesday evening that you expected to attend the celebration, so a pleasant reception awaits



you. My reporting work keeps me from attending Sunday evening services, but if possible I hope to arrange so as to hear your address. With the other deacons I signed a good number of certificates on Wednesday evening. These will be given to recent converts on Sunday evening, by Dr. Seasholes. My date for talking to the Mens' Club, of the First Baptist Church, Germantown, is Tuesday evening, the 26th, and not Thursday, as I stated in my last letter. President Whitehead, who is a house sergeant in the Manayunk police station, put me right on Monday.

Hoping this will find you in good health, and that we may see each other on Sunday, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONKI

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May 25th 1914.

Dear James,

You may think it superfluous in my writing to you today, after seeing you last evening, but I want to express the great pleasure your address gave me. We get back into the past a great deal as our years increase, and I have often wondered whether we do not pay a little too much attention to what is behind us. Those somewhat ancient programmes, you read, awakened in me many precious and sacred resolutions. In fact most that you said touched tender chords in my breast. I do not remember any address I have ever listened to that was more interesting and when you ceased speaking I felt sorry you had not continued.

As I told you, it was 7.40 o'clock when I left the Record office, and just 40 minutes later I entered the church and was agreeably surprised in seeing such a large congregation. On Wednesday evening I urged those present to come to the Sunday evening service, even if they might have to miss the morning service, and told them I would prefer having a small audience to listen to me, but wanted a good one to greet you. The size exceeded my fondest wish. I know of no one for whom the dear old church has a greater love than for James S. Swartz, who in my estimation deserves it all. In my historical sketch I made no mention of Joseph Johnson, and others who have passed since our last celebration. I thought to wait until some other occasion, when their names, added to the long list of others I have, might be read at a memorial service. It might be agreeable to Dr. Seasholes to have the roll call of the departed ones in connection with his "John Brown" service, Sunday morning.

I hated to leave you so abruptly last night, but I had a good deal of work ahead. I got through, however, at midnight, and felt on retiring like repeating what so many said to me in the church, "Hasn't this been a grand day?" . It did me good in seeing the people clustering about you. It was a little of the old time sociability, for which the church was for so long noted. Come again, and as often as you can, so as to enjoy the good fellowship and help all to feel good.

Hoping you got back to New York safely and that you may experience no physical trouble from the trip and your reception, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R.R. SHRONK.

May 27th 1914.

Dear James,

*What name Smith*

I had the pleasure of reading your letter of yesterday at the breakfast table this morning, and I felt glad you had appreciated the Sunday service. The Old Academy Building was erected in 1819, by volunteer subscriptions of cash and labor, upon a plot of ground donated by Thomas Smith, ~~a brother, I think,~~ of Richard Penn Smith. I have never seen the land grant, but once, and that was at the second quarterly meeting I attended in 1872, as a member of the Board of Trustees. I had been elected by the Board that year to take the place of Joseph E. Sorber, who died of smallpox. At the first meeting, the members were very much concerned about getting funds to repair the building, to pave Queen lane, and to pay for water pipe. The treasury was almost empty. and the only income was donations the different societies using the building saw fit to make. Jerome Andrews and his family occupied the lower part as a dwelling and he had ceased paying rent. After listening to the lamentations, I asked to see the land grant, and charter, to find whether any provision was made in either regarding the securing of funds to maintain the building. All allowed that neither instrument contained any such proviso, I insisted in seeing the instruments, and Dr. Evans, secretary, was requested to bring them to the next meeting. It was then learned that the trustees were authorized to collect rentals not exceeding so many pounds, shillings and pence. I do not remember the amount. I then offered a motion that a committee be appointed to notify Andrews to either pay rent, or vacate the premises, and to place a given sum for each society to pay as rent. The result was that money began coming in and the long leaking roof was replaced with a new one; the street paving and water pipes were paid for. Dr. Evans went abroad, and I was chosen to set as secretary pro tem. Upon my removing to Manayunk, in 1878, I forfeited the right of being a trustee. In the land grant there is a clause to the effect that should the trustees fail to hold their annual meeting on the first Monday in January, the property was to revert to the Smith Estate. Horace M. Smith watched the first Mondays in January closer than a cat could watch a mouse. He, however, never found the day to pass without a meeting. I have known Mr. Abbot, John H. Green, Dr. Evans, and Harmon Johnson to leave our old time New Year's Day Sunday School festival when the day happened on a Monday, to go up to the Academy to hold the important meeting. Horace Smith at one time had the matter taken to Court. My father was a witness for the Trustees. After his testimony was heard, the case was decided against Smith. I never knew the particulars of this case, but heard my father speak about it and say what he thought of Horace. I do not know the date in which the Old Academy was finished or first occupied. I suppose the records will show

I was not aware of my showing any difficulty in reading my historical sketch on Sunday. The writing was larger than I usually write, but the light was poor. My sight has been what the oculist calls one-third vision, for quite a while, and is, owing, he says, to my bladder trouble. At times the vision is better than at others, and as my other trouble is gradually leaving me, I am in hopes the vision

*a son of W. & Wm Smith.*

will improve. You might have noticed my squinting at what you called my handiwork on the back of one of the old programmes you had on Sunday night. I could just about make it out. I have read very little for more than two years, and use a magnifying class when I want to read and be particular. So long as the vision doesn't get worse I will not worry.

I went up to Germantown last evening to the Mens' Club of the First Baptist Church, and gave a chalk talk on "Light: Physical, Intellectual and Spiritual." Owing to numerous other attractions the audience was not large. There were present a number of aged ministers from the Nugent Home. They all congratulated me after my talk and were particularly interested in what I had to say about the old time tallow candles and how they were moulded at the homes of the people who killed their own cattle. One of them told me of the pleasure he had as a boy in helping his kother boil the tallow in a large pot, and see her pour the melted tallow into the mould.

I hope you have had a cooler day in New York than we have had here today. It has, according to the weather bureau, been the hottest 27th of May here, for 37 years. The mercury reached 94 degrees. As I am writing the sky is darkening and there have been several loud claps of thunder, and it looks as if we are to have a storm, and I have just finished watering our little garden and lawn with a hose. Hoping this will find you in the best of health, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

P.S. The rain has commenced to fall, with hail stones, and wind accompaniment.

S.

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June 2nd 1914.

Dear James,

Having a little leisure this evening I concluded to indulge in a paper talk with you. Dr. Seesholes left yesterday afternoon for the Pacific Coast. He has arranged pulpit supplies for this month. Rev. Orlando T. Steward, of the City Mission, formerly of Roxborough, will preach on Sunday morning and Rev. Charles A. Scars, of the State Mission in the evening. On the other Sundays we will have ministers and laymen, one of the latter a Presbyterian. I suppose we can stand it for one month. The church expects to supply July. Edwin Singer had a magnificent wreath placed by Dr. Stidham's tomb on Memorial Day. My Daughter went up to the cemetery to her mother's grave, and greatly admired the wreath. She saw Mrs. Stidham there but had no chance to speak to her. Singer told me on Sunday that Mrs. Stidham greatly appreciates the remembrance. A year ago today, Dr. Stidham was nearing his end. He passed away, as you remember, on the 9th. On next Wednesday evening Singer proposes that we hold a memorial service, and have the hymns sung which were sung at the tombstone dedication. I do not know yet, what the rest of the programme may be but think it will be a church family affair, without outside aid. I suppose I will have the honor of conducting

the service as Singer, although senior deacon, generally gets me to do it. How did you like my report on the anniversary in the Chronicle and Forecast? The Forecast editor phoned me on Tuesday to write him an account of the celebration. This week I wrote him a report of Dr. Seasholes' Sunday morning sermon on "John Brown". It will not give the sermon, or preacher justice, for cold type could no do either justice. I appended some of my own recollections of the night after John Brown was hung, of the exhibition given that night by Professor Yarnall, in the Old Academy. Perhaps you were present and witnessed Judge Arnold, Titus Haywood, and William Berry, being executed as Brown and his two companions? I have seen Judge Arnold look stern on the bench, but I'll never forget the appearance of his face that night. Mrs. Wieand, on Sunday, expressed her regrets, to me, on her not having been able to hear your address. From what Mrs. Seasholes told her about it, she thinks you must have exceeded yourself. Living alone, as they do, and Elizabeth not being in good health, they very seldom leave the house at night. I do not know exactly how many years Elizabeth has seen, but I think she was 83 in May. Hoping you are in good health, and wishing you could be at the Memorial service, on June 10th, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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June 8th 1914.

Dear James,

Jacob G. Walker used to quote Sydney Smith's saying; in this kind of weather, "It would be a good thing if one could cast off his flesh and sit around in his bones". Clothing of any kind today is burdensome, and I almost wish we could have a little of the blizzard that has blown off the New Brunswick coast, without any of the attending damage. The public thermometer in the city reached 93 degrees at 3 this afternoon, according to the evening papers. Just now it looks as if we were going to have a shower. Which may wash the air of humidity. I had an hour's chat with Jacob, on Saturday afternoon, at Hallie's house (on Ainslie street, East Falls). Helen told me on Wednesday evening that he would be at their home on Saturday. I went upon the 2.24 train from 22nd street. He happened to be on the train, but I did not know it till I got to the house, sometime before he arrived. He looks much better than I expected, after he had told me, in a letter of his ailment, and I was heartily glad to learn that he is feeling as well as he looks. I feel sorry for his being unable to see and wonder why science has not discovered a way of curing blindness. It must be a terrible affliction.

Rev. Orlando Steward, secretary of the City Missions, preached to us yesterday morning; received two new members into the church; and administered communion. His sermon, of course, was in the interest of the city mission, and yet it was very interesting and instructive, and eloquently delivered. It was based on the text: "II Kings, 7 -9": "We do not well; this day is a day of good tidings and we hold our peace". After a vivid description of the seige of Samaria, and the dispensing of the Syrians, and how the people were starving for bread, he graphically told of the lepers who had found the empty camp. The Samaritans were dying for bread. He applied the text to

the foreign element in this city, who are perishing for the bread of life. There are three reasons why they should be fed. For our own sakes, so as to have them become good citizens; for their own selves; and for Jesus' sake. As he spoke without notes I presume he has preached the same sermon before. Whether he has or not, it is one worth repeating. I remember once hearing Dr. J. Wheaton Smith preach a sermon on "The Vast Undone", one morning in our church, and on the following Sunday night he preached the same sermon in the Temple church. I have a synopsis of it somewhere, which I made at the time for The Weekly Guide, I was then editing. I would go a good way to hear a preacher with Dr. Smith's ability. I know of **none** who could equal him. His sermons, to my mind, were much like Wendell Philips' lectures. Magnificent arguments clothed in conversation-like talks.

After the church has paid back the \$600 borrowed last Fall, I shall endeavor to get the people interested in having a spire placed on the steeple. The present arrangement is an eyesore, and reminds me, everytime I look at it, of a man whose leg has been cut off at the knee. A smaller spire than the one removed, would make the building harmonize and ought not to cost very much. Hoping you are well, as this leaves me, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

P.S. Deacon John Field, Jr., will lead the Memorial Service on Wednesday evening. William H. Ball, chief of the Bureau of City Property, will be the speaker Sunday morning. He comes as the guest of the James S. Swartz Bible Class.

S.

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June 11th 1914.

Dear James,

Your interesting letter of the 9th came to hand this morning. Three things mentioned in it made me feel sad. The critical condition of your Cousin Ella, whom I have not seen for many years; your hand being worse than usual; and your having to borrow money to pay your rent. I have had some experience in the latter, but not of late years. I, too, have to pay a month's rent in advance, but have a good landlady, Miss G. A. Snyder, for many years a companion of Mrs. Sarah E. Richards, from whom I think she inherited the house. I moved into the house in September 1904, and since October 1st that year, have paid Miss Snyder each month in advance. The part of September I paid to the tenant, who was an anxious to get out as I was to get in, The house I had been living in and for which I had paid over \$6000 in rent, was sold for \$4500 and I had to move. I presume you will take your oil painting to Lewisburg and see that it is properly hung. The amount borrowed last October for church repairs was \$600, and I believe the loan was for a year. Just what amount has been raised towards repaying the loan, I do not know. Last night was our monthly business meeting, but a quorum not being present, the meeting went over till July. We had but a slim attendance to the Memorial service. I do not think more than 20 were present. One of the Morreheads, a young man of the church, was married yesterday afternoon in Lower Dublin Church, near Collegeville, and many of

the young folks attended the wedding, coming back too tired to attend service, but fresh enough to go to the Carnival being held by the Young Mens' Improvement Association, in Dobson's lot, or to the city to see the Redmen's Parade. I think they should be treated to an old-fashioned Baptist Gospel sermon on "Self Denial", so as to make attending church services a duty, instead of a convenience.

While talking with Edwin Singer, prior to the service last evening, Adam Mettinger walked up the steps on his way to the Methodist Church. He told me he had been up to Spring City during the day to attend the funeral of Fred Seltzer, his brother-in-law. I do not know when Fred died, or what was the cause of his death. I believe he came to the Falls to work for your father. At the Memorial service, the hymns sung at the dedication of the Dr. Stidham's tomb stone were used. Brief addresses were made by John Field, Jr., who presided; John Wyatt, Edwin Singer, and I. Singer received a letter from Mrs. Stidham and her children, thanking the church for decorating Dr. Stidham's grave on Memorial Day. The letter will be read on Sunday. I tried to get Dr. Gordon to be present at the Memorial service, but he is the states supply at Blockley Church. When I saw the slim attendance, I felt glad he was not present. He wants me to go over to Blockley Church, some Sunday morning and talk on the relation of that church with ours. Nearly all of the constituent members of our church came from Blockley. I may go over on June 21st. With best wishes,  
Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONKL

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June 22nd 1914.

Dear James,

I have been thinking a great deal about you, since I saw you under such sorrowful circumstances on Saturday. In a way I felt as though I was intruding upon your sorrow, in attending the obsequies of your departed and beloved cousin. I have long known how closely you were attached to she and her sister, and wish I could find words of comfort for you in your bereavement. In circumstances like the present, the choicest words are but empty sounds. I saw the little notice of Ellen's death in the Bulletin on Friday evening, while I was at supper. Jacob called me over the telephone and asked if I could conveniently accompany him to the funeral services in the morning. Realizing his affliction and wishing to serve him, I felt glad that I could oblige him, and I feel that he appreciated the little service. He would not permit me to go back to the Falls with him, saying that his niece and cousin could easily help him from the trolley cars to where he is stopping.

This world, it seems to me, is constantly showing us pilgrims the penalty of living. One after another of those we have learned to love, fall by the wayside, while we, sorrow laden, press on towards the allotted bounds past which we cannot go. While we are aware of this stern fact, we go on day after day, just as though it were not true, giving emphasis to Moore in his "Night Thoughts" "man thinks all men mortal but himself". Of all the friends I have recently lost, I miss none so much as Dr. Stidham, whose companionship I so long and so frequently enjoyed. We had a young man, named Scull,

to preach yesterday morning. He, I believe, is a member of the Market Square Presbyterian Church, Germantown. He stood on the lower platform, and said we might call the subject of his talk, "What the Seeker Finds", and then went on in a quiet conversational way, very much like Deacon Abbot, to explain the meaning of numerous passages bearing upon seeking and finding, until he had formed one of the greatest strings of pearls I have ever listened to. Dr. Seasholes spoke yesterday at Stanford University, in Palo Alto, California, and Mrs. Seasholes told me he is in the best of health, and having a glorious time. I was surprised on Saturday, in meeting your cousin Mary Simmons, who I had not seen, she said, since 1867. What surprised me was her appearance which has changed so little during all these years. I feel deeply for Jacob, but he bears his affliction philosophically.

Hoping this will find you in good health and that it may be a long, long while before you are again called upon to lay aside any of your loved ones, I am,

Sincerely Yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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June 25th 1914.

Dear James,

Your letter of the 23rd reached me yesterday morning before my breakfast time, I felt <sup>bad</sup> after reading it that I had attended your cousin's funeral. As I read the letter I thought of your life as I have known it, from the time of your father's terrible death. One day, years after that sad event, while painting in John Binkin's house, on old James (Stanton) street, Mother Binkin spoke of your father's death, and said, "Robert, I think James Swartz is one of the best young men that ever lived. I heard him tell his mother the night his father was killed, that he would take care of her. I thought it was merely a boy's promise, but now I know he meant all he said". I have often thought how true were her remarks. Few mothers have ever been cared for as well as yours. Added to the home obligations you assumed were those in caring for your orphaned cousins. Much of the self-imposed work has been accomplished and well performed, for which you have earned the esteem of all who know of your doing, and the approbation of Him who spoke and taught as never man spoke and taught. May the fullness of your reward not be entirely reserved until you have joined your loved ones Beyond the river, where the surges cease to roll.

I have always felt that presenting flowers to the living is better than giving bouquets to the dead and I feel proud of your friendship. Your advice to me, when, as an ignorant youth I came into the church, has helped me to be what I am intellectual and spiritual, while your example has been a help to me and others.

The day following your father's death I walked "to town" as then called it, with my father, and as we turned from Ridge avenue into Ninth street, we met Nicholas H. Maguire, with whom my father had long been intimate. Father told him of your father's death and he at once asked "Was he James' father?" On being told that he was, Maguire said, "Dan, I have taught a

great many boys since you first knew me, but in all my experience I have never met a brighter or better boy than James Swartz".

I do not remember ever telling you this before. If I have it is worth repeating. The last time I saw Professor Maguire was in the Horace Binney Public School, of which he was superintendent. I went there to convey to him and his pupils the thanks of a poor woman in Manayunk, whose husband had been killed in Seville Schofield's mill. Maguire read my account of the accident in the Ledger to his pupils. They contributed their spending money, some \$15, I think, for the poor woman. The money was sent to the Ledger and I was asked to take it to the woman. I had no acquaintance with Maguire, but after I had introduced myself and he learned I was a son of Daniel Shronk, I felt that I had been acquainted with him all my life. He made me sit down beside him and oh, my! but how he bombarded me with questions about the Falls and its people. He said he purposed hiring a carriage and driving out to see some of the old landmarks, but when I informed him that most of them had passed out of existence, he replied, "I am glad you have told me. I will give ~~xxxx~~ up that expected ride, preferring to know the old Falls as I knew it, rather than see it shorn of most that would interest me". He made me promise to call on him again, but I never, like old Felix, found a "convenient season". But, wasn't he one of God's noblemen?

We had a rather novel service last night, instead of the weekly prayer meeting, the night was given over to the King's Daughters, who had two women speakers, then ice cream and cake. I had to leave before the last speaker got through, and missed my share of the refreshments, for which I have no regrets.

On Sunday morning, by invitation of Dr. Gordon, who is stated supply of Blockley Church, I expect to go over to that old church from which my mother and grandmother withdrew their letters to help form our (Falls Baptist) Church. Dr. Gordon wants me to give a talk on the relationship of the two churches, and I expect to talk on "The Tie that Binds". Seven, or not eight, of the ten persons who constituted our church came from Blockley Church. Hoping you are in good health, as this leaves me, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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June 29th 1914.

Dear James,

I want to tell you of the delightful time I had yesterday morning, when at Dr. Gordon's request I went over to Blockley Baptist Church and gave a talk on "The Tie that Binds". Despite the rain there was a good sized congregation present, including a large number of noble-looking men. Prior to the service Dr. Gordon and I walked through the churchyard in which I saw the graves of my great grandmother, grandfather, grandmother, and others of the Roberts family, including Uncle William, whom you met on his return from California. I went to give one talk, and gave three before a fine class in the Infant Department, one before the Sunday School, and the other in the church, all of which seemed to be appreciated and enjoyed by the hearers. In the church Dr. Gordon gave a talk to the young people on "The Nightingale", after which I was given the rest of the time. I have never received such a hearty reception



than the one which followed the service, or was never more highly complimented for anything I have ever spoken. Dr. Gordon said he was surprised and delighted with what I said and in the manner in which I spoke and said he would write an account of it for this week's Commonwealth. On our way back to Tioga, Dr. Gordon asked particularly about you and said he will never forget the royal manner in which he was entertained by you last year, while in New York City. He told me that Mrs. Stidham and Edna are going to Virginia to visit Mrs. Stidham's sister, and may spend the summer, fall and winter there.

Rev. Dr. Robert Harkinson, an assistant to Dr. Conwell, will preach for us next Sunday, and administer communion. He is an earnest and interesting speaker. Everything is ready, I believe, for the Sunday School's Fourth of July picnic. Do you remember the Fourth when you and Mr. Chesshire led the Presbyterian School to our woods, to share our ice cream? I have not been to one of the picnics since going on the Ledger in March 1888.

With best wishes I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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July 5th 1914.

Dear James,

This is about as quiet a Sunday as I have known for a long while. It may be on account of the weather, or perhaps the people were so fatigued from yesterday's celebration of the glorious Fourth. I had a pretty busy day from noon until late in the night, but did most of my work with the telephone. I didn't have enough patriotism to go down to Independence Hall in the morning to listen to President Wilson, neither have I had interest enough yet to read his speech. I see by the headlines in the Ledger's report, that he advocated the modifying of the Declaration of Independence for the benefit of our foreign relations. Some people would modify the Bible to please the devil. The Declaration of Independence was good enough for the great and good men who signed it 138 years ago, and was the foundation on which the great Lincoln built his spotless character. I am however, not at all surprised that the Democratic demagogue who now occupies, but does not fill, the Presidential chair would favor anything. James Buchanan, or Andrew Johnson in their weakness or peculiarities never found fault with that great instrument, why should Wilson? (We wonder how Robert Roberts Shronk would like the way Herbert Hoover is attempting to fill that Presidential seat, these days?) There used to be a large electric sign on the old Girard House, which read "Wilson's Whiskey, That's All!" I sometimes feel like writing another sign, "Wilson's Idea, That's All!" In my opinion the best thing he could do would be to die (that was real practical Christianity) or go back to school teaching.

Your letter of the first came duly to hand. I sympathize with you for the great loss you have sustained in the death of your two noble cousins. The older one gets, it seems to me, the harder such blows strike him. It is no easy thing to have the links of love and friendship severed. The wound may heal in time, but the scar will always remain. I often think of Tennyson's words, "Oh for the touch of a vanished hand, and

the sound of a voice that is still". There are yearnings of the soul which cannot be satisfied. We may be given strength to bear the loss, but who would want to forget what the departed ones meant in our lives?

The Rev. Robert Harkinson, one of Dr. Conwell's assistants occupied the Falls Baptist pulpit this morning and preached a fine sermon on prayer. After which he conducted the communion service. A good sized congregation was present. He will also preach tonight. Dr. Seasholes is swinging around his lecture circuit on the Pacific coast, and writes that he is in the best of health. Dr. Gordon told me during the week that Mrs. Stidham expected to be at the Falls this morning, so she has not yet gone to her sisters. The Sunday School picnic passed off yesterday, very pleasantly, I was told this morning. With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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July 12th 1914.

Dear James,

This is the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne, and is certainly hot enough for the "yellow Irish" who will celebrate the day tomorrow. Those of our city who like to mix drinks with the celebration will go to Central Park while the "Drys" will hold their outing in Woodside Park. Both of them being outside of my jurisdiction I will not have to report either. While I do not agree with their opponents, the "green Irish", I would rather go to their outings than to the "yellows". One in my position gets into a great many different kinds of company, Altogether they are more enjoyable than otherwise. There was a very sad occurrence at the Falls last Thursday evening, when two little boys, James and Benjamin Fanning, aged 6 and 9 years, respectively, sons of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Fanning, of 3309 Bowman street, were drowned in the Queen Lane Reservoir. They were flying a kite from the top of the embankment, when the string broke, the younger climbed over the fence, slipped and fell into the water. Benjamin jumped in to save him, losing his own life in the endeavor. Their funeral service will be held tomorrow morning in St. Bridget's Church. Do you remember the night of June 14th 1870, when two young women and a man were drowned in the Schuylkill near the Reading Railroad bridge? Your (brother) Jacob and I, in a rowboat, belonging to the late Jacob Stehle went to try and rescue them, and had a narrow escape from striking the almost submerged rocks. It required a good deal of self control to keep our boat from being capsized, when it was swept so furiously under the bridge by the swift and swirling current. After being unable to do anything for the unfortunate party, I rowed you and Jacob across the river. When I reached my home that night, I was thankful I had learned to manage a rowboat. I do not think I would undertake such a performance now, since 44 years have been added to my life. I never felt the heat as oppressive in church as I did this morning, and I felt sorry for the young man, Mr. Hall, a student from Crozer Theological Seminary, who filled the pulpit. He preached a good sermon on "The Touch of Jesus"; was rather modest and unlike most students I have heard does not presume to know it all. From his

voice and manner he reminded me of Eugene Gardiner, whom Free saddled upon the church during his pastorate, and who, I believe, became a professor in some theological seminary.

Dr. Seasholes is still on his lecturing tour along the Pacific coast, and expects to be back by the first Sunday in August. I see by the papers you and Mr. Patton have taken out letters of administration to your Cousin Ellen's estate. Hoping you are having a cooler day, and that you are in the best of health, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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July 20th 1914.

Dear James,

Your letter of the 17th although postmarked at New York 9 A.M. of the 18th, did not reach me until this morning. We have not mail delivery here after 3 P.M. I have had two days vacation, the only kind I have ever known, and that is by being on the sick list. I was taken ill on Friday night just before retiring. I had had a good deal of walking in the early evening, in a part of the city where I could not use the trolley cars. The weather was very oppressive and close. I got through with my work about 11 o'clock and then went out to the front porch for a smoke before retiring. I was there but a little time when my rupture troubled me, and a very severe pain came from the appendix region. I went to bed, thinking a rest would do me good, but I slept very little. Saturday morning I took a strong physic and spent the day in bed. I spent most of yesterday the same way, too weak to venture away from the house. Today I am feeling better, but somewhat shaky. I heard last week of your being at the Falls on Monday. Edwin Singer told me on Wednesday evening. He also informed me that Jacob had returned to his home, in Washington, I was sorry to learn of his departure for I had purposed to call on him on Thursday, the only day in the week on which I could get away a little while from my work. During all the time he was at the Falls I only saw him three times, the day he arrived, one Sunday at church, and the day of your cousin's funeral.

You ought to meet James G. Marree, of whose 84th birthday I wrote an account in the Chronicle. He sang for years in Beth Eden Baptist Church, and on numerous times in other church choirs, often walking through all sorts of weather after the night service to his home in Manayunk. His daughter, Mrs. Mamie Maree Nassau, is a widely known soprano, and until the Pope barred women singers, she sang in St. James Church, West Philadelphia. Maree spends much of his time with a lot of cronies in the billiard room of the Continental Hotel, watching the players and is well preserved for his years. He had a motor yacht which he keeps up at Lafayette, on the Schuylkill, and gets lots of pleasure cruising up and down the river. He was greatly pleased with my article and phoned me to get him extra copies of the paper. I received an invitation Friday, to the Masonic Home annual birthday dinner, which will be held this year on July 31st, the birthday of the president Past Grand Master George W. Kendrick, Jr. I have attended the dinners for 20 years, and am the only non member of the order ever invited. Heretofore they have been

held on or near General Wagner's birthday, in August. Hoping the rheumatism and you have parted company, and that you are in good health, I am, sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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July 27th 1914.

Dear James,

I concluded to have a little talk on paper with you, before commencing my day's work. We are passing through a pretty hot spell here in old Philadelphia, with the temperature up in the nineties and a high degree of humidity. One feels pretty well done up without much exertion. It may seem womanish but I do not venture out in the heat without an umbrella. Here is one advantage in having gray hair and whiskers. People look upon us in that state as being old and excusable. I am feeling much better and stronger than when I last wrote and am over the effects of the heat stroke. It was very warm in church yesterday morning and the congregation was unusually small. A student from Crozer Seminary occupied the pulpit in the morning and preached a fairly good sermon on "Contentment". Announcement was made that "the James S. Swartz Bible Class is going to give a moonlight excursion down the Delaware on Thursday night, August 6th, Tickets 25 cents". As my work is principally at night, I do not expect to go on the excursion. Dr. Seasholes having been detained on the Pacific Coast, owing to his having to take the place of another lecturer who was taken ill, he will not reach home in time for next Sunday. It was arranged last night to have the Rev. Joseph Schubert, pastor of Newtown Square Church preach for us. You will see a little puff of Adam Mettinger in the Chronicle, I shall mail you today. I did not see him yesterday and his niece and housekeeper, Mary Jane Shaffer, was not at church, I was unable to even enquire about how he was enjoying his birthday anniversary. I was asked last Thursday if I could tell when the Reading Railroad's stone bridge at the Falls was built. I said I believe it was finished in 1854, Am I right in that date? I have been writing up bridges as special articles for the Sunday Record, and have written about the Falls, Wissahickon and Manayunk bridges. The next and last will be the Reading Railway's stone bridge with structures preceding it on the same site. This bridge I have always regarded as being the most graceful that spans the Schuylkill and occupies one of the most beautiful sites to be found along that wonderful and beautiful valley. Mrs. Stidham and her daughter Edna have gone for an indefinite stay, to their widowed sister, nee Dolly Dutton, about 20 miles from Washington, D.C. Hoping this will find you in good health and fully rid of the rheumatism in your shoulder, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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August 2nd 1914.

Dear James,

Your highly interesting letter of July 24--29 came

to hand on Friday afternoon, You surely have me guessing over that Scripture puzzle, given you years ago by our dear old friend Dr. Evans. If you know the answer, please send it along, for I do not want to be sent to Norristown. I had a wrong impression regarding Mrs. Stidham's going to live with her sister. While I have known her so many years, it was not until last Wednesday night that I learned she had more than one sister. "Dollie" is the wife of a Baptist clergyman and is living somewhere in the South. The other sister is a widow and I understand is pretty well to do, and lives on the old homestead about 20 miles from Washington, D.C. I wrote a special article on the Reading Railway's stone bridge, at the Falls, for the Record. Owing to the war in Europe (World War) the editor told me that he couldn't tell when the article would be printed. When it appears I will see that you get a copy.

So you are taking to the movies. I have not yet been afflicted with the fever. I have seen them twice, on Market street, and once in Willow Grive Park; once at Atlantic City, and once here in Tioga, in Temple Baptist Church. That at Atlantic City and Temple Church were advertised as reproductions of the Passion Play at Oberammagau. While looking on the pictures at Atlantic City the landscapes seemed very familiar, but I could not locate the views. One day, some weeks later, while walking to the Falls along the Pennsylvania Railroad, I saw a crowd of men in Dr. Evan's Hollow (near Fox street and Abbotsford avenue), many of them garbed in the uniform of Roman soldiers. One, a magnificent specimen of humanity, was dressed in a long white robe and resembled the pictures of Christ. Climbing down the embankment I asked one of the men what the gathering meant? He said, "We are taking pictures of the Passion Play, for Lubin's moving picture show", and invited men to see them take a picture of "Christ before Caiaphas, the High Priest". On the lot were a number of theatrical scenes representing the Jewish Temple. I had a talk with the man who represented the Messiah, who said he had acted the part in Oberammagau, but I believe he lied. Just before the picture was taken he called the soldiers to him and said, "When they take me before the high priest, you men act as if you were going to give me hell!" I asked him if he thought the real Messiah used that sort of language and his reply was "He never had such a crowd to deal with".

I saw the picture taken and the behavior before the priests was made like one can imagine in reading accounts in the Gospel of that event. Looking about I soon became wise as to the landscapes I had seen in the Atlantic City show. There was the littlebrook, in which John the Baptist stood and poured a shell full of water on the head of Christ, in baptism. There was the projecting manhole of a sewer, which the pictures represented as the well of Jacob, at which Christ talked to the woman of Samaria. There in the railroad embankment was a boarded up archway, that was passed off in the pictures as the sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea, and there, too, a contractor's shanty that the pictures said was the carpenter shop of Joseph, the husband of Mary.

The brook, the hillsides, the steep railroad embankment all formed an ideal place for taking fake pictures on the original Passion Play. The pictures exhibited in Temple Church were the same as those I had seen in Atlantic City. I saw them, however, after I had learned where the pictures had been taken. I often think of those old time magic lantern shows and wish I could get the same amount of pleasure out of the more improved shows. I guess its something like eating; nothing seems as good

now as it did when we had a boy's appetite to enjoy it.

In reading your letter I could not help but wish I had as many good things to look back upon in my life, as you have in yours. Your care of your widowed mother, and her fatherless children, in the royal way in which you did it, will ever be to me one of the grandest exemplifications of filial affection I have ever known. While your work for the church and Sunday School remains unequalled. We had the Rev. Joseph Schubert, of Newtown Square Church preach for us this morning. He is a good and earnest speaker. He preaches tonight. Dr. Seasholes is somewhere in the West and may be home for next Sunday. The James S. Swartz Bible Class gives a moonlight excursion on Thursday night, and on Saturday, August 15th, the trustees will hold a lawn fete on the church lawn. We decided this morning to hold no Sunday evening service for the rest of August. Mrs. Wieand and her sister, Elizabeth Peltz, have returned from Bucks County. Elizabeth is in poor health and didn't get to church this morning. Hoping this will find you in good health, as it leaves me, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

P.S. I am going to give that puzzle to the Chronicle readers to solve.

R.R.S.

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August 9th 1914.

Dear James,

My article on the Reading Railways' stone bridge, at the Falls, appeared in today's Philadelphia Record. The editor cut out the date "1856" making it appear that it was built in the year 1853. Another error was changing the name of Josiah White to Joseph White. These, however, are hardly worth growling about. In writing such an article a reporter has to set aside his individuality, hence the presumed conversation between the former resident of the Falls and his imagined companion. My only anxiety is that the article will satisfy you. As the Sunday paper is so bulky I clip the article and send it with this.

We are having a very hot day. I was over to church this morning and heard Deacon Schmidhenner, of Blockley Church, give an interesting talk on "Doing One's Best", based on the woman who anointed Christ's head with the precious ointment, when He said of her, "she has done what she could". Dr. Seasholes, at last accounts, was at his wife's sister's home, in Montana, on his way home. He is expected to reach home on Wednesday night. The church on Wednesday night voted to allow the trustees to spend \$72 in placing a new sidewalk in front of the parsonage. Thanks for the solution of the Scripture riddle. It is very simple after all, when one knows the answer. Are you not glad you did not go abroad this year, to be marooned in some of the war scarred cities on the continent? Mr. and Mrs. John Hohenadel were in London at last accounts, and are probably there at present. I learned on Wednesday night that Hohenadel placed the electric chandelier over the church pulpit, as a memorial to Dr. Stidham; a very kind act and a splendid tribute to the dear Doctor. Dr. Gordon is preaching in Wilmington, Delaware, today. The last two Sundays of the month he will spend in

Cambridge, Massachusetts. A very active and perhaps profitable way of spending his vacation as supply pastor of Blockley Church. Most preachers are too tired to death in their own churches, and would die if they didn't have a month or two vacation, then go off and preach in other places. Hoping you are in good health, and having collar weather than is "on tap here", I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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August 17th 1914.

Dear James,

The only solution to the Scripture riddle, except the one you gave me, received, was from Mrs. Mary L. Burns, wife of Rev. Dr. Charles E. Burns, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Bristol, Pa., and former pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, of Manayunk. There may have been some sent to the Chronicle office. Hers was the same as yours. I have concluded to take my hat off to you as far as memory goes. In regards to the stone bridge, you rather surprised me in giving the date of the explosion of the locomotive boiler. I thought it was at least a year earlier, and your giving the names of the engineer and fireman who were killed, shows remarkable memory. I saw the body of the fireman later in the morning as it was carried from the towpath in front of McDonald's office. I also remember seeing the blown out front of McDonald's house and the tubes of the boiler sticking in the ceiling over the bed on which Mrs. McDonald, an invalid, had been lying.

They carried her up to Harry Hagner's house, where the family remained till their house was repaired. The pyramiding of coal cars on the bridge had also slipped my memory, although I remember a similar occurrence, when an empty train going pretty fast was suddenly stopped by a red board signal, that about a dozen cars pyramided and toppled over into the river and on to the East Park Drive.

Everything here is the European War, and the boost speculators have given to the cost of eatables. As to the progress of the war we have no reliable information. The statements, much padded out in the papers, seem to be chiefly guess work on the part of the able writers, and as filled with contradictions as to not be worth the trouble and time to read them. Dr. Seasholes got home last Monday evening, looking fine for his outing. The trustees lawn fets, Saturday afternoon, was not a howling success, too many people being away. The parsonage property looks much better since the cement sidewalk has been put down. It will not be long before a similar pavement will have to be placed in front of the church, as the bricks are badly worn. The congregation has arranged to give Dr. Seasholes a welcome home reception on Thursday evening, in the lecture room. I wish it were convenient for you to come over and preside.

Miss Elizabeth Peltz, accompanied by her sister, Mrs. Wieand came to church yesterday morning. She looks feeble and I fear her 83 years are beginning to tell on her. I have tried to persuade them to either get a good housekeeper to care for their home, or to go to boarding. It is too much for either of them to look after such a large house. Hoping you are well, as this leaves me, I am, sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

August 23rd 1914.

Dear James,

The reception to Dr. Seasholes on Thursday evening was given by the James S. Swartz Bible Class, a fact I was not aware of until Wednesday evening. It was a splendid success. John Roy, who had taught the class during Dr. Seasholes absence presided. The affair was made the more interesting with a program of choice singing and recitations.

Dr. Seasholes gave a very interesting account of his traveling more than 10,000 miles. In closing he presented Roy with a fine silk umbrella. Then came ice cream and cakes. Other exercises followed, but I did not stay to hear them. There was a good sized congregation this morning. Mrs. Wieand and her sister, both being present again. The cement pavement in front of the parsonage is a great improvement and it will not be long before the sidewalk in front of the church will have to be renewed. From the news in the papers it looks as if you are not to be gratified in seeing the Emperor of Germany crushed. I showed your last letter to my daughter, and she applauded that part in which you said you wanted to see the Emperor crushed. While she is a descendant of the Shronks and Shoemakers, originally German, she has no love for the ruler of that people. It may be that after the Japanese get after him, his victories may be turned to defeat. So you attribute your memory to the keeping of a memorandum book. I have often regretted that I never kept one. Had I done so, I might have jotted down data from talks I had with my father, your Uncle James Simmons, and others, that would be very helpful to me in getting up historical articles. I have always thought your Uncle James was one of the best informed men I have ever had the pleasure of meeting, and I have never met anyone who was more accurately posted on local history than my father. I thought of a little incident yesterday which may be interesting to you. Several years ago, one day in February, I had an errand on Second street below Vine. It was a stormy day. I wore rather a shabby overcoat and an old soft hat, and rubber boots. In walking up Arch street, I found myself in front of the Betsy Ross building, and thought it would be a good chance to see the interior. Walking in, I was met by a young woman. When this talk took place: "Is this the home of Betsy Ross?" I asked. "Yes, sir", was the reply. "Is she in?" I inquired. "Why no. She is dead!" "You don't say so, why that's sad news. When did she die?" "I have never seen any notice of her death in the papers".

"I do not know when she died", said the lady, "but it was a long time ago!"

At this point the secretary, John Quincy Adams, came from a rear room, as though to relieve the young woman. He glanced at me, and I have always thought he took me for an escaped lunatic. I, without noticing his excitement, repeated the questions to him, as solemnly as I could, with the result that I soon had him 'up in the air', by insisting that he tell me when and how she came to die. I then asked him questions about the house and whether he was sure that the first American flag was made there by Betsy Ross, before telling him who I was.

As soon as he learned I was a reporter, he calmed down and gave me a lot of what he claimed was historic facts about the flag. I do not know, but they gave me a lot of pleasure which I wished someone else had been there to enjoy.

Your remembrance Thomas Wendell, I suppose? He worked in Sorber's carriage works and married Mrs. Powell, a member of



our church. He told me one day of an experience he had when a boy at Milton, Pa. The schools there used to have spelling contests and the greatest punishment a teacher could inflict upon a scholar was to prohibit him from attending the contests. Tom was a crack speller, but did something for which the teacher took his name from the school class and told him not to go to the contest. It was winter and everything covered with ice after a cold rain. On the night of the contest Tom stood on the top of a hill, which from his description was much like the hill in front of the Forest (Breck) School, but the Milton school was at the bottom of the hill. He stood there with one foot on a log. The teacher came along slowly making his way down the hill obliquely towards the school house. Tom gave the log a shove, that sent it rolling down the hill. It tripped the teacher, who also rolled to the bottom and escaped injury. Tom wished others of the boys could have been with him to enjoy the fun. This is not news but may prove interesting.

What a relief there is in the weather. It makes one feel today as though the whole world was his friend. A more sultry sticky week than the one just past I do not remember ever having passed through.

Hoping you are well, I am  
Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHROCK.

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August 30th 1914.

Dear James,

I am very glad you rambled as you did, for the letter was unusually interesting and entertaining. In writing up Charles K. Sorber, I looked only upon the bright side, as you are probably aware. He has always been a peculiar person, and very much for himself and yet, a jolly good fellow. I never knew he had but one sweetheart, Virginia Matherson, whom he married. I remember pretty Emma Timbers. She was married to William Taylor, who for years was head carter at the laboratory, and widely known as "Bill" Taylor. His father, James Taylor was a rival with John R. Johnson in horse doctoring, a skill which Bill acquired to such a degree that he was for years superintendent of the Ridge Avenue Passenger Railway stables at Ridge and Columbia avenues. I always regarded him as an unpolished diamond, for he was as tender hearted a man as I have ever known.

I do not remember when she (Emma Timbers) died. She had three daughters, two of whom were twins. All three were members of our church and Sunday School. The eldest daughter was married to Joseph Montgomery, of Wissahickon, where they now reside. One of the twins was married to George Meredith, and resides here in Tioga. The other (daughter) became the wife of William Wilson, son of Dr. Joseph F. Wilson, and I believe they are living in Norfolk, Virginia. Taylor married again. He died in 1889, while residing on 22nd street, below Clearfield. Emma Hoyt was another Falls belle in her day, but who went all to smash years later. She married Sylvester Snodgrass, of Manayunk. They became separated. I met her in a Germantown avenue horse car 20 or more years ago. She was ababbily dressed. I learned she was living with her sons in Tioga, and subsequently occasionally met her. One day I called at her home, when she told me that she and Sylvester had become reconciled. They lived together some years when she died. She was the last of the family; Claudina, Eliza, and Mary Little, to pass away.

Your mention of Edgar Russell Smith, and other members of the family awoke pleasant memories in my mind. Yes, I remember the excitement caused by Belle's accident. Poor Bill, I always like him, and am sorry he allowed rum to get the best of him. His father could get intoxicated three times a day, but never above his neck. He used to call Charlie Sorber over to the old hotel porch (Falls Hotel) and would say to him, "Charley, help me up the hill there---old legs of mine are drunk again". The last time I saw Edgar and his brothers was in the William Penn House in West Fairmount Park, of which their grandmother, Mrs. Horace W. (Smith) had charge. I am glad to learn of their doing so well, I always liked "Little Dick" and to me there was always a good side to his father. After Horace had published the life of his grandfather, I asked him one day, how the book was selling? "Very slowly", was the reply. "It has, however, proved to me that there are a very few educated men at the Falls. Only two. James S. Swartz, and old man Tissot. They are the only two who have shown sense enough to buy the book;" I have a copy of "Smith's Works", which he published as a memorial to his father. The copy I have, Horace presented to my father. Dr. Stidham gave me a copy of Horace's "Nuts for Future Historians to Crack", said to be very rare. I remember one instance concerning your Uncle James Simmons. One day I bought a pocket edition of Pottock's "Course of Time". That evening I was at your house on Ridge avenue, I showed the book to your mother, and your Uncle began talking of its contents, and asked your mother to read the part referring to the hypocrite, which he quoted. Subsequently, your mother, in speaking of the instance said she wondered if there was any book her brother was not acquainted with. I have but a dim recollection of your cousin who was in the Rebel army, and cannot tell whether I saw him at your house, or heard of his being there. One time, while in the city with Harry, I went to your Uncle's home, where we had supper. I then met a young man. I think his name was Edward. Harry introduced me to him as his cousin. You and Uncle George Simmons came to the house while we were there and I remember his asking Mary how she made out on the witness stand, and whether she was frightened. You may recall the occasion and why she had been a witness.

Events long forgotten are awakened in one's mind and the past seems turned into the living present. We live over again the occasions that brought us joy or sorrow, and at times feel perfectly satisfied in recalling the old time experiences, even though some of them makes us sad. There are many memorial days which we cannot help but remembering. Like Shakespeare's ghost they will not down.

I wished while at church this morning that you were present to here Dr. Seasholes. He preached on Those Realms; Self, the material world, and God with the spiritual. He started out by lauding Gladstone, whose greatness was due, he claimed, by his thinking ~~xxx~~ of and serving God. Later on he said, "Of all the men who have occupied the Presidential chair, at Washington, I do not suppose there has been a greater than Woodrow Wilson, who amid the great excitement of the times is calmly pursuing after peace even when his own party is against him" (Good for Seasholes) Strange isn't it what different opinions different men have of the same individual. I fear that Dr. Seasholes bases his opinion of Wilson's religion more than for his statesmanship, and I was led to wonder whether the Doctor is not a Democrat. He is all right as a preacher, but I fear he has something to learn about politics or statesmanship. A year ago we called him to the pastorate. He accepted the call on condition that it be for one

year. That year will expire with September, so I suppose we will have to renew the call at the next church meeting, which will be held on September 9th. I have no fear but what the church will cheerfully renew the call, and hope he will comply, should the call be repeated, but I hope it will not again be limited. A great deal has been done during the year for the betterment of the church materially, and some fifty new members have been added. The congregations have been somewhat larger, and the people seem contented, so, perhaps I know of nothing better than to have the pastorate continued.

The Methodists are getting ready for their fall rally, which will begin September 20th. Bishop Neely, Floyd Tompkins, and other big guns are to take part. We will have to look out for our laurels. The Presbyterians have called a "powerful" preacher. These added to the importance of our holding on to and supporting Dr. Seasholes, if we desire to hold our ground.

I had a letter from Jacob during the week, in which he told me of your sending him the article on the stone bridge. I will stop lest I weary you, or impose too much on your time.

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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September 6th 1914.

Dear James,

Your letter written late on Friday night reached me yesterday afternoon. I am sorry you have lost sight of so many of your books, for I know you had a valuable collection. I have not a large collection, but I like to keep what I have on hand. I do not know how many I have loaned that have never been returned. Some of my dearest friends have in that respect proven themselves to be good bookkeepers. I had two copies of Charles Hagner's History of the Falls of Schuylkill, until I met Dr. Charles K. Mills, nearly ten years ago, when he asked whether I could tell where he could get a copy. I had just moved and I told him I had two copies, and would present him with one if I could find them. My daughter knew just where they were and I mailed one to him the next day. I do not recall anything that gave me more pleasure than to be able to furnish him with a book he wanted, and he appreciated the gift. I never read or hear of Richard Penn Smith, but what I think of what he said to my father a few days before he died. Father thought a great deal of him, and was often in his company. One day he came home and told mother he had been to see Penn Smith, who had no fear of dying. Then father went on to tell what had happened, as follows: "He said, 'Dan, I am going to die, and before I go I want you to see what---legs I have to go to Hell with!'" He then reached down and uncovered his legs for father to see. I have never forgotten how father looked when he came home that day. He was horrified by what Smith had said. I agree with you concerning Mrs. Mary Little being the best of the Hoyt family. She was different from the others, and was liked by all who had any acquaintance with her. My mother had a cousin who was married to a Nelson Hoyt, who in the early days of the Lehigh Navigation Company, was connected with it in Easton. He had a son Nelson Douglas Hoyt, who used to come to our house to spend his school vacations. Daniel Hoyt met him there one day and on learning he had no father, adopted him and he lived with him about a year, when he went back to his mother. Daniel Hoyt

always claimed relationship to mother, but mother always thought he was mistaken. Her cousin Hoyt came to the city in the early forties to apprentice his son, William, to Merricks Foundry, and was never seen after the papers had been signed. What became of him has ever been a mystery and I suppose always will be.

Dr. Seasholes conducted the communion service today for the first time since May. He called on me, on Tuesday, while my folks were out. We had a talk on the porch and I asked him about continuing his pastorate. He does not want a formal call, but will continue. This may be all right providing the church is satisfied, and I think the members will be. The matter will probably be brought up on Wednesday night. If it should I will offer a motion to the effect that the relationship be continued without any limitation. From what he said to me, I believe he does not want to tie himself down so that he would not be able to keep up lecturing. I suppose he realizes as much money from that source than from preaching. I wonder what John N. Green would say were he alive, and a pastor would decline a formal call. I'm thinking he would object to having one any other way. Green, of whom I have a little sketch in the Chronicle you will receive this week, was as frank in expressing his views as anyone I have ever known. I remember one of his arguments, "A pastor can leave whenever he wants to, but a church has to stay". Personally I feel that way, but will not press it. Sometimes I wonder of the church, and I mean the church in general, has not drifted away from its original practice, by hiring a pastor to do its thinking, or to cause it to think upon such lines as might suit his fancy. It has been a long while since I listened to a discourse that in truth might be called a sermon. There is little in them to satisfy a hungry soul, or to lead to the conviction of a sinner. Sermons, like those Watkinson, Clark, or Richards, used to speak. Their hearts were filled with the consciousness of their responsibility, and from the abundance of their heart, they spoke. The people not only listened to what was spoken but obeyed. Then those preachers carried their sermons with them on leaving the pulpit, by personal appeals to the congregation; not only that, they visited the houses of the members and spoke of spiritual things. I may be an old fossil, but I cannot help longing for the old time religion. Next Sunday is to be "Patriotic Day", also the autumnal rallying day. Don't think I am growling. I only say what I would like, but will do my best to keep things going at the church, even if things do not suit my views. Your mention of the Timbers led me to wonder of any of them are living. None are, unless it might be Silas, Jr., whom I have not seen or heard about for years. Hoping you are well, I am sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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September 9th 1914.

Dear James,

Your letter of yesterday arrived at noon. I have made a brief notice of the death of Mrs. Jennie Stone, for next week's Chronicle, my space for this week's issue being filled.

I have no recollection of ever having seen Mrs. Stone. At the time Mr. Chesshire came to the Falls I did not attend the church, but spent my Sundays tending the toll gate for my uncle Robert T. Roberts, so that he could go to church. "Jennie" as she was known to the Falls was married and left the Falls before I resumed attending services late in March. I always thought

a great deal of Tillie, and recall how badly poor Fred Hyneman was smitten by her charms. He confided in me and one day asked me to compose a letter for him, to copy, telling her his feeling towards her. I wrote as strong a letter as I knew how, and it was gushing. Fred copied it and mailed it. After he had dropped it in the letter box he said he would have given a year's salary to have it again. The letter was delivered, and most politely answered in the negative. Of course, Maud, as she is now known, never dreamed that I had helped Fred to express his love to her. I never told anyone about my connection with the letter, but your sister, Tillie, having during a visit told her of the very beautiful letter Fred Hyneman had sent her, so I told your sister all about it, poor Fred having passed to a better world.

I have known quite a number of clergymen, but never felt the same high regard for any as I did for Mr. Chesshire, who baptized me and pushed me forward in churchwork. He believed in putting converts to work. Much of the time I would be out of work, I spent with him in his study. I have a copy of the minutes of the Bridgewater Association, in which is printed a sermon preached by Mr. Chesshire, while pastor of the Baptist Church in Montrose, Susquehanna County. He having mailed me the copy of the minutes. I think as you do, regarding Dr. Seasholes' pastorate and expect, should the matter come up tonight, to simply move that the relationship be continued. My opinion is that he is willing to stay but does not want to be bound. I have written this today to prevent any chance of forgetting to return the clipping. The weather here today is cool enough for wearing a light overcoat. Hoping you are well, I am sincerely Yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

P.S. I have had just had a talk over the phone with Mrs. J. G. Walker. Dr. Walker is suffering from a cold, and could not hear. I told her of your informing me of the death of Mrs. Jennie Stone; she asked me if I had heard of the re-marriage of Mrs. Stone's brother, Caleb. Of course, I hadn't! Mrs. Walker heard of it at a meeting she attended today. Weddings, births and funerals often come close together in some families.

R.R.S.

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September 11th 1914.

Dear James,

I did notice that Caleb Chesshire's name was not mentioned in the sketch of his sister, Mrs. Stone. The last time I met him he told me he was the only member of the family remaining in the Baptist church. His mother was living then and I presumed she had been lured from the fold. My first intimation of Tillie's leaving the church was given me in the Eastern Penitentiary, by a prisoner from Montrose, who was serving nine years for second degree murder. His name was Frederick Warren, and his father was a lawyer and a Universalist preacher. Fred was one of my assistants in the library, and was a bright fellow. One day I asked him if he knew the Rev. John E. Chesshire? To which he replied, "Yes, I know him well, that grand and good old man. My father and he are warm friends, and say hasn't he a fine looking daughter, Miss Maud Chesshire?" I told him that the Chesshires had but two daughters, Tillie and Jennie. When he told me of Tillie having changed her name to Maud, upon her becoming a member of the Episcopal Church, and said she had joined the Episcopalists to please a young man to whom she was understood to be engaged. Caleb lost his first wife about the time my wife

passed away, 10 years ago, last May. I had not heard of his second marriage.

I went to the Falls Presbyterian Church last evening to get an account of the installing of the new pastor, Rev. Samuel W. Steckel. I did not remain to the service. Walking to the police station I stopped in my cousin's, John M. Shronk's dry goods store. He was 70 on June 19th. I will be 70 on October 18th. During our talk he told me that Dr. C. K. Mills has a great deal of trouble with his eyes, and is using the last glasses that can be made for their relief, and that he is unable to read. I feel very sorry for him, for he has always been an ardent reader and an able writer.

The question of recalling our pastor was not brought up on Wednesday evening, so I suppose the relationship will continue. He will, however, in my estimation be only an acting pastor, after the first of October. Personally I think the church should take some action to legalize the relationship. In his talk Dr. Seasholes looks ahead in the future to the work to be done, just as though there was no limitation. When the Association meets in October he will probably be mentioned as pastor of the church. Can he be legally unless the church says so? is the question that is bothering me.

There is to be a mass meeting in Gorgas Park tomorrow afternoon, under the auspices of the Church Federation of the 21st Ward, and vicinity, when Rev. Dr. Stough, a Billy Sunday evangelist, is to deliver his address on "Booze". I object to the church going into the Federation, but it voted to do so at a meeting at which I was not present. I may attend the mass meeting as a reporter, but I have no sympathy for spectacular evangelism, or sky-rocket enthusiasm. Such movements work upon the emotions of the people without doing much permanent good. After the excitement is over one is forced into thinking of the Saviour's question: "Where there not ten cleansed; but where are the nine?"

I sent Dr. Howard L. Green a copy of the Chronicle containing a sketch of his father. He acknowledged it yesterday in a very grateful letter. The Dr. is located in Bridgeport, and tells me his business is prospering. He conducts a drug store in connection with his practice. I always regarded Howard as being the brightest of the three boys. Horace is something like his father, but lacks his fighting qualities. He seems to take offence in a sulky manner, while his father would let people know just how he felt, and stick it out. Dinner is announced, so goodbye for the present.

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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September 13th 1914.

Dear James,

At the close of this morning's service Harry B. Binkin read the annual letter to the Association. He also states that the years for which Dr. Seasholes was called as pastor would expire at the end of this month. He then moved that a committee be appointed to confer with the pastor regarding the matter. Before the motion was seconded I offered as a substitute that the present relation be continued and it was passed without a dissenting vote. So that matter is settled.

After the benediction Dr. Seasholes said to me quietly, "The Lord must have directed you in making that motion. It was just the right thing to do". He seems satisfied as does the

people. Under the circumstances I believe it was the best way to settle the question. On coming home Mrs. Wieand complimented me by saying, "Shronk, you are smart, and you did the right thing in offering the motion".

I suppose you saw the notice in the last copy of the Commonwealth, on the death of Miss Eliza Jones, sister of Rev. Henry W. Jones. From the notice she, I judge, was a very good woman. Mrs. Wieand told me that Miss Jones lived with her brother after he had lost his first wife. At that time I was employed in the penitentiary, and later with the Mount Vernon Mission, in North Manayunk, and did not get to many of our church services, consequently I did not get acquainted with Mr. Jones' sister. I always liked Mr. Jones, but thought he was not the right man to take charge of the church, when it had so much of the Free element in it. But he did his part and did it well. I went up to the church federation mass meeting, in Gorgas Park, Roxborough, yesterday afternoon, and heard Dr. W. W. Stough deliver his address on "Booze". It was a powerful denunciation of the liquor traffic. There were about 3000 present. The old, old story of rum causing most of the prison convicts was reiterated. While in the penitentiary, from personally interviewing the prisoners, while acting as moral instructor, I found that but a small percentage could be traced to drink. It may be different among prisoners in county jails or houses of correction. Hoping you are well, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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September 21st 1914.

Dear James,

Your highly interesting letter came to hand in time to be read at my solitary breakfast table this morning. As to Mrs. Chesshire having left the Baptist Church, all I know is from what Caleb told me when he said he was the only Baptist in the family. He said nothing about his mother, but as she was then alive I inferred that he included her. After reading your letter I felt glad I had not known Eliza Jones. I always felt sorry for Rev. Henry W. Jones, and as you say, he had a hard up hill work at the Falls. He was very kind to my mother, when father died, and during his brief illness. You remember how I used to draw the Sunday School lesson illustrations on the blackboard, with colored chalks provided by you? Often when engaged in that work Mr. Jones would be in the church and frequently he had to encounter the Free feeling. He certainly brought about a harmonious change. I had my own trouble with Free. He was a betrayer of his best friends, and a traitor to the church. It was a long time after he left that some of his followers would speak to me. I shall never forget a statement made to me one day by Andrew J. Daymon, Free's greatest champion. The day after Grover Cleveland's first election I was in the office of the little paper published by William Gifford. I took an old woodcut, drew a crow lying on a dish on the back of the cut, and then I went into a wheelwright shop, borrowed a tool, and cut away all the wood outside of the drawing. I then got Gifford to print me some cards with the words over the crow, "Republican Thanksgiving, ala Democratic". I gave the cards to my Democratic friends. On my way to the Reading Railway station, that night, I meet Daymon in his milk wagon, at the top of Spencer street (Calumet) and though we had not spoken for years,

I called to him and he stopped his horse. I then gave him several of the cards. After admiring them, he said "Robert, I am glad you stopped me", and with tears streaming down his cheeks he continued, "I want to apologize for all the harsh words I have spoken against you, and hope you will forgive me". I found my own cheeks wet, and with hands clasped renewed our old time friendship. He then went on to tell me of Free's contemptible action towards his daughter Lizzie, whose life he said he had ruined. "We have found him out to our sorrow, and will have nothing else to do with him" were his parting words. After that we were friends up until his death. I could tell you much more about his perfidy, but what is the use. We both know him, to our sorrow.

There was no limitation to Dr. Seasholes continuance. I do not think he is using the church as an accomodation, but at the same time he is able to have his children attend school and college. He told me, the day he called at my house, that he had declined a call to a large church in San Francisco, and would not entertain a call to a church in Chicago, saying he prefers to continue in his lecturing and to help build up the weak churches. He is certainly earnest in his work at the Falls and has already done much good and is particularly attentive to the sick. He began this month to devote Wednesday evenings to teaching Baptist belief, very much in the nature of Deacon Abbott's Tuesday evening Bible Class, a line of instruction we all need especially the younger members. Dr. Stidham's sermons were highly interesting and instructive, but they seldom touched on the truths upon which the church is founded. Hanna was the first pastor, since Chesshire to feed the flock with strong meat. Do you remember when at least once a month Clark and others preached doctrinal sermons? It would be a good thing for Baptist churches if the custom was renewed. In the Sunday School, Mr. Abbott and Margaret Morison and yourself taught Bible truths to the children in a way that made the scholars familiar with Scriptural Baptist doctrine. Such teachings were done away with when the international lessons were introduced. The lesson slips took the place of the Bible in the Sunday School. One Wednesday evening I was very much pained and surprised in seeing a grown woman hunting for the Epistle of Ephesus, in the front end of the Old Testament.

I have been patiently awaiting the appearance of Dr. Mills' book and like you, hope he will publish it before his sight gets too poor for him to do so.

I had not trouble in reading your "broken up letter". Hoping you are well, and that your nerves may never explode I am,  
Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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September 27th 1914.

Dear James,

Your letter of the 25th which you began at 10.30 that night, reached me yesterday morning, in time to be read at the breakfast table, if not with my coffee. When my doctor ordered me to do without sugar, of which I was passionately fond, more than a year ago, I tried to take coffee raw, but it was too much for me, so I substituted warm milk for breakfast. I have a peculiar breakfast, but enjoy it very much. It consists of a good sized dish of grape nuts, softened in cream, a saucer of



sliced peaches, when in season, and stewed evaporated peaches the rest of the year, a slice of toasted bread, well buttered, and a cup of warm milk. Strange as it may seem, if I eat anything sweetened it is distasteful. Uncle Billy Roberts and Dr. Stidham used to tell me I like my sugar stained with coffee. When I discarded sugar I also stopped eating meat and white potatoes, and the only flesh I have eaten since is a small service of fish once in a while, and a small piece of chicken or turkey. Comparing the year of deprivation with any other recent twelve months, I have had as much enjoyment from the meals and feel a great deal better otherwise, so I shall continue the simple eating.

I had heard of your being at the Falls, a week ago this evening. Cousin Belle Ward, told my step-daughter, on Monday while telephoning to tell me you had been to church. Singer also told me on Wednesday evening how gladly you had surprised him and others. On Saturday October 17th, I expect to have Dr. and Mrs. Seasholes, Miss Elizabeth Peltz, and Mrs. Wicand, to take tea with me, and I would very much like you to join them. It will be a simple little party, given me by my daughter and step-daughters, similar to those I had while Dr. Stidham and my sister Elizabeth were alive.

In telling me she had set the date, my daughter asked if I couldn't have you join us this year. I am glad you heard Dr. Seasholes's sermon on "Will the End of the World Come in October 1914, or 1915?" That is the way it was announced on the church bulletin board. I told him last Sunday morning that he was going to preach on a subject he knew nothing about. He frankly acknowledged that he didn't, but said the air is filled with it, and that he had been requested to preach on the topic.

That word requested, reminds me of dear old Mr. Chesshire. I used to spend a great deal of time with him in his study in the church and on several occasions he regretted having been so busy that his sermons for the coming Sunday were not completed. One day I asked him how it would do to repeat a sermon he had recently preached. When he said, "Rob, that is a good idea. I will preach that sermon again on Sunday evening".

On Sunday morning he announced that he had been requested to preach the sermon again. I have always had a warm spot in my heart for Mr. Chesshire. He had not pity in pushing me forward in church work and would, during his absence, give me a list of sick to attend. One day he showed me half of a ham he was carrying home and spoke of the high cost of living. He then suggested that I should try to get the Financial Board to get him a donation. The Board met at your home of Ridge avenue the next week. I made the suggestion which was taken up. After the other members had left and while I tarried to enjoy a smoke with you, you asked whether Mr. Chesshire had not asked me to get up a donation, and I, of course, acknowledged he had. As a result we gathered \$75 and the night Mr. Abbott presented the purse, Mr. Chesshire acted as though he was greatly surprised. Then it was that he told me he wished he had fifty young men like me in the church. He wanted me to study for the ministry, as did Mrs. Sarah Evans Richards, and Rev. Clark B. Oakley, pastor of Enon Church, which I frequently attended with Mrs. Harmon Lake, at the time I was suffering from a chronic sore throat, caused by being struck on the Adam's apple with a townball bat, and was afraid that after using other people's money for the education, I would be unable to preach like Rev. Steinman was.

Years afterward, while Rev. Emerson Andrews was visiting the Falls, he advised me to let my beard grow as a cure for my sore throat, as he had cured himself by the same remedy. I tried

it and was completely cured. But it was then too late to think of being educated. You will observe that I have again drifted into our happy past, and hope it will not weary you over much. With best wishes I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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October 5th 1914.

Dear James,

I was sorry to learn of the death of your cousin Kate Pennypacker. Nellie told me of the sad event last Wednesday night after prayer meeting. I had met Kate a number of times in your old home on Ridge avenue, as I did her sister Sallie, both of whom were noble young women. At that time James Pennypacker always impressed me as being a consistent Christian. Thus it goes, the years pass, and take from us, one by one, those whom we love. We form new acquaintances, and new friendships, but they are not like the old ones. That is one reason why we like to call up the past with its precious associations. I often wonder how men who re-marry are able to forget the past. If they do not there must be a comparison going on in their minds regarding the now and the then of their experience. I also wonder what this world would be if it were not for the religious comforts we have. What a terrible thing it would be to bury loved ones with no hopes of a resurrection. Having that hope we can look forward as well as backward, and are comforted. I also learned on Wednesday evening of the death and burial of Griffith Abbot Boardman, a son of my half-sister Sarah. He was forty some years old, but never married, and had lived with his brother, Robert, on Bowman street. Until my eyes troubled me I used to read the death notices in the Ledger every morning, and then knew who had passed away. Saving my eyes leaves me in ignorance of many things occurring. I am gradually getting rid of my bladder trouble and hope soon to have an increase in vision. With other churches throughout the city we complied yesterday with President Wilson's request by observing the day as one for prayer for peace. I am a firm believer in prayer, but there are some things which to me seem presumptuous, to appeal to the Almighty. He is able to overcome the wrath of men and of kings, and will do so in His own time and way. Praying for peace ought to result in our being more peaceful and more opposed to strife. Many of the wars recorded in the Bible were God's means of punishment, and who will deny that He has not a purpose in the war now raging? I have no objection to the President putting himself on record, or even using such a means to make himself popular, but forced, or ordered prayer is not devotion. (Seems like a biased Republican viewpoint)

"Prayer is the soul's desire,  
Uttered and unexpressed,  
The motion of a hidden fire,  
Which trembles in the breast.  
Prayer is the burden of a sigh,  
The falling of a tear,  
The upward glancing of the eye,  
When none but God is near".

There is a good deal of talk here in Philadelphia about "The Great Revival", which, it is taken for granted by many church people, as coming this way. Some are hard at work organizing a Billy Sunday Campaign. From Dr. Seasholes talks I infer that he is in favor of such boosting or spectacular evangelism, and skyrocket enthusiasm. Whether our church will be drawn into the movement or not, I cannot say, but it will not with my approval. We have gotten along quite nicely during the past year without any show of excitement. Two young women are waiting baptism and others are interested. We take a good report to the Association, which begins its 207th annual sessions tomorrow, in Roxborough Church.

I am glad you think favorably of the little party my daughter is arranging for me on the 17th instant, and hope you may find it convenient to be present. Hoping you are in good health as this leaves me, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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October 12th 1914.

Dear James,

This old city is baseball mad again today. I am a little affected myself. So far as to call up the newspapers to learn the latest score, but not enough to either wager any money on it, or to stand watching a scoreboard. Is it not wonderful how so many can afford the time they spend, watching the electric scoreboards? I am told the pawnbrokers did a large business last week in loaning money to men wishing to see the games, or to bet on the result. I feel that gambling is not confined altogether to the outsiders, and that the players might be tempted to pile up huge sums for themselves. I went up to Manayunk this afternoon where I found the postoffice and bank closed on account of Columbus Day, so I will mail you a Chronicle from home.

What a long dry spell of weather we are having. Everything in the country is burning up for want of rain. Some of the wise ones attribute the dry spell to the war in Europe, while others claim that the warm weather we are having is due to the Panama Canal and its influence on the Gulf Stream. I am not scientist enough to see why either should be true, so all I can do is to act wise, by saying nothing and listening. The war news, like the weather reports, are not very reliable. One reads the news and then wonders whether it is true or only the work of able reporters. I attended three of the six sessions of the Baptist Association last week, at Roxborough Church. Dr. MacArthur, whom I presume you know, is a wonderful man. His address on "The Twelve Baptist Apostles of 100 years Ago", was a masterful oration. In it he said he feared Baptist are losing backbone. I wish he had been more explicit and exposed some of the weaknesses which has taken possession of too many ministers who preach "courtesy". In the Permanent Advisory Council I have had goes (?) with a number of preachers, and had the honor of being called an old fashioned Baptist, by Dr. Rowland. The report of the committee on Unification of Baptist Work was submitted by Dr. Rosselle, when I was not present. From comments upon it, it seems to mean a change in Baptist Government, and is to be considered at a special meeting of the Association on November 19th, in the Memorial Church. I was appointed on the Committee on Place and Preachers for the next meeting. When the time came to report I was the only member present, and at my suggestion the moderator

appointed others on the Committee. We had two invitations; one from Bethlehem Church, and the other from Zion (Colored) Church. We decided in favor of Bethlehem, and named Dr. Moore, of Zion Church to preach the Introductory Sermon. I felt some pride in being named on the Committee, but more on account of the church being honored than personally. I do love to hear Falls of Schuylkill Church named in any of the large gatherings, a love I have had ever since I became a member of the dear old church.

Dr. Seasholes preached a fine sermon yesterday morning from the text: "We All Do Fade as a Leaf". He is well up in botany, and knows how to make himself clear with a very few words.

I am looking forward to Saturday with great interest when Dr. and Mrs. Seasholes will be at my little party, and I hope you may find it convenient to join them. Mrs. Wieand expects to be here but is uncertain about her sister Elizabeth being able to come. This is rambling and sort of newsless letter, but may interest you a little. Hoping you are well and that we may see you on Saturday, when supper will be served at six, I am,

Sincerely yours,  
R. R. SHRONK.

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October 23rd 1924.

Dear James,

I have gotten into the habit of writing to you, at least, once a week, and it's a habit I do not care to break myself away from. I know of nothing that I enjoy more than receiving a letter from you, and learning of your being well. I regard letter-writing as a recreation, and you cannot tell what a relief it is to the other writing I have to do. I often think of the laborious task it used to be for me to write a page in the old copy book in Mr. Mackie's school. Do you remember how particular he was in having the boys hold the pen in a proper angle, and how he used to sneak up behind and crack the boys on the hand, who were not holding the pen right? I wonder how many of us are as careful now in holding the pen, as we had to be in those glorious old days? The last time I met Mr. Mackie was on a Sunday afternoon, in the early seventies. He had charge, as minister, of the Holy Trinity Mission of the St. James the Less Church, which met in the Old Academy Building, and which Mr. Powers, Thomas Moore, and others turned into Grace Reformed Episcopal Church. I overtook Mr. Mackie that day in front of our church, as he was on his way to the Old Academy. At first he did not recognize me, but after looking me over he asked "Are you not one of the Shronks?" When I told him which one I was, he said, "I hope you are a better man than you were a boy!"

I enjoyed your being at the church service on Sunday morning. It made me think of the days gone by. I was also glad to be at the Sunday School session. I do not often get to go anywhere on Sunday afternoons, but went there on invitation of Harry Binkin. What a pleasure it must be to you in realizing the high esteem in which you are held by the church and Sunday School? It was hard for me to repress the emotions which filled my heart, as I sat in the Sunday School room and thought of the many loved ones who once helped to fill the room, but who are now with the Lord. Dr. Seasholes was absent on Wednesday evening. He had gone to Johnstown on Lodge business. The service was

led very successfully by Harry Binkin. Billy Sunday Trailers, whatever that means, four of them, are to be at the Falls Presbyterian Church on Sunday evening. I sincerely hope our church will not be drawn into the excitement. I met Dr. Rowland last evening at the First German Baptist Church's new edifice at 9th and Luzerne streets, where he presided over a Denominational Brotherhood service. He asked about you and told me of your being present when he preached in the Fourth Church. I am glad you got to my little birthday party, and I do not care how soon I shall have another one. Hoping you are well, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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November 3<sup>rd</sup> 1914.

Dear James,

This is one of the finest election days, so far as the weather is concerned, I have ever known. So far I have had little to do, but I expect a bust night in getting returns from the four wards that make up my news district, the 21st, 37th, 43rd and 38th. They take up the territory from 5th street to the Schuylkill, and from Lehigh avenue to the county line, Upper Roxborough. East of Broad street it extends to Susquhanna avenue. Fortunately with a telephone in the house I can get the news from the four police stations without much traveling.

Your referred in a recent letter to the time you were induced to allow your name to be used as a candidate for Councils. I lived in Manayunk at the time, and would have been deprived of voting for you. I felt at the time that you would make a good Councilman, and had no fear of your being controlled by what was then known as "The Ring", and yet I was glad when I learned you had withdrawn.

Poor Bill Stevenson! I often think of him and how he used to work, and his great dislike for Catholics. I wonder what he would think if he were now alive and see a majority of Catholics on the police force? With all his political trickery, he was always frank and true with me. It was through him that I took such an active part in the Judicial Convention, in 1870, when Thomas K. Finletter was nominated for Common Pleas judge.

Bill died of a bad disease. Just before his death he sent for me and got me to write an appealing letter to Mrs. J. K. Uhler. Dr. Uhler had borrowed \$1000 from Mrs. Stevenson, which she had saved in a building society. Mrs. Uhler complied with the letter and sent him, in three remittances, nearly half of her husband's indebtedness.

Joseph M. Morison was buried last Friday from the home of his brother Frank, on Queen lane. He had been in the Norristown Asylum for more than 30 years. Poor fellow! he was a promising boy. It must be a satisfaction to his relatives in knowing he is at rest. I saw enough of insanity during the 18 months I was employed on the Penitentiary, to make me feel that I would be glad to bury any one near to me afflicted with it.

There was a general exchange of pulpits on Sunday evening, in the Falls, and the 21st Ward, arranged by the 21st Ward Church Federation. Dr. Seasholes preached at Ebenezer M.E. Church, Manayunk, while Rev. Robert Hetherington, of Wissahickon M. E. Church filled our pulpit. I did not hear him. What a difference there is on the treatment of the Baptists by the other

denominations to what it was when Rev. N. Judson Clark was pastor? I often think the change had benefitted others more than it has us Baptists. Hoping you are well, and that all things are well with you, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

P.S. I called at the Publication (Baptist) office this afternoon, to get a copy of the Association Minutes, but they are not yet out. I had a brief chat with your friend, Dr. Rowland.

R. R. S.

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November 9th 1914.

Dear James,

I had your letter at the breakfast table on Saturday morning. I had seen your name in print in the Commonwealth and was glad you happened to be present at Walker's fortieth anniversary. He has had a long and successful pastorate and I hope he may be spared to round out half a century. I do not know of any Baptist ministers that have ministered to a church as long as he has. He is one of the Falls boys who had honored the little old town. John Humpstone, although born in England, began his remarkable career at the Falls, where he was baptized 50 years ago this coming winter, and like Walker is somewhat indebted to Deacon Abbot. Dr. Seasholes is anxious to have Humpstone come over to our church on or near the anniversary of his baptism. Perhaps you can help in getting him to come. There will, however, be very few of those who were then members to greet him, as most of them have been called home.

I was kept home yesterday through a severe pain in the region of the left kidney, which came very suddenly on Friday night. I suffered most of Saturday and yesterday, but am feeling better today. I presume it was a cold. A cold, you know, always shows itself in the weakest point of one's body. I had for more than a year been taking a glass of porter every night before retiring. The porter ran out last week and I thought to try doing without it. That might have had something to do with the trouble. Another box of porter has been ordered and I expect to resume the bitter draught tonight.

I send you herewith a little article I had published in yesterday's Record. Perhaps you remember the dinner. Mr. Chesshire started the subscription list with \$2. I was a member of the general committee. He was delighted when I told him the committee would not need his contribution. Unless Samuel Stewart is alive, and I have not heard of him for years, I am the only member of the committee left. Stewart, when I last heard of him, was in a soldier's home, I think in Virginia. He was a peculiar man and would argue with a signboard as the saying goes.

I have always thought the church made a mistake in excluding him. He had acted as a pall bearer at the funeral of James Morison, who died of small pox. The doctor has advised the carriers to take a drink of whiskey. Sam complied and like other weak mortals repeated the dose until he became drunk. Then he proved himself an ugly man and became profane. Green heard him cursing and brought the case before the church. Stewart and his family then went to St. James the Less.

The church will entertain the Northwest Baptist Social

Union on the 17th, when a dinner that couldn't be bought in a restaurant for half a dollar will be served for 20 cents. As a church we have a reputation of giving the best dinners of any in the Union. Hoping you are well and with respects of the family, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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November 12th 1914.

Dear James,

Your highly interesting letter came in time for the breakfast table yesterday morning. I have often wondered as to what became of the Smith girls; Peep and Belle, and their brother, Bill. I always had a high regard for the young ladies, one of whom, Belle, I believe, lost one of her legs, by being run over on the old Norristown Railroad. I never had but a speaking acquaintance with either. My wife knew Belle and often spoke of the sad accident. Her sister Sallie Shoemaker (Shronk's wife's sister) was one time a "flame" of Michael Arnold, Jr. The Shoemakers lived on Main street, Manayunk, and were neighbors of the Somers family, whose home occupied the site of the Reading Railway's passenger station. Lew Borquin and Mike Arnold used to tramp to Manayunk together. Lew married Miss Somers, and in after years had to keep his wife's mother and two sisters. At the time I worked for John H. Richard, the French artist. Mrs. Somers and daughters rented part of his house. What became of Lew? I heard that he was in the law book business on Walnut street, and had gone through most of his sister, Grace Town's, money before she died. You remember Grace with the bright black eyes and pretty curly head. She married Colonel Gus Town during the Civil War, through corresponding in compliance to a request published in the Waverly Magazine. They met and married while he was home on a furlough. He returned and was killed soon after re-joining his regiment. Sallie Shoemaker's father and mother were very strict Methodists and they objected to a son of a hotel keeper calling on their daughter. There is a story about a ring which may interest you. Sallie Shoemaker had a gold ring with a red stone setting. Arnold took it off her finger one night. On another night while at your house, your sister got the ring from him. She placed it on a bureau in her home. Harry found it there the next day and slipped it on his finger. One evening he loaned the ring to me and we went into swim in the Schuylkill, at the Laboratory Wharf. While in the water the ring slipped from my finger and I suppose is still lying on the bottom of the river. I married the sister of the first wearer of the ring, and who was the original owner, she having loaned it to her sister shortly before Arnold borrowed it. The whole affair has always seemed to me a strange coincidence.

One of my first recollections of Bill Smith was when I first went to the Forest School (Breck School) One day after the summer vacation I saw a large pear on one of the trees in the lot above the school grounds. I climbed the tree and brought the pear down. Showing it to some of the boys, Bill came along and offered me a cent for the pear. I didn't want to part with it, neither did I like to refuse him, so he got the pear and I got the big copper cent.

The church, at my suggestion last night, decided to invite Dr. Humpstone to be present on Sunday morning, December

27th, which is the nearest Sunday to the date of his baptism on December 24th 1864. Dr. Seasholes and you were appointed a committee to get him to come. His sister Mrs. Lorenzo Goshow of Roxborough will also be asked to be present. I would like to learn as early as possible should he decide to come, so as to give notice in the daily and local papers, as I shall consider myself a committee on publication. The morning service I presume will be given over to the distinguished celebrant with congratulatory remarks from the pastor, yourself and others.

Dr. Eaton, of Madison Square Church, lectured on Tuesday night in the North Branch Y. M. C. S. Building, at 10th street and Lehigh avenue, on "The Making of a Man". I was not there but I had a talk with him on the phone after the lecture. The churches in this vicinity including Lehigh Avenue Baptist, Dr. Spencer's church, had formed a church federation lyceum, to provide entertainments for the young people, to draw away from the "blood and thunder" movies and vaudeville shows. Dr. Eaton's lecture was the first of a series to be given during the fall and winter. It looks as though the Germans still have the best of the Great War, and that there are some gigantic liars following the French and English armies. One can scarcely believe anything printed about the war. Hoping you are well, I am sticking to my toddy, and feel it is helping me, but it is anything but agreeable to take. With regards of the family, I am, sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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November 15th 1914.

Dear James,

I had your highly interesting letter, at the breakfast table yesterday morning. It found me feeling pretty well again. This is one of the gloomiest Sundays I have known for a long time. The rain is welcome to the farmers in the country, who have had to drive their horses and cattle long distances to water, but here in the city, one soon gets a plenty of it. The day is so dark that lights had to be lit in the church this morning. Perhaps after the pools, creeks and wells are filled we may have some more seasonable weather. While I enjoy hot weather and would like to live where the temperature would never reach the freezing point, it is unreasonable this time of the year. I have just had to light a light to see to continue writing, as a dark cloud made it impossible for me to see the point of the pen. There were very few out to church this morning, the rain affording a splendid excuse for many to stay home. The Northwest Baptist Social Union, will hold its annual autumn meeting in our church on Tuesday afternoon and evening. Supper will be served at 20 cents a plate. Binkin, who takes a warm interest in the Union and represents the church in it, announced this morning that the committee needs \$10 to pay for the provisions for the supper, which looks as though the patrons are to get more than their money's worth.

Preparations for the Billy Sunday campaign will be discussed. I have no objection to people taking part in this spectacular evangelism, and hope they may be spurred up to taking a more active part in the regular services of the church. As to the converts I fear it will be a repetition of the old, old story, in few of them becoming members of Baptist churches. I, personally, do not approve of union revival meetings. Our own little church never prospered more than it did under Richards, Watkinson, Clark, or Chesshire, all of whom preached



the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and excited the opposition of other denominations.

The choir has preempted Thanksgiving evening, by announcing a musicale for that night in the church.

Have you read the report of the Philadelphia Association's committee on Unification of Baptist Work, published in this week's Commonwealth? It is to be voted on at a special meetings of the Association to be held Thursday night, November 19th, in the Memorial Church, Broad and Master streets. I have read part of the report. The plan, of adopted, and I question the right of the Association to adopt it, will make great changes in Baptist Church government. In my estimation it will place the varied activities of the church in a position to control the church, in place of the church controlling them. I also fear that the clergymen are having too much to say regarding the churches, whom they are paid to serve, and not to control. Dr. J. Wheaton Smith used to say that he feared the church was getting to have too many legs and arms. Nothing in my mind would increase the efficiency of the church more than for the members to live up to the covenant, and regularly attend the prayer and other services. The strength of the church must go from the center to the circumference, to be of lasting good. Another thing I am skeptical about is the Association's right to legislate laws or rules to govern the church. Originally the Association was formed for mutual encouragement of the struggling churches. That, however, was before the day of so many societies with their well paid secretaries. One of the most interesting features of the annual meetings was the reading of the letters from the different churches. Of recent years it has been found that too much time was taken up in reading the letters, consequently that interesting part of the program was dispensed with, as were the morning sessions of the Association. Centralize the churches, and a commission can do all the work, except contributing the cash, which will be left to the churches to do, according to the sums required by the budget sent out by those in control. What the result of the special meeting will be we will have to wait and see.

Edwin Singer is suffering from another spell of heart ailment, and was unable to be out this morning. He suffers a great deal, and I am afraid he is none too careful with his eating. (Singer lived about ten years longer than Shronk). I will cease my growling and subscribe myself,

Yours sincerely,

R. R. SHRONK.

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November 22nd 1914.

Dear James,

I was much interested in your letter, which I had at the breakfast table yesterday, as to the calabash, which we used to call callow-bash. The Century Dictionary gives illustrations of the way the hard shell is carved. Your mother called them properly as gourds. I used to like to drink out of one that used to hang by the old home pump. I cannot, however, agree to you rattling your brains, as one used to rattle the seeds in the hollow calabash.

I have never known a preacher whom I more enjoyed listening to than J. Wheaton Smith, and I'll never forget the merciless way in which he bombarded William Humpstone with questions, the

day he was before the council for ordination, or how Humpstone replied with Scriptural quotations. Yes, I remember the old sorrel horse and rather delapidated carriage in which Dr. Smith used to ride.

I had rather a peculiar experience one Sunday evening in the Temple Baptist Church, 22nd and Thoga streets. I think it was in 1887. I heard Dr. Smith preach in the morning in our church and saw him drive away after the service. It was understood he was to preach again in the evening, as he did. Upon reaching home I was told that it was announced that he was present to preach that evening in the Temple Church. I concluded to go hear him. When I reached the church every seat was filled but a few near the door. One of these I occupied.

John M. Evans, whom I think you know, who was a great singer, stepped to the platform, and stated that the committee had made a mistake in announcing Dr. Smith and being too late to get another preacher, they would have a service of prayer and singing. He announced a hymn, read a selection of Scripture and then said, "We are not as badly off as I supposed. I see Brother Shronk sitting near the door, and I know he will help us out with an address". As I walked up the aisle there came to my mind a sermon which Mr. Paddleford had preached when he was a candidate in our church, at the time Dr. Stidham was first called. The sermon was on the text "What Think Ye of Christ?" It came to me as plain as though written in a book. I told the congregation of the sermon, impressing itself upon me and that I would repeat it. I was highly complimented after the service on having such a memory, but it was not a case of memory it, was more of inspiration, for I could not have repeated the recital. I heard Dr. Smith preach his sermon on "The Vast Undone", one morning in our church and heard him repeat it a few Sundays later in the Temple Church. I printed a synopsis of it in the Weekly Guide, which I then edited and have it somewhere in the house. I attended the adjourned, or special meeting, of the Philadelphia Association, in the Memorial Church, and was the only messenger from our church. There were 31 churches represented beside the five from the North Philadelphia Association. The report of the Committee on Unification of Baptist Work was adopted after some important amendments to the recommendations were made. It was deemed advisable to merge the City Mission and the Permanent Advisory Council because of the former being incorporated, and holding a number of endowments, so it was decided to form an organization.

Your will find, I think, a full report in this week's Commonwealth. I fear the whole thing will be found to be impracticable. Whatever is done will have to be ratified by the individual churches and other organizations interested. I found Dr. Rowland to be a very careful legislator, and feel that with such men any movement would be safe. And yet I cannot help but feel that the only real solution to the problem is in each church and individual member living up to the covenant vows, and the teaching of Christ. What is wanted is an earnest "contending for the faith once delivered to the saints".

Dr. Seasholes preached a fine Thanksgiving sermon this morning in which he compared President Wilson with Washington. I think he is a little too much stuck on Wilson. There will be the usual Union Thanksgiving service on Thursday. It will be held in the (Falls) Methodist Church, and the Rev. Samuel W. Steckel, the new pastor of the Presbyterian Church will preach the sermon.

Everything here is Billy Sunday. A little too much for

my individual belief and I am sorry Dr. Seasholes is so enthusiastic. In the Chronicle I will mail you tomorrow is a little poem on the first page "A Robin's Song", which I think you will appreciate. I do not know who wrote it, but its sentiment is fine.

I learned last evening while calling on Mrs. Wieand and her sister Elizabeth Peltz, that Rebecca Uhler is trying to get into a home in West Philadelphia. I was under the impression she was pretty well to do, and am sorry I was mistaken. My ink is bad, which accounts for the blurred writing. With best wishes I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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November 29th 1914.

Dear James,

I missed your usual letter at the breakfast table yesterday morning. Hope no illness or any other unpleasant thing prevented you from writing. I know of nothing that gives me more enjoyment than the correspondence we have been holding with each other. You are the only one to whom I write regularly and there are but few to whom I occasionally scribble off a letter. As we get on in years the number of our friends grow smaller and smaller, and with me, as I suppose it is with others, new friends are not easily made, and those friendships formed later in life do not seem as close as those of our earlier days. We had a splendid Thanksgiving Day here in Philadelphia. The weather was fine. I did not go over the the Union services in the morning and most of the day I spent at home.

You do not know how great a thing a telephone is in the home of a reporter. I sat at my desk, called up the various fraternal homes, and other institutions in which the day was observed, thus getting all the news desired, without the trouble, time or expense of visiting each place.

The musicale given by the choir in our church in the evening was a success, I am told. The Falls, like others parts of the city, is much taken up by the Billy Sunday revival campaign. I must be an old fossil, or a back number, for I cannot get up any personal interest in the movement. It seems to me to have too much man in it. I will, however, do nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of those interested. The Falls has been parceled out into sections, by someone I do not know. Each church has been assigned a section in which to conduct prayer meetings on Tuesdays and Thursday nights, during December. Sunday's services will be begin in January, in the frame tabernacle now erected at Vine and 19th streets.

Mrs. Christina Whalley, one of the oldest members of our church, and a cousin of mine, is very ill at her home on 35th street, near Sunnyside avenue. Her mother was a sister of my father, and was the first Shronk known to marry an Irishman. Only one of his four children followed him in being a Catholic.

Hoping you are in good health, as this leaves me, and with regards of the family, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

December 6th 1914.

Dear James,

My Cousin Christiana Whalley passed away last night. I called at the house yesterday afternoon, but found her unconscious, in which condition she had been since Wednesday. The funeral services will be held in the church on Tuesday afternoon, at two o'clock.

Christiana would have been 84 years old, had she lived until Christmas eve. Her husband, Thomas Whalley died 33 years ago, and of her four children Thomas is the only one living, and he has always been good and kind to his mother. As the funeral will be on Tuesday afternoon, I fear I will be unable to attend as I have to report personally at the Ledger office every Tuesday afternoon.

We are having a regular old-fashioned northeast storm, which I suppose you feel more in New York than we do here, provided you got back from that long deferred visit to your cousin.

I would like very much to know what she thought of your coming after having kept the invitation 53 years. It seems to me that a brilliant author could build a splendid story on the incident.

It is a good thing the meal you were invited to at the time was not kept till you arrived, for it might have become somewhat stale.

Considering the weather we had a good attendance at church this morning; more than sixty took communion. Three were added, a man and his wife, from Germantown, by letter, and a man by experience. Neither Mrs. Wieand, nor her sister Elizabeth Peltz ventured out in the storm, and I do not blame them. I would stay indoors tonight if I could, but I guess the outing will not hurt me. Hoping you are well, and that you had a delightful visit, and with regards of the family, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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December 14th 1914.

Dear James,

Your letter of yesterday made my breakfast all the more enjoyable this morning. I will gladly aid you in springing a surprise on the church in getting the Empire chairs from the Philadelphia Art Galleries.

As I could not get to the city today, I phoned the manager and told him I had an order from Mr. John A. Patton for the chairs, and asked him to hold them till I sent for them. He said he would hold them but would deliver them to no one without an order from Mr. Swartz, as well as Mr. Patton. I shall call there tomorrow, show him your letter, which ought to serve as an order. He suggested that I had better not engage an ordinary express man as the chairs are too valuable. I think I can get a storage house keeper to take them to the church. The chairs will, I believe, do very well, one of each side of the communion table, in front of the pulpit platform, and I feel sure the gift will be appreciated.

Your sister's piano was placed on the lower platform yesterday to make room for the crowd expected to attend the patriotic service in the evening. The heavy downpour of rain kept the most of the Patriotic Sons of America away, but enough

came to fill the centre pews.

The service was a grand success. John Milligan, of the Chronicle, told me this afternoon that he didn't see how a little church could support such an able preacher as Dr. Seasholes, whom he heard at last night's service for the first time.

Dr. Seasholes preached in the morning on "The Mountain of Transfiguration", in which he said the disciples Peter, James and John did not see Jesus; that His mother nor any other mortal ever saw Him. They only saw the man. The thought is, I think, a good one, and helps to solve some of the mysteries of Christ's wonderful life. I have not yet read the leaflet of the Presbyterian Church, but will, tonight.

You failed to tell me anything about your visit to your cousin in Reading, whom you expected to visit after a fifty years' old invitation. I hope she enjoyed your coming, even though you kept her waiting so long.

I had a special in yesterday's Record, which may interest you and I enclose a clipping. I got the facts of Hugh Scott's election bet from my father, who was one of Scott's warmest friends.

Hoping you are well, and with regards of the household,  
I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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December 15th 1914.

Dear James,

The handsome Empire chairs are standing, one at each end of your sister's piano which still occupies the centre of the lower platform in the church.

I called this afternoon at the Philadelphia Art Galleries and presented your letter and Mr. Patton's order, which were accepted. I asked the man in charge of he could recommend anyone to convey the chairs to the church. He called a colored man named Washington, who said he would do the job for two dollars. I engaged him, thinking I could not get a mover cheaper. I met him at the Falls police station, and had him drive to the church. I went to the parsonage for the church key and Dr. Seasholes and his son, Lyon, went with me in the church.

The chairs harmonize grandly with the pulpit and I feel sure your gift will be highly appreciated. Dr. Seasholes is greatly pleased and said he would write and express his personal appreciation. I am anxious to know what Singer will think when he sees the chairs. I was only too glad to carry out your wishes. Enclosed is a slip Washington gave me as a receipt for the expressage.

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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December 20th 1914.

Dear James,

Had you been present at the services this morning, I feel sure you would be pleased by the way the beautiful Empire chairs were admired by the entire congregation. After the bene-

diction had been pronounced the men and women went forward to look at your generous gift. They fit as though made expressly for the positions they occupy. I suggested to Mrs. Seasholes that the Kin's Daughters make coverings for the chairs and she said she had thought of the same thing, and would see that the suggestion was carried out. Your letter of Wednesday with check for \$2 for express on the chairs came to me on Thursday. Dr. Seasholes announced your gift from the pulpit. He also stated that the James S. Swartz Bible Class had placed a brilliant electric lamp in front of the entrance to the church. It was also announced that a special anniversary service will be held in commemoration of the baptism of Dr. John Humpstone, and that a letter from Dr. Humpstone will be read on that occasion. I presume his sister, Mrs. (Lorenzo) Goshow, of Roxborough, who was baptized the same night will be present. The church, at the December business meeting, decided to arrange an Old Home Service, to be held on Sunday March 21, 1915, your birthday, in celebration of the 63rd anniversary of the opening of the Lecture Room, and to try and have Dr. Humpstone present on that occasion, with as many other old time members as possible. Of course you will be included. I had rather a painful experience last evening, by falling down on an icy pavement. I went down pretty heavily on my right hip and elbow, bruising both. I felt very thankful it was no worse. While a little sore today, it does not interfere with my getting about.

Adam Mettinger will leave on Tuesday for Sanford, Florida, to spend the winter with his son John K., and family. Lucky isn't it that he can get away from Jack Frost? I am still wondering how your Reading cousin received you after waiting so long to comply with her invitation.

Hoping this will find you in good health, and with regards of the household, I am

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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December 27th 1914.

Dear James,

Thanks for the very pretty Christmas card. Splendid idea and wish I could have seen some like them instead of depending on the ordinary sort on sale in the stores here.

I had a very quiet, but pleasant day with just enough work to keep me awake.

I see that John Humpstone was baptized on Christmas night, instead of on Christmas eve. Christmas came on Sunday in 1864. We had a very pleasant service this morning in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of his baptism. His sister Elizabeth Goshow and her husband (Lorenzo, not Alonzo, as Shronk insists on calling him) of Manayunk were present. Dr. Seasholes read a short letter from Dr. Humpstone regretting his inability to be present, and preached one of the strongest baptist sermons I have ever heard for a long while. He based his text on Samuel being chosen of God, and after telling of the Humpstone family coming to the Falls of Cheshire taking John and Mrs. Swartz caring for Elizabeth, he spoke of John's choice of the modes of baptism, of his education, his pastorates, and his great modesty. It happened that the boiler of the steam heater in the Methodist Church burst last night, and having no way of heating the building, services had to be dispensed with; quite a number of the dear Methodist brethren were present and heard the sermon and Dr. Seasholes' offer to nail up the baptistry if

anyone would show him a Scriptural proof that immersion is not the only baptism. Dr. Seasholes announced that an effort will be made to have Dr. Humpstone with us in the Old Home Day service to be held on March 21st, which will be the 63rd anniversary of the opening of the Lecture Room. I hope you will be present for the occasion will have a triple significance to you. The opening of the Lecture Room, your birthday, and the anniversary of your baptism.

Dr. Walker, who was baptized the same night, will likely be invited to be present.

To rode to and from church this morning with Mrs. Wiand. She and her sister Elizabeth Pelts, each received a Christmas card from you and they were highly appreciated.

We are having an old fashioned winter as far as cold is concerned. The Wissahickon and the Schuylkill are frozen over affording splendid skating to lovers of that winter sport; most people like the weather but I prefer straw hat temperature, when I can sit on the porch and enjoy my pipe without annoying anyone.

Hoping you had a pleasant Christmas and that you may have a happy and prosperous New Year, and that this may find you in good health, as it leaves me and the household, I am,

Sincerely Yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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December 31st 1914.

Dear James,,

This being the last chance I'll have to write this year I decided to embrace it by answering your letter of yesterday which I had at the breakfast table. I did not think you had been all those 50 years in complying to your cousin's invitation to call on her in Reading, but the preservation of the letter so longa hile must have pleased her.

I wonder whether I am not differently constituted from most people in so far as caring for cousins is concerned. I have never had one that I cared to visit, except in time of sickness or trouble. I have always had more of a feeling of friendship than of love, for my relatives. Perhaps it is a family peculiarity but I often wish there had been a closer feeling than has existed.

The notices you read in the Commonwealth and Chronicle were from the same pen. Our little church would not receive so much mention if it depended upon the pastors. Whenever there is something which I think worth mentioning, I scratch it off and mail it to the editor, and always find pleasure in doing so.

In last week's Chronicle I had a little account of the old time Methodist protracted meetings, in which I mentioned the Mills and Marleys, and that ~~xxxx~~ Ann Marley Short was the only survivor of the little band of workers. I mailed a copy of the paper to her address, 1921 Dauphin street, yesterday, and I received a letter from her son-in-law, DR. H. H. Laubach, informing me that Mrs. Short died December 20th of last year. The notice he said, was highly appreciated by his wife and her sister.

Last week the church decided to postpone the Wednesday evening service till tonight, to hold it in connection with the Watch Night Service. I went to the Temple prayer service, at 22nd and Tioga streets, last evening, and for the first time had the

pleasure of hearing the pastor, Rev. Thomas Bird. I found him to be to my mind an ideal preacher. He does not mince matters but has a positiveness in his assertions on Biblical themes which makes one feel good. There was an uplift in all he said, in his review of the old year.

I do not expect to get the the Watch Night Service tonight I presume it will be well attended, as Binkin announced on Sunday that the King's Daughters would serve refreshments. If anything will bring the people of the Falls out it is something to eat. I wrote the little editorial in the Chronicle last week and one for this week also. Hoping your hand is all right again, and that you are well, I am,

Sincerely yours,

R. R. SHRONK.

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