

THE FOLLOWING SERIES OF PAPERS

ON

Northborough, Manayunk and the Wicohickon

was written by

HORATIO GATES JONES, A.M.

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Complete set of
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The object of the present series of sketches will be to furnish the citizens of Manayunk, Roxborough and vicinity a history of these places. They will not aspire to elaborate finish in style and composition, but will chiefly aim to give to the readers of this journal such facts about olden times as have been gathered by the writer from the descendants of the pioneer settlers, and from such official documents as have been examined. In connection with local sketches, the writer proposes, if it is deemed a matter of interest to the readers, to give lists of the taxable inhabitants of Roxborough at various early dates--digests of ~~MMMMM~~early wills and personal sketches of such prominent citizens as have been preserved. These, with carefully prepared statistical tables of the population, manufactures etc. of Roxborough and Manayunk, will, it is hoped, prove of value to the present generation and give to those who succeed some knowledge of their predecessors.

That some sketches of this kind are needed is almost self-evident, for there are thousands of persons in Philadelphia who do not know the locality of Roxborough, while there are equally as many who have never heard of the great extent of the manufacturing interests of Manayunk. Various causes have operated to produce this ignorance, about Roxborough and Manayunk, the chief of which has been the want of such a journal as it now proposes to establish.

Facts form the basis of history, and hence only such should be stated as can be substantiated, for when once a statement is given to the world as a fact, and remains uncontradicted, it goes down the stream of time, and from its very antiquity gains the semblance of a verity, and in this way, may mislead the future historian. The writer of the historic notes will therefore endeavor to state only such things as he believes to be true. In describing Roxborough he will refer to it as not distinct from Manayunk, but as the old township of ~~MMMMM~~ Roxborough, of which Manayunk was a component part until 1840. In subsequent numbers, Manayunk will be described separately and in detail.

Roxborough Township now composes part of the Twenty-first Ward of the City of Philadelphia. It is situated in the northwestern part of the city, about eight miles from Independence Hall, and is nearly five miles in length by two in breadth. It comprises a superficial area of about 4500 acres of land. The surface of the country is hilly, and the river Schuylkill flows on one side of the township and the Wissahickon creek passes through the eastern part. There is, therefore, a beautiful variety of scenery, which is the admiration of all who visit the region.

When Roxborough was first settled cannot now be ascertained, but it was shortly after Philadelphia was founded. The large map of Thomas Holme, Surveyor General to William Penn, published in 1681-2, does not distinguish the section of country now known as Roxborough by any name, but it is merely divided into eleven different tracts, and on each one is to be seen the name of the patentee to whom each tract had been granted by William Penn. The names of the Patentees, together with the number of acres called for by the patent, is as follows:--

Robert Turner,	500 acres,
Richard and Robert Vicaris	446 acres,
John Jennett	200 acres,
Philip Talmun	200 acres,
Francis Fincher	500 acres,
James Claypoole	500 acres,
Samuel Bennett	246 acres,
Charles Hartford (about)	400 acres,
Richard Snee	354 acres,
Charles Jones	400 acres,
Jonas Smith	500 acres.

The total number of acres is thus ascertained to be 4226, although it was no doubt much greater, as the early surveys were not accurate. Mr. Turner's tract was at the lower end and Mr. Smith's at the upper end of the township. So far as can be ascertained none of these twelve patentees were residents in Roxborough, although the tract of Finches had a house and orchards on it as early as 1691. The land was no doubt taken up on speculation and was settled by second and third purchasers, being the new emigrants.

Unlike the "towns" of New England which were incorporated bodies, with Selectmen and other officers, the townships of Pennsylvania had no special government and kept no official records. Officers were chosen to take charge of the poor and of the roads--and strange as it may seem, the only official documents of Roxborough are "The Records of the Overseers of the Poor," begun in the year 1753. It will thus be seen that means of correct and minute information about the early settlers are very scarce--and that much will depend upon early deeds and wills, or the traditions handed down from father to son, which latter are sometimes very unreliable.

Among the first pioneer settlers were the Cooks, Holgates, Leverings, Rigneters, Rittenhouses, Robesons and Woods. The first permanent settler of whom satisfactory information has been obtained was WIGART, alias WISHERT LEVERING, a native of the town of Camen, in the district of Munster, Germany, who, with his wife and four children came to America in 1685 and first settled at Germantown.

He subsequently, in the years 1691 and 1697 became by purchase the owner of 500 acres of land which had been patented to Francis Fincher. The greater part of Manayunk is built upon this tract, and it commenced at Levering Street on the east, and extended to Fountain Street (Hipple's Lane) on the west. The amount paid for the entire tract of land was the sum of one hundred and sixty-eight pounds current money.

Gerhard Levering, a brother of Wigard, was another early settler, and in October, 1692, bought from John Jennett one hundred acres, which Jennett had purchased of Talmun. This now comprises the lower portion of Manayunk. Wigard Levering was the ancestor of the present Roxborough family of that name, and lived on the Ridge Road, where he died, February 2, 1744, at the age

- "Memoir of the Rev. Abel Morgan, of Pennypek Church"
 "History of the Great Valley (Pa.) Church"
 "History of the Brandywine, (Pa) Church"
 "Biographical Sketch of the Rev. David Jones A.M."
 "History of Pennypek, or Lower Dublin Baptist Church, Morrisania, NY"
 "History of Roxborough Baptist Church, 1889"
 "History of Roxborough and Manayunk"
 "History of the Levering Family, of Roxborough"
 "Sketches of the Life of Johannes Kelpius, the Hermit of the
 Wissahickon"
 "An account of the Early Paper Manufacturers in Pennsylvania" etc

besides numerous articles in Baptist periodicals. He retained an ancestral interest in the Welsh People and language and in everything relating to the Welsh in the United States.

He was a zealous Baptist and also furthered the interests of that church. He succeeded his father as President of the Philadelphia Baptist Association.

In 1853, Brown University gave him the honorary degree of M.A. and in 1880 he received that of D.C.L. from Jordan University.

Mr. Jones was married in 1852 (May 27th) to Caroline Elizabeth Vassar Babcock, daughter of the Rev. Dr. Rufus Babcock of Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

1893
 18222
 71

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of 97 years. He was buried in the midst of his plantation, in the rear of
the present Roxborough Baptist Church. 3

CHAPTER 2.

FIRST PAPER MILL IN AMERICA.

Wigard Levering, the pioneer settler on the "Ridge", as the higher part of Roxborough was called in early times, had two sons who reached maturity; William, who was born at Mulheim, in Germany, May 4, 1677, and Jacob, who it is supposed was born in Roxborough, January 21, 1693. They lived with their parents at the family mansion on the Ridge until their marriage. Both settled in the immediate vicinity of their father, and William died in August or September 1747, aged 70 years, leaving two sons and several daughters, while Jacob died October, 1753, aged 61, leaving six sons and one daughter. Jacob Levering was the first settler in what is now known as Manayunk, and he resided in the house on Green Lane now owned by P.W. Levering, his great-grandson. His father, on the 20th day of February, 1716-17, granted to him a tract of land 85 acres in extent, which is now included within the limits of Manayunk.

Nearly cotemporary with the settlement of the Leverings on the Ridge, the Rittenhouses settled on Paper Mill Run at what is now known as "Rittenhouse Town." The first of the family who came to Roxborough is supposed to have been named William Rittenhouse, or, as the name was then spelled, Rittinhouse or Rittinghausen. He is believed to have been a native of Arnheim in Holland, and to have settled in New Amsterdam, now known as New York, while it was a Dutch colony, from whence he came to Pennsylvania, and located in Roxborough, near the line of the Township of Germantown. It seems that the family had carried on the business of paper making in Holland for many years, and he himself understood that art. At the time of his settlement in Roxborough about the year 1690, there was not only no paper mill in Pennsylvania, but there was none in all British America, and the early colonists were dependent upon Holland or England for their supply of paper.

Mr. Rittenhouse accordingly undertook to supply the great desideratum and erected a paper mill near the source of the stream of water which has thus derived the name of Paper Mill Run. There is no doubt whatever, that this was the first PAPER MILL ERECTED IN BRITISH AMERICA.

This William Rittenhouse had two sons, one named Claus or Nicholas, and the other Gerhardor Garrett. The latter settled at Cresheim, in the upper part of Germantown, where he had a grist mill and a farm, while Nicholas was connected with his father in running the paper mill, and was in fact the owner of the same in part. This mill was owned by William Bradford of New York, Thomas Tresse of Philadelphia, William Rittenhouse and Nicholas Rittenhouse. When it was erected cannot be ascertained with certainty, but as Bradford was interested as part owner, it was doubtless built before 1693, for in that year he removed to the city of New York, and in 1697 the mill was in successful operation as appears from Gabriel Thomas' history of the Province of Pennsylvania. And moreover there is a lease still in existence, dated September 24, 1697, by which "William Bradford of the city of New York, Printer, leases his fourth part of the said paper mill near Germantown to the Rittenhouses for the term of ten years. They were to pay Bradford the full quantity of seven reams of printing paper, two reams of good writing paper, and two reams of blue paper yearly."

This mill was unfortunately swept away by a freshet, and the proprietors lost their materials, tools, etc.

So great a calamity was this that William Penn wrote a paper recommending that citizens at large should aid the proprietors in rebuilding the mill. The freshet must have occurred about the time of Penn's last visit to his colony, between the years 1699 and 1701, and the mill was rebuilt prior to 1703. It was about this time that Nicholas Rittenhouse bought the interest of Bradford and Tresse. William, the father, died in 1707-8

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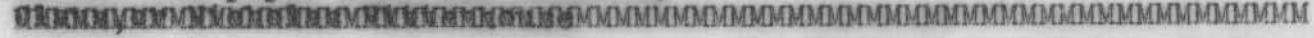
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and Nicholas became by purchase the sole owner of the mill. He continued to manufacture paper until his decease in May, 1734. He left seven children, three sons and four daughters. One of the sons was named Matthias, and he was the father of the celebrated David Rittenhouse, the American astronomer. He was born on the 8th of April, 1732, at the old family estate in Roxborough, and not, as stated by nearly all historians, in Germantown. When David was an infant, his father moved to Norriton, Montgomery County, and engaged in agricultural pursuits.

The ~~mill~~ property on which the first American paper mill was built is still owned by the descendants of the first Claus or Nicholas Rittenhouse, but the mill itself was a second time destroyed, and although another was rebuilt, yet it was not upon the old site, but farther down the stream, at a ~~finite~~ time the writer may furnish a detailed sketch of David Rittenhouse, whose humble birthplace can still be seen in the beautiful vale ~~where~~ where the old paper mill was erected.



Another early Roxborough family were the Righter or Richter family, who settled upon part of the Vicaris patent, in the lower part of the township. There were, it is supposed, two brothers, named Michael and Peter Righter, who bought land adjoining each other and extending from the Schuylkill to the Wissahickon. They were of German origin, but the period of their emigration to America is unknown. Peter bought 75 acres adjoining the tract of Robert Turner and Michael purchased about as much to the west of his brother. The first is now occupied by the lumber yard of Matthew L. Jones, the Wissahickon Station House and the houses of Messrs. Harjes, King, Lorenz, Collins, and Heins; while the latter is that now occupied by the ~~M~~ houses of Messrs. Cauffman, Root, Reger, Prowattain, and the former Manayunk Poor House. Peter Righter lived on the banks of the Schuylkill and built the old stone house at the lumber yard and was the owner of a Ferry. This is supposed to have been the first Ferry in Roxborough. Originally all ferries were granted by patents from the Proprietaries. There are two for the Ferry still preserved. One is from John Thomson and Richard Penn to Peter Righter, and is dated January 13th, 1741, and grants to Righter the use of the Ferry for seven years, forbidding any other ferry to be erected within two miles. The other patent is dated October 11, 1765, and is from John Penn "the American", as he was called. This extends the ferry privilege for seven years and grants the right to exact tolls of everybody except "the Proprietaries, their heirs and successors, their Lieutenant - Governor, attendants and servants." The rope of the ferry was attached to a large maple or sugar tree, ~~on~~ on the opposite side of the Schuylkill, and in order to have a good landing, Thomas David leased to Peter Righter a small strip of ground near the tree. The Lease is dated October 31, 1765, and ~~the~~ the rent reserved was "one ear of ~~Indian~~ Indian corn, to be paid yearly on the first day of October."

CHAPTER III. EARLY SETTLERS IN ROXBOROUGH.

Another early settler in Roxborough was Matthew Holgate, or Houlgate, who is said to have emigrated from England. He settled on the Jennett ~~patent~~ patent, and erected, at an early period, the large stone house on Rittenhouse Lane, and owned by George Markle. He was a fuller by occupation, and that ~~art~~ art appears to have been kept in the family for three generations. On the banks, of the Wissahickon ~~where~~ where "Red Bridge" ~~near~~ near a small ravine, may yet be seen the ruins of an old mill, whose existence was distinctly remembered by some of the older inhabitants of Roxborough a few years since. As there was no apparent road to the mill it was a frequent subject of remark to the boys who used to frequent the banks of the Wissahickon for fishing and bathing. That was the location of Houlgate's Fulling Mill, and there is every reason to believe that it was the first

fulling mill established in Roxborough. On the 8th of December, 1720, Matthew Houlgate, of Roxborough Township, yeoman, and Sarah his wife, conveyed 100 acres of land "as also the fulling mill", to Matthew Houlgate Jr., and this deed recites that he had purchased the land from John Jennett, on the 16th of the 3d month (May) 1698. So that it is probable that Mr. Houlgate settled in Roxborough as early as this last date. Matthew Houlgate the younger, on the 20th of January, 1762, granted the fulling mill to his son John, who, on the 19th of February following conveyed half of the mill to Christian Schneider, of Germantown, skin-dresser. The fulling establishment was bought in 1782 & 1783 by William Rittenhouse. John Houlgate also had five sons, viz:-- Matthew, Samuel, John, Cornelius and William. The latter did some service in the Revolutionary war, and will be noticed hereafter, when the events of the Revolution come to be described.

Andrew Robeson was another of the Roxborough pioneers and owned the mills at the mouth of the Wissahickon.

The family originally settled in Amity Township and its members appear to have become quite extensive land owners. There were several brothers, but the only one who seems to have located in Roxborough was Andrew, which name is still perpetuated in the family and is borne by Andrew Robeson of New Bedford, Massachusetts, who was born at the family mansion on the Ridge Road just below the Wissahickon. When Mr. Robeson first came to Roxborough is not known, but he died in February, 1719-20, and his will of that date describes him as being of the County of Philadelphia. He had bought the Turner patent, July 11, 1691. It may possibly be that he continued to reside in Amity Township, and placed one of his sons at the Roxborough estate. He had seven sons--Andrew, Israel, Jonathan, David, Thomas, Samuel, and Peter. To his eldest son, Andrew, he devised "all the land and tenements belonging to the Roxborough Mill and the Boating Mill." The estate, called in early times, Sumac Park, still retains that name, and is yet owned by lineal descendants of the first Andrew Robeson. The mill, a century ago was called "The Wissahickon Mill," and it is very probable that it was the first mill erected on the Wissahickon Creek. From its situation on the King's Highway, and being contiguous to the city, it attained considerable notoriety. While being owned and conducted by the late Peter Robeson, it was visited in the year 1795 by the Duke de la Rochefoncault Liancourt and described by him at some length in his volume of travels. In a late number of these notes full extracts from the Duke's book will be given.

At the time of the Revolution the mill was occupied by John Vandaren, and in the despatches and official papers of that period frequent mention is made of "Vandeering's Mill." It was, in fact, a very important post, for, in the immediate vicinity, on the bluff behind the mansion house, stood the Hessian redoubt during the occupancy of Philadelphia by the British."

Henry Frey appears to have settled in Roxborough about the year 1692. He was a son-in-law of Wigard Levering, and bought 100 acres of the Talmun ~~patent~~ patent from John Jennett. What became of him is unknown, but on the 9th of March, 1729, he sold his farm to John George Wood, who was a German, and as was often the case, had anglicised his name, the original German being Hannes Yorick Hultz. Such at least was the family tradition related to the writer by the late venerable Mrs. Elizabeth Taylor, a grand daughter of Mr. Wood. He built the large stone house on the Ridge Road, now owned and occupied by Mr. Shur. In its day it was, no doubt, much in advance of the age, although most of the houses erected in Roxborough at that period were large and substantial. This was graced on the north and east sides with a pent roof which, over the door, was enlarged so as to increase the beauty of the architecture. During the Revolution the house and property were owned and occupied by Andrew Wood, a son of the above named John George, and here, in the winter of 1777-78 an event occurred, which, of itself will form a theme for a subsequent paper.

THE HERMIT OF THE RIDGE.

Many of the early settlers of Pennsylvania were induced to leave their native countries on account of religious persecution. In the Eighteenth century the great truth of Religious Freedom was not understood by the higher powers in Europe, although the Quakers and other bodies of Christians had proclaimed it as one of their cardinal doctrines. Nor was it understood here in America, except in the Baptist Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations founded by Roger Williams, and in the Roman Catholic Colony of Maryland, founded by Calvert, Lord Baltimore,—until William Penn took upon himself the government of Pennsylvania, when he incorporated, among the laws passed at Upland (now known as Chester) the glorious principle not of religious toleration only, but of soul liberty, a doctrine which now pervades the Constitution of every State of this Confederacy except New Hampshire. When, therefore, William Penn who had traveled extensively on the Continent, as a preacher of the Society of Friends, or teacher, announced that he was about to found a colony in America, where every settler, whether Jew or Gentile, Catholic or Protestant, should enjoy full liberty to worship God as his Conscience might dictate, the proclamation was hailed as good news by hundreds and thousands who were patiently suffering in religious matters from the oppression of their rulers. This was, no doubt the cause, or one of the causes which led to the extensive immigration from Germany and Holland— for at the period referred to, there had sprung up in those countries, a sect who are known in history as PIETISTS. This name was originally applied in derision to some young teachers of theology at Leipsic, who began to deliver ascetic lectures on the New Testament to the students and citizens. They inculcated holy living and attacked the character of the sermons preached by the Lutheran clergy. The real founder of this sect was a celebrated divine of the Lutheran Church, named Philip ~~SPENER~~ Jacob Spener, who was born in 1635, in Rappolsweller in Upper Alsace. He was a warm and ardent preacher; a learned and pious man, and his teachings were so spiritual that he soon incurred the hatred of the state clergy; but the people were with him, and the students in many of the Universities became his followers. In 1670 he instituted his celebrated Collegia Pietatis, which became the origin of the Pietists.

Spener died in Berlin in the year 1705. The principles which he inculcated were, in the main, correct, but as is apt to be the case, many of his disciples ran into extremes and became enthusiasts; so much so, as to incur censure—if not the severity of the law.

The colony of Penn was therefore to them a refuge from their sore trials, and many of them availed themselves of his generous offer, and came to settle in the wilderness. Among these religious enthusiasts was John Kelpius, more generally known as "The Hermit of the Ridge." The history of this man is so full of romance that but for the strongest evidence one is disinclined to credit the stories related of him. Brought up in the refined society of his native city, receiving an education at the University of Helmstadt, possessing, it is said, an ample fortune, and acquainted with many of the learned men of Europe; we behold him forsaking all—kindred, society and friends, traversing the wide ocean, and taking up his abode in the midst of the wilderness—there to devote his days to the education of such young persons as sought him out, and to commune with his God. Happily for the antiquarian and historian, there were those in that age who carefully treasured up the history of this strange man, and by this means we can now furnish a sketch of his life in America.

A work in German called "Chronicon Ephratense," and published at Ephrata Pennsylvania in 1786, furnishes the following account of Kelpius, for the translation of which we are indebted to Mr. John H. Harjes of Roxborough.

(At the time this sketch was written, Mr. Harjes resided in Roxborough. He is now, and has been for many years, a resident of Paris, France, and is a member of the wellknown Banking House of Drexel, Harjes & Co.)

After a brief sketch of the political condition of Pennsylvania the work proceeds as follows:--

"Among the inhabitants at that time was a certain religious society, which, under the leader John Kelpius, settled near Germantown and for some time prosecuted a strange light in human society."

An appended foot note thus states;--"This Kelpius from Siebenburgen, of a wealthy family, studied at Helmstadt, under Dr. Fabricius, and was well versed in the chief languages, as may be found from his letters, which are still preserved among his friends. In London he was acquainted with Portage, Leade, Deichman, and Maecken chaplain to Prince George, with whom he corresponded. In the year 1694 he came to Philadelphia. His traveling companions were Bernard Kuster, Daniel Falckner, Daniel Lutkins, John Seelig, Ludwig Aderman and many others, the most of whom were scholars. They were all in easy circumstances (Treyen Standes) and settled on the Ridge, which, at that time was a wilderness, whence they named themselves "The Woman in the Wilderness." In the beginning their number was but forty, but it increased, and in 1704 Conrad Matthias joined them, and after a while Christopher Witt, a celebrated physician and magician, Daniel Geissler and several others. Kelpius died in the middle of his days, by which the society was divided, though up to our time a good renown of it has been preserved. Some married, and others were received by the church whilst Seelig and Matthias kept their ground. The former clothed himself in rough garments to avoid associations with men, and the latter after having ~~SHOWN~~ proved his sense of right by acts of love, became a minister, and God sent him a rich merchant, John Wister by name, to assist him with his money. The same gentleman had him buried near Kelpius, though his (Matthias') modesty would not allow him to be laid near--but at the feet of Kelpius."

Such is the account which the Chronicles of Ephrata give of John Kelpius.

Chapter Five.

MORE ABOUT KELPIUS.

When John Kelpius and his band of Hermits reached Pennsylvania, they spent one day in Philadelphia and then hastened to Germantown, and no doubt reported themselves to Pastorius, the agent of the Frankfort Company. How long they remained in Germantown is unknown, but Mr. Watson, the most indefatigable and learned investigator and antiquarian, thinks it was not long, as their peculiar habits attracted much attention and gave them too great notoriety--hence they quietly left the abodes of men, and went to the wilderness, and settled "on the Ridge" as the range of hills along the western bank of the Wissahickon was called. A letter of Kelpius, now in the writer's possession, dated December 11, 1699, is subscribed by that worthy, and has appended to it in his handwriting the following words, "Dated in the Wilderness," so that judging from the peculiarity of his views he early sought the solitude of the Wissahickon--and there lived for years either in rude huts or caves. Even the precise locality of Kelpius's hut is still pointed out. Mr. Watson in his Annals says (Vol. 2, p. 22.) that his "house or hut stood on the hills where the widow Phoebe Righter now lives. Her log house has now stood more than 40 years on the same cellar foundation which was his; it ~~is~~ is on a steep descending, grassy hill, well exposed to the sun for warmth in the winter and has a spring of the hermit's own making half way down the hill shaded by a very stout cedar tree." The property referred to is situated on Hermit's Lane, and is now owned by Mr. Evan Prowattain of Philadelphia, who lately erected a beautiful mansion near the log house of Mrs. Righter, which he appropriately designated as "The Hermitage." Desirous of learning the ground for Mr. Watson's statement, the writer addressed him a letter, and under date of April 18, 1855, Mr. Watson replied as follows:--

"I can't now say who told me the home residence of Kelpius was on Phoebe Righter's place; perhaps it was Leibert; (Mr. Watson says "Leibert of Germantown, was a great admirer of Kelpius

and had his portrait painted by Dr. Witt) but you may rest assured that so "the oldest inhabitant" marked out the place to me. I always marked my way by facts and not by imaginings. I went there and verified, but did not see her."

There, amid the rocks and the hills, surrounded by the tall forest trees, and in the groves--God's first temples--these Hermits of the Ridge, numbering about forty persons, lived as an unbroken brotherhood for a space of at least ten years; but in the year 1708 their learned and pious leader died, at the early age of 35 years, sitting in his garden and attended by his children--spiritual ones, and children whom he taught gratis--weeping as for the loss of a father. The Hermits were banded together on the principle of celibacy, and as long as Kelpius lived, they kept their vows, but as the "Chronicles of Ephrata" quaintly expresses it, "after the death of their leader, THE TEMPTER came among them. Those who had always argued against matrimony returned to woman, which was considered an insult to the single class, so that those who kept to the faith did not dare to speak against the disgrace!" It thus appears that these bachelor hermits used to have discussions about matrimony, even in the wilderness, and it may be that the homeliness of their fare and their rather scant lodgings, especially in winter, made them long for good housekeepers. Nor do we, of the present day, wonder at their decision.

Little is known of any of the Hermits, besides Johannes Kelpius, Johannes Seelig, and Christopher Witt. It will be observed that the first two have Latin names, whilst Dr. Witt's is English. This was a common custom prevalent among the learned in Europe at that time. Some changed their names into Greek--as Philip Melancthon, whose original name was Schwatzerd or black earth. The proper name of Kelpius has not been ascertained, but a gentleman recently suggested that it was Kolb or Kulp, now written Culp. Seelig's name in English was Schlee, as the writer recently discovered by accident. But the few papers which are still in existence show that Kelpius was a very learned man, and acquainted with the Latin, Hebrew, Greek, German and English languages. This is clearly shown by his Journal in Mss. a copy of which in the original Latin is now in the writer's possession. The copy was made from the original which is ~~in the possession of the~~ owned by Charles J. Wister, Esq. of Germantown. It is bound up with copies of letters written by Kelpius to his friends, in Latin, German and English, the whole forming about one hundred pages of written matter. The title page is as follows:--

"Copiae literarum ad amicos in et extra Pennsylvaniam, missae ex deserto a Johanne Kelpio, Transylvanien. 1694--1703-4-5-6-7."
(Copies of letters to friends in and out of Pennsylvania sent from the wilderness by John Kelpius of Transylvania.)

The Journal itself begins as follows; "I. N. I. Anno 1694, Septima Januarii convictus a Deo iter in Americam instituitur comitibus Henrico Hernharde Costero, Daniele Falknero, Daniele Lutkio, Johanne Seeligio, Ludovico Ardermanno et comitibus simul forty circiter quorum recensiti et alii convicti a Deo in Germania precedente adhuc Anno iter ins(iti) ~~transylvaniam~~ tuerant."

It gives quite a detailed account of his voyage, describing his visit to London, the Downs and Plymouth, at each of which places they were detained some time--so that they did not get fairly started from Plymouth until the 18th of April. They had very boisterous weather--but on the 19th day of June, 1694, they espied land; on the 23d they reached Philadelphia, and on the 24th "German optolim usque prosequamur", as the closing sentence of the Journal has it--that is, "we continued our journey even to Germantown."

When the writer has leisure, he may translate the entire Journal, but it is so full of quaint phrases and the Latin is so unclassical, that it requires a thorough antiquary to make it out. It is, however, a very interesting document and should be preserved for the future historian of this part of the city of Philadelphia.

THE NAME ROCKBOROUGH.

The English letters of Kelpius, of which two very long ones are still preserved, show the peculiar bent of his religious thoughts. One of them, dated December 10, 1699, is addressed to "Mr. Steven Momfort, in Long Island, in America; concerning the Pietists in Germany," and it gives a detailed account of the rise and progress of that class of Christians. Its length forbids its publication in these "Notes." The other, dated May 25, 1706, is still longer, and was addressed "For Hesther Pallmer, in Long Island, in Flushing." At its close the date is repeated, with the addition of the word "Rocksorrow." This is believed to be the earliest date yet found of the use of that name as applied to this section of country. The origin of the name is ascribed to Kelpius by Mr. Watson, who says, "After Kelpius' *HAM* hut went down, the foxes used to burrow in his cellar; he called the place the "Burrow of Rocks or Rocksarrow"--now Roxborough. This last letter treats of the three-fold wilderness state, viz. 1. The Barren; 2. The Faithful; 3. The Wilderness of the Elect of God. It is essentially allegorical and highly figurative. In fact, were it not for the deep tone of piety which pervades every sentence, one might suppose that it was written by some of our modern transcendental philosophers. There is little room to doubt that Kelpius, in addition to holding the spiritual notions of the Pietists, was also tinctured with the sublimated views of Jacob Boehme, the celebrated philosopher, and that his seclusion in the wilderness, and silent meditation, only added to the intensity of his aspirations. He and his followers, it would seem, were also expecting that the Millenium was near--so near, that according to Mr. Watson, Kelpius told Alexander Mack, the Tunker, that he should not die till he saw it!

The other letters of Kelpius are addressed to various friends. One dated February 29, 1697, is written to Henry John Deichman of London. Another in Latin, is addressed "Ad. Rev. Dn. Ericum Biork, Pastorem ad Christinem." Another dated 1704, 10-8 pr, written to Maria Elisabeth Gerber, in Virginia; and another, dated July 22, 1705, is written in German to Dr. John Fabricius, Prof. Theol., in Helmstadt. In that last is contained the following sentence in English; "I did behold in it as in a Mirroure the Sincerity and uprightness of my good old Master Dr. Fabricius."

In addition to the above, there is still preserved in manuscript a Hymn Book of 70 pages, containing a number of Hymns composed by Kelpius, and translated into English verse by Dr. Christopher Witt, his friend and pupil. The book has for its title page a quotation from Lamentations, and the following; "Christina Warnerin, 1705; In Germantown in Pennsylvania." The next page is as follows;--"I. N. I. The Lamenting Voice of the Hidden Love, at the time when she lay in Misery, and forsaken; and opprest by the multitude of Her Enemies. Composed by one In Kumber, Pennsylvania in America, 1706." N. B. That Kumber is, here above, spelled with a K, and not with a C, has its peculiar Reason." By this he meant that "one in Kumber" was none other than John Kelpius. The titles of some of these Hymns or poetical effusions may not be uninteresting, and are given to show how the thoughts of the Hermit Poet ran. They are as follows;--"Of the Wilderness--of the secret or private Virgin Cross Love,"--"Colloquium of the Soul with itself over her long-during purification; Set in a pensive longing in the Wilderness, Anno, 1698, January 30." "Of the Power of the New Virgin Body, wherein the Lord himself dwelleth and Revealeth his Mysteries,"--"The Power of Love, which conquers the World, Sin, and Death; A Loving Moan of the Disconsolate Soul, in the Moving Dawn, as I lay in Christian Warner's house, very weak, in a small bed, and not unlike a coffin, in May, 1706,"--"A Comfortable and Encouraging Song, Made intentionally for the lonesome Widow, by occasion of a great cold which seized me in July, 1706." The volume which contains the Hymns has in it a

frontispiece,—a small portrait of Kelpius, in his toga, or scholar's dress, and an eye-lid is held up with the hand, as the nerves were injured. It was painted by Dr. Witt, and has been preserved by the Leibert family. The present owner is Mr. John Leibert of Germantown, who has kindly allowed the writer to have the portrait lithographed. We now bid farewell to the leader of the Hermits of the Ridge, regretting that we have not time to refer to his acts as attorney in fact of the Frankford Company.

CHAPTER SEVEN.

DR. CHRISTOPHER WITT.

Reference has been made in the sketch of John Kelpius to Dr. Witt and John Seelig—both of whom were with Kelpius during his residence among the hills of the Wissahickon, and they are therefore entitled to some notice, especially so, as we are indebted to Dr. Witt for the preservation of many of the Hermit's Mss., and also for his portrait. CHRISTOPHER WITT was a native of Wiltshire, England, and came to America early in the 18th century. He was quite a skillful physician and a man of science—and according to the tradition of Germantown, he was a Magus, or Diviner, and a devout believer in the absurdities and nonsense of the Rosicrucian philosophy. How he made the acquaintance of Kelpius and the other Hermits of the Ridge, is not known, but it may have been that they met at Christian Warner's in Germantown, and Witt was so charmed with the simplicity and bearing of Kelpius, as to be led into the wilderness after him. He must certainly have caught some mysticism of Kelpius, as will subsequently appear—and this added to his, very natural love for the wonderful, and his scientific knowledge, gave him notoriety in his immediate neighborhood. Mr. Watson says that Witt was called a "conjurer," because he cast nativities." He lived in an age when learning was confined to a few, and the learned were often regarded with great awe. Happily that day has, we trust, forever passed away, and ignorance is now the exception. However Dr. Witt was looked upon in Germantown and vicinity, there is no doubt but that he was a learned man, and Darlington's "Memorials of Bartram and Marshall," prove that he was a Naturalist of no mean power, and a Botanist of considerable eminence. He was a correspondent of Peter Collinson, and an intimate friend of our early Botanist, John Bartram. Notwithstanding this he was exceedingly credulous, and dealt much in the marvellous. In a letter to Collinson, dated June 11, 1743, Bartram, after speaking of Dr. Witt's garden, says; "We went into his study, which was furnished with books containing different kinds of learning—as Philosophy, Natural Magic, Divinity, nay, even Mystic Divinity, all of which were the subjects of our discourse within doors, which alternately gave way to Botany, every time we walked in the garden. I could have wished thee the enjoyment of so much diversion, as to have heard our discourse, provided, thee had been well swathed from hips to arm-pits. But it happened, a little of our spiritual discourse was interrupted by a material object within doors; for the doctor had lately purchased of a great traveler in Spain and Italy, a sample of what was imposed upon him for Snake-stones—which took up a little time, beside laughing at him, to convince the doctor that they were nothing but calcined old horse bones. Indeed, to give the doctor his due, he is very pleasant, facetious and pleasant." (Darlington's Memorials, p. 174.)

In another letter dated December 10, 1745, Mr. Bartram says; "Now though oracles be ceased, and thee hath not the spirit of divination, yet according to our friend Dr. Witt, we friends that love one another sincerely, may, by an extraordinary spirit of sympathy, not only know each others desires, but may have a spiritual conversation at great distances one from another." If Dr. Witt proclaimed such views a century since, there is no wonder that he was regarded as a conjurer. Now-a-days, when so many are believers of this very doctrine, we are more charitable, and ascribe such belief to a peculiar mental organization of the individuals.

About the year 1758, when he was over 83 years of age, Dr. Witt lost the use of his eyes, and in July, 1761, Bartram says of him: "Poor old man! he was lately in my garden, but could not distinguish a leaf from a flower."

The doctor survived until January, 1765, when he died at the advanced age of 90 years. He was buried on his own ground in Germantown, now, or lately owned by Miss Morris. He left the greater part of his estate to his "well-beloved friend, Christian Warner, of Germantown," with whom he resided. It is said that he built the first two-story stone house in Germantown. In his will he is described as a "Practitioner of Physick." Among his personal effects were a telescope, a parcel of maps and pictures, an organ, virginals, mathematical instruments, library, prospect glasses, drugs, medicines, "and other utensils belonging to the Apothecary's and Doctor's way." There were also, two clocks, and clock maker's tools; and mention is made of "the great clock that strikes the quarters." He gave sixty pounds to the Pennsylvania Hospital.

CHAPTER EIGHT.

THE LAST OF THE HERMITS.

The last of the Hermits of whom any reliable information can be obtained is JOHN SEHLEE, otherwise, and more commonly known as JOHN SEELIG. He was, no doubt, a German, and at the age of 26 came over with Kelpius, in the year 1694. He, too, was one of the Pietists, and appears to have enjoyed in a high degree, the confidence of his distinguished leader, and is often mentioned in the Latin Journal. He also corresponded with his friends abroad, and one of his letters in German is preserved in the Mss. letter-book.

He also wrote on the subject of the mystic divinity of that day, for in his letter to Mr. Momfort, Kelpius, when referring to the "Reformation and Revolutions in this last Age," says: "as my beloved Brother and faithful Fellow Pilgrim in the Wilderness state, Seelig hath written."

From the most accurate data yet discovered, the writer is disposed to the belief that Sehlee was an ascetic of the first water, if the term may be allowed, and was a believer in Boehme's Teutonic Mysticism--for the NM Chronicles of Ephrata state that after the death of Kelpius, when many of the Society married, Sehlee kept to his principles, clothed himself in a rough, coarse garment, and avoided the society of men; and among his literary treasures were no less than ten of Jacob Boehme's books. The probability therefore is, that when Kelpius died (which is said to have been in 1708) Sehlee remained on the banks of the Wissahickon with Matthias, and such others as were not overcome with the charms of lovely women; until as years advanced upon him, and the desire of his soul was not satisfied, he was led to remove from the Wissahickon to the vicinity of some kind friends. This is rendered probable from the tradition which the writer has heard from a very aged lady, whose early life was passed in Roxborough, that Sehlee, the Hermit, lived for some years, and died on the farm of William Levering, the oldest son of Wigard Levering. The same informant also said that his abode was in the valley, back of the present Leverington Cemetery, a short distance beyond the house of William Levering, who is a lineal descendant of the first of that name. What was the precise relation existing between Mr. Levering and the Hermit will never be known, but it was a close and intimate friendship. Their acquaintance was doubtless formed at the period of Kelpius's settlement on the Ridge, when the Rittenhouses, Leverings, and Holgates were about the only settlers in Roxborough, and the Hermit was probably assisted and visited by Mr. Levering. Be that as it may, they were known to each other intimately in 1735. It was in that year, on the 17th of September, that Sehlee made his will. It began as follows:-- "I, John Sehlee, of Roxborough, in the county of Philadelphia, Gentleman, being in good health of body and mind, do make this my last Will and Testament." The residue of his estate he bequeathed to "my friend, William Levering, Sen'r. of Roxborough." The presumption therefore is, that at the time the Hermit was living either at Mr. Levering's house or on his farm. He was 67 years of age, and survived ten years.. His death

His death is recorded in the family Bible of Wigard Levering in the following words:--"John Sealy, Hermit, died April 26, 1745, aged 77 years. As Mr. Levering was his legatee and Executor, he no doubt superintended the funeral of his aged friend, and although there is nothing to prove the fact, yet it is more than probable that his remains were interred in the Family Buryial ground of his Executor, where, the previous February, Wigard Levering, the Pioneer settler had been buried. This graveyard is in the rear of the Roxborough Baptist Church, and is beautifully located on an elevated knoll, which affords a view of Germantown and the romantic valley of the Wissahickon. It does not appear that the Hermit had very much of an estate but the inventory, as filed in the Register's office, contains the following items:-- 25 SHIRTS, shirts, 4 coats, 2 jackets, 2 hats, pair of shoes and slippers, 7 pairs linen drawers, 3 planes, 2 saws, 1 glue pot, 54 bottles, 5 bookbinder's presses, saddle and bridle, 1 seal, gold and silver weights, 5 Bibles, 14 books, 10 of Jacob Boehm's books, and 120 Latin, Dutch and Greek books." The author of the Chronicles of Ephrata says that Sehlee "clothed himself with a rough garment," but the inventory shows that he possessed other clothing, and we are led to the inference that the large number of shirts in his wardrobe may have been the accumulation of years, and as the other Hermits died off, he may have inherited their dresses. --Thus far, all attempts to discover any of the above named books, have failed, and yet they were, no doubt, preserved for years in Roxborough. Mr. Watson, who saw and conversed with some of the old inhabitants in Germantown, by whom many of the local traditions were handed down, says that Sehlee also predicted men's lives when requested, by the rules of Astrology, and that he had a mysterious cane or rod, which, during his last sickness he commanded to be cast into the river Schuylkill. This, as the tradition goes, was done, and the cane exploded with a loud ~~explosive~~ noise."

Of Conrad Matthias, who has been designated as "the last of the Hermits of the Ridge," nothing is really known. He too, according to Mr. Watson, died in 1745--the year of Sehlee's death, but his authority for this statement is not given. They have passed away, one by one, these devoted and pious men. They sought refuge amid the rocks and the vales of Penn's woods--preferring the dangers of the ocean--the exposure to savages--the wants and trials incident to exclusion from Society--to the pleasures of social intercourse, that they might become better fitted to enter upon "the Divine Life." Their dreams of Millennial glory have been realized but not on earth--and although their names are almost forgotten here, yet it is earnestly hoped that they "are written in the Lamb's Book of Life."

REQUIESCANT IN PACE.

X

Those who have visited the valley of the Wissahickon have doubtless observed on the brow of a hill on its Eastern bank, about a mile above the "Red Bridge," a large three-storied house of dressed stone, with an old-fashioned hollow cornice. That building is the so-called "Monastery of the Wissahickon," but not as originally built, for many of the windows have been walled up and a cornice that once projected over the first row of windows has been removed. In fact, the old house, which was a grand mansion in its pristine glory, has been thoroughly modernized, with the exception that it has escaped the vandalic coat of exterior plaster, which, in that region, has ruined many a noble old house. But there, in the same building, tradition states that more than a century since, lived a band of Monks, who had their robes and habits of dress---their solemn rites and midnight vigils---their matins and their vespers. They were, however, of the Protestant faith, and belonged to a church since designated as Seventh Day Baptist or Sabbatarians, from the fact of their belief that the seventh day is still to be observed as a day for rest and worship. They were similar to those who founded cloisters at Ephrata in Lancaster County and also at Snow Hill.

Our friend Watson of Germantown, who is deserving of everlasting praise for garnering up the recollections of the early settlers, and their immediate descendants, says that the aged neighbors remembered that when young, they were told that the old mansion was occupied by Monks of the Seventh Day Baptist order, who used wooden blocks for pillows to sleep on, scalloped out so as to fit the head. A pillow of this sort, said to have been used at Ephrata, the writer has seen in Philadelphia, where it is yet possessed. With such traditional data, fancy has been allowed free scope, and now "The Monastery of the Wissahickon" figures upon maps, and forms the theme of more than one romance. It is difficult after such a lapse of time and the absence of documents to arrive at the precise truth. We know, however, that between the Hermits of the Ridge and the brethren at Ephrata, there was a brotherly affinity---and those at Ephrata had frequent accessions to their number from the banks of the Wissahickon.

The *Chronicon Ephratense* (p. 84.) has a curious paragraph which may or may not refer to the valley of the Wissahickon. The author says:--"On the 13th of April, 1736, I went to brother Alexander Mack's, where three of us lived for some time. In the year 1737 we built a house in a valley one mile from Germantown into which we moved, October 14th, of the same year.

Another hermit, named John Riessman, and a couple of married people came to and lived with us. On the 21st of March, 1738, my three brethren, Alexander Mack, Henry Hoecker, and John Reissman, left us and went to the Hermit in Ephrata, whilst the housekeeper went again to the country. After this another pious house-father came and lived with me, but only up to March 27th, 1739, at which time I moved also to the solitary ones at Ephrata."

There is no other house in the valley one mile from Germantown except this that has the reputation of having been a Monastery, and yet the present building was not erected until at a later period, so that if the other Anchorites built a house at this spot, it must have been prior to the one now there. There is proof in the writer's possession, which states that Benjamin Shoemaker, in March 1746-7, sold the land where this house now stands, to John Gorgas, of Germantown, and on the 6th of April, 1752, he conveyed half of it to his brother, Joseph Gorgas. In the deed there is the following recital:--

WHEREAS, the above named Joseph Gorgas, has since, at his own ~~own~~ costs and charges, built and erected a three-story stone house or Messuage on a certain spot of land. Joseph Gorgas was a member of the Society of Tunkers or German Baptists, and was full of religious zeal. Desirous of cultivating a habit of meditation, he conceived the design of erecting this house in that hidden spot---secluded and sequestered from the world. Hither were gathered congenial spirits like himself, and there they held sweet communion. Such is the tradition as obtained from those

who have heard the history of Joseph Gorgas. And what more fitting spot could have been selected for such a purpose? Before, behind, and on either side stood in silent grandeur, the granite rocks, shaded by trees of a century's growth --- while in front flowed the placid waters of the Wissahickon, whose banks were fringed with the evergreen hemlock. Innocent men, dream on, nor heed the busy world without, nor fear to commune with your Maker!

Mr. Gorgas was not destined to hold the Monastery long, for the expense of its erection was heavy, and hence we find that in 1761, he removed to Germantown. In that same year he sold the property to Edward Milner, and he, in 1775, sold it to Peter Care, who held it until 1802. It was afterwards owned by John Livezey, John Conrad, Gavin Hamilton, John G. Langstreth, Joshua Garsed & Co, and Elizabeth Weest. Its present owners are William Kitchen & Son.

A small strip of land below the County Bridge is pointed out as the place where the Monks were accustomed to administer the rite of Baptism in the Wissahickon, and on the Township Map the spot is designated as "The Baptisterion." The map, however, has the place located above, instead of below the bridge.

The entire history of the spot as well as the parts of the Wissahickon where the Hermits lived--the peculiar manners and doctrines of that strange people--their seclusion from the world, and their high character for learning and piety, have invested the whole subject with an air of romance, which, as time rolls on in the cycle of years, will ever continue to increase.

It is a theme worthy the pen of the poet or novelist. The work of that eccentric genius, George Lippard, called "Paul Ardenheim; or the Monk of the Wissahickon," is doubtless based on the facts before stated, but there is surely little or no historic truth in that mysterious production. Years ago Mr. Lippard called upon the writer for information about these very Monks, of whom his work professes to treat.

The most interesting papers ever written about the Hermits, Monks, and Legends of the Wissahickon, are from the pen of the late William M. Fahnestock M.D. of Bordentown, who formerly resided in Roxborough as a practicing physician.

The writer has seen a series of eight stories by Dr. Fahnestock, all of which are based on some of the early traditions which prevailed among the early settlers of Roxborough. Their titles are here given to show their nature. "The Brethren of the Wilderness, or the Hermits;" "Cupid in the Cloister;" "Hidden Treasures;" "The Alchymist;" "The Haunted Mill;" "The Rose of the Lake;" "The Bridal Tomb;" "Filial Sacrifice;" "The Forsaken." Some of them were published in the Bucks County Intelligencer, and the Doctor intended to bring them out in book form, but his sudden death prevented. They are yet in the possession of his family.

It is truly hoped that his mantle may rest upon some one equally fitted to clothe in living forms the humble heroes of the Valley of the Wissahickon.

CHAPTER TEN.

Having disposed of the Hermits, Monks and the other celebrities of the Wissahickon, it is now proposed to resume the plain thread of our Roxborough sketches, noting here and there, such facts as are deemed worthy of preservation. It has long been a cherished wish of the writer to obtain a list of the citizens of Roxborough during the early part of the last century, but the researches that have been made, have been unavailing prior to 1753. There are numerous parties named in deeds and wills, but the labor of collecting their names is too much for one who has other and more important duties to perform.

Among the names of residents prior to that date are those of Henry Frey, Johannes Gumric, Samuel Guldin, Michare Pelsner, Samuel Savage, John Linderman and his sons John Henry, Abraham, William, Christian, Samuel, and Zachariah; Henry Snider, George Jacob and his sons, Henry, Jacob, Peter, and Matthias.

Thomas, Rees, Isaac Linglow alias L'englois, Benjamin Morgan, Bartle Righter, and his sons John, Jacob, Peter, and Bartle; George Giger, John, David, and Henry Shellenberger.

There were, of course, many other residents here prior to that date, many of whom are included in a list of taxables which I was fortunate to discover in the vault beneath the office of the Court of Common Pleas. This list contains the names of all the taxables of Roxborough Township in the 1758, and as one of the earliest records relating to our township, it is given entire, the only alteration being the alphabetical arrangement of names. The amount of tax levied, and the cause of the tax may also prove a matter of some interest. The duplicate states as follows:--

"A Tax of Three Pence in a pound, and nine shillings per head, laid on the Estates of the Freeholders and Inhabitants of the City and County of Philadelphia, for repairing and enlarging the Prison, and Discharging sundry Debts of the County, and destroying Wolves, Foxes, Crows, and other Exigencies of the County the ensuing year, Assessed the 27th day of February, A.D. 1753.

ROXBOROUGH.

Abraham Levering, Collector.

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Adam Alt | Jacob Levering |
| Jacob Amos | William Levering |
| James Anghas | Thomas Livezley, and for the mill. |
| John Bouler | Philip Marewine |
| Daniel Barndollar | Henry Markel |
| George Barkman | Michael Moyer and for the Plow. |
| Jacob Blade | William Morgan |
| Frederick Black | George Page |
| John Bold | Thomas Page |
| Jacob Bold | Jacob Pancake |
| John Butterwarke | David Person |
| George Calege | Fred. Plankhorne |
| Isaac Cooke | Thomas Price |
| Jacob Cooke | Thomas Reese |
| Isaac Cooke, Jr. | George Righter |
| Jacob Colton | Michael Righter |
| Conrad Corett | Peter Righter |
| Jacob Crawford | Jacob Rincker |
| Frederick Coon | William Rittenhouse |
| Thomas Daves | Michael Rittenhouse |
| Arnold Fight | William Rittenhouse |
| Casper Fight | Nicholas Robin |
| John Gruber | Adam Shaffer, Jr. |
| Isaac Hanney | Henry Shellenberger |
| Matthew Holgate | Adam Shaffer |
| John Holgate | George Shaffer |
| John Holdgat | George Shurr |
| Henry Kile | Nicholas Shoude |
| Joseph Keekler | Oliver Shortalle |
| Andrew Lees | John Stanaland |
| Abraham Levering | Conrad Star |
| Benjamin Levering | Andrew Wood |
| Jacob Levering | John Wood |
| Septimus Levering | Peter Wood |
| Benjamin Levering | Adam Yager |
| Wickard Levering | Henry Zeiner |

The whole number of taxables in this year, it will be seen, was 71, and allowing four persons to each family, the population of the township would be only 284. I have also seen a statement that in 1741 there were but 38 taxables--but the list itself I cannot obtain. The population in that year would be about 152. Some of the names are erroneously spelled, and require explanation. John and Jacob Bold should be Bald, Nicholas Robin was, no doubt, Rapine, Michael Moyer, it is very likely, lived on the Ridge Road where the Manayunk Poor House used to be, for that was long known--even within the writer's memory as the "Plow Tavern."

What became of Oliver Shortaile and Jacob Pancake, even tradition fails to tell. These distinguished surnames have long since been extinct in our township.

It is a somewhat singular fact that of all the freeholders named in this list of taxables, only four of the family names are yet to be found, and they are Levering, Moyer, Righter and Rittenhouse.

It seems, therefore, that within the last century, the names of nearly the entire population have been changed, and but for the accidental discovery of the foregoing tax list, we of this generation would never have known who resided here a hundred years ago.

The occupations of these citizens were various. They were chiefly farmers, millers, paper-makers, carpenters or blacksmiths, and in some cases one man carried on several trades. They were, for the most part, in easy, comfortable circumstances. Every one, at that time had something to do--and no one was ashamed of his occupation. All were industrious and before their stalwart blows, the forests soon disappeared. Their farms yielded them a full supply, and as the clothing of our ancestors was homespun, they felt, perhaps, far more than we do now, quite independent of the world around them.

CHAPTER ELEVEN.

In a former paper I have stated that at a very early period after the settlement of Roxborough, the Rittenhouses erected a paper mill, and that it was the first in British America. This statement has been given by the writer to the American public through the pages of "The Historical Magazine," and no one has ever attempted to disprove the assertion.

When or where the next mill in our township was built, cannot be ascertained with certainty. I am inclined to believe that it was the Grist Mill near the mouth of the Wissahickon, and usually called Robeson's Mill. That it was built at a very early date is unquestionable. The Duke de la Roche foucault, when writing in 1795 of Peter Robeson's Mill, says, "it is said to be the first that was built in America." The Duke no doubt heard the statement from some one, and it is to be regretted that he did not give his authority.

Grist Mills had long been in existence in other parts of the country, and Mr. Watson asserts that the first grist mill in Philadelphia County was built on the present Mill Street, formerly Church Lane, Germantown, and commonly known as Roberts' Mill. It was erected by a Quaker named Richard Townsend, who came over with William Penn in the good ship Welcome, in 1682.

In a statement which he made about the year 1727, he says that after his arrival, "he set up a mill on Chester Creek," which he brought over read framed from London, and which "served for grinding corn and sawing of board. He then adds that "as soon as Germantown was laid out, I settled my tract of land which was about one mile from Germantown, where I set up a barn and a corn mill, which was very useful to the country round. But there being few horses, people generally brought their corn upon their backs, many miles. I remember one man had a bull so gentle that he used to bring the corn upon his back."

(Watson, Vol. 2, p. 512.)

It is very probable that this is the basis of Mr. Watson's statement con-

cerning the locality of this grist mill, but I have recently ascertained that a certain Richard Townsend, millwright, as early as 1686 became interested in a tract of 50 acres of land in Roxborough, and, as I shall show, he no doubt erected a mill ~~MMMM~~ in this place at that date, and at a spot "about a mile from Germantown." Whether he was the same Townsend, I cannot say, but the probability is that he was. There is no doubt but that the fine water power of the Wissahickon Creek was soon applied to the practical purposes of life. The proximity of the Wissahickon to the city, and the water fall that could be had at the mouth, rendered it a desirable mill seat.

As before stated, Sumac Park, embracing 501 acres, was patented by William Penn to Robert Turner, on the 24th of the 4th month (June) 1684. On the 19th of June, 1688, Turner leased fifty and a half acres of his large tract to Joshua Tittery, for 101 years, and he entered into partnership with Richard Townsend, millwright, "for the said term upon said fifty and a half acres of land, to equally pay the rent, and equally to bear the charge of building the mill or mills or other improvements."

On the 11th day of July, 1691, Turner conveyed the whole tract to Andrew Robeson--and in that deed there are numerous recitals by which it appears that Tittery and Townsend had also taken into the concern John Tysack of London, and had conveyed to him a third of the land, "Houses, saw and corn mills." The date of that conveyance was March 25, 1689.

On the 8th of November, 1690, Andrew Robeson and Charles Sanders bought Tittery's share. On the 5th of October, 1703, Sarah Sanders, widow of Charles and guardian of her son, conveyed all her late husband's interest in the property to Andrew Robeson, whereby the sole ownership vested in him. In this conveyance mention is made of "one water corn mill and mills (being three grist mills under one roof) commonly called or known by the name of Wissahickon Mills. The Records of the Court of Quarter Sessions (See Road Book, Vol. 1, p. 31) speaks of a survey of "Ridge Road from Wissahickon Mills to Philadelphia," as early as June 1706.

It is thus seen that Roxborough Mills were established as early as 1686, only three years after the supposed date of Roberts' Mill at Germantown. Further notice of this mill must be deferred until the next paper. The other early mills on the Wissahickon may be named as follows, proceeding up the stream.

At an early date, about the year 1746, Nicholas Rittenhouse and Matthias Adam Hogermoed built a grist mill on the Wissahickon between the present Wissahickon Hall and the Log Cabin, the walls of which were standing within the memory of some of our citizens, and the remains of a dam at that spot as well as a couple of old mill-stones, are still visible. This mill was subsequently owned and carried on by Martin Rittenhouse and John Vandaren, who at one time lived at Robeson's Mill, but when Robeson's upper dam was constructed the other mill power was rendered useless.

The next mill was built about 1749 by one of the Rittenhouses, and was a grist mill. The late Nicholas Rittenhouse used to say that it was currently reported that this mill was built without the use of horses and carts, all the materials having been carried to the spot by manual labor. Mr. Watson says that even barrows were not used, but that admits of some doubt.

On Paper Mill Run there was always a mill of some kind, and when the second paper mill was destroyed another was built a short distance below the site of the first one, and it was carried on for many years by Jacob Rittenhouse, the first of that name in Roxborough.

Near the Wissahickon on the Run was William Rittenhouse's Paper Mill, subsequently converted into a factory. At one time, I believe, it was a grist mill.

The Red Bridge Mill was built, it is believed, by Henry Rittenhouse, and was afterwards owned by Abraham Rittenhouse, then by Enoch, and now by ~~MMMM~~-Nicholas Rittenhouse, Jr.

Half a mile up the stream we come to Holgate's Fulling Mill, erected, as stated before, at a very early day, probably several years prior to 1720, and subsequently owned by Matthew Holgate and Christian Snyder. It was finally bought by Abraham Rittenhouse, the owner of the Red Bridge Mill and on account of raising his dam the fulling mill was rendered useless. Access to this mill was had through and across the hills of Wissahickon by a road which, in some places, is yet visible.

The Monastery Mill, now owned by William Kitchen & Son, was built about 1747--8 by Jacob Simon, Michael Pelsner, and John Gorgas, and was at first a grist mill. The interesting events which have occurred in its vicinity entitle it to more extended notice, but the difficulty of procuring the materials for full notices is my apology for this list of references.

CHAPTER TWELVE.

The next mill on the Wissahickon above the Monastery is that owned by a Mr. Weighley, and is carried on as a cotton wadding factory, by Jacob D. Heft. It was erected at an early date, perhaps about the middle of the last century, by John Gorgas, of Germantown, who bought on the 22d of August, 1746, two tracts of land from John Bald, one containing 43 acres, and the other 42 acres. In the deed mention is made of a stone messuage on one of the tracts, but there is no reference to any mill. The land extended from the Ridge Road to the Wissahickon, and was bounded on the lower side by Levering's land (now owned by Horatio Gates Jones). In 1773, John Gorgas, Senior, who is described as "of Roxborough," conveyed to his son John Gorgas, miller, a certain messuage or tenement, and about 63 acres of land. The house thus conveyed, it is most likely, was that situated back some distance from the Ridge Road, and now occupied by Lewis Hinkle. When the mill at the Wissahickon was built I cannot learn, but it must have been between 1746 and 1764, at which ~~the~~ latter date Gorgas Lane was laid out by order of the Court. Prior to that time the road crossed the Wissahickon over the breast of the dam, and went up through the narrow gorge towards Germantown. In addition to a grist mill, I have heard that there was once a saw-mill at the place. The mill was occupied for many years by the Gorgas family, and at a later date Jacob Wise carried on an extensive flour business there, and finally it was converted to its present use and greatly enlarged. Mr. Hendricks subsequently carried on this Factory, and it was during this occupancy that it was completely destroyed by fire.

A short distance above the Factory, a small stream, which rises in a valley beyond the chemical works of Charles J. Grease, empties into the Wissahickon. It is known in early deeds as Oil Mill Run, and has been so designated on the Township Map. It takes its name from an Oil Mill which formerly occupied the site of Matthias Gorgas' cotton wadding factory. The date of its erection is unknown, but it was subsequent to 1746.

John Bald was a cordwainer and only held his property on the north-easterly side of Ridge Road from 1738 to 1746. In the deed to Gorgas mention is made of "an oak by a run," but in May, 1777, John Gorgas bought about an acre of land from Michael Bargendollar (now spelled Barndollar) and this deed speaks of one of the lines of the land as extending along the courses of "Oil Mill Run," so that between those two dates it is very likely the oil mill was built. It appears to have been carried on by Benjamin Gorgas. Subsequently it was turned into a grist mill, and was carried on as such by John Gorgas, Jr., father of the late Samuel Gorgas. Then it was converted into a Cotton Lap Factory, and for many years, Joseph Carr, now of Cresheim, carried it on, and more recently it was changed into a cotton wadding factory by the present occupant, Matthias Gorgas. The property, it will thus be seen, has been in the same family for the period of 113 years. The old mill, with the ancient mansion, situated at the base of a hill covered with laurel--with the small stream running in front of it--was quite picturesque, and I am glad to know that Mr. John Gorgas, of Wilmington, Delaware, has a fine oil painting of the old mill as it stood

before the hand of modern improvement depraved it of its ancient beauty. There is also, at Bordentown, New Jersey, another view of the mill, from which Mr. Gorgas had his copied. This Bordentown picture is also an original.

It once belonged to Dr. Fahnestock, to whose prolific pen we are also indebted for a tale entitled "The Haunted Mill." The local interest in the story is such that the re-publication of it would no doubt be acceptable to many of your readers. Those who know the locality of the mill and ~~and~~ its history, and who are not at all credulous, might well believe that there is some of the ancient witchcraft about the spot, for, during the nineteen years that the present occupant has carried on business there, the mill and dry-house have been on fire thirty-two times; and I believe that the factory itself, has been wholly or partially burned eight times,

Nearly opposite, on Livezey's lot, is to be seen "Mine Rock," which is plainly visible from the road; and a short distance below on the northern side of Oil Mill Run, is a cavern which extends into the hill-side a considerable distance. Concerning both of these I shall have much to say at a future time.

The only other mill on the Wissahickon within the bounds of Roxborough is Livezey's. It was formerly a grist mill, and was built about the year 1745-6, by a certain Thomas Shoemaker, who conveyed it and about 23 acres of land to Thomas Livezey, on the 10th of October, 1747. Mr. Shoemaker had bought the property from John Hammer February 8th, 1745-6, and the deed to Mr. Livezey reads as follows: "And the said Thomas Shoemaker hath erected a certain water grist mill, with two pairs of stones, under one roof." Thomas Livezey was a member of the Society of Friends, and at one time resided in Cheltenham Township (now in Montgomery County) then in Philadelphia County. The family had been settled for some years in Lower Dublin. Mr. ~~Bovering~~ ^{Bovering} came to Roxborough prior to 1752, and after 1747. No man, perhaps, has had his name so differently spelled and pronounced. Commonly it is pronounced as if written "Lewsley," and I find in a deed of 1710 that it was even then so pronounced, as it speaks of "Thomas Livezey, alias Lewsley;" and another deed speaks of Thomas ~~Lewisley~~ Lewisley.

The family originated in Morton, in the County Palatine of Chester, and emigrated to America at an early day. The position which Mr. Livezey occupied in Roxborough, and his influence at large, entitle him to a separate notice, which will be given when I come to give biographical sketches of the early prominent settlers. All that is necessary to say here is that he carried on the mill for many years, and died in the year 1790.

The mill and adjoining property are now owned by his grandson, Thomas Livezey, who resides on Allen's Lane, Germantown, near Township Line. Another grandson, Mr. John Livezey, resides in Philadelphia, and for many years, occupied a prominent position as a merchant, but retired many years since on an ample fortune. He still feels an interest in Roxborough, his natale solum

CHAPTER THIRTEEN.

These brief sketches of the various mills along the Wissahickon would be incomplete without a more special reference to the later history of Robeson's Mills. Since Chapter Eleven was written, other facts have come to light, and perhaps their detail may lead to further research. Robeson's Mills were at one time owned by John Vandaren. In 1760 he bought 53 acres of land, which is described as being near to other land "belonging to the said John Vandaren's (late Andrew Robeson's) ~~Mills~~ Mills, and on the 18th of May, 1760, Rudman Robeson of Roxborough, gentleman, "sold Vandaren three tracts of land, and in 1783, he bought more from one of the Rittenhouses, so that he finally owned about 250 acres in Roxborough. During the Revolution Mr. Vandaren lived in the Robeson mansion and carried on the mills. He died in 1788. Judge Thomas Smith of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, who lived on School Lane was his son-in-law. In 1786 his estate and mills were sold, and Peter Robeson and his brother Jonathan Robeson, who are described as of Roxborough, "millers" become the purchasers and the property

has ever since remained in the family. Peter Robeson, who became the sole owner, was a member of the Society of Friends. His first wife was Martha, daughter of Thomas Livezey of the Wissahickon, and he carried on an extensive business at the mills. He was widely known and as equally respected by the community. He possessed a spirit of enterprise, and long before the Schuylkill Canal was constructed, he and the late George W. Smick had projected a ~~sort~~ a sort of water right improvement up at the "dead waters," opposite Nixon's Mill, and bought a tract of land from John Tibben, Senior. They had also bought as early as September 1812, a tract near the Upper Locks from Godfrey Bockius. Mr. Robeson died November 9, 1833, aged 86 years. It was while he resided at the Wissahickon that he was visited by the celebrated Duke de la Rochefoucault Lieucourt, who subsequently wrote a book, describing his travels in America. From this very interesting work I shall now extract his own account of his visit to Mr. Robeson, whom he calls by mistake, Robertson. On the 20th of April, 1795, Mr. Guillemard, Caleb Lownes and myself set out on horseback from Philadelphia through Ridge Road, on our way to Norristown. This road, like all the road in Pennsylvania, is very bad, for provision is brought to that city from all parts in large and heavily laden wagons. The constant passing of these wagons destroys the roads, especially near the town, when several of them meet. Ridge Road is almost impassible. Two miles from the city Ridge Road intersects the intrenchments which the English constructed during the last war, for the purpose of covering Philadelphia, after they had penetrated Pennsylvania through the Chesapeake. The remains of these works are still visible, but the presence of the English is more strongly testified by the ruins of many half-burnt and half demolished houses, so many expensive monuments of that inveterate animosity with which the war was carried on, and which was highly disgraceful to the generous sentiments of a people who well know, that every evil inflicted on an enemy, even in time of war, without the plea of necessity or advantage is a crime. The whole road from Philadelphia to Roxborough is full of granite and covered with a sort of mica, which is reducible to the finest dust.

"About half a mile from Mr. Nicholson's buildings, on the bank of the Schuylkill is the house of one Robertson (Robeson) where we intended to stop. Robeson is a Quaker and brother of Caleb Lownes' wife, is a miller, and farmer on his own account. He possesses an estate of 250 acres, of which 30 only are covered with wood. The land is, on the whole, of very inferior quality, in this district. There is but little wheat cultivated here, the common grain being maize, called herein America, Indian corn; also rye and some oats. An acre generally yields from 25 to 30 bushels of maize, from 18 to 20 bushels of rye, and about 10 bushels of wheat. Mr. Robeson manures his land, but it is a surprising fact, that he fetches his dung from Philadelphia at the high price of three dollars a load, containing about five cubic feet (evidently an error) when he might easily obtain it in abundance on his own farm. Seven such loads are allowed to every acre, and his land is manured every three or four years. His meadows are superior to the rest of his ground; in common with all American farmers he mixes plaster of Paris with his seed. Four oxen and two horses are sufficient to do the work of this farm, part of which is so steep as to be incapable of cultivation. Day laborers are procured here without much difficulty; they receive four dollars a day, with board, or five shillings and nine pence without it. The price of Indian corn is five shillings a bushel, and of wheat from nine to twelve, and of barley six. Hay is generally sold at sixteen or 18 dollars a ton, but at this time it is thirty-three. Common meadows yield about three tons, but those in a good situation, which are properly cultivated, and sown with clover or other grass, at times yield eight tons per acre. Mr. Robeson buys lean cattle, from the fattening of which he derives a profit of 16, 20, or 25 dollars per head. Robeson asserts, however, that hay is the most lucrative produce coming from the meadows, at least it is that which with equal profit requires least toil. I am astonished at the shallow arguments the farmers of this county offer to justify their favorite system of avoiding whatever requires labor. On this principle Mr. Robeson will not keep a dairy, or make either

butter or cheese, though, were he to try the experiment, he would soon experience its advantages.

"He appears to be more skillful as a miller. His mill, which is said to be the first built in America is worked by a rivulet called Wissahickon, which turns twenty five other mills before it reaches Robeson's. It has three separate water courses, and three separate mills, two of which are for the manufactory, as they call it, and one for the public. The latter grinds all the corn which is brought hither, without the least alteration of the mill-stones in its passing from the grain to the flour, which naturally renders the meal very indifferent. The miller's due is one tenth, according to the law of the land. Robeson does not grind any Indian Corn on his own account, nor has he any kiln to dry it. Meal from this corn is not bad if speedily used; but it is not for being long kept, and yields but little. The corn is brought hither in wagons, and the cranes, instead of turning it out of the vessel, lift it up from the wagons into the granary, which is very small, and the corn lies in heaps, the several being low, dark, and dirty. Robinson grinds yearly from 45,000 to about 50,000 bushels of corn which he procures from Virginia and New York, and some is even brought from the upper parts of Pennsylvania. There are however, so many mills along the Schuylkill that he receives but little from that part of the country. The grain procured from the other side of the bay comes by Philadelphia, from which it is brought to the mill, which is large enough to contain about 10,000 bushels. Six horses are constantly employed in carrying the meal to Philadelphia and bringing back corn in return. This journey is often performed twice a day. The water of the Wissahickon is never frozen, nor does the mill cease working, except in case of the utmost necessity. Mr. Robinson employs about his mill five men, three of whom he pays. He gives \$120 to the first, and \$80 to each of the other two. The rest are apprentices who receive nothing but victuals, clothes, etc. A barrel of flour at this time (April 20 1885) is worth \$10. Robinson complains of the quality of the grain last year, which, he says, is not heavy, but in general, hollow. I have, however, seen some very good grain of last year. I heard him say that the grain attacked by the Hessian fly, notwithstanding it becomes bad and hollow, yields flour, which, though somewhat indigestible is not quite unwholesome. The banks of the Schuylkill were visited last year by great numbers of these flies. "

Such is the interesting account of the Duke's visit to Peter Robeson, which I consider worthy of being read by the citizens of Roxborough and Manayunk. My attention was first directed to it by my worthy friend Mr. Benjamin P. Hunt of Kensington. The recollection of the visit of this distinguished foreigner had been entirely forgotten. The late Jonathan Robeson, who was a lad at that time, knew nothing of it. When I stated the circumstances to the late Mrs. Mary Bensell, a sister of Peter Robeson, who, when I saw her, was in her 93d year, she at once said that she remembered being at her brother's when a Frenchman stopped and dined, and that his visit was impressed on her mind from the fact that he had a dog with him, and while at the table he threw meat to it.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN.

All of the mills which have been either named or described were famous in early times, and the grist and merchant mills were carried on with much energy. Access to Robeson's was of course quite convenient by means of the Schuylkill River, for the farmers who lived in the interior on the Schuylkill were accustomed to send their grain down in long boats and sell it to the miller. Several of the Wissahickon millers built warehouses on the banks of the Schuylkill, where they were accustomed to store their grain and haul it away as it was needed. Among these were the Messrs Livezey, sons of Thomas Livezey Sr., and also John Wise, who had such houses on the river above Flat Rock. The millers would also go up country and engage grain from the farmers, who hauled it for themselves for a distance of fifty or sixty miles, and were always sure to find a ready market. The roads used to be lined for miles with wagons loaded with wheat, rye, or corn, on their way to the mills. An eye witness has told me that he has seen a train of wagons at Robeson's Mills, extending for nearly half a mile along Ridge Road. The scene as described by those who remember the days of yore, was full of excitement; and the otherwise quiet Township of Roxborough was, on such occasions enlivened by crowds of farmers and teamsters, who were always ready for fun and jokes. Those jocund, merry times of yore have long since passed away, and no more will these scenes be enacted here. The number of mills along the Wissahickon in Roxborough Township in 1779, was eleven, as nearly as I can ascertain, and since then there has been no increase, the whole of the water power having been taken up.

Before I close this sketch, it seems but proper that I should notice two other mills, although of a later date than any of those described. The first is the Roxborough Powder Mill. This was situated on Crease's Lane, near where the chemical works of Charles J. Crease are erected. The stream of water on which it was built was called Oil Mill Run. At first there was a saw mill on the premises, which was built by a person named Benjamin Davis (or Davies) between 1787 and 1794, in which latter year he sold the property to Joseph and Michael Levering, and in the deed mention is made of a saw mill. It was afterwards, in 1797, bought by Thomas Sheppard and Henry Scheetz, by whom the Powder Mill was erected, for in 1802, when the share of Mr. Scheetz was sold, the recital describes:—"a certain saw mill which has since been turned and converted into a powder mill." Like most powder mills, this was blown up, but when I cannot learn. The late John Dill of Manayunk, once informed me that his father worked there, and that he, himself, remembered that when a lad, there was an explosion at the mill, and he saw one of the workmen thrown out of a window at the time. It is said that the explosion was attended with much loss of life. The chemical works of Mr. Crease which occupy the powder mill locality, shall receive at the proper time, a full and detailed notice.

The other mill is what used to be known in early times as The Roxborough Tilt Mill. It occupied the site of Robert Haley's Dye Factory on Spring Lane, and was supplied with water from Oil Mill Run. The Tilt Mill, it is believed, was built by Nathan Levering, Sr., who owned and occupied the present Leverington Hotel. The precise date of its erection has escaped the memory of the old people, but, as he bought the property in 1800, and sold it in 1810, it must have been between those dates, probably nearer 1800. The manager of the mill was a person named Goodwin. It proved a losing speculation to Mr. Levering, and in 1810 he sold it. His nephew, Aaron Levering, also carried it on. I have heard it said that there was, at one time, a Powder Mill at this place, under the control of a person named Keyser, but I do not vouch for the accuracy of the statement.

Subsequently the place was bought by John Thornburn, and in 1811, James Thornburn and three others bought it and erected there a cotton factory, the first of the kind in Roxborough.

How long they carried it on I cannot learn, but in 1833 it was bought by William Peterson, who, on October 1 of that year sold it to John Wood and others. Mr Wood was a very intelligent man and is well remembered by the citizens of Roxborough and Manayunk. Mr. Wood, on the 28th of April, 1840, sold the factory and land to Robert Haley, the present owner, who carries on the business of blue dyeing.

A former resident of Roxborough, his native place, whose memory carries him back to childhood, in a recent letter to the author, gives the following reminiscences of the Tilt Mill and Factory:--

"Of the Grease Powder Mill I know literally nothing; of the other (Haley) only that, as a child, of about four years, I, passed it on one occasion, and saw mill wheels, one or more, whose shaft or shafts projected through the building, and I was told, I think, that it was, or had been a powder mill.

"I have also a recollection that an enormous cast iron vessel was placed in the bank below the mill (near where the Run now crosses the road) said to have been used in the powder operations. It remained there out of use for many years, when it was sold to an iron founder in the city, who sent a man with an iron battering ram to break it to pieces. Having erected his ram he commenced operations, but the stubborn kettle, if it was a kettle, refused to go to pieces, until he had rung it for many days, making more noise than has, perhaps, been heard in Roxborough since, by hammering the sonorous metal.

"John Thoburn, or Thaburn & Wood, (James Wood) I well remember them both, built the tall part of the mill, very nearly in the form it still retains, and carried it on as a cotton factory for some years, commencing, say in 1812 or 1813. I well remember the carding and spinning operations, quite unknown in Roxborough before, and the printing operations in the basement, where cotton shawls, selling at \$4. and largely worn by the ladies of Roxborough, were stamped to a considerable extent for the day. This must have been immediately immediately after the war, or perhaps during its continuance.

The machinery for the factory was built or put up in the second story of the large barn-like building which you may remember below Hipple's Tavern. This shop was, I think, carried on by an English machinist, named Lawson, who afterwards rented John Gorgas's old mill near the Wissahickon, in order to have his lathes propelled by water power, the treadle being used in the other shop.

"All this was ~~many~~ many years before Manayunk, or even the canal was dreamed of by the people of Roxborough.

"There are, no doubt, others in our town who have distinct recollections about these two mills---perhaps they have worked there, and it will give ~~me~~ me great pleasure to receive any facts that they may remember.

"One of the neighbors says he very well recollects that, when a boy, he used to go down to the factory dam and get cat-fish, and that he was told the dam had been stocked with them at first by Nathan Levering. The boys used to wait for low water, when they could wade into the dam and catch the fish in great numbers without any trouble. This must have been about forty or forty-five years ago. The finny tribes have long since disappeared from the spot."

CHAPTER FIFTEEN.

A great difficulty with the early settlers of Pennsylvania was that there had been no general law passed establishing common schools in each township. Had our ancestors followed the example afforded them by the Pilgrim Fathers of New England, in this particular, there is no doubt that the entire character of our Commonwealth would have been cast in a different mould--and we should not be, as we proverbially are, the last to adopt and carry out any great improvement. In other words, if our ancestors had properly educated--if they had built school houses as soon as their own roof-trees had been erected and covered, we should now have a population as intelligent as that of New England; and our State the richest in mineral wealth of any in the Union, would be the Keystone State in every great enterprise, and Philadelphia, once the foremost city of America would never have lost that position--never have sunk into a third-rate city--never have been compelled, in order to regain her position numerically, to absorb the whole County, farms and all for fifteen miles around.

When Roxboro was first settled, there was no school nearer than Germantown, and the population being sparse and scattered, with comparatively few children, they did not deem it necessary to erect a school-house--and there fore chiefly depended upon such casual teachers as chance threw in their way, whom they were wont to employ for a few months in winter. The evils arising from such a system were so apparent that one of the prominent citizens resolved to correct the mischief, and accordingly in 1748, William Levering (a grandson of Wigard Levering, the Pioneer settler) and Hannah his wife, conveyed twenty perches of land, situated on the southerly side of the Ridge Road, adjoining the line of John George Wood's land, to seven trustees. This deed is dated April 1, 1748, and it states as follows:---"For and in consideration of the love and regard they have and bear for the public

good, in having a school kept in their neighborhood, they grant the said lot of ground to Michael Richter, ~~Michael Richter~~ Peter Richter, Abraham Levering, Wickard Levering, David Bargendole, John Graber, and John Houlgate as trustees. These were all substantial yeomen of the neighborhood, and doubtless felt the importance of having some convenient place for the education of their children.

The lot of ground thus generously donated by William Levering and his wife for the school-house was located as nearly as possible in the geographical center of the Township, and is well known to the citizens of Manayunk and Roxborough, being in the Ridge Road between the sixth and seventh mile-stones. When the school-house was erected has not been ascertained with certainty, but the strong presumption is that it was in 1748, the same year of the gift of the lot, for in ~~1771~~ 1771, when the same generous donor gave an additional piece of ground, it was stated on many years experience the former lot was found to be too small. This expression would scarcely be allowable if the house had not been erected at the first named date, twenty three years before. The house was a small one-story stone building, and ~~it formed~~ it formed, I believe, part of the structure which continued on the spot until the year 1857. Before the second building was plastered, the outline of the first could be seen in the gable end. In that humble edifice our plain forefathers were accustomed to learn the "rudiments" as they were called, and it long continued to be the only place of learning in the Township of Roxborough.

The increase of population was followed by a large number of pupils at the school, and the lot of ground was so small that it was deemed requisite to have it enlarged. Accordingly on the 30th of March, 1771, Andrew Wood and Elizabeth his wife, conveyed ten perches of land on the south side of the first lot, to trustees, and on the same day, William Levering and Hannah his wife, granted ten perches on the north side of the first lot, that making the whole school lot to contain forty perches of land. This last deed of the Leverings, after reciting the first conveyance in 1748, stated that it was "in trust to erect and build a school-house thereon, and pursuant to said trust, the grantees and other inhabitants of said Township

have contributed to and built a School-house, which on many years experience the lot is found to be too small to accommodate the said school."

The same one-story building satisfied the people of Roxborough until the year 1798-9, when the house was considerably enlarged and a back building added so as to accommodate a resident teacher and his family, and I believe it was also intended that the second story should be devoted to a female teacher, to instruct girls in the art and mystery of sewing and other housewife accomplishments.

I have endeavored, but in vain, to learn the name of the first teacher of the school. I have conversed with some who went to school there as early as 1760; but there was no distinct recollection of the first teacher. The earliest persons named were a Mr. Sefton, who was drowned in the Schuylkill, and a Mr. Broderick; but I could learn no particulars, nor do ~~any of~~ their names appear on any list of taxables that I have ever examined. One of the early teachers, and the first of whom anything reliable is known, was Matthias Maris, a nephew of William Levering, the Founder of the School. His mother was Magdalena Levering, a grand daughter of Wigard Levering. She married ~~Mr. Maris~~ William Maris, who had a paper mill on the Wissahickon Creek. Their son, Matthias Maris, was a posthumous child, and was born in Germantown Township, May 19, 1747. Shortly after the death of her husband Mrs. Maris came to Roxborough, where her son was brought up. He was a man of considerable natural ability, and he became a most skilfull land surveyor. Some of his surveys of Roxborough property are now in my possession. How long, or in what years he taught the Roxborough School I cannot ascertain. About the period of the Revolution he went to Baltimore and there became a successful merchant and acquired an ample fortune. In later life he bought a farm of about two hundred acres of land near Chambersburg, Franklin County, Penna., and devoted himself to the noble pursuit of agriculture, and to the improvement of his mind.

He ever retained an affectionate remembrance of Roxborough, and evinced his interest in the school where he had once taught, by making to it a donation of thirty pounds, in the year 1802, when some improvements were projected.

Mr. Maris died October 9, 1811, at the age of sixty-five years and is buried at Waddall's graveyard, Peters Township, Franklin County. By his will he bequeathed six hundred dollars to the Roxborough Baptist Church.

In my next paper I shall give further sketches of the teachers, and such facts relative to the school as I have been able to glean from the documents in my possession.

Who succeeded Mr. Maris as teacher of the Roxborough school is not remembered, but it is most likely that it was John Holgate, a brother of Messrs. 'Squire Cornelius Holgate. He was followed by John Righter, Joseph Dickerson, Thomas Grant, Curtis Gilbert, Tilman Culp, and John Patterson.

Mr. Gilbert was the first minister of the Roxborough Baptist Church, and lived in the "Parker House," now owned by Isaac Wilkinson. He was in delicate health and died April 22, 1792, at the early age of 23 years.

Mr. Patterson was teacher as early as 1808, and he may have been much earlier. His wife taught young girls needlework, and they lived in the second story of the School House. Mr. Patterson was connected with the Roxborough church and subsequently became a minister.

He resigned in 1808, and within my own recollection he taught a classical school at Mount Airy, which was attended by several Roxborough boys, among whom may be mentioned Joseph H. Hoffman, and Charles Thomson Jones. After an absence of over forty years Mr. Patterson returned to Roxborough, and in the second story of the old schoolhouse opened a select school for young ladies. He is still living in the city, and is now quite an aged man. During the term of Mr. Patterson the trustees first kept records of their proceedings. The first entry in the minute book is under date of October 13, 1809. The chief value of the records consists in showing the names of the different teachers and the length of their service.

The first act which the trustees did was to divide themselves into four classes of seven persons to serve as trustees one year in rotation, according to number, and if any trustee failed to attend a stated meeting he was to pay a fine of twenty-five cents. They also resolved to visit the school every three months and to hold an annual meeting of the trustees, on the first of January, at the house of Nathan Levering--the present Leverington Hotel. Cornelius Holgate was appointed President, John K. Duy, Secretary, and Nathan Levering Treasurer.

The minutes of the same complete up to January 19, 1839, and contain many interesting items, which I shall, as occasion offers, extract for these Historic Notes.

It was in the same year (1804) on the 7th of April, that Abraham Levering (who lived where P. W. Levering now resides) the sole survivor of the original trustees to whom William Levering and Andrew Wood had granted the school house lot, conveyed the same to Michael Righter, Christopher Wunder, Christopher Ozias, John Hoffman, Michael Levering, Anthony Levering, John Levering, Thomas Levering, and twenty others, to hold upon the same uses and trusts as he and his co-trustees had held them. A few months after making this conveyance (October 31, 1804) Mr. Levering died at the advanced age of 87 years and five months.

The school was afterwards taught by the following persons:--John Holgate Jr., (son of Cornelius Holgate) who was appointed September 19, 1808, and resigned April 1, 1814. He was followed by Thomas Patterson, and he by Michael Conrad, the grandfather of Hon. Robert T. Conrad, the first Mayor of the Consolidated City of Philadelphia.

The next teacher was Samuel H. Slingluff, who was well known for many years to the citizens of Roxborough and Manayunk. He was appointed teacher in 1815 and continued until 1822. During his term the Lancasterian System was introduced. It was adopted April 3, 1818 and continued only the one year. The minutes contain the following on the subject:--

"January 10, 1818, Horatio G. Jones, John K. Duy, and William Alexander were appointed a committee to obtain some information and knowledge of the Lancasterian system of education, in order to have it introduced into our schools if approved of."

On the third of April the committee reported in favor, and "the question being taken, whether that system of education should be adopted, was carried in the affirmative." Cornelius Holgate was appointed to have the benches and other necessary alterations in the school house made.

In July, 1819, an adjourned meeting of the Trustees was held, when it was resolved to return to the old method of teaching. After which, the Master, Mr. Slingluff was instructed to proceed accordingly.

Part of the plan was to teach the children to write in sand, and for this purpose, desks with flat, box-like surfaces were used, in which the sand was placed. When the system was abandoned a top was nailed on to those flat desks. Several of these desks were to be seen at the school house until quite a recent date. After Mr. Slingluff resigned he devoted himself to farming, and finally was elected a Justice of the Peace. He also acted as a local conveyancer. He was fond of collecting old books, and, I believe, was the only person in Roxborough who preserved a file of the Public Ledger from its commencement. This copy was presented by his widow to the Roxborough Lyceum, and will be placed in the Library of the Lyceum. Mr. Slingluff died on the Ridge April 12, 1858, aged 67 years. During the year 1821 the school was incorporated by the Supreme Court, and by the Charter it was provided that Trustees should be elected by the patrons of the school--or those who sent their children there. The chief features of the charter will be explained hereafter.

Mr. Slingluff was succeeded by Charles Johnson and William Simpson, each of whom taught for a short time.

The next teacher was Francis Murphy. He was a native of Ireland, and at one time taught school at Norristown, prior to his coming to Roxborough. He was elected teacher February 12, 1823, and had quite a reputation as a teacher of surveying. So popular was he that young men came 20 or 30 miles distant, to enjoy the advantage of his tuition. He resided on the farm now owned by L. T. Saláigna. He used to act as a surveyor and also wrote deeds. He was a man of considerable native talent, and while at Norristown published a book, [†] composed of a series of Tales. The only copy of this work I knew of is in the Library of the Roxborough Lyceum, the gift of Mr. B. P. Hunt of Philadelphia. He possessed a vast fund of anecdotes and was full of jokes. He was proverbial for his humor. He resigned as teacher in 1831, and removed to Manayunk where he officiated for many years as a Justice of the Peace. Mr. Murphy died at Manayunk, May 19, 1855, at the age of 82 years.

† The title of the volume is as follows:---

Tales of an Evening, Founded on Facts. Compiled by Francis Murphy, Norristown, Montgomery County, Norriton. Printed by James Winnard, 1815. (pp. 148.) The book is number 986 of the Roxborough Lyceum Library.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN.

After the resignation of Mr. Murphy the trustees convened and chose a person named William George in Mr. Murphy's place--but he declined the position; therefore a young gentleman from New England, Benjamin P. Hunt, who had recently come to Roxborough was chosen teacher, and continued to act as such until April 1, 1833. Mr. Hunt is a native of Chelmsford, Massachusetts, and is now a resident of Kensington. Being a gentleman of literary tastes, his society was highly appreciated in Roxborough.. He also taught a classical school in Roxborough, and when he left the Public School he removed to Manayunk. I think Mr. Hunt taught a school in Ripka's School House. While there he took an interest in the Manayunk Library, and I have understood that the Catalogue to the Library and the preface to it are the productions of his pen. He took charge of the Library, which then numbered about 250 volumes, covered most of the books himself, and when he left, the Library had increased to about 900 volumes.

Mr. Hunt was succeeded by James Thomas, who was elected February 9, 1833, but he did not commence to teach until the following April. Mr. Thomas resided in the upper part of the school house for some time. He was a native of Ireland and had taught for some years in Lower Merion Township.

He continued at Roxborough until January 1837, when he resigned, and having removed to Manayunk, took charge of a public school there. He taught at "The Blocks," and also, at "The Robeson School," on Main Street. Having enjoyed the privilege of his instruction for several years at the school in Roxborough, I am glad, after this lapse of time--a period of nearly twenty four years--to offer to my respected friend and teacher, many thanks for his many instances of kindness to me when a lad. I shall not tender to him the Persian compliment of wishing him to live a thousand years but I sincerely hope that his last days may be happy and serene. On the 9th of January, 1837, Joseph H. Hoffman of Roxborough was chosen to succeed Mr. Thomas, and he continued a teacher of the school until 1842.

Prior to 1840, the teacher was paid by the parents or guardians of the children, and his salary, therefore, depended upon the number of his scholars. Besides this, the children of poor persons were allowed to attend the school, and the charge of their tuition was borne by the County; but before such child could attend a certificate from a school director was necessary to be had. This invidious distinction between "pay scholars" and "poor scholars," was the source of many a quarrel between the children, although there were many parents, who, for the sake of saving the expense of tuition, were not unwilling to be regarded as "poor." Happily that grand barrier between the rich and the poor has been broken down, and the son of the millionaire and the son of the humblest artisan, stand upon an equal footing in our public schools. Merit is the only ground of distinction.

Of Mr. Hoffman, who is still living in Roxborough, it is scarcely necessary to speak. He received part of his education at Mr. Patterson's school at Mount Airy, then taught school himself in the small house opposite Shoemaker's store, since enlarged and occupied by Rev. Joseph Beggs. In 1845 he was chosen to represent Philadelphia County in the Legislature of Pennsylvania--and in 1857 he was elected an Alderman for the Second Ward of Philadelphia. He was also one of the founders of the Roxborough Lyceum.

Since the school has been under the charge of the Directors, the teachers have been chosen by them at a fixed salary. Among those who have taught here are Calvin Newton, W. P. Cushman, Edward Poole, Henry Tahudy, John Omensetter and John C. Huckins, and the following females:--Miss Conrad, Miss Kitchenand Miss Runkle.

I have stated that the school was incorporated in 1821. The certificate of the Attorney General is dated April 30, 1821. A brief abstract of the Charter may not be uninteresting to my fellow citizens, many of whom receive their education at the school.

ARTICLE 1.

Horatio G. Jones, George W. Riter, Jacob Rittenhouse, William Alexander, John Sinket, Matthew Levering and Thomas Leverink are made a body corporate by the name of the Trustees of the Roxborough School.

ARTICLE 2.

The Corporation empowered to hold Real Estate, &c. and to aliene the same.

ARTICLE 3.

The Corporation has the glorious privilege of suing and being sued anywhere and everywhere.

ARTICLE 4.

Power granted to make and use a common seal.

ARTICLE 5.

The Trustees are to elect a President, Secretary and Treasurer by ballot, and shall make laws and regulations for the good of the school. Provided, that the Regulations of the said school shall not extend to a dissolution of said corporation, or a division or distribution of the property thereto belonging.

ARTICLE 6.

The Treasurer shall not be a Trustee for the time being.

ARTICLE 7.

All those who have sent, or hereafter shall send, their scholar or scholars to this Institution, shall be ~~MEMBERS~~ deemed subscribers and members of the same, and shall have all and singular the rights and privileges of the incorporation. Provided always that the said right shall be forfeited by any member who shall send all or any of his scholars to any other institution, to acquire any branch or branches of education which shall be taught in said Roxborough school. Provided further that any person becoming a member of this Institution must be a subscriber to the school at least three months previous to the Annual Meeting for Trustees, if they shall have been so long in the vicinity.

ARTICLE 8.

The members of the corporation to meet annually, on the first Monday of January, and the subscribers to the school shall also meet at that ~~MM~~ time ~~MMMMMMMMMMMM~~ and between the hours of 2 and 6 o'clock P.M. elect by ballot seven trustees, who shall hold their offices one year, &c.

ARTICLE 9.

The trustees so elected to fill vacancies.

ARTICLE 10.

The present trustees to hold office until January 1, 1822.

In the original charter there are eleven articles, but one was stricken out by the Attorney General, and the copyist made a mistake in numbering the others.

In the next number I shall give some further extracts from the minute book, and, if I can recall them, some personal recollections of the school in its palmy days.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN.

After the incorporation of the Roxborough school, a set of Rules for its government was drawn up, and I shall now proceed to give a synopsis of the same, for the information of the present generation.

1. This Institution shall be open to scholars of every description, merit only to make distinction.
2. Scholars must be at school at the appointed hour, decent and clean., free from every infectious disease, the latter on peril of dismissal.
3. From October 1 to April 1, the school shall be open at 9 A.M. and let out at 12 M. and from 1 1/2 P.M. to 4 1/2 P.M. From April 1 to October 1, the hours shall be from 8 A.M. to 12 M. and from 2 P.M. to 5 P.M.
4. No conversation between the scholars during school hours.

5. Allscholars shall enter the spelling class as soon as competent and spell whenever the class does.
6. The writing scholars who are not ciphering must show their copies at least every fourth line or half copy, and when done writing shall bring them to the teacher.
7. The arithmeticians shall bring up their slates at least twice a day, viz:--morning and afternoon, whether their questions are solved or not.
8. The scholars must not go about the house, but keep their seats and attend to their respective studies.
9. The large scholars must not impose upon the smaller ones; but on all occasions must behave with kindness and respect towards one another.
10. Trafficking, gaming, swearing, lying, gambling, fighting, wrestling, boxing, and every kind of athletic practice must be carefully guarded against.
11. At noon, and in coming to and going from school, scholars must not ramble about, and must avoid all impertinent and indecent behaviour to persons of every description that they may pass or repass by the way.
12. ~~12.~~ In coming to say their lessons, in spelling or reading, or at closing of school, there must be no hurry or any unavoidable noise, nor shall there be noise or play in the school house.
13. No scholar shall leave the school during school hours, without permission from the teacher.

The foregoing rules to be binding on all the scholars, and if any think they are above correction, and disregard and break them, after sufficient admonition they shall be expelled from the institution. Any one aggrieved may appeal to the Board of Trustees, who, after hearing both sides, may give an impartial verdict, and if the parties are dissatisfied they will have the liberty to appeal to the civil authorities.

Such, in brief, were the laws by which our first school was governed; but how often they were obeyed or how frequently they were transgressed, it does not become me here to state--that fact is best known to the citizens of Roxborough who were scholars at this period. My own recollection extends from 1830 to 1835, when I know the usual school traffic prevailed and various sorts of embryo gambling abounded. As to fighting and wrestling, there was enough of both, especially during winter, when the Manayunkers and the Roxborough Boys, or the "up road" and "down road" boys used to put themselves in battle array, ~~and~~ snow forts were erected and fighting went on in earnest. Occasionally a black eye, or bruised face, or broken arm, was to be seen, but the boys were honorable enough not to "peach" on the aggressor. In fact, this sort of rough and tumble exercises, when boys dressed in plain, strong clothes, did much to bring out the muscles, and endured them to the hard knocks they had to anticipate in the battle of the field of life.

There are very pleasant memories connected with my own school boy days, and I often look back with fond regret to those days of yore. I remember the smile-provoking joviality of 'Squire Murphy, who had a notable way of rubbing his hands, whenever a good thing was about to be uttered--and I have a strong reason for remembering still better a small round mahogany ruler, which, besides being used for copy-books and deeds, was ~~often~~ only too often applied to the bare hand or harder head of some unruly urchin; if the term unruly can be properly applied to an urchin who felt that same ruler at least once a day. I can also recall the time when news came to school that the "Squire" was sick, and in his place appeared a very quiet gentle young Irishman, upon whom it was resolved to play some tricks; but it would not do. He had a nerve about him, and when a venturesome lad dared to ask the teacher to "play tag," there was a chase around a few benches, a hasty jump into the seat--and then came the blows from a rattan thick and fast upon that urchin's back. His name was---but we shall not expose him. No doubt he has repented long ago. I remember, too, that that we boys thought rattans grew just on purpose for school masters! Very glad were we when when the rattans were used up, but in such case

we were sent out to cut a switch for the master to use upon our backs. I think I generally got one from a poplar tree that still stands in the back yard.

Once there was a regular rebellion, headed by a "big boy" who did not attend school. He first secured the door by a rope, and then piled up a number of logs of wood (for it happened before the era of coal stoves) against the door. The rope was then cut, and when the door was opened the log fell into the room, making a tremendous noise and frightening the children very much. The perpetrators of the joke were not discovered for a long time afterwards.

As scholars of every grade were in the same room, and the teacher had no assistant, it was not to be supposed that the course of instruction was very thorough. The attendance, especially during winter, when the "big boys" apprentices, &c. were accustomed to get their "schooling" was large, and I remember very well that the room for three or four months was crowded. We smaller chaps were glad when spring time approached for then the big boys left and we could do as we choose and were not likely to be imposed upon. The yard in the rear of the house used to be the play ground, but the adjoining fields were also devoted to that purpose in the fall and winter season. The games were about the same as those now played. We had bat or town ball, shinney, mumbley peg, marbles, prisoners' base, &c. Cricket, now so much in vogue, and such a manly game, was never played within my recollection. It is strange how the same games are handed down from generation to generation.

I have said that the school passed out of the hands of the Trustees. Perhaps now is the right time to give a brief history of the present condition of the school house.

In course of time it was found that the provisions of the charter of the school relative to the rights of "subscribers" who had the privilege of voting for Trustees could not be complied with, so nearly all the citizens had sent their children to other schools, and as the Trustees had no real authority, except the control of the property, it was deemed best to have legislative action to remedy the difficulty. Whereupon by the Act of Assembly of April 17, 1846, (P.L.p. 365, Sec. 3.) the School Directors of Roxborough Township were authorized and empowered to perform all the duties heretofore performed by the Trustees of Roxborough School. Some little excitement was occasioned at the time, but it now seems that no better course could have been adopted.

Meanwhile the Roxborough Lyceum had used the school room once a week for its sessions, and when the Lyceum was incorporated, May 8, 1854, it was deemed advisable to invest the control of the school in the Trustees of the Lyceum. Accordingly, by Sec. 6, of the Act of May 8, 1854, the 3d section of the Act of April 17, 1846, was repealed, and by section 7 the Trustees of the Roxborough Lyceum were authorized to act as Trustees of the school house. The dilapidated condition of the house and the need of a new Hall by the Lyceum, led the Trustees to propose the erection of a fine large building, for the double purpose of a school house and Lyceum Hall, but the projectors were defeated in the usual Roxborough style.

The elements, as if disgusted with the want of enterprise evinced by our worthy citizens, took the matter in hand, and, on Saturday night, April 12, 1856, a furious tornado passed through Roxborough and unroofed the old school house and partially destroyed the beautiful elm which stands in front. The exposed condition of the house induced the school directors to come to the rescue, and an Act of Assembly was obtained vesting the school house and property in the City of Philadelphia, to hold in trust forever for the same purposes on which it was originally held. This act was passed February 13, 1857. An appropriation was obtained at once and the present large edifice was built in 1857 at a cost of \$3500. The Act of Assembly above referred to was drawn up by Alfred Grease of Roxborough, and the Preamble to it contains a brief history of the school.

The extreme length of this article prevents the reprint of the Act, but those who wish to examine it will find the whole in the pamphlet laws of 1857, p. 30--32. A supplement to the Act was passed April 21, 1857 (P.L.P. 277) authorizing the Councils of Philadelphia to make an appropriation to erect a school house on this property.

The old school house was formerly the place where the elections for Manayunk and Roxborough were held, and was for a long time the only public building in the place. It was used also as a place for preaching before the Roxborough Church was built and when that house was burned down. It was the scene of an interesting incident during the Revolutionary war, which will be related in detail when I come to describe the events of that war, so far as they relate to Roxborough.

At one time the yard was planted on three sides with Lombardy poplars, and in addition, there was a cedar tree on the southwest corner. There are two elm trees in the rear of the new house, and a fine, noble elm in front. As far as I know it is the largest elm tree in Roxborough. I have tried to ascertain its age and have met one person who says that when a lad he went to school there, and he remembers that he used to climb up the elm and swing to the ground from its top. My informant was born in 1791, and supposing that he went to school at the age of twelve or fourteen, it would make the tree not much over sixty years of age. It certainly must be older than that, and my informant may have confounded the back trees with the large one in front.

In conclusion I will add that according to the Minute Book, the last Trustees were elected in January 1839. The Trustees were Abraham Shalkop, Jacob Rittenhouse, Daniel Rittenhouse, Horatio G. Jones, George Markle, Charles T. Jones and Henry Rod. Horatio G. Jones was elected President, and Charles Thomson Jones Secretary. It may be proper here to say that the Reverend H. G. Jones had served continuously as a Trustee from the year 1828, and had always been chosen President of the Board. Mr. Shalkop officiated as Treasurer for many years.

I now bid adieu to the old village school house around which so many pleasant memories cluster, and where I have passed happy days--gone now forever. Some portions of the house have been preserved by Joseph Crout of Roxborough, who has them made up into canes. A daguerreotype view of the house was taken for me in 1855, by Jacob Keech, and I have had it lithographed, so that posterity may be able to see where their forefathers used to worship God, and where, too, they were educated. This view gives a good idea of the elm tree before its beauty was marred by the tornado.

CHAPTER NINETEEN.

The Roxborough School continued to be the only one in the Township until the year 1811, and it always retained that name as a distinctive one---until the classification of schools was made by the Controllers. In 1846 it was termed the Roxborough Primary--a name by which it is now known in the records of the Controllers. The date stone in the new house bears the following inscription--"Roxborough School, 1857--Sixth Section." It has been a matter of surprise to more than one person that those who had the oversight of this matter did not preserve the names of the founders of the School, and the year when the first house was erected.

In 1811 the residents in the upper end of Roxborough felt that the increasing number of children, and the distance of the Roxborough School House called for a school in their vicinity. Accordingly subscriptions were obtained, and when sufficient money was collected, a public spirited citizen named Frederick Heiss, a farmer, gave a lot of ground at the corner of Wise's (formerly Joseph Paul's) and Livezey's Mill Lane, containing 30 perches of land. The deed is dated December 12, 1811, and the conveyance is made to George Martin, David Davis, Henry Keely, John Wise, Jacob Kolp, and Garret Snyder. "In trust, nevertheless, for the use of a school, to erect and hold a school house thereupon." The deed further state

that pursuant to said trust the said Grantees and other inhabitants of the Township of Roxborough had contributed to and built a school house thereon, "which, with the consent of the Trustees for the time being, may occasionally be made use of for and as a place of worship."

The house thus erected is situated a short distance from the railroad, between the eighth and ninth milestones, and is a small one story edifice fronting on Wise's Mill Lane--and from the color of the plaster in the walls is familiarly known as the "Yellow School House."

The first teacher, according to the recollection of some of the older citizens, was a person named Maloney, and I have ascertained that the following persons have also taught the school, viz:--Joseph Keasy, Mr. Keisel, Henry Kerper, Ephraim Fenton, William Rex, Mr. Budd, and William Carey Winter. Mr. Winter was a young man of fine abilities and gave promise of a brilliant future. He was the oldest son of Rev. Thomas Winter of Roxborough. He subsequently went to Poughkeepsie, New York and taught in the Dutchess County Academy. He died February 22, 1845, at the age of 22 years. Mr. Fenton subsequently removed to Montgomery County and became an Associate Judge of Common Pleas.

The School, in course of time, passed into the hands of the Directors of Public Schools, and was taught in 1843 by Andrew Levering; in 1844 by J. Roney; in 1845-6 by William H. Hunter. The house is now disused for school purposes, but public worship is kept up very regularly by the Methodists, and it is thus doing the community some service.

The next school in Roxborough of any repute, was established about the year 1815-16, by Jacob B. Smith, who lived in the house now owned and occupied by Joseph Gilkeson. The school was kept in the small house below Mr. Gilkeson's, which had been a wheelwright shop. As a teacher he was very popular, and he had a large number of scholars. Among them were Mr. John Gargas, formerly of Wilmington, Delaware, but now of West Chester. Mr. Smith was a self made man, and became quite an adept as a Latin scholar. His literary tastes led him to establish a circulating library. This he did in the old wheelwright shop; but I shall reserve further notice of the Library until another time.

Mr. Smith's health failed and he died in the spring of 1820. At his death the school was broken up. There was no other school in Roxborough until that of Mr. Hoffman. The school at Rittenhouse Town, now called Wissahickon (unclassified) was established as early as 1843, and was then taught by William T. Lewis.

The Roxborough Grammar School, called also the Dickinson Grammar School, on Ridge Road, between the seventh and eighth milestones, was organized in 1847, and its first principal was William H. Hunter. There was also a school taught in the basement of Hagy's church, which was called the "Union School, Henry K. Smith, once Superintendent of the Philadelphia and Norristown Railroad, taught there at least from 1843 to 1847, when Richard Glassen succeeded him and continued until 1850. In 1851 he was succeeded by George W. Schock.

The Manatawna school house, on the Ridge Road below the toll gate, was built in 1851-2 at a cost of about \$2000. The first principal teacher was George W. Schock, who taught in 1852-3. Jesse M. Willard taught in 1854 5--6 and was succeeded by O. K. Saybold, who came there in 1857. There are at present four school houses (exclusive of the yellow school) in Roxborough, viz:--the Wissahickon, Levering Primary, Roxborough Grammar, and Manatawna. In connection with the Grammar School there is also a Primary School.

It was my intention to prepare a tabular statement showing the names of the schools, and the names of the teachers at different times, as far as ascertained, but the labor is much too great for one of my pursuits. There is a gentleman in Roxborough who has been connected with the school system for many years, and who possesses peculiar ability for a work of this sort, and I trust that these hastily written sketches of mine will incite him to the preparation of an elaborate paper on the schools of Roxborough and Manayunk. There is no subject in which the various members of the community are, or ought to be, so generally interested, as the education of children--and people should be taught, if they do not know, what an exalted

privilege they have in the public schools laws of Pennsylvania.

In my next paper I shall endeavor to show the gradual increase in the number of pupils at the Roxborough Schools. The citizens of Manayunk will remember that I am daily gathering facts and statistics concerning their history, and in due time they shall have ocular proof that "a chiel's amang ye, takin' notes.."

CHAPTER TWENTY.

The Public School System as it now prevails in Philadelphia, is the growth of years, and although it forms one of the crowning glories of Pennsylvania yet, when first established it had its opponents. Especially was this the case when the gratuitous education of all children was ordained by law. It is a matter of regret that in Roxborough there were no records kept of the number of pupils who attended the schools, nor can I find any mention of the fact in the various reports of the Board of Controllers, until 1842--and even then there is only an aggregate given. As Manayunk at that time was not a separate school district, there is not anything to distinguish between the children there and these in Roxborough. But as early as 1843 the names of the various schools are given in the Reports of the Controllers, and from that time the task of arranging the pupils, teachers and schools is easy.

For the information of those who are not familiar with the school system, I may here remark that at first the County of Philadelphia formed, as does the City now, the First School District of Pennsylvania; which was then divided into "Sections"--each Section being comprised of one, or more than one, Ward or Township. Roxborough, Germantown, and Bristol, (and Manayunk after it became a borough) formed the Sixth Section. Each township had its own local Board of School Directors, and all the Directors of a Section formed a "Sectional Board," which generally met once a month to consider the wants of the various schools and estimate the expense thereof.

The several Sectional Boards chose a person denominated the Controller, and the various Controllers formed "The Board of Controllers of the Public Schools," who have the general oversight of all the schools in the First District and appropriated the monies derived from the State and the school tax among the several Sections.

At first the directors were appointed either by the City Councils or the Court of Quarter Sessions, and it is believed that as a general thing the appointments were made from among those citizens who could read and write, and were able to examine a teacher as to his qualifications. In 1843, school directors, under the progress of the "Young America" doctrines, became the subjects of popular favor, and were voted into office; so that the question that decided the election of a citizen as a school director was not--"Can he read or write--can he examine a teacher--does he know anything about schools?" but "is he a Whig, or is he a Democrat?" However, I bow with much submission to the VOX POPULI, VOX DEI, doctrine.

Roxborough continued to form part of the Sixth Section until the year 1853-4, when the Townships and Wards were consolidated into the City of Philadelphia, and the Sections were re-arranged and classified according to the number of the Wards. On this account Roxborough, Manayunk, and Penn Township formed the Twenty-first Section. According to the Report of the Controllers for 1819, the Directors for Roxborough that year were Peter Robeson and Rev. Horatio Gates Jones--and the next mention of Roxborough is in 1825, when the Directors were Rev. Horatio Gates Jones and John R. Duy. No Controller from the Sixth Section is named until 1838, when Charles V. Hagner appears as a Controller from the Sixth Section. He was also Controller for the following year, and in 1840 and 1841 he was succeeded by the Rev. Horatio Gates Jones.

In 1842 the number of children in the schools of Roxborough and Manayunk was returned as 425 boys and 409 girls, making a total of 834, while in Germantown there were 341 boys and 289 girls, making a total of 630.

showing a balance of 204 scholars in favor of Roxborough, then including Manayunk. It appears that the ratio of increase since that time has been about the same, for in 1858 we had 1678 children attending our schools, and Germantown had 1423, showing a difference in our favor of 255 pupils. In 1843 there were in Roxborough 253 scholars and in Manayunk 400.

It was my intention to give the names of all the different schools, with the teachers and other facts, but the length of this article leads me to confine myself merely to those in Roxborough.

NAMES OF SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS IN ROXBOROUGH
with number of pupils attending the same.

ROXBOROUGH GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

J.M. Willard, principal; Margaret M. Morrison, assistant; boys, 64, girls 71; total ~~MMMM~~ 135.

PRIMARY SCHOOL, (same building)

Catharine Worrell, principal; Elizabeth E. Stott assistant. Boys 59, girls 71. Total 140.

MANATAWNA--Unclassified School.

O.K. Saybold, principal; Selina Levering assistant. Boys 75, girls 65. Total 140.

LEVERING Unclassified School.

J.C. Huckins principal; Sarah J. Kitchen ~~MMMMMMMMMM~~ first assistant; Catharine Runkle second assistant. Boys 81, girls 89. Total 170.

WISSAHICKON, Unclassified School.

Charles M. Colladay teacher. Boys 108, girls 55. Total 163.

In addition to the day schools several night schools have been taught in Roxborough and Manayunk during the winter months, but there is no special reference to the number of pupils who attended them. The sum of \$956.26 was appropriated for night schools in the Twenty-first Section during the year 1858; but how much was appropriated to Roxborough or Manayunk I do not know.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE.

As the design of these notes is to furnish information about the local history of Roxborough and Manayunk, and to give due credit to those of our citizens who have occupied positions of public trust, I feel that a Table containing the names of all who have been connected with our public schools as controllers and directors must prove of interest necessarily. The citizens who have been appointed or elected directors of our schools are well known and it would be superfluous to say that they have cheerfully devoted their time to the public good without any hope of reward. It affords me much pleasure to give an entire list of the directors from the year 1838.

A few preliminary remarks will explain when Manayunk was legally recognized as a village worthy of having a director for its special benefit. By the 24th Section of the Act of March 3, 1818, the Court of Quarter Sessions was directed to appoint "two respectable taxable inhabitants" as school directors for Roxborough, and this law continued in force until 1832, when by Section 3 of the Act of May 3, "one citizen residing in the village of Manayunk was authorized to be appointed "a director of the public school in addition to those appointed in the township of Roxborough, and by Section 18 of the Act of April 16, 1845, the electors of the Borough of Manayunk were further authorized to vote for two school directors, one of whom shall reside within and the other without the limits of the Borough.

In 1847 the number of directors for Manayunk was increased to three-- as may be seen by referring to Section 4 of the Act of March 3, 1847, and on the 7th of April, 1848, the number was increased to four in Manayunk, and the like number in Roxborough. It will be seen that the directors for

1820 to 1825, and from 1827 to 1837 are not given. Their names do not appear in the early Reports of the Controllers, and I have not had time to pursue my researches in other quarters.

With this explanation I now present the following tabular statement:--

A LIST OF THE CONTROLLERS AND DIRECTORS FROM 1819 TO 1859.

1819--Peter Robeson and Rev. Horatio Gates Jones.

1826--Rev. Horatio Gates Jones and John K. Duy.

1838-9 ---Controller, Charles V. Hagner; Directors, Roxborough, Rev. Horatio Gates Jones, ~~WAMMM~~ Henry Rex; Manayunk, Charles V. Hagner.

(Then follow the names of all who have been Controllers or Directors up to 1859. As these are easily obtained from the published Reports of the Controllers they are omitted here.)

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In 1844 Mr. Hoffman was chosen Secretary of the Sectional Board, which then met at Germantown, and in 1845 he was succeeded by Alfred Crease of Roxborough. Mr. Crease continued to occupy the same position until 1854, when he ceased to be a director, having been chosen a member of the Common Council from the Twenty-first Ward of the City of Philadelphia.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO.

ROXBOROUGH AND MANAYUNK POOR HOUSE.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO.

There was a time when Poor Laws did not exist in civilized communities--when men were not compelled to be generous and charitable, although there were multitudes, who through misfortune, or in some other way, had become dependent on their fellows. But that period has long since passed and now what was once regarded as a virtue--the support of the poor and destitute, is looked upon as a heavy tax, and is so named in our laws. This is not the time or place to give a history of the poor laws of England, from whence our own are derived; suffice it to say that William Penn made early provision for the support of those who were unfortunate and needy--and as the population of Pennsylvania increased, and numbers of poor adventurers came across the water to seek a shelter under the mild laws of PENNSYLVANIA his Province, the Assembly made new laws to meet the needs of the poor emigrants.

At first those who required relief were either boarded out among the neighbors, or an allowance was made for them. In fact there were few persons in the township who needed support, as we infer from the small tax that was assessed.

In 1757 the whole amount of tax raised was only 17L 6d, or about forty dollars, and the next year it was about 28 dollars. Even in 1800 the tax did not exceed \$240. These facts show that there must have been but really poor people in our township.

When Rochefoucault Liancourt visited Roxborough in 1795, he was struck with the fact that there were so few poor persons to be found here. He remarks as follows:--"Poor rates are quite unknown, as there are seldom any poor people in the country, and a small sum has been laid up in the bank for the support of the poor, if there should be any, which stock yields annually about 40 or 42 dollars, and these are added to the capital." Surely this must be a happy country." *Tempora mutantur.*

The duty of taking charge of the poor devolved by law upon the persons called "Overseers of the Poor," who were appointed by the Court of Quarter Sessions--until they were made elective--but in 1833 the Overseers of Roxborough were made a corporate body by an Act of Assembly, passed April 8, 1833, under the title of "The Managers for the relief and employment of the Poor of the Township of Roxborough, in the County of Philadelphia--a name which they still retain. This act was passed to enable them to buy a poor-house, and Amos A. Jones, Joseph Gilkeson, Samuel H. Slingluff, Alexander Quinton, Michael Levering and Charles Righter were appointed Managers to carry the act into effect. Every year the Managers went out of office and two new ones were elected. This act continued in force until 1847, when the number of managers was reduced to three for Roxborough, that being the year when Manayunk took charge of its own poor and elected three managers for that purpose.

In early times the Court appointed the most respectable citizens as Managers of the Poor, men of intelligence and property, and the records clearly show, and it is this circumstance which has caused the preservation of many interesting facts concerning the Poor of Roxborough. The oldest and most reliable record in Roxborough Township consists of the Minute Book of the Overseers. This volume is a folio, and has been neatly bound. It is entitled on the outside, "The Records of the Poor of Roxborough from 1752," and on the fly leaf I find the following:--"For Roxborough Township Overseers of the Poor, bought by Henry Shellenberg and Thomas Livezey in the year 1752, then Overseers of the Poor, and cost nine shillings. Abraham Livezey 1756, then being Overseer of the Poor."

The accounts for 1757 is brief, and I shall insert it entire. It is as follows:--

March 25, 1757, Jacob Cook	
and John Righter, Overseer	L17 6 0
Contra, Cr.	

By cash paid a doctor in Philadelphia for curing Andrew Cook	
of Lameness in his Leg and Misting him,	
and some cloaths, as per Doctor's Receipt	L14 0 0

By cash paid an Attorney for his Advise	
---	--

concerning Andrew Cook's Residence in
Roxborough

L 1 0 0

By cash paid for Searching the Records
of said Cook's Indent'r

1 0

By a pair of Shoes for John Smith, a
Poor Man

7 6

L 15 8 6

1758. March 25, Ballance in the hands
of Jacob Cook and John Righter, to
be paid to the new Overseers,

1 17 6

L 17 6

March 21, 1768. By cash paid
Two Attorneys for their advice
Respecting Timothy Cough's
Residence,

7 2 6

1769. The said Overseers make
themselves Dr. to Cash Rec'd
of John Potts, Esq. for Fines
paid for Fishing in unlawful
Hours,"

During the Revolution, the Continental currency depreciated to an alarm-
ing extent, and under date of 1781 I find the following entry:--

"The said Overseers Dr. themselves to
cash raised by Duplicate L.23 14 6. They
further Dr. themselves to L.319 6 11, Continental money received from
the former Overseers, which being reduced into hard, proves to be but
L.1 0 4, making in all L.24 14 10.

In 1803 the decimal mode of keeping accounts was first introduced, and
the amount of duplicate for that year was \$287.

After 1803 the tax went on increasing until 1839. The amount of the du-
plicate, or of cash received in various years is as follows:--

1804.....	\$399.80	1819.....	\$875.61
1813.....	\$405.29	1820.....	\$706.47
1814-15...	\$242.15	1821.....	\$728.52
1816.....	\$584.95	1822.....	\$728.52
1817.....	\$388.29	1823.....	\$798.
1818.....	716.83	1833.....	\$2594.16

Bills were paid by the Treasurer, amounting to two-thousand two hundred
and forty-three dollars and sixty cents.

1834.....	\$3192.05	1839.....	\$1652.57
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It might be well to say here, that in eighteen hundred and fifty-eight
no tax was assessed, owing to the receipt of a legacy of one thousand dol-
lars from the late Jacob Rittenhouse, which was appropriated to the liqui-
dation of the floating debts. A few years before, a similar legacy of one
thousand dollars had been bequeathed to the Managers of the Poor, by Enoch
Rittenhouse, an older brother of Jacob. So far as I know, these are the
only two citizens who have ever benefitted Roxborough by any testamentary
disposition. It is to be hoped that they will not be the last.

CHAPTER 23.
ROXBOROUGH POOR HOUSE.

I stated that by a special Act of Assembly passed in 1832, the Managers of the Poor were incorporated.

On the 15th day of June, 1833, they bought a house and farm in Roxborough, containing about 21 acres, situated on the Ridge Road below the sixth milestone. The house was in early times known as the Plow Tavern and was such in 1753 when it was kept by Michael Moyer. "The Plow Tavern" was kept as a public house even within my recollection. When the increasing number of poor rendered the system of boarding them out impracticable, it was deemed best to purchase a farm so that the able-bodied men could be made to work, and thus assist in supporting themselves.

For many years the old tavern sufficed, but there were no accommodations for the sick and very infirm, or for the lunatics, of whom not a few were to be found at different times in Roxborough. Hence the Managers erected the large building to the east of the old one, and in the cellar they had a number of cells built for the confinement of the vicious and the lunatic. The first steward of the new Poor House was John Roberts, and he was succeeded by John Moyer.

In 1847 Manayunk and Roxborough were separated. The 5th section of the Act of March 3, 1847 provides as follows:-- "That from and after the passage of this Act, the incorporated part of the Township of Roxborough, in the County of Philadelphia, called the Borough of Manayunk, shall be no longer connected with the unincorporated part of the said Township, in the levy and assessment of taxes for the relief and employment of the poor, or for the opening and keeping in repair the roads or for any other township purposes whatever."

Section 8 of the same Act provided for the proper distribution of the funds by the Auditors of the Township, and Section 10 authorized the sale of the Poor House and farm or plantation, and directed that the proceeds should be equally divided between the Managers of the Poor of Roxborough and the Town Council of Manayunk. A subsequent act was passed, of which I need say no more at this time, and the Poor House and farm were bought by the Borough of Manayunk for the sum of \$7,000, and used by them for poor purposes, until 1854-5, when the citizens of Manayunk availed themselves of the Act of Consolidation and became subject to the poor laws of the city of Philadelphia. Their poor are now kept in the Almshouse, West Philadelphia. From 1847 until 1850 the Managers of Roxborough boarded their poor at the Manayunk Poor House as it was then called.

The land connected with the Poor House extended from the Ridge Road to the Schuylkill River, and the greater part of it was susceptible of cultivation, although the middle was hilly. Near the large rocks, about half way to the river and adjoining a copse of trees, is the burial ground of the poor, and there repose quite a number of the dead. This property finally vested in the City of Philadelphia, but it was afterward sold to and owned by John Adams and David Wallace.

The following account may prove of some interest to show the exact condition of our poor funds at the time of the separation. It is the official account published at the time:---

Overseers of the Poor of the Borough of Manayunk
in account with Overseers of the Township of Roxborough.

DR.

May, 1847.	To farm purchased	
	of them at public sale.....	\$7,000
April 1, 1848,	to 34 days interest	
	on \$3,500	199.07
April 1, 1849,	to one year's interest	
	on \$3500	210.00
April.....	to one year's interest	
	on \$3,188.86.....	191.33

7,600.40

GR.

May 1847, By their Meity,.....	\$3,500.00
April 1, 1848, By Board of Poor,.....	372.50
April 1, 1849, By Board of Poor,.....	338.68
By 1 year's interest	
on \$173.43.....	9.75
April 1, 1850, By interest of	
six months on \$148.55.....	4.45
By Board of Poor.....	387.95
By Balance due Township	
of Roxborough,.....	<u>2,897.07</u>
	\$7,600.40

It was, however, finally deemed expedient to secure a farm and house for the separate use of Roxborough, and, on the 15th day of May, 1850, the Managers of Roxborough bought from Benjamin Shourds a fine farm containing about 40 acres, situated on Livezey's Lane between the Ridge Road and the Wissahicon for the sum of \$3,700. As this valuable property is still owned by the Managers of the Poor of Roxborough and as it will no doubt be long retained for its present purposes, a sketch of the former occupants of the farm may not be uninteresting to my fellow citizens. The buildings on the farm have long been known, and are still familiarly called the Camel Stables, the origin of which queer appellation has puzzled many of the present generation of citizens, and will be fully explained before I close.

On the 16th of April, 1777, Anthony Cook conveyed 74 acres, including the Poor House property to George Saunders, and the latter on November 22d 1806, sold 40 acres and 18 perches to Jean Jacques De la Bourdine of the City of Philadelphia, Grocer.

On the 27th of January, 1807, John Everman sold Mr. De la Bourdine 2 acres, and on the 16th of May, 1808, John King sold him 15 acres, so that he owned in one tract about 57 acres of land. The present buildings so conspicuously seen from different points of Ridge Road, and consisting of two large edifices and a small one in the middle, connecting them, were erected by Mr. De la Bourdine.

When he bought the property there were some old buildings on it, and I think there was a house on the southern side of the lane near Philip Marwine's land, but Mr. De la Bourdine was not content with the old-fashioned structure and determined to put up a house that would satisfy his own ideas and perhaps "astonish them natives of Roxborough." This he at once proceeded to do. On each side of the small house he erected a large two-storied edifice nearly twice the height of the middle building. There were chimneys to these buildings and the usual openings in the wall for fire-places, and stairs are remembered to have been seen by one of my neighbors. In front of the house was a neat fence, and the pathway leading to it was paved with bricks, then a novelty in Roxborough, and at the entrance were places for lamps. The whole structure attracted attention and did "astonish the natives." Many were the speculations about the buildings, but no one could learn their intended use. At last some of the Roxborough boys suggested that if designed for barns--for in Europe it is quite common to have the mansion house and barns quite as near to each other--he could not intend them for horses, for they were too high, and hence perhaps the Frenchman ~~WHEN HE BUILT THEM FOR CAMELS!~~ HAD BUILT THEM FOR CAMELS! This novel idea--an original one, most undoubtedly, at once took among the school boys and others, and the large buildings were dubbed "The Camel Stables," and from that time to this the name has clung to them. Tradition has perpetuated the nickname, but I doubt very much whether the origin of the name was known by a dozen persons of the several thousands who may read these notes. Mr. John James De la Bourdine did not enjoy his country seat very long, for he met with reverses and his property was sold by the sheriff. It was bought on the 19th of October, 1810, by Joseph Clark of Philadelphia. The following persons have since successively held the property, viz;--John Thoburn, from May 29th, 1812 to April 1st, 1818; Eliza Lybrand, from April 1st 1818, to September 22d, 1821; Howell Hopkins from September 22d, 1821, to October 1st, 1838; Charles Finney, from October 1st, 1838 to September 22d, 1846;

William C. Shourds, from September 22d, 1846 to February 1st, 1850; Benjamin Shourds, from February 1st, 1850, to May 15th, 1850, when he conveyed it as stated before to "The Managers for the relief and employment of the Poor of the Township of Roxborough.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR.

ROXBOROUGH POOR HOUSE.

I had hoped to furnish a complete list of the Managers of the Poor of Roxborough until the present time; but I have only been able to collect the names as far as 1840. The books containing the records are unfortunately out of my reach, but I trust at some other time to append those names which are now omitted. The same remark will apply to the internal arrangements of our poor house. The published accounts as arranged by the auditors of the township give a general view of affairs; but it was my design to furnish minute details, so as to let the people know exactly what it cost to support each poor person.

The following list has been abstracted from the old book to which I have referred in a former paper.

LIST OF MANAGERS OF THE POOR OF ROXBOROUGH from 1752 to 1842.

- 1752--Henry Shellenberg, Thomas Livezey.
- 1756--Abraham Levering.
- 1757--Jacob Cook, Jacob Righter.
- 1758--John Stanaland, John Barndollar.
- 1760--John Martin, Anthony Harp.
- 1761--William Levering, Lawrence Smith.
- 1762--William Houlgate, Charles Bower.
- 1763--Edward Milner, Michael Smith.
- 1764--Aaron Levering, Abraham Rittenhouse.
- 1765--Miles Carpenter, William Savage.
- 1766--William Savage, H. Riddenberg.
- 1767--Henry Rittenhouse, Joseph Starn.
- 1768--John Vanderen, Enoch Levering.
- 1769--Hugh Crawford, Anthony Cook.
- 1772--Andrew Wood, William Levering, Jr.
- 1773--John Holgate, John Shephard.
- 1774--John Colp, Lewis Smick.
- 1775--Nicholas Rapine, John Gorgas.
- 1776--George Sanders, Nicholas Fight.
- 1777--Nathan Levering, Joseph Knouse.
- 1778--Peter Righter, Benjamin Gorgas.
- 1779--Samuel Holeget, John Pile.
- 1780--George Righter, Jacob Rittenhouse.
- 1781--Andrew Wood, Peter Case.
- 1782--Peter Case, Andrew Wood.
- 1783--4 William Rittenhouse, Andrew Marewine.
- 1785--John Righter, Jacob Gilbert.
- 1786--John Levering, Henry Keely.
- 1789--Benjamin Davies, Cornelius Holgate.
- 1790--Anthony Levering, Godfrey Bockius.
- 1791-2-3--George Righter, Joseph Starn.
- 1794--John Righter, Christopher Ozias.
- 1796--Jacob Lukens, Valentine Smith.
- 1797--David Davis, Lawrence Miller.
- 1798-8--Thomas Levering, Michael Levering.
- 1800--Philip Bartis, William Rittenhouse.
- 1801--John Weaver, Peter Rittenhouse.
- 1802--George Rex, Daniel Rittenhouse.
- 1803--Garret Snyder, Nicholas Rittenhouse.

- 1804--Daniel Smith, Jacob Rapine.
 1805--John Smith, Samuel Levering.
 1806--John Livezey, Nathan Levering.
 1808--John Livezey, Christopher Wunder.
 1809-10--Christopher Wunder, Benjamin Smick.
 1811-12--William De Haven, John Hoffman.
 1813-15--John Boyer, Daniel Tibben.
 1816-17--Cornelius Holget, John Gicking.
 1818-19--John K. Duy, Jacob Kolp.
 1820--Charles Levering, Charles Righter.
 1821-28--Michael Levering, Charles Righter.
 1829--Michael Levering, Michael Conrad.
 1830-32--Michael Levering, Charles Righter.
 1833--Amos A. Jones, Joseph Gilkeson, Samuel Slingluff, Alexander Quinton,
 Michael Levering, Charles Righter; Michael Levering, Treasurer.
 1834--Henry Root, Henry Dotts.
 1835--Michael Levering, Charles Righter, Henry Root, Michael Snyder,
 Daniel Rittenhouse, Jacob F. Heston.
 1836--Michael Levering, Charles Finney.
 1837--Michael Snyder, Henry Root.
 1838--Daniel Rittenhouse, Jacob F. Heston.
 1839--Michael Levering, Charles Finney.
 1840--Michael Snyder, Henry Root.

It will be observed that the person most frequently chosen a Manager of the Poor was Michael Levering. He was, by common consent, admitted to be the most wonderfully fitted for the duties of the office, and he was always chosen--voted for irrespective of party--until the infirmities of years ~~compelled~~ compelled him to decline. Mr. Levering devoted a great deal of his time to the poor, and visited all who were known to be in want, in this way setting a worthy example to his successors in office.

It is much to be regretted that in public positions of this kind, men are not more frequently chosen on account of their ability and adaptation for the duty.

Mr. Levering was born in Roxborough May 6, 1765, and died April 3, 1846, at the age of 80 years, 10 months, and 27 days.

The late aged Charles Righter was also much interested in the care of the poor.

The occupants of the poor house have always been well cared for--and when sick a physician is provided.

Among those who have been residents of this establishment were several persons of somewhat remarkable traits of character. One of the most devoted of these was Billy Curley, whose very name will recall a host of amusing scenes connected with his appearance in Roxborough at various times. His real name was William Loag or Logue. He was a native of Ireland, but of his early life, or the cause of his coming to America nothing is known. He was a short, thick set man, with a grizzly beard, grey eyes, round face, and rather a pleasant smile when he was sober, but he had a deep, gruff voice which, added to his "rich brogue," could be heard far and near when he was in a passion. The chief fault with Billy was a love for liquor, and I seldom remember ever to have seen the poor fellow sober. When he was sober, or only a little disguised, Billy was very civil, but when he was real drukk he was terribly passionate. He never forgot a person who had in any way offended him. For years he would carry the memory of the fancied wrong in his mind, and drunk as he might be he was always sure, when passing along the road, to stop in front of the offender's house, no matter even if it was mid-winter, and there he would stand for hours, calling his supposed enemy all the bitter names he could invent, and pouring out the most direful invective. His enemy having usually retired to bed was in a sound sleep, while Billy's vials of wrath were being poured out upon his devoted head. His cursings were fearful to listen to. Billy's occupation was to drive cattle, and in this way he eked out a miserable subsistence, working out his lodging at taverns by acting as hostler.

For years he was accustomed to visit Roxborough with droves of cattle, and on his return from town he stopped at several houses along the Ridge to express his opinion of the occupants. When remonstrated with about his drinking so much, he used to say:--"It's the only comfort Billy has left him."

Poor old man! how often have my childish eyes looked upon him with pity, and more frequently with fear when I have seen him half crazy with rage. None may now ever know of his early trials--of the sore temptations to which he was exposed, or why he tried to drive away his cares with liquor.

Many have supposed he was the poor old wanderer one is reminded of in the following lines from Dickens's Trade Songs--entitled "The Old Servitor!"

"Who travels on the road to-night?

It is the ancient Servitor.

He stumbles on from left to right;

He winks beneath the starry light;

The poor old Servitor!

An alms-man, he is poor and old;

No silver hath he now in store;

His face is thin, and pinched with cold;

His mantle grey is round him rolled;

The worn out Servitor.

A staff is tottering in his hand;

He takes his journey o'er and o'er,

Without an object gained or planned;

He withers on the fertile land,

The fallen Servitor.

He once had fortune--youth and light,

And strength and many words in store;

He served a Lord in his morning bright;

But now he wanes into the night,

The fading Servitor.

He hath his little alms-house room,

(His name and number on the door);

But dark. Perhaps amid the gloom,

He sees the phantom of a tomb,

The poor, sad Servitor.

"William Logue died in November, 1844, at the Roxborough Poor House, and was buried on a Saturday in the poor house burial ground. His remains were followed to the grave by the inmates of that charitable institution." Such is the substance of a notice which appeared at the time in the "Roxborough Lyceum Gazette."

The expenses of the Managers of the Poor for the year ending June 1, 1859, were \$1,544.93, which includes the monies expended on the farm and repairs to the houses. The total number of the paupers is eight. The stock on the farm consists of two horses, four cows, three heifers and eight shoats.

My desire to close my sketch of the Roxborough Poor House with this paper is the only apology I have to offer for its length.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE.

MINE ROCK----- TREASURE HUNTERS.

Any one who has ever visited the banks of the Wissahickon will remember that there are numerous large fissures, and some caves in the huge masses of rocks which abound there, and the same remark will apply to several places in the valley of the Schuylkill. These caves were often visited by me when a lad, and in common with others, I was frequently at a loss to account for their origin and history. The most remarkable of these caves

appeared to be the work of man, and this fact only added to the mystery which enshrouded it. It is situated on Gorgas' Lane, below the Cotton Wadding Factory of Mathias George, and just above the Wissahickon Turnpike--in Livezey's woods. The rocks are about 18 or 20 feet high, and on the northwest side are much broken. Large forest trees are growing on the summit. The cave, or excavation, extends into the solid rock about 30 feet. It is five feet high, and five and one-half feet wide at the mouth; while at the back part a person can almost stand erect.

At the entrance a large piece of rock has fallen--perhaps from the blasting of the interior. The cave rock can be distinctly seen from the road as you pass by. A short distance to the northeast of the rock is a deep hole in the hill--but apparently without any connection with the cave itself.

Many were the traditions current in former days about the cave in the rock, varying, no doubt, according to the peculiar temperament of the narrator. Some said that Indians used to live in it; others that a band of robbers, who infested the region in days of yore, had this place as their rendezvous--while others related that during the Revolutionary War, when the Hessian soldiers carried off everything they could, some of the neighbors selected this cave as a place unknown to the enemy, and hid in it large quantities of barley and other grain. The late Joseph Gorgas of Germantown informed me that in his young days they were accustomed to keep fowls in the cave, and that it was called "The Chicken Rock." He also said there was a tradition that the persons who dug the cave were seeking for saltpetre!

In 1845 I called to see the late Samuel Gorgas, who was born in the vicinity in 1776, and whose life had been passed in the neighborhood. While speaking of this cave which he well-remembered, he said that when young he recollected that he had seen a door at the mouth of the cave, but it was not the one in the rock, and that the mouth or entrance of the other had been closed up by the accumulation of dirt and leaves for many years. Upon further inquiry from Mr. Gorgas, I learned that the cave or mine he referred to was near a buttonwood tree, but the exact spot was unknown to him. This statement of my respected friend gave a new impulse to my antiquarian curiosity, and a few days afterwards, I chanced to discover in an old chest of papers, a time-worn document, which, on opening, proved to be THE VERY AGREEMENT WHICH HAD BEEN ENTERED INTO BY THE PARTIES WHO DUG THE MINES!

This was indeed a grand discovery for one who had not then grown old in such researches, and procuring the aid of a faithful assistant, with pick-axe and spade, we proceeded to the supposed site of the hidden mine, and after digging more than an hour we struck a stone which gave back a hollow sound--upon removing the stone a slight opening appeared, and finally I succeeded in digging a hole large enough to admit my creeping in. A large root from the buttonwood tree ran across the entrance, almost closing it up, but this was soon cut off, and then having procured a light, I entered and stood within the mine, which had not been trodden by the foot of man for at least fifty years. I found that the mine branched off about fifteen feet from the entrance, one chamber going straight on, and the other diverging to the left. The length of it must be about 30 or 40 feet. The hole on the hill below the rock was now susceptible of explanation. It was no doubt designed as a shaft, and was intended to meet the horizontal mines. The rock through which the mines extended was micaceous sandstone, and so soft that the water from the hills percolated through it. As I threaded my way along the dark and narrow passages, I could not but reflect upon the past, and think of the days and weeks of useless labor that had been expended within that mine. Hope had animated the hearts of the miners, while heaps of glittering gold or silver appeared to their imaginations--but the beautiful vision had quickly disappeared, and these excavations that I saw around me were the sole monuments of their folly. Eighty years had passed away, and the memory of the deluded men had almost died out.

Upon emerging from the mine, covered with dirt, I espied an old woman--a sort of Meg Merillies--at the roadside, busily watching my movements. She soon approached, and after being informed of the newly discovered mine, she wended her way to Germantown. I subsequently learned that she circulated the story far and near that I had discovered a gold mine on the banks of the Wissahickon.

The entrance to this mine has again been hidden from view by leaves and dirt, and it may be that half a century will again roll round ere another local antiquary shall stumble upon its hidden chambers.

In my next paper I shall give such facts as I have gathered relative to the real origin of these mines and shafts, which are certainly well worthy of a visit, being situated in that beautiful valley formed by the union of Oil Mill Run and the Wissahickon Creek.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX.

THE ROXBOROUGH MINES.

A century since most of the people of Roxborough, Germantown, and vicinity were very superstitious, and even in later years, traces of the fanciful notions of our ancestors were to be found among their descendants. A belief in witches was quite common, and I have an amusing anecdote of this sort which I shall reserve for some other occasion. One of the channels in which the superstitions of the day ran was in searching for hidden treasures, and a belief was very prevalent that treasures and minerals ~~could~~ could be pointed out by a hazel rod held in the hand in a peculiar way. Watson, who knew some of these early people, says that the rod had a peculiar angle in it, and that it was supposed to be self-turned in the hands when any minerals were approached. The use of the rod on such occasions was called HEXING. The same sort of a rod has been employed even within my recollection by well-diggers, who said it would turn and point to the spot where the water was to be found!

The late Mrs. Mary Levering, who died February 17, 1851, at the age of eighty six years, and who used to reside where her son, Percy W. Levering now lives on Green Lane in Manayunk, related to me that she well-remembered when a number of Germans came to her husband's farm to dig for treasures ~~of~~ of some kind. She stated that they dug on a lot nearly in the rear of the German Catholic Church, now occupied in part by Mulberry Street, and I think that when P. W. Levering was building the two houses on Green Lane below the Baptist Church (the site which was once occupied by a block of houses formed out of his father's stone barn,) he discovered, on digging, the cellar, indications of a search of some kind, but whether by treasure-hunters or not, was, of course, uncertain.

As most of the early settlers in this region were Germans, they brought with them here many of the superstitions of their native country, but the influence of religion and education has happily succeeded in eradicating these notions, and now science occupies the seat which was formerly held by rude and ignorant pretenders.

The laws of nature are made one of the familiar studies in our schools, and no longer are we liable to the imposition of Philosophic empyrics.

When we consider the condition of the people a century since, the few ~~advantages which they possessed, and the general poverty which prevailed,~~ it is not surprising that a desire for wealth should lead them into foolish beliefs and experiments. We, of this age, can remember the delusion of the people about MORVS MULTICAVLIS AND MERINO SHEEP, and the gold diggings of California and Pike's Peak, and even Australia have withdrawn from the regions of civilization hundreds of thousands of our citizens. Let us not therefore judge our ancestors too severely because they were dazzled by visions of untold wealth which were never to be realized.

The mining operations on Livezey's hill were conducted, it would seem, by persons acquainted with the business, but who were the deceivers and who the deceived it is impossible to say. What led to that place as a spot

where mineral wealth could be had does not appear from any documents I have ever seen; but one of the local traditions is that a light was frequently seen near the large rock in Livezey's woods, and hence it was believed that precious metals were there. Be this as it may, there was some strong reason which induced a company of persons, as early as 1763-4 to lease five acres of ground from Thomas Livezey for THE TERM OF NINETY-NINE YEARS! and to begin the excavations which they finally abandoned, as I have stated in my previous papers. I discovered in 1845, a copy of the original articles of agreement which formed the basis of the Roxborough Mining Company. As a matter of interest to the antiquary, and as it furnishes a full explanation of the term, upon which the mining operations were to be carried on, I shall now give the document entire.

It is endorsed as follows:---"Copy of Agreement between Bernard Gratz and others."

" Articles of Agreement indented, made the second day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty-four, Between Barnard Gratz, Mordecai Moses Mordecai, Isaac Levy, Jr. of the city of Philadelphia, and Peter Righter, and Conrad Joast, of Germantown, in the county of Philadelphia, of the one part, and John Crout and John Stot of Germantown, aforesaid of the other part. Whereas in and by a certain Indenture bearing date theday oflast part, Thomas Livezey of Roxborough, in the county of Philadelphia, Miller, did grant, demise set and to farm let unto the said Barnard Gratz, Mordecai Moses Mordecai, Isaac Levy, Jr.; Peter Righter, Conrad Joast, John Crout and John Stot their executors administrators and assigns, A certain Piece of Land situate in Roxborough aforesaid by Metes and Bounds in the same indenture mentioned, containing Five Acres, with all the Mines and Minerals thereon and the free right, liberty and privilege to and for the said Barnard Gratz, Mordecai Moses Mordecai, Isaac Levy, Peter Righter, Conrad Joast, John Crout, and John Stot, their Executors, Administrators, and Assigns to dig and search for mines, minerals and ore on the said Land, Together with the appurtenances, To hold from the day of said recited Indenture for the term of ninety-nine years, as in and by the said recited Indenture relation being thereunto had more at large appears. And whereas the said Barnard Gratz, Mordecai Moses Mordecai, Isaac Levy, Peter Righter, Conrad Joast, John Crout, and John Stot are resolved to carry on search, dig, and delve on the said land for mines minerals, and ore on and in the said land, and erect such works as may be necessary for doing the same. Now these Presents Witness and it is hereby mutually covenanted and agreed by and between said Parties and to these Presents for themselves, their Heirs, Executors, and Administrators respectively in manner following, that is to say; That the aforesaid Mines and Works shall be equally carried on by the said Parties hereto (except as hereafter mentioned) and the expenses settled and paid every month by the said Parties.

But if any of the said Parties shall not be able to pay his or their part of the expenses every month, then the others of the said Parties agree to advance the same for two months, and he or they that cannot pay his or their part of the expenses in carrying on the said Mines and Works in the said three months, are to give his or their bond or bonds to the rest or others of the said Parties (who agree to advance the same) to pay his or their part of the expenses in twelve months, and if he or they do not pay off the bond or bonds so to be given, or give satisfaction for the same, then such delinquent or delinquents shall, and hereby do agree to forfeit or lose his or their share of said Land, Mines, Lease and Premises to the rest of said Parties, and the bond or bonds still to be in full force and virtue. And it is agreed that the said John Crout shall not be obliged to pay or advance his part of the expenses until they come to the body of the ore, or until the said Parties shall not think searching for, but in case the said ~~MINES~~ Mines shall not prove worth searching for, then he, the said John Crout, is to pay the others of the said Parties, all

his part of the expenses in carrying on the said Mines, to be reckoned from the beginning, but if the body of the ore shall be found, then his, the said John Crout's share of the expenses is to begin. And the said John Stot agrees to work as a miner at the said Mines without reward until they come to the body of the ore, he not being to pay any part of the expenses in carrying on the said works until they come to the body of the ore, and when the said Parties get or come to the body of the ore, then he, the said John Stot, is to be paid monthly wages as other miners, and also have his part of the profits of the said Mines, and from that time he is to pay his part of the expenses. And also that the said Parties shall or will on or before the second Tuesday in January instant, choose three of them to be managers to carry on the said mines and works for one whole year from the time they shall be chosen, and so yearly and every year on the second Tuesday in January, during the continuance of this agreement choose three managers out of their Company to carry on the said Mines and Works, who are each to have and be allowed five shillings per day for every day they shall spend in doing the business relating to the said Mines; that ore and minerals shall be sent to the City of Philadelphia after being cleaned, to one of the said Parties, to be exported or otherwise disposed of, as the managers think proper for the benefit of the said Parties. And after that the body of the ore is found, the said Parties shall keep a clerk or accountant at the said Mines who shall keep proper books and regularly posted up, to which the said Parties may at all times have free access to examine and copy the same, or such parts as they may think proper. And that if any of the said managers or any one of the Parties hereto, shall be found out to conceal or carry off any ore, mineral or other thing belonging to the said Mines, he or they so offending shall lose and forfeit his and their share of all the said mines and premises to the rest and others of the said Parties, and have no profit or benefit thereby, and that the said Parties shall settle all accounts relating to the said Mines and divide the profits arising therefrom every twelve months. And that if any of said Parties shall incline to dispose of and sell his or their share or shares of the said Mines or any part thereof, he or they so inclined to sell shall give the preference to the said Parties or to some or one of them. But if the said Parties, or some or one of them shall not purchase the part or shares to be sold, then the said party or parties so inclining to sell, may sell to whom he or they think proper, with the consent of the said Parties or a majority of them. And that these Articles are, and shall continue to be in full force and virtue for and during all the rest and residue of the aforesaid term of ninety-nine years, or until a majority of the said Parties shall not think the Mines and Minerals worth searching and digging for. In witness whereof the said Parties to the Presents have interchangeably set their Hands and Seals hereunto. Date of the day and year first before written.

Sealed and delivered in the presence of us; Paul Isaac Vote, John Kirk."

The instrument is signed by all the contracting parties except Mr. Gratz. The signature of John Stot is in German. Appended to the agreement is the following memorandum. "The above is a true copy taken and compared with the original."

How long these works on Livezey's hill were continued I do not know. No doubt the excavations occupied several months and then were abandoned forever.

Several of the miners boarded at the house of Mr. John Gorgas, who lived near the old grist mill on the Wissahickon.

A perusal of the agreement will satisfy any one that the contracting parties were honest in their belief that some previous ore existed in Livezey's hill. It would certainly be interesting to know the primary reasons which led them to dig their mines.

The foregoing constitute all the facts that I have been able to gather concerning the mines of Roxborough.

Chpt 27 Roads and Highways.

One of the first things that western settlers do, after making a clearing and building a cabin, is to construct a road to the next adjoining settlement, leaving the great public highways to the action of the community. We suppose that a similar line of conduct was pursued by the early settlers in this part of Pennsylvania. The nearest settlements to Roxborough, were Germantown and Merion, and Plymouth. The access to the first was rendered exceedingly difficult by reason of the deep gorges and steep rocky hills of the Wissahickon, but to Merion the waters of the Schuylkill afforded an easy and pleasant conveyance.

At first bridle paths were much used, and, in fact, for many years--even within the memory of some old people whom I personally knew---it was the custom to carry things to market in panniers on horseback. Then, the daughters of the farmers, "well to do in the world", used to meet at some general rendezvous, at an early hour in the morning, and with their butter in nice tubs---fixed on purpose for horseback riding---and their eggs and other articles in panniers, they would all start off together---a right merry company---and proceed to the city to market. Occasionally they were accompanied by the men---perhaps the beaux of the young damsels---which escort made them feel safer and no doubt happier. The songs of these buxom lads and lassies, as they wended their way to market are yet remembered as "among the things that were".

The introduction of the market cart, then of the dearborn wagon, and at length of the more convenient market wagon, produced a change for the better; but, until this, the "gude man" would often mount his horse, and his wife would sit behind him on a pillow, and thus they would go to church, or to town, or to visit their neighbors at a distance. As late as 1845, in the State of Indiana, I was thus accompanied across the prairie by a sweet young damsel, whose name I am ashamed to say, I have now forgotten.

But I must not get off the track, and so shall return to the roads in early Roxborough.

Although the ~~settles~~ settlement commenced in 1685-6, yet I can find no mention of any road or highway, until the year 1706; but prior to that time, there must have been some communication with Philadelphia and Germantown.

The first road that was laid out was the Ridge road from the Wissahickon Mills to Philadelphia. This road had had a number of names; sometimes it was called the Manatawny, or the Plymouth road, or the Great Road leading to Plymouth. It was, however, more usually termed the Ridge Road, from its running on top of the ridge of the hills lying between the Schuylkill river and Wissahickon creek. The same year, the road was extended to Perkiomen above Norristown. The route through Roxborough has been changed very materially. Formerly it ran back of the residence of D. Rodney King, beginning near the culvert below the Norristown Railroad crossing (Wissahickon) going back "Wetherill's Lane", then up the present Righter street, out past Henry Root's and the old Poor House (Ridge avenue and Hermit lane). This road was then opened of the width of 60 feet, but was subsequently reduced to its present width of 50 feet.

It would seem that at an early day there was a ford over the Schuylkill, near Andrew Robeson's Mills, and Righter's Ferry was a short distance above the Wissahickon. The probability is that the Ridge road at first ran over part of the present Manayunk Turnpike (Main street) and before reaching the ditch below the

lumber yard of N. L. Jones, turned to the right. 49

This route was traveled for many years, but in 1723, a partial change was made and in September 1753 "Divers inhabitants of the township of Roxborough represented to the Court that the great Road from the City of Philadelphia, through Roxborough to Manatany (as it now runs over a great hill and through a deep hollow) is rendered very incommodious to all Travellers by reason of the ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ rains washing the same" and they requested a change in the route. In March 1754, the Jury reported against altering the road, nor was it until 1786 that any further effort was made to effect a change. The road, meanwhile, became worse and worse, and the wagons wore ruts in the rocks to the depth of a foot in many places. These may still be seen in the rear of Mr. King's residence.

In June 1786, there were three petitions in favor of a change of route presented to Court. These presented among other things the "the Road leading north-westwardly from Philadelphia, through Reading to Northumberland County is one of the great Highways of the State through which the produce of the back counties is brought to the city; that in its present passage through Roxborough it passes over a very steep rocky hill, called Van Deren's Hill, which is near or about three-fourths of a mile in ascent, which renders carting and travelling very difficult; that the said Hill may be avoided by taking the road around the side of the same, whereby the ascent will be gradual without materially increasing the distance". It was further represented that at times the road was so bad as to be impassable, and travelers to the city were compelled to take a circuitous route by the Germantown road---These petitions had the desired effect and the Ridge Road was changed to its present route over Righetr's Hill, but why the valley beyond--the apparently natural course for the road---was not adopted as the route, I cannot tell.

The estate of Miss Esther Righter, whom Nathan Levering and Algernon Roberts were guardians, received the sum of about twenty-nine pounds as damages.

The jury on this route was ordered in September 1786, so that it is probable the present road was made during the fall of that year. But, notwithstanding the change, many persons preferred the old road, and in March 1797, Messrs. Levering and Roberts, as guardians of Miss Righter, petitioned the court to vacate the old road.

Accordingly the Court appointed Peter Robeson, Andrew Wood, Godfrey Bockius, Joseph Crawford, George Sinn, and Christopher Ozias, jurors, to examine the road, and on the 24th of August 1797, they reported as follows: "We have viewed and vacated the following courses and distances of the old Wissahickon Road (Supposed to have been formerly laid out to a width of sixty feet) in the township of Roxborough, the centre whereof begins about 16 perches northwestward from the fork of the old and new roads, thence along the line of the said Esther Righter's land, north 3 degrees, east 26 perches, and ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ five tenths to the westerly corner of David Markle's land, the whole distance being one hundred and ~~xxxxxxxx~~ thirty one perches and five-tenths."

This report was confirmed and the old road, leading through Miss Righter's farm, was vacated.

We of the present generation are not aware of the character of the roads in Roxborough half a century since, except from report. The Ridge road, in the fall and spring, was eat up by the heavy teams, so as to almost be impassable for ordinary vehicles, and I have often heard the old people say that they were compelled to go to Germantown, where there was a turnpike, in order to go to

Philadelphia. This state of affairs led some of the prominent men of that day to organize the Ridge Turnpike Company, and numerous were the philippics written for the press upon the subject in order to awaken an interest in a turnpike. At length, after enduring the evils of a muddy, impassable road for years, the people of Roxborough (who ten took a long time to consider and think over a matter before they did anything) a fault which still clings to them---went to work in earnest and on March 30th 1811, the act of incorporating was signed by the Governor (Simon Snyder) The following persons were appointed commissioners to open the books of subscription for the stock, viz: General Francis Swain; James Sharswood, John K. Duy, John Matkley, Henry Nixon, Joseph Starne; Matthias Harrison, Francis Deal; Alexander Crawford; and Levi Pawling. The road was to begin at the intersection of Vine and Tenth street, in Philadelphia, and extend to Perkiomen Bridge, in Montgomery County. Its width was to be not less than 40 feet, and not more than 60 feet. The turnpike was in due ~~time~~ time finished and it proved to be of the greatest advantage to the whole section of country through which it passed, but it never yielded the projectors of it any remuneration what-ever---the cost having far exceeded their expectations.

While the bridge at the Wisahickon Creek was being repaired, the stones for that purpose was furnished by the Rev. Horatio Gates Jones, who resided at the Righter Mansion, opposite the lumber yard of Nathan L. Jones. A coffer dam had been built to enable the pier to be repaired, but there happned to be a leak in it, and in the morning the dam was full of water. Mr. Jones was on the spot overlooking the work, when one of the workmen--- a son of Erin, said to him, "Mr. Jones, I'll soon tell you where the leak is", and leaning over the edge of the dam his feet slipped and in he fell, head foremost. As soon as he got out, Mr. Jones jocosely said, "Why Patrick, what did you go in there for?" To which the witty Irishman quickly replied, as he shook the water from his clothes. "Shure, Mr. Jones, and it was júst to look after the leak!"

There was formerly but one toll gate on this road, within the limits of the township of Roxborough. It was situate near the Montgomery County line between the 9th and 10th milestones. It is now kept by Thomas Whiteman.

There is now another gate, at the junction of the Ridge and Manayunk (Main street) turnpike; so that there are two gates within the bounds of Roxborough. There is one provision in the charter of this company, which it would be well for citizens to know. It is as follows: "It shall be unlawful for any person to dig or remove any stine, sand or earth from the stoned part, or from the side or summer road, within the limits of the road of the Ridge Turnpike Company, without the consent of the said company; and if any person shall dig or remove any stone, sand or earth, contrary to this section, he shall forfeit and pay the sum of ten dollars, for each offence, to be recovered as debts of the same amount recoverable, for the iuse of the person who may sue for the same".

This provision, some of the citizens of Roxborough, living on the line of Ridge road think is more honoured in the breach, than in the observance---for the dust-produced by the number of ~~travelers~~ travelers is so annoying, that the windows can be seldom raised, except early in the day, or late at night. Hence it has been suggested that if the company does not remove the sand, and earth, and dirt, the people who ~~do so~~ do so, should not be fined for so meritorious an act.