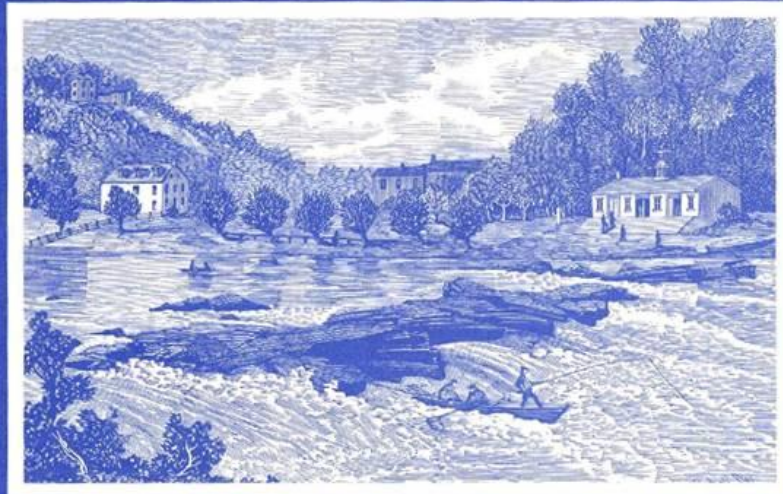


# EAST FALLS



THREE HUNDRED YEARS  
OF HISTORY

**PART 2: Page 42 to end**

# "WHERE THERE'S A MILL, THERE'S A WAY"

By Kathy Bandish and Judi Morrow

Although East Falls was not designated in William Penn's original plan for Philadelphia, the history of our roads and means of transportation actually precedes Penn's arrival in Pennsylvania.

Ridge Avenue, for example, was supposed to have been a well-established Indian path long before William Penn sailed over the Atlantic. "The Ridge," as we know it today, has been used as a main route from Philadelphia to the countryside for over 300 years. Prior to 1682, there was a pathway which began at 3rd Street in Philadelphia, cutting northward through the forests and passing the mills on the Wissahickon, along the ridge overlooking the Schuylkill and Wissahickon Valleys, to Perkiomen Creek and westward through a wilderness of vacant land to "Mulberry," the home of Andrew Robeson II, which was in Amity Township (now part of Berks County).

The Robeson family was among the first to actually lay out Ridge Avenue. In 1690-1691 A. Robeson, Sr., and Charles Saunders had purchased a grist and saw mill on the Wissahickon, at Ridge Road, and they wanted an accessible, well-built road to carry their products to the city.

On December 19, 1693, Andrew Robeson, Sr., petitioned for "confirmation of the road that is now from Merion Ford to Phila. at 3rd St." The same source states that "In 1704, a road was petitioned for from Merion Meeting House to 'the ford of the Schuylkill', then over the ford and so along the old road that leads from Wissahickon Mills to Phila. (this being Ridge Ave.)."

In 1706, A. Robeson petitioned the Court to widen and improve the road from his mills to Philadelphia.

Ridge Avenue is a natural highway, because the men who constructed it closely followed the lines of an old trail as it follows the hills and valleys along the eastern side of the Schuylkill.

In the evolution of an Indian pathway to the present congested urban street, Ridge Avenue has had many different names: early 1700's, King's Road, Manatawny Road, or the Reading turnpike; in 1718, the upper section was sometimes called "A. Robeson's Road," in 1729, it was supposed to have been called Rocksburrow; in 1750, the Wissahickon Road; in 1761, Roxborough or Wissahickon Great Road to Philadelphia; in 1774, it was referred to again as The Wissahickon Road.

One article notes that "On a French map of Lafayette's encampment at Bar-

ren Hill in 1778, it is described between the 9th and 11th milestones as 'Rich Road.'" In 1795, a French traveller, Duke de la Rockinfoucault, referred to it as "the Ridge Road."

In 1811, the Ridge Road Turnpike Company was formed, and Governor Simon Snyder signed an act authorizing Gen. Francis Swain to construct an artificial road over the ridge. Toll gates were established, but by 1869, the road was opened to the public free of charge.

The fact that Ridge Road was used during the Revolution is proven by the Valley Forge Orderly Book, page 72, issued by General Washington on October 3, 1777, when he was preparing for the Battle of Germantown; "The troops to be ready to march at Six O'Clock this evening. The Divisions of Sullivan & Wayne to form the Right wing, and attack the Enemy's left; they are to march down the Manatawny Road ... General Armstrong to pass down Ridge Road by Levering's Tavern and take guides to cross the Wissahickon Creek about the head of John Vandaring's mill dam so as to fall in bout Josh Warner's new house."

Near the intersection of Ridge and Midvale Avenues, Governor Mifflin's mansion once stood. The house was just northwest of the hollow, on a hill overlooking Ridge Road, with the Mifflin property skirting what is now Midvale Avenue. Midvale Avenue, so named because it was located in the middle of two valleys, was earlier a dirt road passing up the hollow, and known as Mifflin Street, in honor of one of the Falls' most famous residents.

In earlier days, the term "run" was frequently used to designate the small streams which flowed throughout the neighborhood, running down to the river. Mifflin Run was one of these small waterways. At the bottom of the run was a stone culvert under Ridge Avenue. At the river end of the culvert were two wooden

troughs which carried water to two ponds. These ponds were used to keep live catfish for the Fountain Park Hotel, kept by Robert Evans, and the Falls Hotel, kept by Michael Arnold, who provided the famous catfish and waffle suppers.

Due to the many streams, there were also some dams present along Midvale Avenue during the 19th century. The earlier dam was supposed to have been built by Governor Mifflin. When the Reading Railroad was built in 1834, a lower, and larger dam was formed, when they filled in the hollow to form a level roadbed. The filling in caused a backing-up of water and formed a large dam, which almost obliterated the older dam. Both these dams, which were noted for fishing and skating, existed until 1895, when Midvale Ave. was opened, and the Reading Railroad built a stone bridge to carry its tracks over the Avenue.

The appearance of Midvale Avenue has changed over the years. Besides the culvert at Ridge Ave., there was also a "deer park" with a picket fence which extended to Indian Queen Lane. The following quotation gives a detailed description of how Midvale Avenue used to be, "On the lower side, at the corner, was John R. Johnson's store and dwelling, with its flower garden ... In the rear was the old stable, beyond which were the nicely kept yards of the dwellings fronting on Indian Queen Lane. Then came the little frame dwelling, the home of Charles Boothroyd, the Benjamin R. Marley's carpenter shop, with its yard enclosed with the high picket fencing which once surrounded the Deer park ... next was the Baptist church, with its sheds for horses and the three-story stone former parsonage occupied by L. Metinger. Beyond was the row of dwellings erected by Henry J. Becker, and the big brewery at the end of Smith's knoll, which once was covered with a blackberry thicket. Patrick Dougherty's



Midvale Avenue, under P & R.R.R.

home and stable close to the railroad finished that side of the hollow. Along the upper side were the two dwellings, the first Becker erected, standing on what is now St. Bridget's Church lawn. One of the houses was occupied by Becker and the other by Cornelius De Groff, the marble cutter and noted singer. At the lower side of Frederick Street, where the Midvale Theatre now stands, were James Morrison's two dwellings; he occupied one and Elizah Scofield and family the other. Then came Stein's brewery yard, and on the corner James Morrison's frame building."

Farther east, the valley now occupied by Midvale Avenue was covered, as late as 1870, with a thick forest composed principally of tall poplar trees. Nearby, where Warden Drive meets Midvale, was a pool of water known as Dunlap's dam, which later became known as "the Duck Pond." Most of the trees remained in this area until the early 1900's, when the Warden estate was opened for development.

Queen Lane Manor, one block south of Midvale, was one of the last major areas to be developed in the Falls. At what is now Conrad Street, Garrett's Woods once began. The area was apparently a chestnut grove, with green moss covering the ground, and the woods were traditionally used by Sunday schools for their picnics. Garrett's log cabin was near Queen Lane and Vaux.

Real development did not occur until the beginning of the 20th century, when a previously unnamed street, which ran from Wissahickon Avenue to N. 35th Street (now Conrad St.), was given the name Queen Lane. Many felt that the historic road, Indian Queen Lane, should alone carry the old name, and all those who have been confused by New Queen, Indian Queen, and Queen Lane, would probably agree. The following poem, written by A.C. Chadwick, conveys these feelings quite adroitly.

*When Washington was leading men  
In fights against a king,  
He rode a horse out Bowman's lane,  
Which in those days, would bring  
Him to a camp, where stands today,  
A reservoir of water;  
Where patriots rested for the frays  
In which they gave no quarter.*

*The lane led down to Schuylkill waves,  
That men were wont to ford  
To reach the inner State, that then  
Was largely unexplored.  
And near the bottom of the hill  
Dwelt Smith, the teacher great,  
Whose name, today, is still revered  
Where students congregate.*

*Still later, off in Germantown,  
A publican sat down,  
And called his inn, "The Indian Queen,"  
Which won for it renown;  
And as it stood at Bowman's lane  
It soon became the mode*

*To give the hotel's storied name,  
Also, unto the road.*

*"Old Indian Queen," how many years  
The lane has borne that name!  
How many love its ancient past!  
And all its gloried fame!  
But there came men, with thoughts of  
gold,  
Who took its rights away,  
Until, usurping honors old,  
We have "Queen Lane" today.*

*The stranger, coming to East Falls,  
Is puzzled much to find  
Two streets with names so much alike,  
And wonders who designed  
So foolish a condition here  
And then he vents his spleen  
On men who silly-like, for wealth,  
Have bobbed our Indian Queen.*

A.C.C.



*Alex C. Chadwick, editor of the 1930's Suburban Press, whose scrapbooks provided much of the material for this book.*

All of the streets in the upper Falls which run perpendicular to Midvale Ave. were originally numbered streets, but were later changed to honor the deceased mayors of our city — Stokely Avenue was 30th St.; Fox Street, 31st Street; McMichael, 32nd Street; Henry Avenue, 33rd Street; Vaux Street, 34th Street; Conrad Street, 35th Street; and Cresson Street was 36th Street or Norristown Avenue.

Other area names have also changed over the years. "Smith's Thicket" was the name for the area which now includes Bowman, Ainslie, Conrad, New Queen, and Sunnyside Streets; and "Cadwalader's lot" is now covered with the homes of Cresson, Indian Queen Lane, and Crawford St. School House Lane was previously known as Bensell's Lane, and has always been a favorite crossroad from Germantown to the Schuylkill River.

By whatever name the streets are known, or have been known in the past, the important thing is that East Falls has been able to maintain its own identity within the framework of the larger city.

## RAILROAD

The present day Norristown branch of Conrail (Reading Railroad) was once a part of the Philadelphia, Germantown and Norristown Railroad. This company, which was formed in 1829 in order to establish more adequate transportation for the citizens of several communities, has a particularly interesting history.

Germantown, at that time, was virtually isolated from the center of the city due to a lack of transportation. There existed actually one main thoroughfare, Germantown Road, which became a virtually impassable sea of mud after a heavy rainstorm. Passengers and merchants with their goods attempting to reach the city were often unceremoniously dumped into the mud from their carriage. As a result, travel between this section and the city was quite difficult; little business activity was conducted between the two.

Several ambitious citizens decided to investigate the possibility of building a railroad in order to link Germantown with other communities — especially the city proper. Residents of Philadelphia, Germantown, Flourtown, Whitemarsh, Plymouth, and Norristown met at the home of Jacob Mason in order to formulate a plan. The outcome was the formation of the Philadelphia, Germantown and Norristown Railroad (P.G. & N.R.R.).

The original plans called for a railroad line to extend from Philadelphia to Norristown via Germantown. The extension of the line from Germantown to Norristown proved later to be impossible for several reasons. However, construction of the line, starting at the original depot at 9th & Green Streets in Philadelphia and ending at Price Street in Germantown, began in 1831. Festivities, speech-making, and feasting accompanied the long-awaited official opening of the railroad on March 7, 1832.

This first line was operated by the use of horses and gravity. Horses were hitched to the railroad car, which they pulled from Green Street to Germantown. The return trip from Germantown was accomplished by the force of gravity as far as Girard Avenue. At this point, the horses were once again required to pull the car into the depot.

Present day commuters might find it interesting to note that passengers at that remote time not only paid their fare for the journey, but were also expected to function as unpaid employees of the railroad! Conductors and brakemen were non-existent. These duties were accomplished by the passengers, who collected

and turned-in fares upon arrival, and pushed the car in order to start the train.

Horse-drawn cars, however, were soon replaced by a new invention — the locomotive. The Board of Directors of the P.G. & N.R.R. were quite excited when the locomotive, invented by Mr. Matthias Baldwin, was brought to their attention. After much discussion, Mr. Baldwin was persuaded to build a locomotive for the railroad, and the final contract was signed on November 24, 1831.

Great excitement greeted the running of the first locomotive, "Old Ironsides," on November 23, 1832. It maintained an "incredible" speed of 28 mph. Many were astonished to learn that it could attain a speed of 40 mph on a level road while drawing 30 tons gross.

During this time, the company maintained its original intention to establish a road from Philadelphia to Norristown. The Board of Directors finally decided that the road should be constructed via the Wissahickon Valley. The route that was finally followed remains today as the Norristown branch.

On October 18, 1834, the first train passed through East Falls on its way to Manayunk, where the road ended. Residents of East Falls lined the tracks to witness the running of the first train. The crowd cheered at the first glimpse of the four cars with an upper and lower deck, each drawn by two horses. The train's 30 passengers gaily responded as they waved, cheered, and saluted the crowds along the tracks.

The usual festivities, merriment, and speech-making were held at Snyder's Hotel. Samuel Nevins, President of the Norristown Branch, along with Henry Troth, William Levins, Benjamin Chew, and many other distinguished citizens participated in the ceremonies.

It wasn't until August 15, 1835, that the road was completed to Norristown. The final fare charged for the journey from Philadelphia to Norristown was 37½¢. A comparison with today's prices proves how relatively inexpensive a train ride into the city was at that time. In 1895, an excursion ticket from East Falls to Center City cost only 15¢; the single fare, 8¢.

Some may be surprised to note that, even though locomotives were used elsewhere, the first trains to run on the Norristown Branch were horse-drawn. Though it had been almost two years since the locomotive was first used on the Germantown line, the managers of the railroad were not totally convinced of its reliability. The locomotive only ran on fair days, while horses continued to pull the railroad cars when the weather was stormy and unpleasant. The first locomotive to travel through East Falls, on its way to Norristown, came on August 15, 1835.

One elderly resident of the Falls reminisced with a newspaper reporter back

in 1915 about the early history of the railroad. His father had often told him how frightened the residents of East Falls had been when the first locomotive came down the single track road. It seemed that almost the entire community fearfully believed this "iron horse" would blow up.

The old-timer vividly remembered his own first ride on the iron horse when he was just a boy. Dr. Horace Evans decided to take the Baptist Sunday School into the city on the train. The older man remembered how frightened he was of the wood-burning locomotive that traveled at such a breathtaking speed.

He also recalled riding into town on Johnnie Small's stage coach. Prior to the building of the railroad, this was the only means of public transportation by land into center city.

When Dr. Evans marched the Sunday School up to the train station, they boarded the train from the original station at the bottom of Indian Queen Lane. This was simply a small open frame shed. In 1886, a new station was built at the foot of Bowman Street. William Green, who was the railroad agent for the Falls for 51 years, moved into the new station in October of 1886, and made his home there.

The present train station wasn't built until 1933, when the Warden estate purchased the land from the Wiele estate. The property was generously donated to the railroad as a site for the East Falls station.

Quite a bit of controversy arose concerning the name of the station. This area had always been known as the Falls of Schuylkill. However, another town in upstate Pennsylvania had also adopted this name. In addition, there existed a small station on the other side of the river known as West Falls. The railroad company decided to avoid any confusion by changing Falls of Schuylkill to East Falls. Stubborn residents protested to no avail. All traffic schedules began designating the Falls of Schuylkill as "East Falls."

On December 1, 1870, the Philadelphia, Germantown, and Norristown Railroad passed out of existence. On this day, the railroad was leased to the Reading Railroad for a period extending over 999 years. The old depot at 9th & Green Streets was replaced in 1893 by the present terminal at 12th & Market Streets. The railroad, before the advent of the trolley car, the automobile, and the bus, was essentially the main means of transportation from East Falls to the city. It played a vital role in developing the Falls and surrounding communities.

#### HORSE CAR & TROLLEY CAR

The railroad was a valuable means of transportation, but by itself it did not solve the transportation problems of the Falls. Johnnie Small's stage coach was

another method of transit that deserves mention. Stage coach lines had originally begun in Philadelphia in 1781 by William Coleman. Even with the railroad, Small's stage coach was still running every few hours from East Falls to Girard Avenue.

A new mode of transportation, the horse car, ushered in a new era of travel, but also proved to be the downfall of the old stagecoach which had served the Falls for so many years. The first horse car came up Ridge Avenue on April 3, 1859. The line began at Ridge & Columbia, and extended as far as James Street (now Stanton Street).

Ridge Avenue was lined with people cheering, saluting, and waving handkerchiefs as they greeted the first car. The frescoed cars, which were made of poplar and ash with walnut seats, created a fresh, light, and airy appearance. The silver and nickel-plated handles and metal fixings would today be highly valued. The cars were brightly lit by two lamps in the center near the roof. Dogs, children, and men on horseback paraded alongside this modern conveyance for the entire route.

Fares were only 5¢; six tickets could be purchased for a bargain at only 25¢. Smoking was prohibited, and earnestly enforced by the ladies. The cars, of course, were forbidden to run on Sundays.

Although the horse cars helped relieve the transportation woes of East Falls and adjoining communities, transit was still slow, and did not improve as greatly as had been expected. A heavy snowfall caused the car line to run only once in a great while. Soon, residents were demanding that the city provide them with trolley car service.

For several years, proposals were made by each side, while residents continuously bemoaned the inadequacies of horse-powered cars. It wasn't until early in 1893 that the trolley ordinance was finally passed by the Select Council (City Council), and plans were begun to service the area with this up-to-date method of transportation.

The fare from Manayunk and East Falls to center city was set at 10¢ one way; trolleys were expected to run at five minute intervals. The entire community delightedly awaited this "ultimate" solution to all transportation problems.

Even though the electric trolley began running in 1893 in this area, the horse cars were not entirely disposed of until 1894. A newspaper reporter at this time recounted a sentimental journey taken by Dr. George DeSwan, Samuel Reagan, and Bernard Fraser. They decided to take a ride on the last horse car that would ever run from Manayunk. Accordingly, at 11:00 P.M. they met Conductor James Barber as he drove his horse car for the last time.

They then thought it would be appropriate to also ride the first trolley car at 5:00 A.M. at Susquehanna Avenue.



Ridge and Midvale — 1918. Falls Pharmacy on corner of Indian Queen Lane, next to it Geo. Stubblebine's Meat Market, Acme on northeast corner of Ridge and Midvale.

Trolley car lines grew rapidly, as many railway companies laid new lines connecting East Falls with outlying communities. The first trolley car to serve East Falls began at Franklin and Pine Streets, and continued up Ridge Avenue. This particular line was owned by the Delaware & Schuylkill Electric Railway Company. Trolley tracks were beginning to crisscross the entire city. One new suburban trolley line, built in 1896, was nine miles in length, and provided a direct route from the Falls to Frankford.

In 1896, residents were also expressing the need for a trolley car line on Midvale Avenue. Midvale Avenue, at that time, was considered to be an eyesore due to the great reduction in land value as a result of the building of the Queen Lane reservoir. It was hoped that the establishment of an electric car line would aid the development and thus improve this "run-down" section of the Falls.

The great expanse of trolley lines soon made all sections of the city easily accessible at a relatively inexpensive cost. The Reading Railroad was rapidly losing business, and strove to compete with the Philadelphia Traction Company, the largest trolley car line, by reducing fares and adding more trains. But this did not hinder the growth of the trolleys.

The trolley car revolutionized transportation not only for East Falls, but for the entire city. However, the trolley cars were not without their own problems, and caused some additional ones. The heavy snowfalls that had halted the horse cars, had the same effect on the trolleys; but they had to deal with yet another weather-related problem. A summer thundershower would cause the power plant to shut down until the threat of lightning had passed.

An article dated April 4, 1895, in the Manayunk Chronicle presents another problem with the trolley cars which many

present SEPTA riders may recognize. One wonders whether things ever really change:

*"What is the main object of those who have control of the Roxborough, Chestnut Hill and Norristown Electric Railroad? Is it to make schedule time, whether it gets passengers or not? It certainly appears to be run with that idea at present.*

*"Just watch how the cars rush past any principal thoroughfare; see how carefully the driver avoids seeing any intended passenger who is not planted squarely in front of the trolley, at the risk of being run over! Again and again the writer has seen ladies within a door or two of the end of the street hurrying to get the car, and again the conductor has had an 'eye single' to that great bugaboo, Schedule Time, and has rushed his car madly onward as if to save his neck, leaving the passenger and the fare behind. And yet, this same trolley was to be a g-r-e-a-t public accommodation! 'Public Nuisance' would be a more fitting term."*

By 1916, automobiles and trolley cars had created a new transportation problem, with which today's residents of East Falls are quite familiar — traffic jams. The intersection of Ridge and Midvale was constantly congested and quite dangerous. In crossing the street, people were forced to dodge trolleys and automobiles, and only hoped to arrive at the other side alive and in one piece. They soon grew tired of these mad dashes, and demanded that traffic be regulated and speed limits set. Thus, East Falls proved to be a modern and growing community when the neighborhood acquired its first traffic cop.

As the electric trolleys replaced the out-dated horse cars, so, too, were electric trolleys to be replaced by a more modern conveyance. Proposals to extend bus routes into East Falls, Manayunk,

and Roxborough were made on November 19, 1931. By December 17, 1931, the R and Z buses were in operation.

The Z bus started at Main and Levering Streets and connected with the No. 61 at Ridge and Wissahickon. The R bus started its route at Barren Hill, and continued on through this area ending at the Erie Avenue Subway. Additional bus lines were planned for the community as soon as Henry Avenue was completed.

On November 23, 1926, \$2,500,000 was appropriated for the construction of two bridges on Henry Avenue. One bridge was to span the Wissahickon Creek; the other over the Reading Railroad tracks above Allegheny Avenue. Plans for both bridges were approved in 1929, and work was to be completed by July of 1932. The development of Henry Avenue made possible another main thoroughfare, with connections leading directly into the city. It eased the traffic congestion of Ridge Avenue, and led to the further development of public transit for East Falls.

## BRIDGES

No historical review of transportation in East Falls would be complete without mention of the area's famous bridges. As much as any means of transportation previously discussed, the bridges served to stimulate the growth of this quiet, residential area.

Beginning in 1760, a series of bridges was erected across the Schuylkill River, north of the present Reading Railroad bridge. Dr. William Smith, the first Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, who lived on Indian Queen Lane, held a seven year license on a rope bridge that was built across the river in order to pull boats from one shore to the other. It was also open to pedestrian traffic.

The next bridge to be erected on this site was constructed by Messrs. Kennedy and Carpenter in 1808 or 1809. This was a chain suspension bridge, one of eight in existence at that time, and the largest, having a span of 306 feet. The original bridge was the talk of Philadelphia while it lasted, and excursionists flocked from the city to pay a penny for the privilege of crossing.

This bridge, often called the "Finley" bridge, after the man who held the patent, was the first chain suspension bridge to be built in the United States. It was also referred to as the corporation bridge, as the two men who built it surrendered their private interests and formed a stock company in 1811. Bridge tolls were charged, of course, and the venture proved to be quite profitable, but short-lived. A decayed wooden section of the bridge was unable to support a great accumulation of snow and ice, and at 5:00 in the morning of January 19, 1816, the bridge collapsed. However, it was almost immediately replaced.

By June of 1816, Josiah White and 45

Erskine Hazzard had already erected a wire foot suspension bridge at the same site. Six wires, three at each side, proved to be the total support of this new bridge. The wires on the east side of the river were attached to a window of a nearby wire factory; on the west side, to a huge old tree. The toll charged for crossing was only 2¢. In light of today's concrete and steel bridges that appear so sturdy and almost indestructible, one may marvel at the courage of travelers who crossed this comparatively rickety structure.

Not far from the site of these bridges was the present stone bridge of the Reading Railroad. Construction began in 1852 under the direction of Christopher Swartz. The bridge, known as a skew bridge, was a new idea in architectural engineering. The following lines taken from a newspaper article of 1928 aptly describe the bridge, and credit East Falls with another "first."

*"The form of the bridge, at the time it was built, was entirely different from anything ever before attempted in any part of the world, and was known as a 'skew' or twisted bridge, being a succession of single arches which formed a whole, each line or circle of stone being independent of the other, and no tying in was done. The theories of these old engineers have been proved beyond argument, and their work has been copied in the building of similar bridges since that time. The more weight that is placed on such structures, the stronger they become."*

The stone used in its construction was taken from a quarry known as Stoever's or Scott's Quarry, located along the East River Drive just below the bridge.

Construction was completed in November of 1855, but at the cost of a few lives. The massive stone foundations of the bridge were laid by divers, as the modern machinery which now accomplishes this dangerous and rugged work did not exist. Some of these divers died in accidents related to the laying of these foundations. Although the masonry of the bridge was completed in 1855, the bridge was not opened for use until the spring of 1856, when the railroad tracks were laid and connections were made.

In 1811, a two-lane iron bridge was built to carry Ridge Avenue across the Wissahickon Creek. This bridge was west of the present bridge; its stone abutments are still visible. Sidney Earle's description of its role in the days of the horse-car may give us some indication of its reputation: "Street cars stopped on the south side, the horses were taken over the bridge and hitched to cars on the north side of the stream for a continued trip." In 1888, the present stone bridge was constructed. Mention should also be made here of the stone bridge which carries the Norristown railroad across the Wissahickon Creek. Construction began



Old "Skewer" Railroad Bridge, south of Midvale Ave., built in 1850 by Pioneer Bridge — designer Christian Schwarz. (Phila. Record)

on this five-arch span in 1872, and lasted until 1875. "The Highbridge" has won much acclaim for its architectural beauty.

The present Falls Bridge is not the first to be constructed on that site. The first bridge to stand there was built in 1848. The original bridge was a white, uncovered wooden toll bridge controlled by Aaron Smith. It was not destined to stand for long. In 1850, remains of an old Manayunk bridge floated down the river during a record freshet and crashed into the toll bridge. As a result, the western span of the bridge was torn from the piers and abutment, and was totally destroyed. Eleven years later the white toll bridge was replaced by the city with the Old Red Bridge. This was a covered, wooden bridge painted Spanish Brown. The bridge derived its name from its color. Unfortunately, a strong gale in October of 1878 swept the middle and western spans into the river.

There were few covered bridges built in this city; only one remains standing today. The loss of this charming, old-fashioned structure is cause for dismay by those proud of the historic nature of the Falls.

The present Falls of Schuylkill Bridge was opened in June of 1895. Residents viewed this freshly painted buff, white, and red iron bridge which would withstand any storm that swept down the river.

The original plans for this bridge were never completed since it was to be a double-decked bridge. The approaches for the upper deck were to extend from the hillsides above the Weightman Chemical Laboratories, where the Schuylkill Falls Housing Project stands today. On the west side of the river, the upper deck was to span the approach to the lower deck, as well as the Reading Railroad tracks, in extending to the very top of the Falls road, now known as Neill Drive. The bridge has fulfilled the hopes of the residents, as it still stands today providing a main and necessary connection between the two scenic, winding drives which follow the lovely, green banks of the Schuylkill River.

## WATER TRAVEL

If you gaze across the Schuylkill on a balmy spring day, you might spot a college crew racing, or a family sailing in a small Sunfish. Years ago, however, the boats on the Schuylkill were not limited to leisure and sport. For example, according to the recollections of Michael Arnold, who came to East Falls in 1853 and ran the Old Falls Hotel, "There was no street, railway, brick pavements, or boardwalks. The mode of travel to the city was by stage, and in the summer by steambot on the river; even the daily papers were brought by steamer."



May 13, 1876 — The Undine Boat Club Inaugural Party (note covered bridge in background).

The exact history of the steamboats is unclear, but we do know that in the early 1800's there was a little side-wheel steamboat, called Mount Vernon, which ran daily from Fairmount Dam to the Falls. Later, there was a complete line of boats on the Schuylkill, the largest vessels being two stern-wheelers, the Frederic Graff, captained by a popular resident, William F. Cline, and the Washington, captained by John Schronk. The Wissahickon replaced the Washington; later, the Reindeer, the Undine, and the Riverside were added.

The boats traveled from Fairmount Dam to a little garden just below Shur's Lane. They left every hour and stopped at Belmont Cottage, the end of Nicetown Lane, Laurel Hill Landing, Wood's Landing (which became Cooksockey in 1858), and Falls of Schuylkill. At the Falls they stopped at a little wharf. A

small bridge spanned Mifflin Run and went to the Falls Hotel, where Robert Evans was proprietor.

The boats apparently operated from April until the cold of winter set in, and at some point even midnight excursions were added. The schedule was apparently speeded up, for a Centennial year notice tells of the Fairmount Steamboat Co., with rides "to and from Wissahickon, every 15 minutes, stopping at Falls, Laurel Hill, Strawberry Mansion." The through trip was 20 cents.

On April 13, 1894, at least 4 new steamboats — the Mayflower, Volunteer, Vigilant, and Defender — were introduced. They carried between 700 and 800 people, and reduced the time of a trip from Fairmount to Wissahickon. A description states that they had one main deck, one saloon deck, and a hurricane deck.

## Meats and Groceries

A. ATKINSON

35th and Allegheny

JOSEPH SPEECE

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Groceries Ice Cream Pastries

Victor 4824

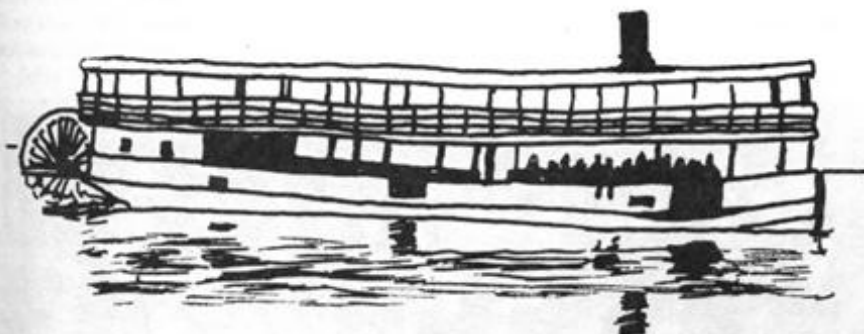
## FERRIES

There were also ferries on the river, but few descriptions can be found. A well-used ferry during the Revolution was Mendenhall's Ferry, which crossed the Schuylkill from Nicetown Lane to the Mendenhall Tavern on the western side of the river.

On the upper side of Falls Hotel was Watkin's Ferry, known as "the rope ferry" owing to a rope stretched across the stream. Other ropes, with pulleys, trolleyed along the larger rope, keeping the boat from drifting down the river. This ferry existed from the earliest days of the Falls, at various times assuming the names Roberts' Ferry and Garrigue's Ferry.

In 1911, Robert Roberts Schronk reported his recollections of Watkin's Ferry, and of life on the Schuylkill River: "This ferry had a frame ferry house at the foot of the roadway that led from Ridge Avenue on the upper side of the (Falls) hotel, between it and the oldtime horse sheds. Beside the house was an immense tree, willow, I think, to which one end of the ferry rope was fastened. The other end on the west side of the river was fastened to a large iron ring which was placed on a rock above the river road near Simpson's old barn.

"I remember this ferry and that it was attended by George Glanding, whose family occupied the dwelling. His father, Archibald Glanding, and Peter Schronk, a granduncle of the writer, previously had charge of the ferry. . . . The old ferry scow, which my uncle Godfrey Schronk, 2nd, used in ferrying goods to and from Simpson's mills, was moored at the shore of my father's property. In the then good old summer days, a number of boys would unfasten the scow, pole it up the river to the Wissahickon, then throwing off our clothes, let the scow drift down with the current while we would swim. Many a time that old scow carried a good load of fine apples which the boys borrowed from Jesse Evan's orchard, down to its mooring place."



The Undine, one of the steamships that carried pleasure-seekers from Fairmount Dam to Riverside Park. Below, Steamboat Timetable.

WISSAHICKON	FALLS.	STRAWBERRY AND LAUREL HILL	ROCKLAND AND ORMISTON.	BELMONT.	ZOOLOGICAL.
A.M. 8.50	A.M. 8.57	A.M. 9.05	A.M. 9.15	A.M. 9.30	A
P.M. 12.30	P.M. 12.37	P.M. 12.45	P.M. 12.55	P.M. 1.10	P
8.55	8.58	9.40	9.50	9.55	1
10.00	10.07	10.15	10.25	10.30	10
10.35	10.42	10.50	11.00	11.05	11
11.10	11.17	11.25	11.35	11.40	11
11.45	11.52	12.00			11
12.30	12.37	12.45	12.55	1.10	15
12.55	1.02	1.10	1.20	1.25	1
1.30	1.37	1.45	1.55	2.00	2
2.00	2.07	2.15	2.25	2.30	2
2.30	2.37	2.45	2.55	3.00	3
3.00	3.07	3.15	3.25	3.30	3
3.30	3.37	3.45	3.55	4.00	4
4.00	4.07	4.15	4.25	4.30	4
4.30	4.37	4.45	4.55	5.00	5
5.00	5.07	5.15	5.25	5.30	5
5.30	5.37	5.45	5.55	6.00	6
6.00	6.07	6.15	6.25	6.30	6
6.30	6.37	6.45	6.55	7.00	7
7.00	7.07	7.15	7.25	7.30	7
7.30	7.37	7.45	7.55	8.00	8
8.00	8.07	8.15	8.25	8.30	8
8.30	8.37	8.45	8.55	9.00	9
9.15	9.22	9.30	9.40	9.45	9
10.00	10.07	10.15			

# COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES ABOUND

*By Bobby Daily*

The Falls branch of the Young Women's Christian Association (Y.W.C.A.) was concerned with "the welfare of human beings — girls who are trained physically, mentally and morally, preserved from evil influence." They were prepared for duties after maturity, and taught their relations in society, all under careful supervision.

The Falls Y.W.C.A. building was located at Ridge Avenue and Ferry Road, and was demolished around 1933.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Interchurch Shuffleboard Association was organized in 1932 among members of the neighborhood churches. The membership numbered 165 at the first banquet on April 14, 1932.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Young Men's Literary Institute (Y.M.L.I.) was founded on February 14, 1886, at a meeting held in the basement of old St. Bridget's Church on Stanton Street. It was established for the intellectual, social, and physical advancement of young men in the community.

Its original founders were: Edward A. Carroll, James P. Byrne, Lawrence Grant, Dr. Bernard Murray, Alfred Byrne, William Flynn, Hugh McGeough, Bernard Dowdall, Thomas Berry, Edward Whalen, Edward McGahan, and John White, Sr.

On August 31, 1906, the Y.M.L.I. moved its headquarters to the building now occupied by the McIlvaine Funeral Home at the corner of Frederick Street and Midvale Avenue, through the efforts of Mr. Bernard Dowdall. The first meeting was held in May, 1907.

The Young Men's Literary Institute was known for the records its members established in baseball and basketball.



*Who are these women?*

Falls of Schuylkill Lodge No. 467 I.O.O.F. was founded on June 21, 1852, and met eventually in Oddfellows Hall, which was built in 1868.

\*\*\*\*\*

Wyaluzing Tribe No. 56 is possibly the only Indian organization ever in the Falls. Instituted on July 16, 1861, they met every Friday night at Oddfellows Hall.

In 1883 the officers were: Sachem, George Kindon; Senior Sagamore, Giles Stafford; Junior Sagamore, Robert Tweedie; Chief of Records, Theodore Marley; Keeper of Wampum, Edward Foster.



*Falls Male Chorus 1915*

Palestine Lodge, Masonic Lodge No. 470, was organized on May 17, 1870, and also met in Oddfellows Hall, at Ridge and Midvale Avenues.

\*\*\*\*\*

A Falls Angling Club was organized in the community in the early 1900's.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Custom Stock Company was a theater group organized in 1903 in Oddfellows Hall, where they also held meetings.

The Falls Male Chorus, composed of some 50 members, was founded June 1, 1912. It was a nonsectarian group that attracted a large number of townspeople as associate members. A newspaper article in 1935 read: "Joseph Smith and the Falls of Schuylkill Male Chorus have been making musical history for almost a quarter of a century."

\*\*\*\*\*

The Falls of Schuylkill Association was formed in the Old Academy Building by the yeomanry of the neighborhood, and any respectable resident could become a member upon payment of \$4.

\*\*\*\*\*

A Falls Mothers Club was in existence during the 1920's and 1930's.

\*\*\*\*\*

Riverside Section of the Cadets of Temperance was the first fire and drur corps in the Falls. William E. Marley, c 4121 Ridge Avenue, was one of the original members. Benjamin Marley, now living outside the city, in his relative

\*\*\*\*\*



In 1917, war brought the establishment of the Citizen's Patriotic Committee, with Charles L. Dykes serving as president. The Kiltie Band was also started at this time.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Philadelphia Rifle Club was organized in East Falls in 1855 at Scheutzen Park, now the site of the reservoir. In its day, the park became a popular spot for picnics by local organizations; almost on the same order as a town square. The Rifle Club opened an enclosed shooting range there on August 15, 1870.

The Club is still in existence, although now located on Tabor Road not far from the Roosevelt Boulevard.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Montrose Boat Club was organized on November 25, 1837, in a house on Ridge Avenue, as a social club. The Club negotiated with the Crescent Boat Club, and raced in a four-oared paper shell. On July 5, 1895, they entered and won the Junior Eight in the People's Regatta, defeating the Vesper, Fairmount, and Americas Boat Clubs.

John B. Kelly received his first lessons in rowing with the Montrose Club.

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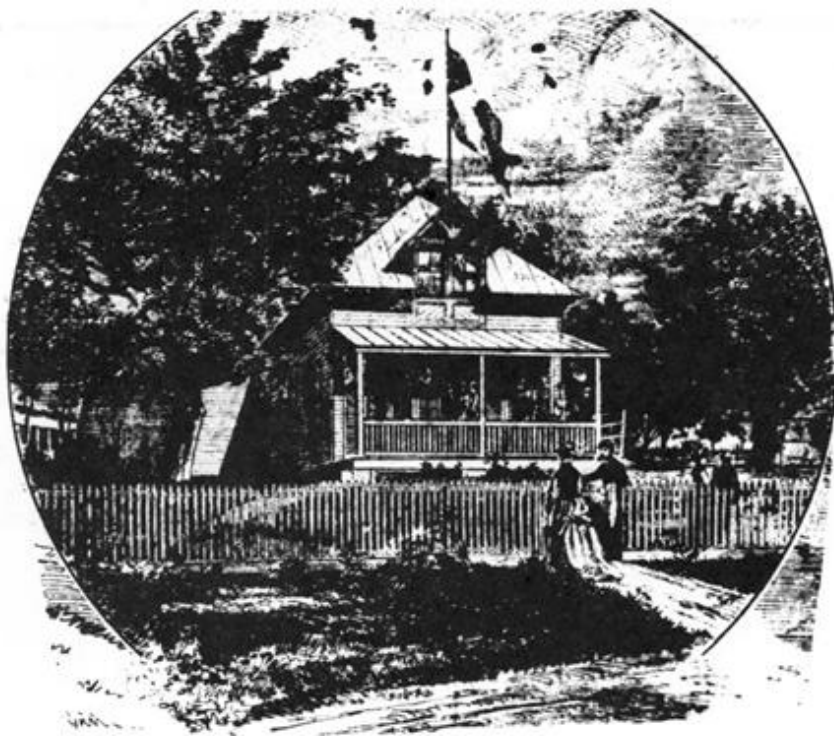
There are two boat clubs in existence today in East Falls. Their social clubs are located on East River Drive, on either side of the Anchorage. Their boathouses are on "Boat House Row," at Fairmount Dam on the Schuylkill River.

Undine's social clubhouse was dedicated on May 13, 1876, the twentieth anniversary of the founding of Undine Boat Club. The occasion was celebrated by a large turn-out of members, accompanied by their friends. The entire party rode upriver to the "Castle Ringstetten," as the clubhouse is called, in the steamer GAZELLE, accompanied by a band. The house and grounds were beautifully illuminated with gaslights and Chinese lanterns, and the rooms decorated with flags.

Bachelor's Boat Club, the oldest active rowing club in the United States, was established on "Boat House Row" in 1853. "The Button," its social clubhouse, was built in 1883, and remains in use today for dinners and meetings of club members.

\*\*\*\*\*

John J. McGrory, who moved to Queen Lane from Norristown, was president of the East Falls War Memorial Association, which raised funds to erect an attractive stone podium in McMichael's Park at Midvale and



The Undine Boat Club of Philadelphia — "Castle Ringstetten" on East River Drive, 1876.

Henry Avenues. The podium honors men and women of the Falls who served in all the nation's wars. There is no list of names on the monument because they didn't want to leave anyone out.

Most of the Association's members were Civilian Defense volunteers during World War II. Using McGrory's home as headquarters, the group sold more than \$5,000,000 worth of War Bonds.

\*\*\*\*\*

In 1918, a former resident of the Falls recalled the years around 1860: "When I was a boy there was a Falls of Schuylkill Library Association that did a great deal of good for the moral and intellectual benefit of its members. Every young man of any account was glad to be admitted as a member and have the privilege of reading and studying the valuable books. . . . The organization was kept up until the Civil War. I know of only four men now living who belonged to the Library, and they have each seen more than four score years — Hugh Scott, Charles K. Sorber, Franklin W. Morison, and Adam Mettinger. All are well preserved, and all have been lifelong residents of the Falls of Schuylkill."

\*\*\*\*\*

Before the blotting out of Cooksockey, a village on the west side of the Schuylkill, by the extension of Farmount Park, there was a strong organization known as the Jackson Club, which held its annual receptions and dances on

January 8th (Jackson Day). This was a holiday similar to today's Washington's Birthday.

#### Publications

The Falls has had its share of newspapers, published right here in the community. Today, local news is read in The Review and The Suburban Press, from Roxborough, or in the city papers, such as the Evening Bulletin, the Philadelphia Inquirer, and the Daily News. Other local papers are listed below, with the year first issued:

1869 — The Chronicle.

Before 1884 — The Falls Advertiser and Riverside Gazette was published by William B.N. Gifford, who had an office on Ridge Avenue.

1884 — The Falls Star.

1885 — The Weekly Guide.

Early 1900's — The Weekly Forecast and Falls of Schuylkill Review.

1917 — The Sentinel, published by Josephus Yeakel and Fred Lovejoy, ceased publication.

1920's and 1930's — The Suburban Press and The Falls Record were published.

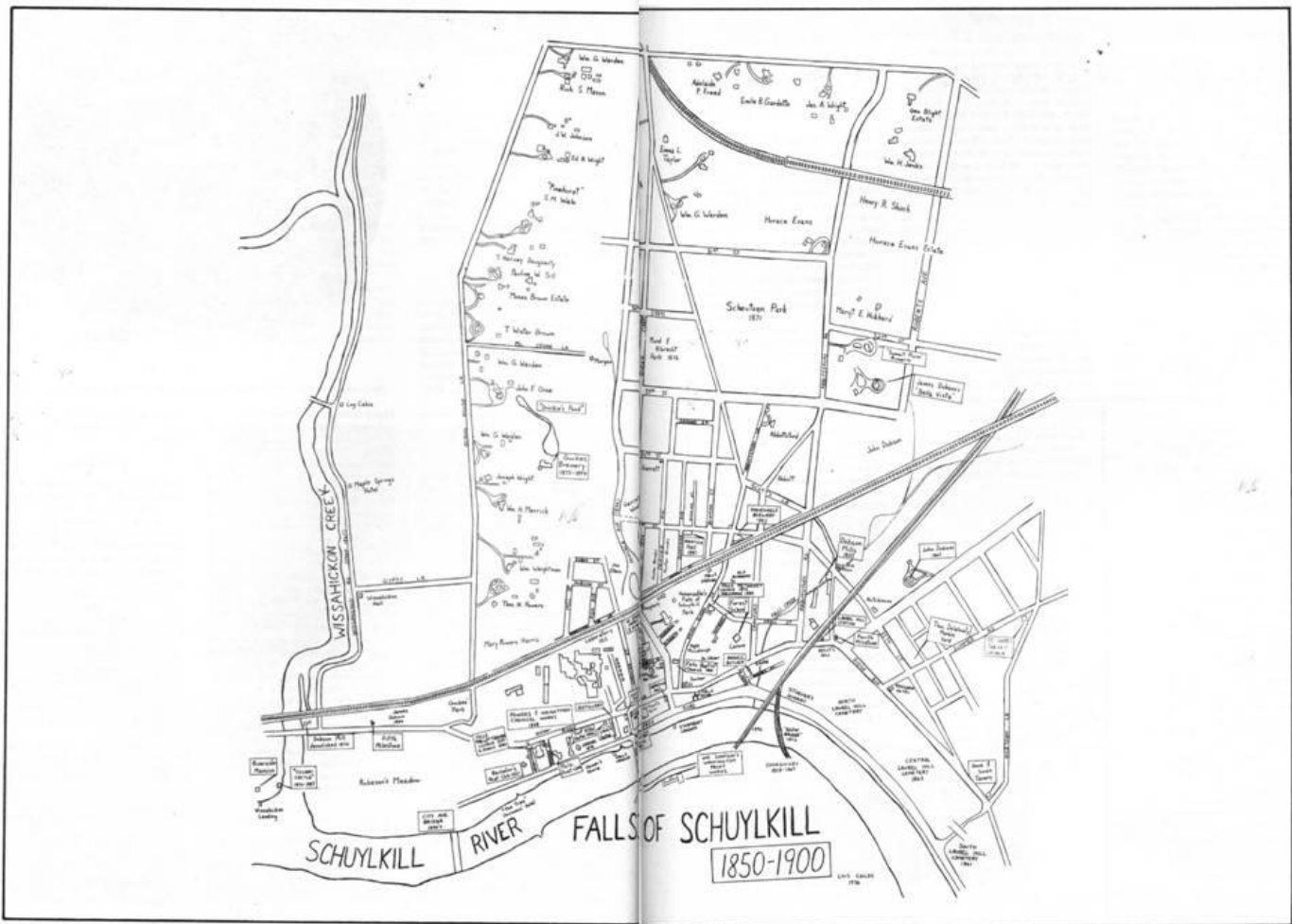
1968-1972 — The Schuylkill Post, published in Roxborough, was distributed throughout the neighborhood.

ESTABLISHED 1855

**THOMAS DELAHUNTY**

3821 RIDGE AVENUE

**Cemetery Memorials**



See *East Falls – 300 Years of History – Maps* for high-resolution images

### Old Academy Players

On April 21, 1923, twelve people from East Falls got together in the Falls Methodist Episcopal Church, formed a group known as the Queen Esther Circle, and performed "The Minister's Wife's New Bonnet." The group soon began performing at other churches. On April 24, 1924, with a membership of nineteen, a constitution was adopted. Since their original productions had been musicals, the Moment Musical Club came into being. Dues for members were ten cents a month.

The Players had no permanent home, so they continued to rent halls or perform in churches. At the end of the 1920's, they produced George Kelly's "The Showoff." After the Depression began, they decided to perform three one-act plays to give people more for their money. But people were not spending money as freely, and the treasury had barely enough to rent halls. Then good fortune came their way. The Old Academy building on Indian Queen Lane was available and, after negotiations with the trustees of the building, the Club

moved into its permanent home.

On June 7, 1932, the Moment Musical Club was dissolved, and still under the original constitution, the Old Academy Players became incorporated. There was a lot of work to be done to the building, which was built in 1819 and had seen days as a meeting hall, church, school, and library. The Players started construction to turn it into a theater. Dues went to ten cents a week. The Old Academy Playhouse became the place to go to be with friends while the Depression continued.

The first major production in the new theater was given on November 4, 1932. In the next four years, the Players presented six or seven groups of one-act plays a year. Admission was 35¢, and the audience was provided with free refreshments. This tradition has been continued, although admission has increased to \$2.75.

Improvements continued, with money raised through card parties, chance books, musical cabarets, and the generosity of many, including the late John B. Kelly and the late John Hohenadel.

The stage was raised, and a dressing room, a backstage, and the lobby were added. The war years saw all-female casts, bond drives, and entertainment at hospitals. Membership was steadily increasing, and money was put into the building and productions as fast as it came in.

Then — FIRE! In 1952, the attic was gutted, and the props and scripts were destroyed, but the walls of the theater stood. Renovations began at once, while rehearsals went on in the lobby. The Players put their building back into shape, never missing a scheduled production.

After fifty-three years, the Old Academy Players is still in existence. Membership now numbers over 150, including some who have gone on to professional careers. The most famous, of course, is Grace Kelly, now Princess Grace of Monaco. Others have appeared on Broadway, including two during the 1973 season. Little Theater is a lot of hard work, but it is a hobby to be loved and enjoyed.

By Bobby Daily

#### WARDEN DRIVE

When "Mike" McCrudden made the plans  
For winding Warden Drive,  
He chose to fill the brewery dam  
Where swimmers used to dive.  
How well we gray-haired men recall,  
In fading memories fond,  
When we, as boys, were wont to splash  
In spring-fed Gukie's Pond!

From old Dutch Hollow we would wend  
Into "the Woods" our way,  
To spend vacation days in joys  
Which words cannot convey.  
Up o'er the hills we'd climb and race  
Beneath the tow'ring trees,  
To be the first to get undressed;  
Then other bathers tease.

The luckless lad who reached there last  
Was pelted well with mud;  
While those who threw the clinging stuff  
Into the pond would scud.  
And when, when'er the tardy one  
Would dive to seek relief,  
On his emergence found dismay  
In boyish cries, "Chaw Beef!"

Today men speed in motor cars  
O'er that old pleasure spot;  
The scene of childhood ecstasies  
That Time can never blot;  
Which brings back thoughts of days now fled,  
Where strangers now arrive,  
Who do not know the history of  
McCrudden's Warden Drive.

A. C. C.

#### "EAST FALLS"

The mailman held a letter up,  
To read inscriptions on it;  
The final line "West Germantown",  
Made him exclaim "Doggone it,  
There isn't any such a place;  
Dadburn their haughty galls,  
Why don't they send their mail to us  
Correctly-phrased 'East Falls'?"

"West Germantown!" It is a myth;  
We smile derisively,  
As Memory takes us back to times  
When Gormley's cows roamed free  
Throughout the land known as "the Woods",  
With no streets then in view,  
On which now dwell "the Manor" folk  
With high hats all askew!

The Duck Pond was a swimmin' hole  
Where boys, in nude, would swim;  
And "Gookie's," too; a brewery dam  
Which springs filled to the brim.  
And farther up the avenue,  
Delassio had his farm,  
Down in a ditch, where many goats  
The boyish mind would charm.

The Reservoir, with sodded banks,  
Would beckon all the year,  
And battles with "the Westsiders"  
Were often settled here.  
In summer time the shot and shell  
Were stones picked up nearby,  
While winter brought the iced snowball  
To make invaders fly.

When autumn came a railroad nut  
And broomstick made a mace,  
To bring the chestnuts down from trees  
Which filled the hallowed place.  
Or up to Mosey Brown's we'd go;  
Along old Cedar lane;  
To purloin fruit. Ah! Many men  
Wish they were there again!

And now they'd give that loved terrain  
A name that men invented  
To bring more shekles to the purse,  
Though many men resent it.  
The Falls of Schuylkill still can boast  
Of honors great and lasting;  
"West Germantown," well, humble folk  
Know this is just bombasting!

A. C. C.



Sunday Drivers.

# FALLS PATRIOTS FOUGHT IN EVERY MAJOR WAR

By Margaret Spino

## THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

The Falls of Schuylkill holds an important place in the history of this country. Its residents have taken part in every major national war — the French and Indian War, the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the War with Mexico, the Civil War, World Wars I and II, Korea, and Vietnam. By writing this brief account, we hope to give recognition to the sacrifices and deeds of all those from the Falls who have served their country.

The story of the Revolutionary War contains the names of American heroes and events which stand out in the history of the Falls. Before and after the Battle of Brandywine, in 1777, Washington's Army occupied the high plateau above the Falls Creek (see map); this hill, on which the Queen Lane Reservoir, and Medical College and Hospital now stand, was once seriously proposed as the site for the permanent federal capitol. (A monument, consisting of a bronze tablet attached to a granite boulder, surrounded by cannon, was erected at Queen Lane and Fox Street by the Pennsylvania Sons of the Revolution in 1895 to mark the campsite.)

Even the trials and hardships of the campaign did not prevent at least one of the soldiers from appreciating the attractiveness of his surroundings at the camp near Schuylkill Falls. Lieutenant McMichael, of the Thirtieth Pennsylvania Regiment, wrote in his diary, "Our encampment was very beautiful."

Here the army remained for a week, while the Commander and his officers were trying to learn what General Howe and his British Army were doing. That it was a period of great uncertainty is evident from the orders issued the first day in camp, August 2: all troops were to have 2 days' provisions ready, and be prepared to march; tents were to be separated from other baggage for facility in handling.

On Monday, August 4, Washington joined his army in the camp at the Falls, making his headquarters at the farmhouse of Henry Hill, near the present Midvale Avenue and Stokley Street.

A letter which General Washington wrote on August 5 from the camp to his brother, Augustine, conveys some idea of the perplexities to which the Commander-in-Chief was subjected at this time, because of the mysterious maneuvers of the British fleet. After telling of the appearance of the fleet at the Delaware Capes and its subsequent disappearance on the 31st, he continued: "We have remained here in a very irksome state of suspense;

some imagining that they are gone to the southward, whilst a majority, in whose opinion on this occasion I concur, are satisfied that they have gone eastward.

"The states have been shamefully deficient in supplying troops," added Washington.

At that time, evidently, he did not place much hope upon French aid, for he wrote: "I have from the first been among those who have never built much upon a French war." The French, he declared, give only "underhand assistance supplying arms in trade."

A letter to General Putnam two days later also told of Washington's perplexities. If the British fleet had returned to New York it should have arrived there by this time. He was now beginning to fear the fleet had gone farther east.

All during the torrid and anxious days of the American army's camp at the Falls of Schuylkill, the troops were held in constant readiness to march, should news come about the British fleet.

The heavy baggage and the boats were sent forward across the Delaware in the direction of New York. The tents were to be taken in separate wagons with the army; officers were to make arrangements not to encumber themselves with excessive baggage, leaving what they could for later removal.

The soldiers themselves were to be relieved of their heavy packs, the Quartermaster General being directed to

provide wagons to carry these. "But," added the orders, "these packs are not to be suffered to be loaded with useless trumpery — as from the sizes of many of them there is great reason to suppose is now the case." Officers were to inspect the packs and reject material not deemed essential. This might be rolled separately and collected by the regimental Quartermasters.

Surgeons were notified to examine men unfit for field duty, and if they were useful for the Philadelphia Garrison they were to be sent there. Men with one leg or one arm were adjudged suitable for the Invalid Corps in Philadelphia.

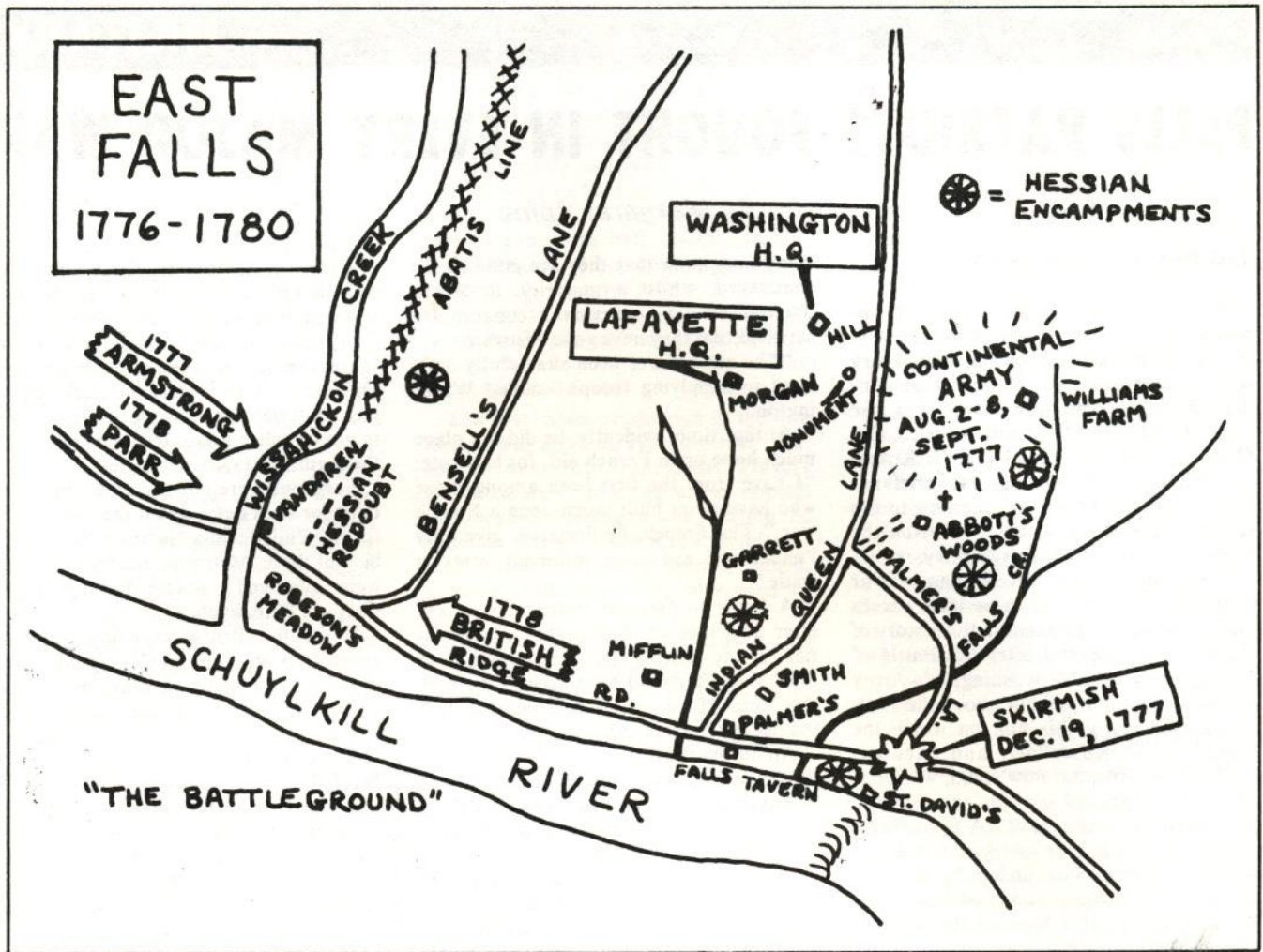
While the British invading force was groping its way up the Chesapeake, some of the staff lodged with Washington at the Hill house; and Lafayette, just arrived in Philadelphia after his long journey from South Carolina, rode out for a visit. The Marquis saw the American army for the first time here at the Falls of Schuylkill.

Lafayette's impressions of his first visit are preserved. "There were 11,000 men," he wrote, "ill-armed and still worse clothed. Many of them wore hunting shirts. Some were attired in long, gray linen coats much used in Carolina. But," he adds, "the soldiers were fine, and the officers were zealous. Virtue stood in place of science, and each day added to the experience and the discipline."

It was in a house owned by Benjamin Morgan near what is now Henry Ave. and Coulter Streets, that General Lafayette



The Morgan House, with a springhouse, located near the northwest corner of what is now McMichael's Park (Henry Ave. and Coulter St.) House served as Lafayette's headquarters. \* Drawing by Joseph Kelly, 1914, from an earlier painting entitled "Tranquility."



JOHN ARMSTRONG

When patriots fought to free our land,  
 From tyrant rules of George the Third,  
 Along the Wissahickon banks  
 A military brush occurred,  
 Between the men of Washington  
 And Hessian hirelings of the crown,  
 Who aided Howe, the British chief,  
 To hold beleaguered Germantown.

Those hardy men, who spilled their blood,  
 That freedom might be our estate,  
 Have long-since gone to their reward  
 Away from work and cares of state.  
 They held their Hessian foes afar  
 From Germantown, which was the plan  
 Which Washington had made, and so,  
 We proudly sing of Armstrong's clan.

John Armstrong, and his valiant band,  
 Marched down "the Ridge," at dawn of day,  
 According to his leader's plans,  
 Past Levering's Inn, to start the fray  
 Above the old Vandearing mill;  
 Which one-time stood beside the stream;  
 And here, not far from Schuylkill's foam,  
 Steep hills echoed the war-guns' scream.

The vale is quiet, no sounds of war  
 Infringe upon the calmness there,  
 Where once the brazen cannon roared  
 Which teaches us a lesson, rare  
 That he who would pacific dwell,  
 Must always face some violent test,  
 Before the dreams of life come true,  
 To bring him peacefulness and rest.

A. C. Chadwick

had his headquarters when the Continental soldiers were encamped on the Queen Lane site.

When the Americans left this camp, Lafayette went with them, and was severely wounded at Brandywine, his first American battle. It was necessary for companions to carry him from the field as the Continental Army fled up the Schuylkill Valley.

Some of Washington's Division Headquarters were also in the Falls, including that of General Stephens of Virginia, who occupied the Smith mansion on Indian Queen Lane ("Plush Hill").

Count Casimir Pulaski joined Washington's forces just before the Americans left camp here, and after the Battle of Brandywine, came back with the fighters of freedom to the same camping ground.

"Abbott's Woods" was the scene of an encampment for the Hessian troops under General Knyphausen at the time of Lord Howe's occupation of Philadelphia, and during Washington's sojourn at White-marsh. The Abbottsford house was at one time temporarily occupied by Colonel Chew, of Howe's Army; and for a short time, by General Knyphausen, Commander of the Hessians.

One Captain Sims, an English infantry leader, and some of the Hessian soldiers died with yellow fever in a rude shelter back from the house, and the bodies were buried on the estate.

During this time, the British and Hessians also used a portion of the Williams estate (see map) as a smithy and a veterinary hospital.

On the eve of the Battle of Germantown — October 4, 1777 — the Hessians marched from these green precincts to the fray along the banks of the Wissahickon. A slave directed them to the longest and hardest route and, glorifying in their ignorance of the country, set off post-haste to inform our own troops as they marched to Mount Airy. The British forces were thus slowed on their way to battle the Americans.

Gustine Lake, which was then a swamp-land known as "Robeson's Meadow," was involved in the Battle of Germantown when a body of Hessian troops under the command of Count Von Donop (a contingent of General Howe's Army) were stationed to defend the mouth of the Wissahickon from the attacks of General John Armstrong's Colonial Forces. (Von Donop's headquarters were at the old Garrett house near Vaux and Ainslie Streets.)

On the bluff above Vandaren's Mill (see map), the Hessians had built a redoubt, extending a half mile up the creek on high ground, to check the Continental Army, should they attempt to enter the city.

General Armstrong, with his Colonial Militiamen, had crossed the upper Wissahickon by Paul's Mill Road (Bell's), and moved down the Ridge Road, and filed through near Hermit's Lane, to pass above the head of the mill, so as to get in the rear of the enemy encampment on the

bluffs.

Orders were given that each man was to have a bit of white paper on his hat to identify him as a soldier of the Continental Army.

General Armstrong engaged the Hessians near the Schuylkill River, and a part of General Greene's column had reached Church Lane and met the right wing of the enemy's frontline.

In a letter to Thomas Wharton, President of the Supreme Council of Pennsylvania, General Armstrong described the battle of Germantown, and his encounter with the Hessians on the Wissahickon:

*Camp near the Trapp, 5th October, 1777.*  
Sir:

*By a forced march of fourteen miles or upward, on Friday night, General Washington attacked about sunrise yesterday morning, the British & foreign troops encamped at Jermantown, Vandurings & elsewhere toward the York Road. We marched by four different routes — those on the left did not arrive so soon as the columns on the center & right.*

*The Continental troops drove the principal part of the enemy at Jermantown full two miles; yet what I shall say a victory almost in full embrace was frustrated, but by what means cannot yet be easily ascertained. I think by a number of casualties, a thick fog whereby not only our ammunition was expended without an object, but it's thought that our own troops had been taken in an instance or two for reinforcements of the enemy, whereby a panic & retreat ensued, which the General could not prevent!*

*Thus may it be said, thro' some strange fatality (tho' not the less faulty on our part), that we fled from victory. Another reason was the time spent about Mr. Chew's house, where a number of the enemy took sanctuary, & from which a number of our people were killed & wounded. We can yet tell nothing perfectly of our loss, nor of that of the enemy...*

*My destiny was against the various corps of Jermans encamped at Mr. Vandurings or near the Falls. Their light horse discovered our approach a little before sunrise; we cannonaded from the heights on each side the Wissahickon, whilst the riflemen on opposite sides acted on the lower ground. About nine I was called to join the General, but left a party with the Colls. Eyers & Dunlap, & one field piece & afterwards reinforced them which reinforcements, by the way, however did not join them, until after a brave resistance they were obliged to retreat, but carried off the field piece, the other I was obliged to leave in the horrendous hills of the Wissahickon, but ordered her on a safe rout to join Eyer's if he shou'd retreat, as was done accordingly.*

*We proceeded to the left, and above Jermantown some three miles, directed by a slow crossfire of canon, until we fell into the front of a superior body of the enemy, with whom we engaged about three*

*quarters of an hour, but their grape shot & ball soon intimidated & obliged us to retreat or rather file off. Until then I thought we had a victory, but to my great disappointment, soon found our army were gone an hour or two before, & we the last on the ground.*

*We brought off everything but a wounded man or two — lost not quite 20 men on the whole, & hope we killed at least that number, beside diverting the Hessian strength from the General in the morning. I have neither time nor light to add but that I am respectfully yours,*

*John Armstrong*

The Williams farm was the headquarters of the British Cavalry during the Battle of Germantown, and claims to have also once harbored General Washington as he passed. (This house, also known as the Griffith Eyans house, stood at the corner of Fox Street and Abbottsford Avenue, but was burned down many years ago).

From 1779 to 1787, the Williams house was owned by a picturesque character known as Blair McClenachan. His city residence was on Second Street near Chestnut or Walnut Streets.

McClenachan, a native of Ireland, was in business in Philadelphia before the Revolution, but on the breaking out of the war, engaged in privateering, in which he was very successful, accumulating much wealth and living in good style.

He was a devoted supporter of the cause of liberty, and one of the founders of the First City Troop of Philadelphia City Cavalry, in which he served during the war.

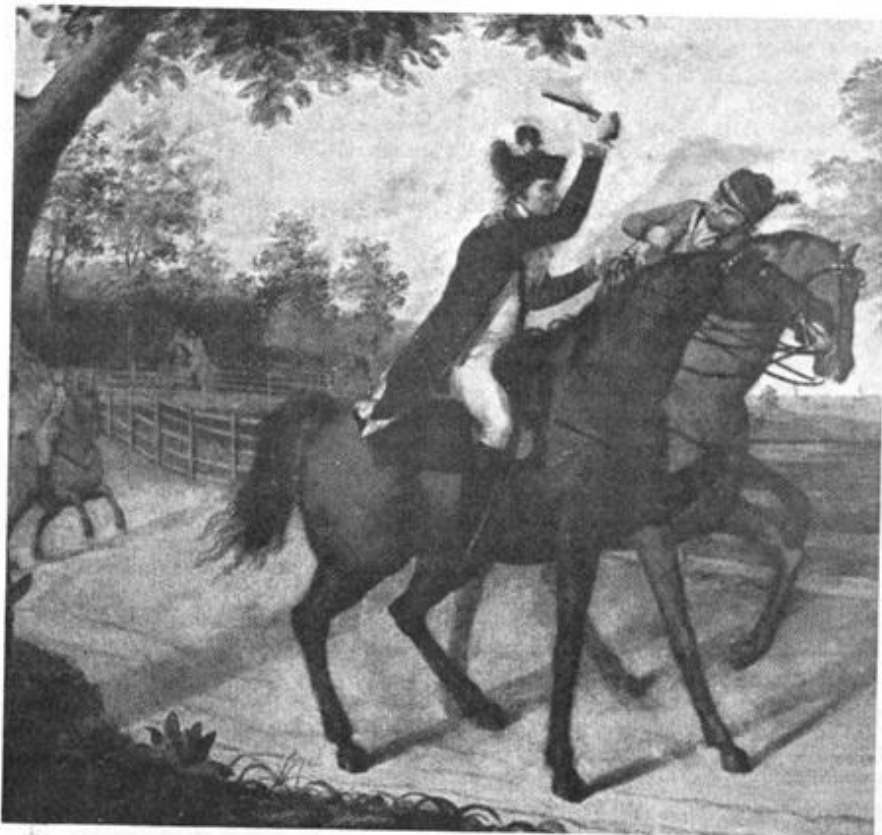
He cooperated liberally in all the patriotic schemes of Robert Morris and his compatriots, and he subscribed £10,000 in 1780 to supply the starving army.

On various occasions, McClenachan aided Congress with his money and credit. He was also on friendly social and political terms with Washington.

Wissahickon (Ridge) Road saw much of both the American and British armies from the Robin Hood Ford northward, and particularly about the Falls and the Wissahickon Creek. Because of the events associated with the Revolution, this section was known as the "Battleground."

The road was an important lane for quick movements, and a spy system rang through here and up the Wissahickon Valley. Along the highway many inns were located. These inns were forums of gossip, and were often the receiving posts where reports of enemy movements were orally relayed from inn to inn and finally to General Washington.

When General Knyphausen's troops were quartered about the Falls Village, one of their assigned duties was to patrol the Wissahickon Road. John Kirk, nicknamed "Fearnought," an American spy, surprised a British picket stationed near School Lane, overpowered him, took his gun, and went his way to General Washington's camp with valuable information.



*A pistol-whipping subdues a British cavalryman as he tries to capture Captain Allan McLane, the daring patriot scout, early on June 16, 1778. McLane fought clear and rode off safe and sound.*

On December 19, 1777, a group of Virginia patriots courageously fought at Scotts Lane and Ridge Avenue. At a memorial service in Roxborough in the 1930's, Dr. Charles K. Mills described the action: "Captain Andrew Cathcart of the 17th Light Dragoons of the British Army, then occupying the City of Philadelphia, with a squadron of men, surprised an American picket of 18 men of 'Light Horse Harry' Lee's Virginia Legion, on Ridge Road at an outpost about four miles from the city. This was at Scott's Lane and Ridge Avenue.

"The British, greatly outnumbering the American force, opened fire, immediately cutting down 7 of the Continentals. The others retreated in the direction of Valley Forge, where the main force of the American Army had recently established their winter headquarters. Toward nightfall, they took refuge in the barn owned by Andrew Wood, at what is now Ridge and Roxborough Avenues, in Roxborough, which formerly stood on the site now occupied by Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church. There they were discovered by the British. Failing to respond to the first challenge to surrender, Capt. Cathcart ordered the barn burned, and the Continental soldiers were killed as they tried to escape."

Many exploits of the Green Boys and of Captain Allen McLane were performed

about this whole area and in the woods of the Wissahickon. They were familiar with all the paths and byways of the Creek and River valleys. Captain McLane knew the trails of the neighborhood, and the fords of the Schuylkill and River Roads, and he made good use of his knowledge in his attacks on British outposts, and in scouting excursions, to gain information, or for the purpose of waylaying those who carried food to the enemy.

Tradition furnishes a story that Captain McLane hid at times in Font Hall (Thomas Mifflin's mansion at what is now Frederick and Eveline Streets), which had secret rooms and passages.

McLane, at the beginning of the War, was a man of property. He used his money to enlist and clothe a company at his own charge. He was the father of Secretary McLane, who was also for sometime our resident minister to London.

When General Gray marched up the Wissahickon Road, in the early morning of May 20, 1778, expecting to make a surprise attack on General Lafayette at Barren Hill, the alert McLane had already warned Lafayette, and General Gray found Captain Parr of the Colonial Forces, posted at Vandaren Mills to oppose the march and cover Lafayette's retreat.

On May 18, 1778, this daring and vigilant leader, with his little band of followers, McLane's Rangers, swept down

the Wissahickon Road, over the broad acres along the Schuylkill; they were determined to disrupt the great outdoor fete, known as "The Meschianza," staged in South Philadelphia by the British and their allies. In 1936, A.C. Chadwick published a lucid account of the incident: "The celebration was held in honor of Sir William Howe and his officers, while the English forces occupied Philadelphia. McLane descended upon the British outposts during the height of the festivities and gave them a surprise.

"A line of felled trees, technically known as an abattis, on account of their bristling branches being left to project out into the open in all directions, had been placed in a continuous line from the Schuylkill River to Germantown, to protect the approaches to the city.

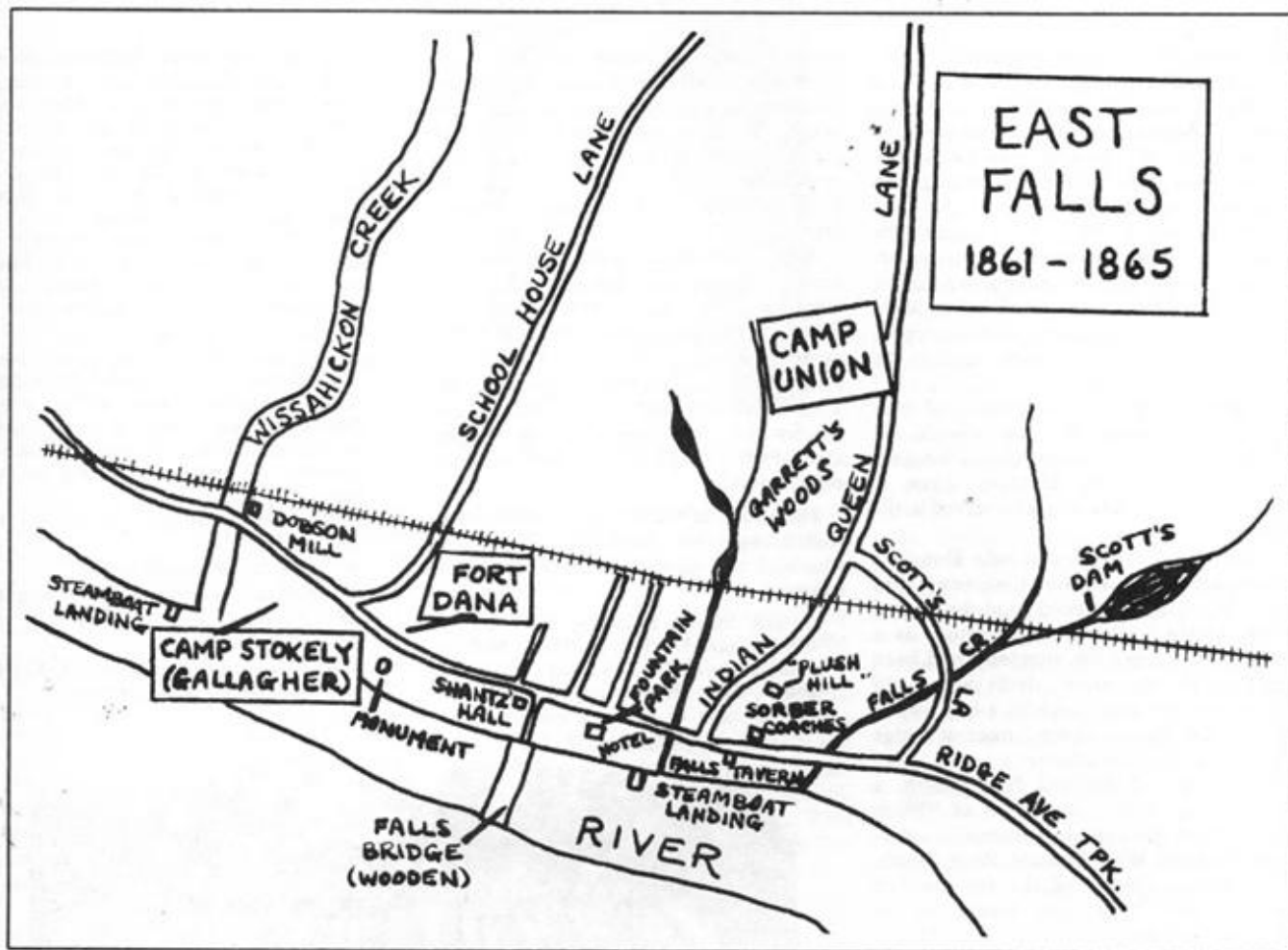
"McLane set fire to the whole line of trees. The long roll was sounded by the British, many of whom were forced to leave the fete to repel the invaders. McLane and his troopers succeeded in making their escape through the Wissahickon Valley, up through Barren Hill, and thence over the Schuylkill River to the American camp. After meeting some unexpected assistance from General Washington, McLane turned upon his pursuers and chased them back to the city."

The First City Troop ("The Light Horse of the City of Philadelphia") was formed on November 17th, 1774, "to maintain the rights of the people against the continued oppression of the British Government" as stated by the first Continental Congress which was meeting in Carpenter's Hall. Many Social clubs around the city made up the Troop, including the Schuylkill Fishing Company of Fort St. David's.

The Troop was the first to carry a flag bearing thirteen stripes. They performed important duties such as bearing dispatches, escorting prisoners, and conveying money to the camps of the army. Always returning with letters of appreciation and commendation from the General in command, these expeditions were fraught with more danger than appears in their recital, both from natural and military difficulties.

The whole troop reported to Washington at Trenton on December 2, 1776, and under his immediate direction covered the rear of the retreating army. On the eventful Christmas night when Colonel Rahl's Hessians were surprised and taken, the troop had an active part, and acted as Washington's escort.

When Washington led his forlorn army through the city to destroy Howe's prospect of a winter in Philadelphia, the troop, as usual, escorted him and Captain Morris. They kept the field to the end of October, serving with General Armstrong at the Battle of Germantown.



## THE CIVIL WAR

Persons journeying along Ridge Avenue, near School House Lane, may remember a tunnel-like structure set in the side of the hill opposite the pumping station for Queen La. Reservoir. It was of reinforced concrete, and had the fort-like appearance of an ancient Egyptian gateway. The building was constructed in 1916, and was erected for the city as a coal receiving station in connection with the pumping station.

To those familiar with this locality and its history, the site chosen for the bunker was very appropriate; the use of the property and the building's structure perpetuated an incident of the Civil War.

At the time when General Robert E. Lee, Commander of the Confederate Army, was making his second raid into Pennsylvania, in the summer of 1863, Governor Andrew G. Curtin and Mayor Alexander Henry issued proclamations calling out the State and City Militia to help repel the invasion; there was a general impression that the invading army would make its way to Philadelphia. In order to check such an advance on the cradle of national and political liberty, a series of fortifications were erected. Construction began on Fort Dana, at the corner of Ridge Road and School House Lane.

This location was selected as being most favorable, since it would command the Schuylkill Valley, including Ridge Road and the Norristown Railroad on the east side of the river, and the Reading Railway and River Road on the west. Some people thought it was chosen to guard the Schuylkill, too, but as nothing but the slow-going canal barges could navigate it, there was no danger of a Confederate force coming down the river.

Day and night through the latter part of June and the first four days of July, a large force of men worked in constructing the fort. Then came the glorious news of the victorious conclusion of the Battle of Gettysburg, in which Philadelphia's own General George G. Meade had put to route the great Confederate Army.

With the news of the victory, work on Fort Dana was suspended, never to be resumed, and the name "Fort Humbug" was substituted locally. The fort long ago disappeared and most of the stony bluff on which it was built was quarried away.

The pumping station opposite occupies the site of Camp Stokely, at which two well-known Pennsylvania regiments of volunteers encamped in 1861-1862, while they were being recruited. The 88th Regiment of Infantry in November, 1861, left Camp Stokely and marched down through the deep dust of the Ridge Avenue Turnpike, unarmed on its way to the front. In the following year, the 13th Pennsylvania

Cavalry (1st Battalion) was recruited on the same property, then known as Camp Gallagher.

The features of the encampment of the 88th, are as follows: The tents were pitched with their aisles at right angles to the river and Ridge Road, the camp stretching from the foot of the knoll over a large area to the north and south limits of the meadows; the officers' quarters were between the river and the tent line; the parade ground was situated between the camp and Ridge Road, on the most level portion of the meadowland. Here the whole regiment could be assembled and maneuvered into various positions for dress parades, or for Company, Battalion, or Regimental movements. Dress parades were very popular with visitors.

The Company which naturally had the greatest interest for the residents of this neighborhood was the one composed of local men. The Camp was readily reached by the horse cars of Ridge Avenue, the Norristown trains of the Reading Railroad at School House Lane, and also by steamboats on the Schuylkill. The Survivors' Association of the Eighty-Eighth Regiment placed the bronze tablet, supported by two granite pillars, which marks the site of the encampment.

Camp Stokely was the first regimental military encampment in this vicinity during the Civil War. Afterward, there were others along what is now Midvale Avenue, 5



and also in Wissahickon and Roxborough.

The 23rd Regiment Infantry and the 118th Regiment encamped at Camp Union, Queen Lane, Falls of Schuylkill. In those days the ground was known as Scott's Lot. The encampment was on the end of the woods, and the cooks got their water from the brook that ran through the ravine. The 23rd was the first regiment organized under the first call for troops, on April 21, 1861, and the first to leave Philadelphia fully armed and equipped. Both the 23rd and the 118th fought in the Battle of Gettysburg.

Company "C" was composed of men residing in Manayunk, Roxborough, the Falls of Schuylkill, and Conshohocken, which had as their Captain, John J. Belstering of Manayunk, who served in the Mexican War.

During the war, Captain John Dobson's Company "I" of the Blue Reserves (133rd Pennsylvania Volunteers) used the second story of the Sorber Coach Factory as a drill room. After the company had been sufficiently organized, drills were held three evenings each week in a hall owned by Joseph Shantz, at the corner of Ridge Avenue and Calumet Street.

Two sons of Richard Penn Smith, a descendant of William Smith of "Plush Hill," both distinguished themselves during the Civil War. Richard Penn Smith, Jr., became colonel of the famous 71st Pennsylvania Volunteers, known as the California regiment, and William Moore Smith went to the front with Rush's Lancers and was afterward transferred to his brother's regiment as a commissioned officer; he received a severe wound in one of the battles.

"Judge" John Kelley, of Laboratory Lane, told how he came to "join up" with the military forces. He was employed by Samuel Frazier who rented the one-time Robeson farm, which included the meadow (now Gustine Lake) on which Camp Stokely was located. He asked Frazier for a raise in pay and gave him until the next day to consider the matter. The request was denied, so Kelley told him "sooner than work for you for \$12 a month, I'll go over the meadow and enlist for \$13 a month." He climbed over the rail fence and walked down to the camp, and was sworn in as a soldier of the regiment; he said he had never regretted the act.

Another individual, who once amused the people of the Falls, was Benny Johnson, who resided in a frame house in Garrett's Woods. Johnson had been a sailor in the British Navy during the War of 1812, but left the service at his first opportunity, to become an American citizen. During the Civil War, as an old man, he was made watchman of the Falls Bridge at a time when most of the available manpower was needed on Southern battlefields.

He was also the local "egg man." He

used to carry eggs to customers in a red bandanna handkerchief hanging from his blue gingham umbrella, which was slung over his shoulder. However, Johnson, with his strange way of delivering eggs, was never known to "pull a fast one" on the Falls housewives by handing them a cracked egg.

A great local event during the Civil War occurred regularly on Saturday afternoons when Dr. John Conry of Manayunk, a militia Captain, marched his Jackson Rifles down from Manayunk to Joe Evan's Fountain Park Hotel for target practice. They used a large bill poster of Jenny Lind, the Swedish Nightingale, for the target, and the great songbird was often shot clear off the picture.

The names of the men from Manayunk, Roxborough, and the Falls of Schuylkill who bled and died for a united nation include:

Captain John J. Belstering, killed at Bull Run, August 30, 1862; Lt. Harry Hudson, killed at Cedar Run, Va., August 11, 1862; John W. Hanson, wounded at

Fredericksburg; John T. Williams, captured at Bull Run, escaped; later wounded at Spottsylvania; John Pagle, wounded on the Rappahannock; Samuel Binns, wounded at Bull Run, lost his right eye; Thomas J. Dixon, wounded at Bull Run; David J. Hartzell, wounded at Bull Run; James Hague, captured at Gettysburg, wounded at Spottsylvania; Peter Hinkle, wounded at Antietam and at Gettysburg; William Maddis, mortally wounded at Bull Run; Thomas Palmer, wounded and discharged in 1863.

Matthew Pinyard, John B. Rigter, John B. Beaver, Wilson Rex, George Still, Thomas Winn, Andrew J. Wier, Peter Wilfong, John Kelly, George Peterman, William Reed, John A. Donahue, George W. Davis, George W. Toland, Charles H. Zaiser, and others of Company "C" who answered the last roll call.

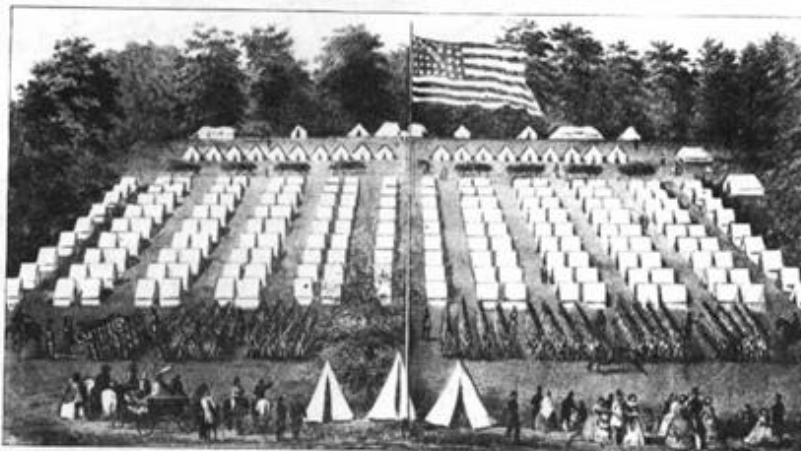
*"Oh, whether we live, or whether we fall*

*By sabre cut or by rifle ball,*

*The hearts of the free can never forget*

*My country, my country will remember us yet."*

*(In a letter written by Charles McKnight of Company "K", June 8, 1864).*



CAMP UNION, 118TH REGIMENT, QUEEN LANE, FALLS OF SCHUYLKILL.  
August, 1862.



CAMP GALLAGHER, 13TH CAVALRY (1 BATTALION), FALLS OF SCHUYLKILL.  
August and September, 1862.

## WAR WITH MEXICO

The annexation of Texas in 1845 moved the United States one step closer to war with Mexico, which finally broke out in 1846.

William R. Shirley, a local boy, wrote several letters describing life in Camp Stewart, Texas. He also mentioned some other Falls boys, including Thomas Burke, John Digman, Cassidy, William Chadwick, and Benjamin Harbach, who he said were doing fine, although army life didn't appeal to them, and there seemed to be very little action at that time.

## WORLD WAR I

One of the gloomiest days during World War I was draft day, when the men between 21 and 31 years of age were drafted to make up the army called out by President Wilson. In the city, immense throngs gathered in front of the newspaper offices to see the numbers placed on the bulletin boards. This method of drafting was different from that during the Civil War. (There were no registration boards in the 1860's. The town was canvassed, and the names taken from a wheel. Those drawn were notified, and had to serve unless they were found to be physically unable, could pay the \$300 commutation fund, or secure a substitute.)

Falls of Schuylkill made its contribution to World War I; 577 men and women saw service. Their names were placed on the town's Honor Roll at Midvale Ave. and East River Drive. The names on the Honor Roll represented the English, Irish, Scotch, and Italian origin of many of the residents of the Falls.

The Young Men's Literary Institute was proud to state that 29 of their members were active in U.S. Military and Naval Service.

The whole community of East Falls supported our people in the armed forces. The citizens used their time and money to make life a little more comfortable for



Mrs. Bessie Dobson Altemus

those in service.

A number of events were scheduled to raise funds for the depleted treasury of the Citizen's Committee, which had so far expended over \$18,000 for "comfort kits," tobacco, and other necessities for the local soldier and sailor boys in the war.

The women of St. Bridget's Catholic Church did their bit of knitting for the Citizen's Committee, and a large contribution in the way of surgical dressings for the Red Cross Society, through the Women's Catholic Alliance. This Red Cross auxiliary had about forty-five members, who met in St. Bridget's rectory on Tuesday evenings. All the work was up to the standards of the Red Cross, and surgical dressings were the greatest need of the Society at that time. There was an unprecedented display of self-sacrifice in giving time and money to the Red Cross.

The "White House" on Ridge Avenue, in which the women met to sew, knit, and plan for the welfare of the absent ones, proved itself to be one of the best organizations East Falls has ever known. In addition to the good work of providing, it also brought about an almost sacred fellowship among the women. Many good things were sent to the boys in camp by the active workers associated with Mrs. Elizabeth Dobson Altemus. Our boys, along with others from Roxborough, Wissahickon, and Manayunk, each took a "comfy kit" and other necessities from the "White House."

Mrs. Richard Norris presented a pocket Bible to each of the Protestants from the Falls, and a prayer book to each member of the Catholic faith. Any soldier or sailor who was home on furlough was requested by Mrs. Altemus to visit at her home, "Bella Vista," for a word and a gift.

Mrs. Altemus took great interest in the Falls' betterment, and her work for the benefit of soldiers, American and British, was highly commendable. With Mrs. Altemus and her co-workers, the good work was carried on, and not only provided some comfort for the soldiers and

sailors, but was the means of placing East Falls prominently on the map because of the great interest shown in the servicemen's welfare.

The armistice was signed on November 11, 1918. The people believed they had "won the war to end war," to make the world safe for democracy.

Almost everyone took off from work. Factories, offices, and schools closed to celebrate the end of World War I. In an exultant statement to the press, President Wilson announced, "Everything for which America fought has been accomplished;" so it seemed to him, and to all Americans in general.

Marion Whalley Cole assumed the role of feminine Paul Revere, and aroused the residents of East Falls by ringing the Baptist Church bell as peace was proclaimed. To Marion Cole belongs the honor of sending forth the first tidings of peace in the patriotic little town of East Falls. At 3:40 a.m., she sped through the silent streets of East Falls to the Baptist Church. Knowing the church doors would be locked, she hurried to the home of William Cober, a trustee, and aroused the sleeping man.

Without taking time to don hat or coat, Cober grabbed the keys to the church, and the joyful man and woman rushed to the church. As Cober unlocked the massive doors, Mrs. Cole darted past him and climbed the stairs leading to the choir loft, quickly unbound the heavy rope, and on the minute of 3:45 a.m. the old bell in the belfry sent forth a clarion cry to the town that peace had been proclaimed.

The news, early Monday morning, awoke the Falls of Schuylkill and caused the highest pitch of enthusiasm. Parades and every conceivable kind of demonstration marked the day. Whistles blew, bells rang, trumpets sounded, people shouted, dishpans clanged. It was a happy day for the whole community.

## WORLD WAR II

By 1939, when World War II broke out in Europe, the United States had begun to reverse its traditional policy of isolationism. America's navy, air force, and army were strengthened with feverish speed. On December 7, 1941, the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor, and the United States was again at war.

In spite of the disaster at Pearl Harbor, for the first time in its history when it was not actually at war, the nation was at least partially prepared because of the peacetime draft. It had an army of 1,600,000 in various stages of training. When America entered World War I, she had an army of only 92,000. Before World War II was over, more than 15,000,000 men and women would serve in the armed forces.

The Selective Service System required all men from the ages of 21 to 35 to register for the draft. Most all East Falls men were drafted or enlisted in one of the



World War I Honor Roll, Ridge and Midvale Aves. (Phila. Record, Oct. 29, 1939)



*Men from St. Bridget's who were in the armed forces during W.W.I.*

services. Those who did not pass the physical, were deferred for reasons of hardship, or were employed in war work, served voluntarily in positions of civilian defense as Air Raid Wardens or Airplane Spotters.

When the city had an air raid alert, the siren sounded, all the lights went out all over the city, and the Air Raid Warden would cover his area to see that everyone had their lights off, and to make sure that all cars and buses stopped, pulled over to the curb, and turned out their lights. He instructed civilians who were out on the street on what they should do. He maintained order, and everyone was subject to his commands.

Blackout curtains were used on doors and windows, but most people sat in the dark or went down to their basements and stayed until the second siren sounded to say it was all clear. These episodes brought the war closer to home.

In 1942, the government issued ration books for gasoline, fuel, shoes, coffee, sugar, fats and oils, meat, butter, and canned foods. (Ration books were a book of stamps received by each civilian from the government. When buying a rationed product, the purchaser had to give the seller a designated number of coupons in addition to the money price.) Americans did not like government controls, but accepted them with the understanding that they would be removed when the emergency was over.

The people of East Falls helped in the war effort by saving scrap iron, tin cans, and aluminum, and also saving fats.

Once a week a city truck would pick up the collection of tin cans (opened at both ends and flattened down), and containers of fat saved from cooking (this was used in making ammunition).

The government stopped the manufacture of new automobiles, refrigerators, radios, electrical appliances, garden tools, typewriters, plumbing fixtures, metal toys, and almost all civilian goods requiring materials necessary to the war effort.

The most important local figure during the war was the mailman. Everyone waited outside his or her home to see if he brought a letter from a loved one. Many homes had service flags in their doors or windows showing how many sons and daughters were away in the armed forces. Each church and other organizations also displayed service flags, showing by the number of stars how many of their members were serving their country.

No matter where one was stationed, or what phase of war he was in, in Europe, Africa, Australia, South Pacific, or Alaska, and in all the training camps all over the United States, one would meet a friend or someone from his hometown, the Falls of Schuylkill.

President Roosevelt did not live to see the end of the war; he died suddenly on April 12, 1945. So, it was on August 14, 1945, (V-J Day), that President Harry S. Truman announced by radio that Japan had accepted the Allied peace terms. The Nazis had already fallen in the Spring of 1945. World War II had come to an end.

People ran out of their homes — into the streets, laughing and crying with joy; but most went to their churches and gave thanks that the most devastating war in history was over, and that our brave men and women would be back home again. Some came back with the silver star, one of the highest awards the government bestows on a military man; some came back with a Purple Heart for wounds received in action. Many did not return, but they still live on in the hearts and minds of their families and friends.

## **KOREA & VIETNAM**

The Korean War started on June 25, 1950, when the North Korean Army launched a full-scale invasion of South Korea.

The United Nations had no troops to throw into action, so the major burden of defending South Korea fell upon the United States. General Douglas MacArthur was chosen as Commanding General. President Truman pledged arms to the defense of South Korea, and once again our Armed Forces were fighting overseas.

Finally, on July 27, 1953, North Korea and the United Nations signed an Armistice Agreement.

Only a few months after the Korean Armistice, world peace was threatened by another Far-Eastern crisis. Indo-China had been torn by armed conflict. A meeting was held in Geneva, Switzerland, and there the decision was reached to divide Indo-China into four parts. The

area north of the 17th Parallel was recognized as North Vietnam, the remainder of the country was divided into three non-Communist states — Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam.

In 1962, the United States sent some 8000 troops to train the South Vietnamese. The major buildup or escalation of the war came in 1965. By the end of that summer, 125,000 American troops were in the country or on their way.

The Vietnam War divided the country, but many local boys were drafted or enlisted in one service or another. Some never returned, others still bear the scars, and many would rather forget.

When the war finally ended, there were no parades or crowds in the street — there was no definite end, and little to celebrate, except the POW's return. It was more like a nationwide sigh of relief that that terrible time in our history was over.

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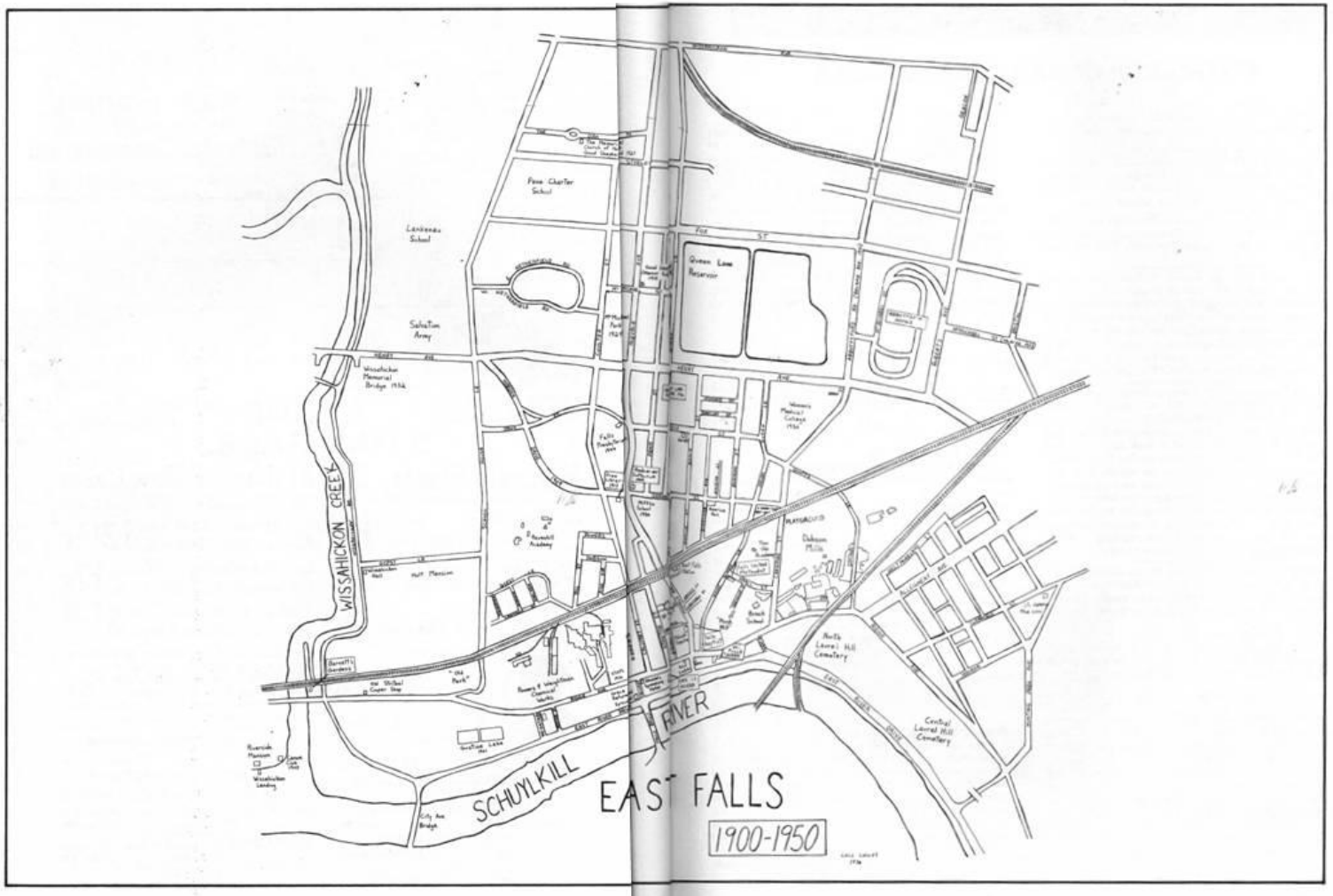
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## POTPOURRI OF EAST FALLS FACTS

The first permanent white resident of the Falls area was probably a Swede, Garrett Garrettson, who settled here in 1680.

Reverend John M. Richards, minister of the Baptist Church at the Old Academy, cared for the spiritual needs of the Falls. He baptized many at the mouth of Mifflin Run, a creek that ran where Midvale Avenue is today.

Charley Whalley, lived in the little cottage on the Mifflin estate, site of the Fiedler Pharmacy, Stanton Street and Ridge Road. He worked at Simpson's Print Works in West Falls.

Mrs. Anne Weightman Walker Penfield, a former East Falls resident, was at one time the world's richest woman. Mrs. Penfield was the daughter of William Weightman, who amassed a fortune in chemicals, and whose company (Powers & Weightman) occupied the land where the Falls of Schuylkill Housing Project stands today. In 1919, Mrs. Penfield deeded her property to the Catholic Church for a girls' school, which today is called, "Ravenhill Academy."

George Leib Harrison was part of Powers, Weightman, & Harrison from 1848 to 1853. According to Robert Schronk, "It was through Mr. Harrison that the dwellings were erected on the hill for the accommodation of the men employed. He also had erected a week-day school and Sunday School with a large room on the 2nd floor fitted up as a reading room and library for the benefit of the employees. The school and reading room were continued as long as Mr. Harrison was a member of the firm, but were closed on the day of his retiring, December 31, 1853. Mr. Harrison took a warm interest in the reading room and regularly attended the Sunday School, teaching a class of boys which included (Robert Roberts Schronk)."

Pennsylvania Senator, Samuel Breck, earned the title "Father of the Pennsylvania Public School System," because of his efforts to gain a public school system. He lived at "Sweet Brier" in Fairmount Park, on the West side of the river.

Around 1913, the famous Evangelist, Aimee Semple McPherson, held Revival Meetings in the hilly woods along Midvale Ave., near the present Vaux St.

*By Elizabeth Ryan*

Ad by Samuel Mayberry, Falls grocer, 1882:

*"Advice to Housekeepers: Buy for cash and you will save money. Buy a good article; the best is the cheapest. Buy only what you need, and you will have no waste. Buy no inferior goods, they are dear at any price. Buy no perishable goods until you need them. Buy everything as pure as you can get it. Pay for what you get and see that you get what you pay for. If you find an error report it immediately. Avoid lottery, or prize goods; they are too costly. Avoid gifts; they all have to be paid for."*

\*\*\*

Remarks by a former resident of the Falls:

*"I'm glad that I didn't live near the river in my young days, and while I do not want to be regarded as an alarmist, let me tell you that if there should happen to come a rapid thaw, or a heavy rain, the Schuylkill river, as tame as it seems, is a real danger. I witnessed the freshet of September, 1850, when the Domino Lane, or Flat Rock, bridge went down the river and knocked out the western span of the old wooden bridge at the Falls. I also saw the freshet of 1869, and others since then, but any winter that a real freeze and break-up comes is likely to equal any of them. Ice freshets are as near an irresistible force as anything I have watched, and with ice more than a foot thick on the upper dams, one may look for something appalling, unless there should be a gradual breaking up following a severe winter."*

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From "Chronicle & Advertiser" in 1911:

*"According to the almanac, Spring began on Tuesday. Already the cry of fresh shad and ripe strawberries is heard on the streets, a sure enough sign that Spring is here."*

\*\*\*

Remarks from around 1914:

*"Chickens are bringing 30¢ a pound if they are good roasters, others can be had from 25¢ a pound up, and eggs are going up in price. There has been no prediction as to what the price of turkeys will be. No doubt the European war will boost the price. It use to be that those who could not afford a turkey would buy a roast of pork to save money. Have you bought such a roast lately? If so, how much cheaper was it than a good turkey? Look over the list of prices of most food stuff and see what it costs to live. Most of the soaring in prices is the result of greedy, heartless speculators who ought to be brought to justice. Even the laundrymen have raised the price of doing up a shirt the cost now being 12¢ instead of 10. There has, however, not been any report of a raise in the working man's wages. People seem to have forgotten all about the great Judgment Day, of which so much use to be said in the old-fashioned sermons."*

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Remarks by Robert Roberts Schronk around 1916:

*"My attention was called last week to the numerous places where ice cream is sold, and of the different makers of that luxury. I remember when the only place to obtain a plate of ice cream at the Falls was at Evan's or Arnold's hotels and then it could only be had on rare occasions, or on the Sunday School Fourth of July picnics. Like ice, it is now used in most homes. When the old well pumps were in existence no one thought of using ice except in cases of sickness, then it was procured from those having ice houses. When the late Chas. H. Lippen of Wissahickon began running his ice wagon at the Falls, people wondered*

how he expected to make a living in that business. Now almost every home has its refrigerator and ice pitcher and the butter does not have to be spread on bread with a spoon."

\*\*\*

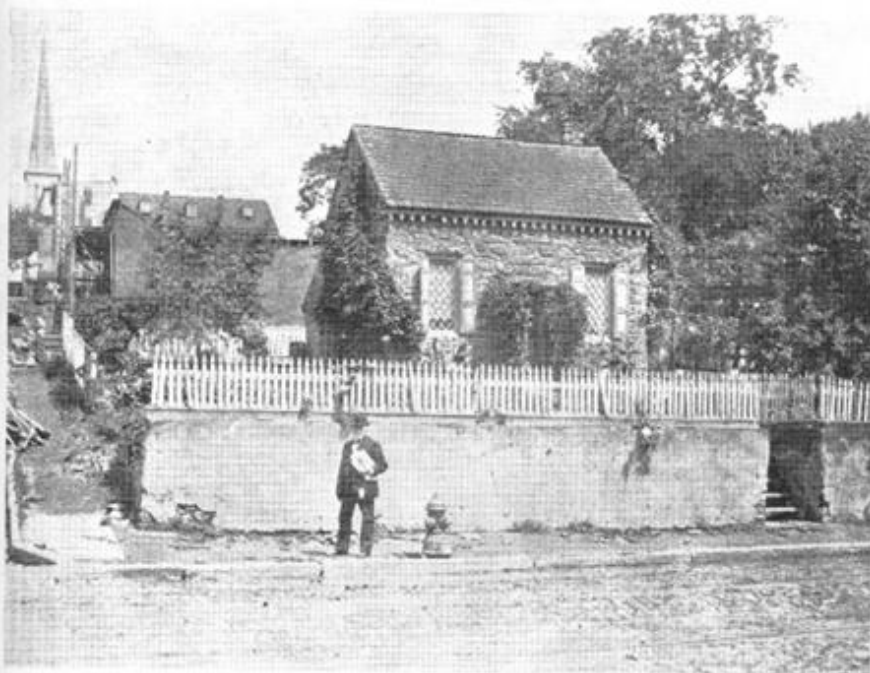
Remarks by Robert Roberts Schronk around 1920:

"The recent freshets in the Schuylkill were noted for the immense quantity of thick ice that was carried down from the upper Schuylkill, also for the inky blackness of the water caused by the coal culm from the mining regions being swept into the river. After the water had receded there was left along the embankments a deep deposit of a black gummy-like mud. If anyone was unfortunate enough to step into this substance, they found it difficult to remove their shoes."

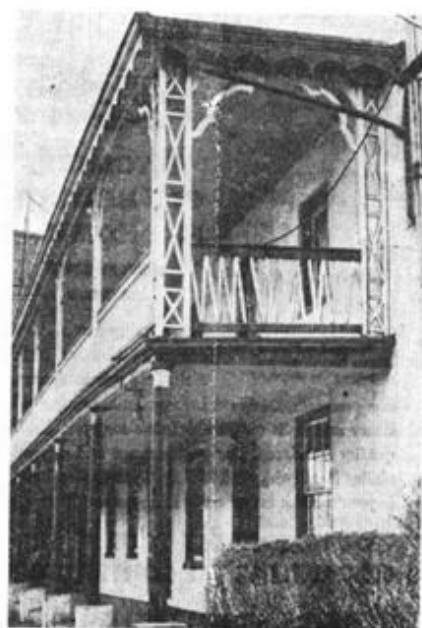


The Garrett house as it appeared in 1910. From the C.K. Mills Collection.

No. <u>Oct 14 1922</u>		PHILADELPHIA, PA. _____	192 _____	No. _____
<u>Mrs. Anna</u> <u>for Anna</u>		<b>BANK OF EAST FALLS</b> 3-141 <small>PHILADELPHIA, PA.</small>		
Balance forward \$ _____	PAY TO THE ORDER OF _____	\$ _____		
Deposited \$ _____		DOLLARS		
Total \$ _____		FOR _____		
This Check \$ <u>45.00</u>				
Balance \$ _____				



Henry J. Becker, who built "Dutch Hollow," in front of the old lodge of the Mifflin Mansion, Ridge Ave. and Stanton St. (St. Bridget's steeple in background.)



The Old Falls Tavern, Ridge Avenue near Indian Queen Lane, 1731-1972. (Sunday Bulletin)

**Taken from the "Weekly Forecast & Falls of Schuylkill Review" dated Thursday, April 18, 1901**

**Church Directory:**

Falls Presbyterian — Rev. J. Milton Thompson, 4504 Ridge Avenue  
 Sunday Services — Preaching 10:30 A.M. & 7:45 P.M.  
 Sunday School — 2:15 P.M.  
 C.E. Society — 7:00 P.M.  
 Wednesday Prayer Meeting — 8:00 P.M.  
 Falls Baptist — Rev. I.F. Stidham, 126 Queen Lane  
 Service Lord's Day — Preaching 10:30 A.M. & 7:30 P.M.  
 Bible School — 2:00 P.M.  
 B.Y.P.U. — 6:45 P.M.  
 Prayer Meeting — Friday — 8:00 P.M.  
 Falls Methodist — 171 Queen Lane  
 Lutheran — Rev. Geo. A. Kercher, 210 Queen Lane

**Advertisements:**

E.B. Andrews  
 35th & Crawford Sts.  
 Dry Goods

\*\*\*

Joshua Cawthray  
 35th & Queen La.  
 Tobacco

\*\*\*

Chas. L. Dykes  
 4208 Ridge Ave.  
 Undertaker

\*\*\*

Dr. J.E. Garrison  
 3518 Sunnyside Ave.

\*\*\*

Adam Mettinger  
 Odd Fellows Hall  
 Gents Furnishings

\*\*\*

C.D. Munro  
 4231 Ridge Ave.  
 Opposite Fairmount Park Inn; Pictures,  
 Crayons, Wreaths made & framed to  
 order

\*\*\*

Thos. Crompton  
 144 Queen La.  
 Grocer

\*\*\*

East Falls Pharmacy  
 35th & Queen La.

\*\*\*

Theo. MacKenzie  
 35th & Sunnyside Ave.  
 Steamship Agent

\*\*\*

Midvale Tea Co.  
 America Hall  
 3418 N. 35th St.

**Prices: "AT YOUR LOCAL GROCER'S"**

Tea — 35¢ lb.  
 Java Coffee — 30¢ lb.  
 Red Salmon — 11¢ can  
 Spring Butter — 25¢ lb.  
 Special: Ceresota Flour — 24-1/2 lb. bag — 59¢  
 Good prunes — 4¢ lb.  
 Pearl barley — 3¢ lb.  
 Heinz's Catsup — 3/25¢  
 Loose preserves — 8¢ lb.  
 Grape-nuts — 2/25¢  
 Baker's Cocoa — 9¢ can  
 Condensed Milk — 3/25¢  
 Sugar — 5¢ lb.

Jos. Wyatt  
 4255 Ridge Ave.  
 Fruit, Veg., Fish, & Oysters

\*\*\*

B.N. Greenlund  
 4048 Ridge Ave.  
 Watch Repair

\*\*\*

H. Brandau  
 4102 Ridge Ave.  
 Tailor

\*\*\*

J. Buckley  
 America Hall  
 Barber & Bikes

\*\*\*

E.S. Dungan's  
 4121 Ridge Ave.  
 Rakes, hoes, screens, screen doors. Fur-  
 niture & Pianos moved with care.

\*\*\*

Foley's  
 4117 Ridge Ave.  
 Family Liquor Store,  
 Mail Orders Promptly Attended To.

\*\*\*

H. Raistrick  
 America Hall  
 Oyster Saloon, Fish, & Cranes Pure Ice  
 Cream

E. McIlvaine  
 4051 Ridge Ave.  
 Baker

\*\*\*

James Siddall  
 3311 Cresson St.  
 Bread & Baker

\*\*\*

Jacob Stehle  
 Norristown R.R. &  
 Bowman St.  
 Lehigh & Schuylkill Coal

\*\*\*

Mrs. Jardine's  
 4170 Ridge Ave.  
 Screens

\*\*\*

John Green  
 3933 Ridge Ave.  
 Barber

\*\*\*

Cain's  
 4123 Ridge Ave.  
 Shoes

\*\*\*

Standard Bargain Store  
 4225-27 Ridge Ave.  
 Max Weiss, Prop.

\*\*\*

Lister's  
 4163 Ridge Ave.  
 Alarm Clocks

\*\*\*

Frank Benham, Jr.  
 4432 Ridge Ave.  
 Lawyer

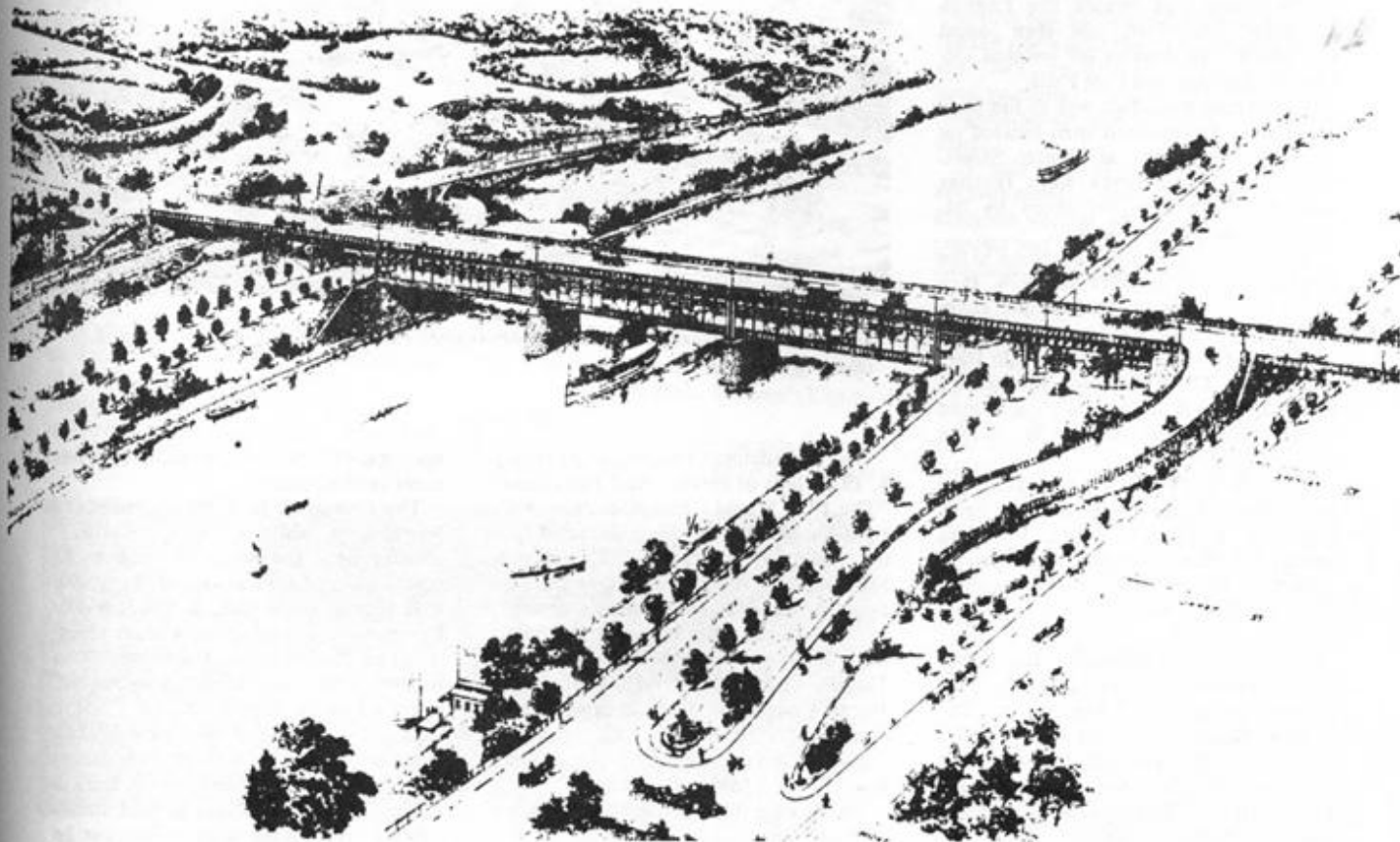
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Dr. Eli S. Beary  
 128 Queen La.





*Samuel Breck School 8th Grade Class of 1922. (Front row, L-R) Sam McClenahan, Gerald Walbank, Eric Schofeld, Sidney Polis, Arthur Edwards, William Molyneaux, Everett Verbeck, George Clark, Frank Benham, Thomas Leach, William Stinson, Robert Calhoun; (2nd row, L-R) Ellen Cooney, Mary Jenkins, Flora Black, Gertrude Redington, Dorothy Dowdall, Emma Hohfeld, Mona Pierson, Mabel Laubert, Ruth Walker; (3rd row, L-R) Marie Steinle, Ethel Dawson, Grace Fromeyer, Frances Montgomery, Catherine Wilson, Ruth Snyder, Dorothy Savin, Elsie Emmet, Annie Peace, Marie Staley, Mary Murphy, Monica Maguire, Ethel Whitaker, Lillian Cubbin, and William Patterson, Teacher.*



*Proposed Falls Bridge, 1892, with upper deck from School Lane to suburbs, and lower deck connecting the river drives.*

# THE GREATEST ATHLETES IN THE WORLD

By Joseph P. Kelley

## SCULLING

As a boy of fifteen, I was at 32nd Street and Allegheny Avenue (where Pep Boys now stands) with hundreds of other citizens, waiting for two of the world's greatest athletes to appear for the start of a Welcoming Parade — the first of many. It was September 22, 1920. At that time, there were beautiful green fields and large shade trees on each side of Allegheny Avenue.

On the north side, from 33rd to Shedwick Street, was the John Dobson Estate enclosed by a 15-foot high stone wall with huge iron gates. Next to the gates was the servants' stone house, which is still occupied. Some early motion pictures depicting prisoners escaping over these very walls were made by the Lubin Company.

Finally, along came a parade of shining new Packard Touring cars with the tops down. In the lead car were John Brendan Kelly and his cousin, Paul V. Costello, returning from the 8th Olympiad that had been held at Antwerp, Belgium. They had won the World Championship in the single and double sculls. Kelly had beaten the English champion, Beresford, and then joined Costello in the doubles for another victory for America and East Falls.

The parade wound its way to the Cafe LaRiviere, a restaurant then located on the East River Drive at Stanton Street, where the two heroes were further honored by a banquet given by St. Bridget's Holy Name Society.

After conquering all competition in the double sculls from 1921 to 1924, they again won a place on the Olympic Team of 1924 at Paris, France. In the final race, the opposing crews were from Italy and France. The Italian crew was heavily favored, but they came in a close second to the United States, while France finished third.

On July 4, 1924, Costello broke the world record in the single sculls by beating W.E. Garrett Gilmore, who had beaten all other competition that year, including Walter Hoover, Jack Guest, Bob Dibble, Jack Balyea, and Joe Wright.

En route to the Olympics, Jack Kelly was acclaimed the most perfectly built athlete on the S.S. America by Dr. Judson Daland, a noted Philadelphia physician. Dr. Daland immediately requested R. Tait MacKenzie of the University of Pennsylvania to have Kelly's body done in bronze.

After Mr. Kelly's death in 1960, a monument in his likeness was dedicated

near the end of the Henley Course, facing up the Schuylkill where he had scored so many wins — a permanent tribute to the rowing prowess of a sculler with over 125 victories.

During these years, Charley McIlvaine was winning in the lightweight singles; he also started rowing in Quads and Eights. One of the Quads that broke the record for the 2000 meters was composed of Jack Kelly, Paul Costello, Bill Auer, and Charley McIlvaine. Bill Auer, upon retiring, was a successful coach at the Crescent Boat Club. Among the East Falls boys whom he coached were my brothers, Jim and Bill Kelley, and Tom Grispon. Charley McIlvaine, upon retiring, coached the LaSalle crews for many years.

the 2000-meter course still stands. This was the only eight-oared crew to win the World Championship outside of the Olympic Games. (There are more oarsmen from East Falls in the Helms Hall of Fame at Los Angeles, California, than from any other place in the world.)

Over a three year span (1929-1931), the crew remained virtually intact and won thirty-one consecutive races, including United States and Canadian titles, and broke the record on every course on which it rowed. In 1950, the Associated Press voted them the greatest crew of the half century.

In the Olympic Finals at Amsterdam, Holland, in 1928, Paul Costello and Charley McIlvaine broke the world record by rowing the 2000 meters in 6



Olympic Champions: (L-R) Charles McIlvaine, Paul Costello, and Jack Kelly, Sr. (Evening Bulletin)

The Philadelphia Inquirer of February 8, 1976, tells of further East Falls fame: "The 1930 World Champion Penn A.C. eight-oared crew has been inducted into the Helms Hall of Fame. Ceremonies took place at the convention of the National Association of Amateur Oarsmen, in Alexandria, Virginia, last weekend. Members of the crew were: Chester Turner, Stroke; Daniel H. Barrow, C. Joseph Dougherty, (Capt.) Myrlin Janes, John McNichol, John C. Bratten, Thomas Curran, Charles J. McIlvaine, Bow; Thomas Mack, Cockswain."

The team captured the World Championship on August 17, 1930, on the Muese River in Liege, Belgium. The record time of 5 minutes, 2 seconds, on

minutes, 41.4 seconds, a record that has never been equalled.

The Queen of Holland presented the World Cup, which stays in the victors' country until the record is broken. At that time, the Cup was valued at \$10,000. It is kept at the Bailey, Banks & Biddle Company in Philadelphia, and, at times, is put on display there. The names of the winners from the various countries are inscribed on the trophy.

Jack Kelly had trained for the English Diamond Sculls in 1920, but was denied the privilege of entering it by the English rowing officials who said he had an advantage over other scullers because he had worked with his hands setting bricks during his apprenticeship. Jack Beresford

of England won the Diamond Sculls but Kelly had his revenge later that year by beating Beresford in the Olympics.

Jack Kelly, Jr. and Art Gallagher, who had been winning National and Canadian Championships in the 1940's, entered the Royal English Henley in 1946 (Diamond Sculls), and were defeated in the finals. The next year, however, they entered and won the Diamond Sculls.

The 1947 championship completed the two most coveted titles for the Kelly family — the Olympiad and the Diamond Sculls. These, and all their other triumphs, came after years of arduous training which made the name "Kelly" synonymous with world rowing supremacy.

Sam Moorehead's first sculling race was on June 20, 1920, in the Navy Regatta on the Schuylkill River. Rowing with him in the Vesper Junior Eight were Jim Wood, Jack Costello, Linton Nelson, Jimmy Carton, John Rabbitt, Benny Hill, and Bert O'Connell; they won the race easily. Later on, teamed with John McNicholas in the Double Sculls, they won the Canadian Championship.

Sam also won in Doubles with Paul Costello at Buffalo and Baltimore. At the Royal Canadian Henley in 1921, the Senior Four consisting of Jack Kelly, Sam Moorehead, Jack Costello, and Ken Myers won the Cup. In July, 1925, rowing for Penn A.C. in the Quad, Kelly, Regan, Costello, and Moorehead beat all competition.

Sam also had many victories in the Singles and was Alternate for Kelly and Costello in the 1920 Olympics. In 1928 & 1929, Sam Moorehead and John McNicholas won the National and Canadian Doubles Rowing Championship.

## GOLF

In the Spring of 1894, a group of aristocrats who made up the membership of the Philadelphia Country Club, a four-year-old Polo, Tennis, and Cricket establishment located a mile or so west of the Schuylkill River at City Line, decided

to build what is generally considered to have been the first golf course in this area. Whether or not golf had been played prior to that time is, for the most part, academic, for it was from this beginning and because of the social prominence of these people that golf spread so rapidly.

Before the nine-hole 3,050 yard layout was replaced in 1898 by an 18-hole course that measured a scant 5,630 yards, the blue-bloods of Philadelphia had taken to golf so thoroughly that they formed an association to govern their tournaments. A Country Club member, Edith Burt, had been runner-up in the qualifying rounds of the Women's Championship.

As golf became more popular, it attained the status of "a way of life" to the

rich and "a way of living" to the poor. The first ball had no sooner bounced into the tall grass than the neophyte golfers of the "90's" realized the need for sharp-eyed youngsters as caddies, and the local neighborhoods supplied them in abundance.

In that time of low wages, uncertain employment, and large families, everyone worked, and caddying became a popular way for a boy to help his parents. Although boys came to the Country Club from West Philadelphia and Roxborough, by far the greatest percentage of them were from a nearby mill section with the romantic name of the Falls of Schuylkill.

Young men of that era spent much of their time on street corners, and Ridge and Midvale was a natural. They would talk about the brand of golf played by the members of the Club, and brag a little about their own game. When bragging had to be backed up, they would get their clubs and wager on driving a ball across the river. Many a Baby Dimple and Silver King found the bottom of the Schuylkill before the boys grew into manhood.

As the corner grew in importance, Ed Byrne opened a small restaurant on Midvale Avenue, a few doors east of the Ridge. The little enterprise, which he named "The Gunboat" was not much more than a coffee and doughnut house, but its ideal location as a place around which to gather and talk golf made it an immediate success.

*John B. Kelly, Jr.*



*"Diamond Sculls Winner"*

*Royal English Henley Regatta  
1947*



1916 Montrose B.C., Junior Eight; All East Falls Crew, near Falls Bridge. Bow, Charley Turner, Bill Morrow, Harry West, Jack Barrow, Ben Walker, Harry Morrow, Harry Smith, Stroke, Sam Moorehead, Coxswain, George Harbeson.



Eddie Clarey

Pros came to the Gunboat from all over the city. From Roxborough came three ex-caddies, amateurs by the name of Platt, Woody, & Zimmer. On one of these visits, Woody put an end to any honors that could be gained by driving a ball over the river when he accomplished the feat by using a souped-up Braid-Mills putter. At the Gunboat, matches were made; pro jobs were accepted, swapped, and reassigned; and careers were launched.

One particularly colorful character who frequented the Gunboat was Matt Duffy. The dapper Matt, with his waxed mustache and fawn-colored spats, was the character around whom George Kelly wrote his prize-winning play "The Show Off."

Duffy was an ex-caddy who could play good golf and, on necessity, could work on any phase of the golf business and turn in a creditable performance. Matt had three pro jobs, Poland Springs, Merchantville, and Cape May. He was caddy-master and later the head greenskeeper at Delaware County Field Club (now Llanarch C.C.). He also designed the greens at the remodeled Cape May Country Club.

At one time during the mid-twenties, a total of 48 pros from East Falls were holding head pro jobs in the United States. Probably the most famous of them all, and certainly the Falls' first son of golf was Jack Burke. Old Jack, or Jackie as he is still referred to at Ridge and Midvale, started his pro career in 1907 at the Delaware County Field Club. In that same year, Bill Byrne, a brother of the boss of the Gunboat, became pro at Aronimink (located at 54th and Chester Avenue, at the former Aronimink Farm).

In 1909, the two Falls pros changed jobs and they each played in the "Open." In 1911, Burke left Philadelphia for a job

in Iowa at the Thunder Bay C.C., and Byrne went to St. Davids. He remained there until the late '20's when his job was taken by his assistant, who was also his brother-in-law, Tommy Robinson, another Falls native.

Robinson had broken into golf as a shop boy at Atlantic City C.C., during the reign of Johnny McDermott. Tommy passed away in 1959; he had been at St. Davids for 45 years.

Burke moved in the mid-west for a few years and entered the "Open" in 1920 from the Town and Country Club in St. Paul. He finished in a four-way tie for the runner-up spot with 296, one shot off the pace set by an Englishman, Ted Ray.

Burke moved to Texas in 1924 and took a job at River Oaks C.C. in Houston. In a few years he was followed by three of his cousins. Dave, Jerry, and Jimmy Marr all became pros in the Lone Star state. The late David Marr was the father of Dave, Jr. who was the 1965 National P.G.A. Champion and a current T.V. commentator at many championship tournaments.

Burke's son, Jack, Jr., is a former P.G.A. and Masters Title-holder, as well as having been honored by his fellow professionals in 1956 by being named pro-of-the-year.

Another member of the same family, and the most recent of the boys of the Falls to turn pro, is Rydal Country Club's Jack Watson. His mother, Marie Marr Watson, is a sister of the three Marr brothers.

When his father died in 1947, young Dave Marr came to Philadelphia to spend the summer with his Aunt Marie, and with young Jack he caddied at Green Valley, where Jerry Marr, now returned from Texas, was caddy-master.

Besides being cousins of the same age, Dave Marr and Jack Watson are good friends. Dave is an officer of the P.G.A., and Jack is on the Board of local sections of the same body.

A Falls contemporary of Burke was Jack Sawyer, a pugnacious Irishman who had worked at the Country Club prior to the building of the golf course. Born in 1886, Sawyer as a small boy had often earned a few cents walking the hot, winded ponies at the Polo Field. When it became more profitable, he caddied, and later worked at Dobson's. In 1912 Torresdale C.C. opened its first course, a nine-hole affair on the former Mack Estate, and Sawyer was hired as the professional. He worked there until retirement and lived out his days in a house on the course after 53 years as a pro.

Other professionals from the Falls included such outstanding golfers as the

Leach brothers — Bill, Jimmy, and Jack; and Eddie Clarey, who won the championship of the A.E.F. while in France after the First World War. He came back to Philadelphia to win the Patterson Cup. When Clarey turned pro, he was put in charge of the City's courses, and became the pro at Juniata. Others included George Balrick, the first of the Falls pros; Jim Starr; Joe and Jim Dougherty; Tod Sloan; Maurice and Ed White; Bill Cone; Joe Loughlin; and Joe Brennan.

Not all the caddies became professionals. Tom (Ike) Gribben, Jim Lees, and Ance Gallagher made careers for themselves as caddy-masters. Ance held the job at Green Valley from 1922 until 1945, when he became lockerman. Vin O'Donnell, who spent many years as a golf equipment salesman for Mitchell and Ness, became pro-caddy-master-greenskeeper at the old Hi-Top C.C. during the depression, when golfers had to use their old clubs.

Others from the Falls who were golf equipment salesmen were Jerry Marr (this was his first job in the golf business), and Walter Wood. These men both worked for Spaulding.

Jim Conway and Pat Dwyer were two green-thumb Irishmen who were successful Course Superintendents, while Joe Roesman moved from the Falls to Chicago, where he invented and manufactured the mower which bears his name.

Although most of the Falls boys who remained close to golf found a way to turn a buck from their skill, there were others who played because they loved it. The late J. Griffith Boardman, winner of almost every title amateur golf could offer, a brother of Dan Boardman, the former professional at the Coatesville C.C., was a Falls boy. So too were Ivan Crooks and Joe (Chap) Rafferty, who won the "Falls Open" in 1945, plus many other events including the Montgomery County Amateur Championship, the Frank McCracken Memorial Championship, and the Club Championship at Melrose for two years.



Jackie Burke

Some of the pros who have scattered over the United States, and are drawing lucrative salaries at Country Clubs, were formerly caddies at the Philadelphia Country Club under Caddymaster Tom Gribben.

Among the boys who climbed to good positions since they caddied under Gribben are:

Bill Leach, Overbrook C.C.  
 Matt Duffy, Merchantville C.C.  
 John Sawyer, Torresdale C.C.  
 Chap Rafferty, Holmesburg C.C. & Cornwells Heights C.C.  
 Joe & Jack Welsh, Des Moines C.C.  
 Bob Ransford, Llanerch C.C.  
 Willie Loughran, Hammond, Ind. C.C.  
 Jim Leach, Tavistock C.C.  
 Bill Burns, St. Davids C.C.  
 Jim Starr, Aiken, S. Carolina, C.C.  
 Neil McHenry & Joe Roseman, Westmoreland C.C., Chicago, Ill.  
 Jimmy Haran & Dan McHenry, Torresdale, C.C.  
 Tommy Burke, San Antonio C.C.  
 Maurice White, Kansas City C.C.  
 Jim Lees, Ashbourne C.C.  
 Tod Sloan, Pittsburgh C.C.  
 Johnny Crawford, Chicago C.C.  
 Jerry Marr & Ance Gallagher, Green Valley C.C.  
 Fred Gamble, Old York Road C.C.  
 Ed Clarey & Jim Conway, Juniata C.C.  
 Jimmy Dougherty, Coatesville, C.C.  
 Alex Douglas, Wilmington C.C.  
 E.J. Auty, Westchester C.C.  
 Jiggs Donahue, Bucks County C.C.  
 Joe Loughlin, Philadelphia C.C.  
 J. Griffith Boardman, Cedarbrook C.C.  
 Joe Brennan, Bala C.C.  
 Dave Marr, Houston, Texas  
 Mike Gaughan, Greenskeeper, Merion C.C.

#### THE EAST FALLS GOLF ASSOCIATION

The East Falls Golf Association was chartered back in the 1930's, and has done a great deal more for the community than its name implies. It has decorated the business district during the Christmas season, conducted send-offs and welcome-homes, regardless of victory or defeat, for such East Falls athletes as Jack Kelly, Jr., and Art Gallagher, and has sponsored athletic teams.

The Association also sponsors an annual Golf Tournament. The tournament is open only to East Falls residents or sons of former residents. All of the nearly 300 players in the 4 classes win a prize.

The prizes, worth more than \$2,000, were not distributed during the Second World War. Instead, a cash gift was sent to every Falls serviceman. And after the war, a \$3,000 fund was divided among the community's three veterans organizations.

#### BASEBALL

There were a great many baseball teams in East Falls. One of the earliest was the Clover A.A., which usually played on their home grounds at Henry Avenue and Bowman Street, before the streets were cut through. It was all farmland, with cows grazing in the outfield.

Some of the men who played for Clover were: Elmer Hemphill, Tommy Murphy, Joe Kelly, Phil and John Gillice, Jim Murphy, John Murphy, Fred Stehle, Dick Cole, Francis Gribben, Francis Mahoney, Paddy Neilan, Ed McCann, Ray Gaughan, Anthony Leidy, John Burns, Elmer Vickerman, Bernie Walsh, Francis Costello, Al Lawler, William Murphy, and Bill Casey. Ed Gallagher was bat boy.

While conversing with Elmer Hemphill, a couple of years ago, he told me about the time they bought new uniforms from Strawbridge & Clothier; they were red with a green stripe down the center. They were very proud of them. Cash was paid, with the exception of a balance of \$34. This was a large sum in those days, and they signed a contract to pay the balance at the end of the season.

The pass-the-hat collections were not up to expectations that season, and, as they had no excess funds, a few of the members decided to visit the nearby home of Mr. Strawbridge, which is now the restaurant at Alden Park Manor.

They explained their predicament to him and asked if he would donate the \$34 to clear up their delinquent balance at his store. Since Mr. Strawbridge did not know any of the boys personally, he suggested that they bring him a letter from a reliable and well-known citizen of East Falls, attesting to their credibility; if so,

he would be glad to make the donation.

Bill Casey composed a letter and the team went in a body to the home of James Dobson on Abbottsford Rd. Mr. Dobson read the letter, congratulated the writer on its perfect composition, and then signed it and added his "Good Wishes" to it. They promptly took it to Mr. Strawbridge, who donated the check with best wishes for the team's success.

Some of the other baseball teams were: East Falls A.A., Clearfield A.A., J & J Dobson, Casey A.A., St. Bridget's Cadets, Hillside, Cedar A.A., Westmoreland A.C., The Falcons, Chamounix, The Trojans, The Wildcats, The Teams of the East Falls Church League, and Rosewood.

The Clearfield A.A. and Rosewood played their home games at Nunny's Field at 35th Street and Ridge Avenue. Among their players were: Vinnie Brill; Jack Garrett; Tommy Murphy; Tom Doherty; Jim and Matt Costine; Ed (Podge) Cullen; Billy, Jimmy, and Johnny Dugan; Ray, Bob, and Jackie Jones; Jimmy Omensetter; Tommy, Mike, and Jimmy Haran; Jim Wood; Oakie and Jack Clancy; Jim, Toby, and Ben Schofield; Eddie Nusky; Jim (Packy) Reardon; Jimmy Fitzpatrick; Ben Pierson; Tom and Bill Cassidy; Wm. (Bucky) Proud; John (Dadder) Allen; Jim McIlvaine; John Fallon; Cy Greevy; Bill Garrett; Jimmy McDonald; Joe Flynn; Til Berry; Bill Daily; Bill McDevitt; Joe Titters; Al (Dick) Hardwick; Tom Foley; and George Harkins.

Sam Moorehead played in the outfield and was traveling manager, with Bob Calhoun and Bob Bates, for the great John & James Dobson Team in the Industrial League from 1918 until the mid-Twenties. This team was as good as any Big League Team. They played most of



The Clover Club of 1912.

their games on the Dobson Field at Indian Queen Lane and Cresson Street. It was a beautiful field surrounded by a high wooden fence, a large grandstand back of homeplate, and grey bleachers along the first and third base sides.

The players were: Jimmy Carlin, first base; Ziddie Trautwein, second; Dutch Schadle, third; and Frank Lees, short-stop. The outfielders were Jimmy Wood, Joe Green, and Cy Simondinger. The pitchers included Lefty Schofield, Mattie Murphy, Bo Moyer, Eggie Thummel, Frances (Meno) Gribben, Mike Hoffman, and Victor Keene, who went on to be one of the leading pitchers in the Big Leagues. The catchers were Harry Haigh and Sam Moorehead.

All of the companies sponsoring teams in the Industrial League were compelled to have their players on the payroll. Sam Moorehead was chief electrician at the Dobson Mills, and the ball players were his assistants.

East Falls A.A. also played their home games at Dobson Field. Among their players were: Hero McHale (who also played for the House of David — they all wore beards), Hip Carruthers, George Shaw, Sam Moorehead, Buzzer Matthews, Mattie Murphy, Jerry Marr, and Hodey Golden.

Later on came the Gotwals brothers, Clarence Brehm, the Stovers, Charley and Billy Quinn, the Greevy brothers, Johnny Faye, Billy and Larry Kelley, Joe Markey, Joe Kinsinger, and Tommy Park.

Dave Budenz, their pitcher, had a try-out with the A's and Phillies in 1938, and received a Gold Baseball Medal from the Atlantic Refining Company's Baseball School for his outstanding ability. Ira Thomas and Jack Coombs of the Athletics highly recommended Budenz.

Harold (Reds) Gotwals, who ran 44 yds. for a touchdown in the last 5 minutes at Franklin Field to win the City Championship, also helped East Falls in the Greater Philadelphia League, along with his brothers, Earl and Webb, and Al, Tom, and Jack Dugan, Harry Preine, and Dave and Frank Stover. Let's not forget Andy Tomasic, who had starred at Temple University, and had a try-out with the Cincinnati Reds.

The East Falls Church League was started in 1927 by members of the various churches in East Falls, including George Shaw, Sam McClenahan, George Gotwals, P.J. Kelley, David Grill, Bob Bates, Bill Ferguson, Billy Muschamp, Paddy Neilan, Walter Costello, Lyman Harker, Ruby Grill, and other interested men from the different parishes; they were sponsored by the pastors of each church.

At the beginning, each team only included their own church members. St. Bridget's team had already been playing together for a few years, and they won the championship the first two seasons. So for the third year, all the teams



*St. Bridget's Young Men's Literary Institute Champions, 1901-02. (Front, L-R) Bill Furlong, Frank Trenwith; (1st row, L-R) Charley Kelly, Bill Buckley, coach; not known; (Rear, L-R) Joe Foster, Patrick J. Kelley, manager, and Charley Park.*

switched players. This created more interest and competition in the now evenly-matched teams, and also created a feeling of good will among the fans.

Later on, we had the Trojans and the Falcons, who were champs of the Pop Warner League in 1948.

The games between East Falls, Clearfield, and Westmoreland were hotly contested, and the rivalry of the fans was intense as they cheered their heroes on with slogans not yet printed in Webster's Dictionary — those were the days!

## BASKETBALL

I first heard of the great basketball games of the early 20th Century when almost everyone in East Falls had a large framed picture of a team that compared with the '76ers of today. It was of St. Bridget's Y.M.L.I. (Young Men's Literary Institute). The picture was taken when they won the Championship in 1901 and 1902. On it was my dad, P.J. Kelley, Manager; Bill Buckley, Coach; Charley Park; Joe Furlong; Charley Kelly; Frank Trenwith; Mick Murphy; and Joe Foster.

They were a well-coordinated team, all of them with a sharp eye for the basket. I remember my father telling me of the time that Mick Murphy, lying on his side, after being knocked to the floor, launched the ball with one hand into the basket at the other end of the court to win the game at America Hall, Sunnyside Avenue and Conrad Street.

Sam Moorehead, "Mr. Basketball," was one of the really great basketball players, and one of the best all-around athletes in the country, competing in basketball, rowing, baseball, and football. He started his long and successful career with all the leading teams around Philadelphia, Camden, and upstate.

His greatest games were in the Eastern League, with and against the great stars of that League: Joe Green, Austin Meehan, Neil Dieghan, Bart Sheehan, Tom Dunleavy, Eddie Gottlieb, and many other stars. He later joined the newly-formed N.B.A. for several years.

In the Church League, he played with St. Josephat's of Manayunk when they won the championships in 1935 and 1936, and with St. James the Less when they won the championship in 1912 with all East Falls boys. The league included: Sid Trevithan, Harry West, Al Homewood, Jinks King, Jimmy Rumsey, Chick Clayton, and Tom McCann. Sam could play any position, but usually played Center.

At the "Old Timers" Reunion and Dinner each year, he re-tells stories of past days with his many friends and former team-mates. In his trophy room he has a trunkful of medals, watches, cups, and wall plaques which were awarded for his many achievements.

Today, at the age of eighty-three, Sam is the picture of health, due to the superb condition he has always maintained since his younger days. He manages to play a

credible game of golf several times a week when the weather is favorable.

Another great basketball star was Bucky Walters, who became an "East Faller" when he married the former Jane Yoast. Bucky starred at Ursinus College and then in the professional leagues. He gave it up later for baseball, and went to the Phillies as a Third Baseman. Jimmy Wilson, Phillies Catcher, encouraged him to become a Pitcher. He became one of the best Pitchers in the Big Leagues for many years, and later a Coach.

Billy Kelley, my nephew, was the inspiration of the Temple University teams of 1962 to 1965. In 1964 they won the Middle Atlantic Championship, under the coaching of Harry Litwack. They were one of the hottest teams in the "Big Five."

Billy is still playing a great game with "Justa" in the Houston Senior League; he is also an editor of *Sports Philadelphia*, a bi-monthly magazine. He is publisher, editor, and designer of *Big Five Magazine*. In addition, he has written articles for *Philadelphia Magazine*, and an award-winning article for the Philadelphia Inquirer Sunday Magazine entitled "I Played in the 'Big Five'."

His brother, Larry, also plays in the Houston League, and contributes articles to *Sports Philadelphia* and the Trenton Times as a free-lance writer. Brother Danny also plays in the Houston Leagues. Eddie, the youngest of the four, starred at quarterback for three years with Bishop Kennedy High School and is now quarterback for East Stroudsburg College.

Bucky Harris, former Gettysburg College basketball star, has been doing an excellent job as Athletic Director at the Philadelphia Textile College for a number of years. Textile, under the coaching of Herb Magee, is having its greatest season since 1970 when Buddy Harris, Bucky's son, excelled on the team; he later went into baseball, where he pitched for Houston, until an arm injury forced his retirement.

## FOOTBALL

The first indoor football game was held in 1921, at the National Guard Armory, 32nd and Lancaster Avenue. It was played on a tan-bark floor by an all-star team from East Falls, selected and captained by John B. Kelly, Sr., against an all-star Army team.

The punting on both sides was excellent; Jim Wood punted for East Falls. But the tackling was vicious, and neither team was able to score. With 3 minutes left in the 4th quarter, Jack Kelly picked Billy Muschamp to drop-kick. The ball went through the uprights from the 35 yard line, and East Falls won 3-0.

Among the East Falls players were: Quarterback, Frank Lally; Fullback,



*East Falls Champions, 1913. (Front, right) Walter Jenkinson; (1st row, L-R) Paul Costello, Oscar Stevenson, Joe Prendergast, Jack Kelly, F. Lally, Joe Huber; (2nd row, L-R) not known, John Armitage, Ivan Crooks, Elmer Cook, Buck Weaver, Horatio Denby, not known; (3rd row, L-R) Tom Byrnes, Jim Stonelake, Jim Fiedler, and Matt Lukens.*



*The Clearfield A.A. of 1921*

Fred Pickard; Left Halfback, Jimmy Burke; Right Halfback, Jim Wood; Center, Ramachie Norton. On the line were Dan Boardman, George Filoon, Earl Schwartz, Jim Hannes, Tom Maguire, Calhoun, Paddy and Billy Muschamp, and Jack Costello. The Coach was Walter Jenkinson.

This game received major publicity from the leading newspapers in the United States, and it was expected that Indoor Football would become quite popular. However, there were no more indoor games until a few years ago, when Bud Dudley innovated an annual Charity Football Game in Convention Hall at Atlantic City.

For the last 3 or 4 years, two of the leading college teams have been selected to play for the Championship at Convention Hall.

One of the highlights of the 1917 Football Season was the game played at Franklin Field by the 2 champion teams of the U.S. Army — Camp Meade and Camp Dix. Of the thousands of football stars to pick from at Camp Meade, there were 6 from East Falls: Frank (Red) Lally, Quarterback; Ed Clarey, Fullback; Cy Fiedler, Halfback; Ed (Podge) Cullen, John Armitage, and Tommy Burke, Line. Camp Meade won the game 7-0.

The East Falls-Clearfield Annual Memorial Football Games started in the latter part of the 19th Century. The early games were played on the soccer field of Northeast High School, at 29th and Clearfield Streets, then at Dobson Field, and for the last three years of the series at the Northeast High School Field at 29th and Cambria Streets.

The "War Cry" was "Water," which meant: "Knock 'em out, and throw water on them to bring them to, and knock 'em out again."

Headlines from the Philadelphia Public Ledger of December 9, 1923, declared: "Blocked punt decides East Falls struggle. Clearfield defeated in annual clash for championship."

"Yesterday on Northeast High's Field, the East Falls eleven, champions last year by a 3-0 score, were victorious again when Jimmy Burke kicked the winning field goal in the annual epic with Clearfield. East Falls doubled the 1922 figures in maintaining its hold on the coveted trophy, and the winners-take-all gate receipts.

"The 6-0 score represented a second period touchdown, and the touchdown represented the dire and far-reaching effect of a blocked punt, even when the blockade occurs far from any goal post.

"Robert (Razz) Jones of Clearfield punted the pig-skin right into the protruding features of Tom Maguire, East Falls Right Tackle. The untimely interruption of the well-meant kick occurred midway through the Second Period in the neighborhood of Clearfield's 40 yard line.



1922 Champions: (Front, L-R) Ramache Norton, Dan Boardman, Frank Lally, Jim Foley, Jim Hannes, Dave Marr; (2nd row, L-R) Tom Maguire, Russ Collins, Ray Matthews, unknown, unknown, Jack Costello, Jim Burke, George Filoon, Walter Jenkinson, coach; (3rd row, L-R) Ivin Crooks, unknown, unknown, Tyson, Fred Pickard, unknown, Sheb Foley, Wag Calhoun, unknown; (rear, L-R) Bob Percy, Freddie Muschamp, Earl Schwartz, Joe Lally; (inside gunboat, Gus Welsh).

"If anybody tells you Razz Jones can't drive that ball with his instep against it, ask Maguire, or any of the 15,000 fans who packed the Field and Grandstand separating Northeast and Central High's Stadiums. The force of the recoil from Maguire's jaw shot the ball obliquely across the gridiron toward Clearfield's goal.

"Twenty-two players, three officials, and two small dogs pursued the pigskin in its 39-yard roll. Earl Schwartz, East Falls Right End, either won or lost the race, whichever way you look at it. He fell on the ball and the other twenty-one players landed on him. When the mob scene was dissected, Schwartz was covering the ball on the one yard line.

"Clearfield's herculean light-blue jerseys stiffened for a last ditch stand against the navy-blue of East Falls, crouched like catamounts. Frank (Red) Lally, East Falls' "Walter Johnson," playing his seventeenth year of football, crashed into the light-blue line and stopped. Clearfield fans rent the heavens with cheers, but it was not to be.

"On the second play, Jerry Marr, the little Quarterback, twisted and wriggled his way across the coveted Line. That was the game's lone score. Jimmy Burke, whose drop-kick won last year's game was wide in his try for the extra point."

It was a grand day, and as fine a day as ever provided for a crucial combat and a happy night at the Gunboat. There the lucky bettors received several thousand

dollars invested before the game by the Clearfield rooters.

In 1924, Clearfield won the game 6-0. It was the last game of a series of over twenty-five years of competition between two great football teams.

Charley Carton was one of the greatest tackles I have ever seen. He starred for Roman High for four years, and was elected Captain in his Senior year. As a student at Holy Cross College, he starred for three years on the varsity with Cy Simondinger. After graduation, he played for the mighty Frankford Yellowjackets until they changed their name to The Philadelphia Quakers, and then after a few years to the Philadelphia Eagles.

Jess Richardson, of West Queen Lane, made a name in football with the Roxborough High School teams, and then starred at the University of Alabama under Bear Bryant for 3 years. He was signed by the Philadelphia Eagles after graduation, and played tackle until illness forced his retirement.

Jim Katcavidge, an East Falls boy, starred in the line at Roman High from 1949 to 1952, and then at Dayton College, Ohio, where he distinguished himself by his heads-up play from 1952 to 1956. The New York Giants signed him after graduation, and he performed brilliantly as defensive end with such stars as Frank Gifford and Y.A. Tittle.

After playing for a number of years, he became a coach in the N.F.L. He was in-



ducted into the First Annual "PAL Hall of Fame" on February 26, 1976, after receiving the National PAL Award in 1970.

### ICE-SKATING

Before Gustine Lake was built, nearly everyone in East Falls enjoyed their pastime in the winter by skating on the Schuylkill River. It was usually frozen over from December to March, and the young and old skated from the Falls Bridge to Fairmount and back. Most of them were quite proficient in speed and fancy skating.

When the winters grew milder, Gustine Lake was built as a playground for East Falls residents, who brought their young children along to learn to skate. One of those young skaters was Walter Boocock, who became quite expert, and was a member of the Dance Team at the Wissahickon Skating Club.

After his death in March of 1976, the Club voted to give an award in Walter's name. The Kilian Medal will be given to anyone who passes the Kilian Dance Test, a very difficult feat. The "Kilian" was Walter's favorite dance at the various contests staged by the Skating Club.

### BOXING

John Costello, Sr., was a very clever boxer and one of the finest boxing instructors in America. He and Twin Prendergast taught Charley Turner, Sr., the fine points of the game, and Turner became one of the most skilled boxers in the country; he had a lightening-fast jab. In 1912 he easily defeated Willie Richie in Philadelphia.

A few months later, Richie became Lightweight Champion of the World, and held the title until 1914. Turner's manager was unsuccessful in getting a rematch with Ritchie, who wanted no part of Turner again.

Charley Turner had three great battles with Eddie McAndrews, a clever lightweight from Manayunk. Turner won two of the decisions.

There were many other good East Falls boxers over the years, including Roundy Donahue, Ramachie Norton, Vince Schwartz, Wild Bill Donahue, Joe Coley, Ben Pierson, and John and Bob Mulligan.

John Mulligan came to East Falls after winning the Amateur Inter-city Championship in Glasgow, Scotland, in March, 1919. John and Bob did most of their fighting at Joe Kennedy's three acres in West Manayunk and at the Cambria A.C.

Johnny Cubbins was a very clever lightweight with a terrific K.O. punch. He had many victories over major contenders in Semi and Windups at all the leading Arenas.

Proteges of Charley Turner, who made quite a record as amateurs, were

Raymond (Bear) Connelly, Joe Kelley, John Quinn, Jim Kelley, Charley Walbank, Carl and Dominic Michini, Tommy Brill, George Lyons, Billy Matthews, Jimmy Conway, Joe Caruso, Mickey DeGeorge, and Dick Begley.



*Joseph P. Kelley, 1924*

Later on, Bear Connelly taught boxing to a group of East Falls boys in his basement, and in 1935 opened a gymnasium in Johnny Donlon's Social Club, on the second floor of Ferris' Garage at Park

Drive and Midvale Avenue. It was at this Club that Johnny Cubbins and other East Falls boys learned and trained.

In 1941, Bear, as a member of the Philadelphia Police Force, was appointed director and boxing instructor at the PAL District at 22nd and Hunting Park Avenue. He held this position until he retired with distinction in 1967.

On February 26, 1976, eleven men, including Raymond (Bear) Connelly ("Mr. Boxing"), were inducted into the First Annual "PAL Hall of Fame."

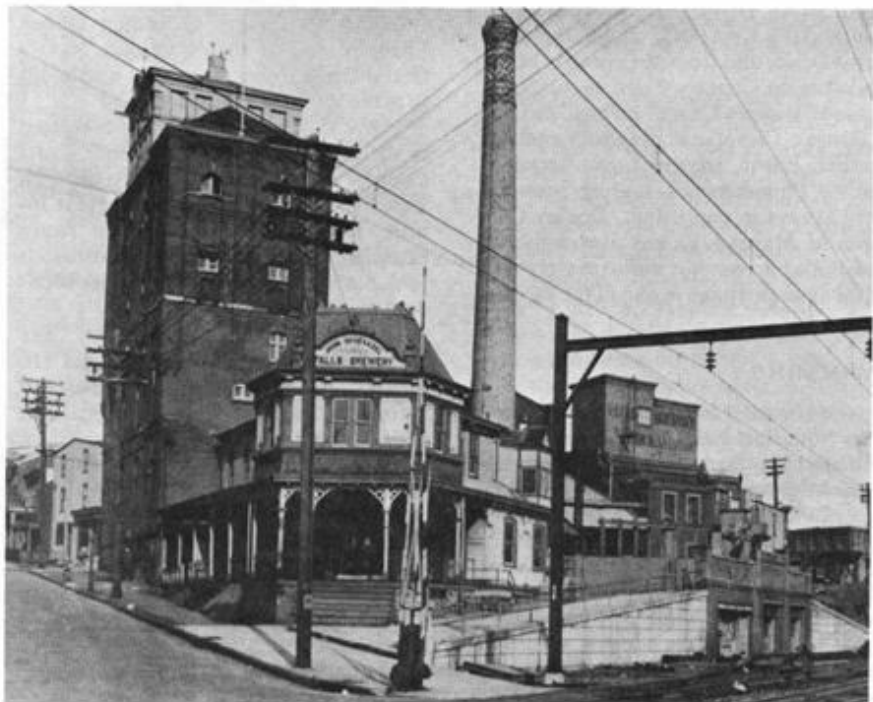
### CRICKET AND SOCCER

Cricket was probably one of the first popular sports played in East Falls. The early games were played at Bowman and Fox Streets, and later at the Germantown Cricket Club. The first players were men brought from England by the J. & J. Dobson Mills. Later on, Dobson's competed in Soccer with some very good teams.

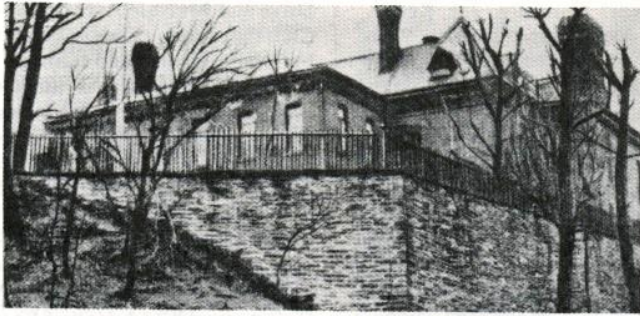
### TENNIS

Joseph Walsh, father of Dr. J. Craig Walsh, was one of the most successful instructors of tennis in Philadelphia. He was tennis pro at the Philadelphia Country Club. Many well-known members of Main Line Society were his proteges, including the Biddles, Disstons, and Cramps.

In Squash and Court Tennis, there are quite a number of City, State, and National Champions in East Falls. Among



*John Hohenadel's Falls Brewery on Indian Queen Lane. Front building is the tavern.*



*The Samuel Breck School, Crawford and Krail Sts.*

them are Jimmy Dunn, pro at the Philadelphia Racquet Club, and his assistants, Tommy Welsh and Jimmy Burke. All were 1975 Champions.

Joe Welsh, Jr., is pro at both the Germantown Cricket Club and Chalfonte-Haddon Hall in Atlantic City. Consistent star players at the Germantown Cricket Club from East Falls are John and Boyd McIlvaine, Joe Furlong, and Jimmy Agger.

A U.S. newspaper of March 10, 1970, reported: "Tom Greevy, Jr., of East Falls, representing the Tuxedo Park Tennis Club of New York, regained the U.S. Court Tennis Professional Handicap Championship defeating Joe Crane of the Boston T.C. He last held this title in 1966.

"The two natives of Philadelphia battled for one hour and forty minutes. It was the 3rd title triumph for Greevy. He won it the first time 7 years ago in a final with Crane."

#### **AUTO RACING**

Who among us older citizens will forget those thrilling auto races on the West River Drive? We watched from Laurel Hill Cemetery, along the East River Drive, and from the grounds of the Philadelphia Country Club, as they spun around "Hairpin Curve" on Neill Drive.

Grover Cleveland Bergdoll and his brother, Edwin, sons of Louis Bergdoll, one of Philadelphia's leading brewers, were always in contention. Dooley Chirano, of Manayunk, was also a daring and skilled driver, but unfortunately was killed at an early age in one of the races.

#### **SWIMMING**

John Costello, Sr., taught many swimmers from East Falls as a member of the Philadelphia Boat Club at Lafayette (now Miquon) on the Schuylkill. Mrs. Costello and their children, Paul, Mae, and Jack, were also expert swimmers.

Margaret Majer (Mrs. John B. Kelly) was an instructor of swimming at the University of Pennsylvania.

Joe (Chap) Rafferty has quite a record as a swimming instructor. He taught at the Y.M.H.A. for 13 years, 1927 to 1940, the Broadway A.C. (now the Philadelphia Club) for 13 years, and

Roman Catholic High School for 8 years. While he taught there, they won the City, Catholic League, and National High School Championships. Chap, besides his other accomplishments in golf and football, is an excellent after-dinner speaker on sports. He is now the golf pro at the Cornwell Heights Country Club.

Dr. James Fiedler was National Back-Stroke Champion at Northeast Catholic High School and the University of Pennsylvania.

#### **TRACK**

The five sons of John and Catherine Cubbins made their mark in high school and college, making many track records. Johnny, Sr., was quite a runner himself back in the thirties.

John, Jr., starred at Dobbins and Textile; Tom, at Roman and St. Joseph's College; Bob, at Roman and Villanova, where he set the World Record in the two-mile relay; Ed, at Roman; and Billy, at LaSalle High School and Delaware Valley College.

Joey Brockman was quite a sprinter, and in 1918 beat a race horse with a jockey, in a half-mile race.

Chuck Patterson, of Indian Queen Lane, is one of the Schuylkill Navy's fastest Cross Country runners, and hopes to make the 1976 Olympic Squad.

Many East Falls boys have competed in the Schuylkill Navy and other Cross Country events, but, for the first time, an East Falls man competed in the great 26-mile Boston Marathon. The route extended from Hopkinton to Boston; it took place on Patriots Day, Easter Monday, April 19th, 1976.

It was a grueling, hot day; the temperature varying between 95 and 116 degrees. Many of the entrants collapsed before the finish in the intolerable heat. Many of the spectators handed out ice cubes and hosed the contestants down as they passed.

Thirty-three-year-old Tommy Guano, of Osmond Street, after training for 5 months, running 10 miles a day, came in 750th in the field of 2300 — a very creditable performance. His time was 3 hours and 10 minutes.

To qualify for this Marathon, Tommy ran in the Schuylkill Navy Cross Country, in Fairmount Park, sponsored and supervised by the A.A.U., and he

hopes to enter it again next year, the 81st continuous Marathon.

#### **HORSE RACING**

One of the world's greatest race horses, "Man-o-War," once romped over the fields in East Falls. His owner, Samuel D. Riddle, was the husband of one of the daughters of James Dobson.

Mary Elizabeth Altemus, also learned her horsemanship on these fields, and has bred many fine race horses at her estate, Llangollen Farms, in Virginia.

Tommy Mower, an East Falls boy, who learned his trade at the George Widener Stables in Erdenheim, went on to be a well-known jockey.

#### **POCKET BILLIARDS**

George Kelly, son of P.H. Kelly the builder, learned to shoot pool as a young boy in the recreation room of the Kelly mansion at Conrad Street and Midvale Avenue (where Mifflin School now stands). George, at various times, defeated the greatest of the World Champions, including Ralph Greenleaf and Willie Mosconi.

#### **BOWLING**

Over the years there were many good bowlers in East Falls. Among those still playing on Bowling Teams are Jim Kelley, Dom Michetti, Fred Yarnell, and George Schwartz. The Y.M.L.I., at Midvale and Frederick, had 2 beautiful bowling alleys, plus 3 pool tables.

Alexander Aloysius Tarsiewicz (1916-1975), known on the bowling circuits as Al Tarz, was quite an athlete, starting in his younger days as a life-guard at the Germantown Boys Club, and at Ocean City and Cape May. He was also a baseball player, and had a try-out with the Philadelphia Athletics.



*Al "Tarz," 1962.*

After 40 years of bowling, his average was over 200. He participated in many bowling tournaments in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and as far west as Chicago. He represented the Kegler Bowling Club of New Jersey, and Knights of Columbus Bowling Club. He was Hi-spot Champ in 1956, 1964, & '65. He also won the Kowalski Post Trophy in 1964 & '65, the New York American Classic in those same years, and the big Kegler B.C. Tournament in 1971. He won many trophies and prizes over the years, including the grand prize on TV's "Beat the Champ."

## THE OVER-SEVENTY ATHLETES

The East Falls athletes in the "Over-70 Walking Club," meet every morning — rain, snow, or shine — at East River Drive and Midvale Avenue, and walk down to Boat House Row and back, in time for lunch.

At 1:00 P.M., they meet again, and after a half-hour of settling world events to their satisfaction, head north past the Undine Club, the Anchorage, and "The Button." They then continue along Wissahickon Drive to Gypsy Lane, and then retrace their steps to their bench at Midvale Avenue where they discuss the Golden Days in East Falls.

Motorists along River Drive are getting to know them, if not by name, then by their smiling faces. As Sweets Shaw used to say, "Good morning all youse Falls Faces!"

The over-70's are: Vinnie Brill, John Cashman, Fred Schrotz, Jack Thompson, Dan Boardman, Charley Quinn, and Jess Wheelhouse, and the list is growing as some of the '69ers are getting ready to retire. John Loughlin and Pud Singer are a couple of the slightly-under-seventy's who tag along, with a little persuasion by Jack Thompson's Irish Setter.

## PERSONALITIES

Hugh Gannon, well-known TV Sports Commentator, has been a resident of East Falls for some time. Hugh played football and basketball with the 26th Infantry in Kansas, and in the European theatre in World War II. His sons compete on teams in the East Falls Sports Association.

Many athletes have lived in East Falls over the years. Some of the "A's" and Phillies players have been residents here. Bing Miller resided at Penn and Vaux Streets for many years.

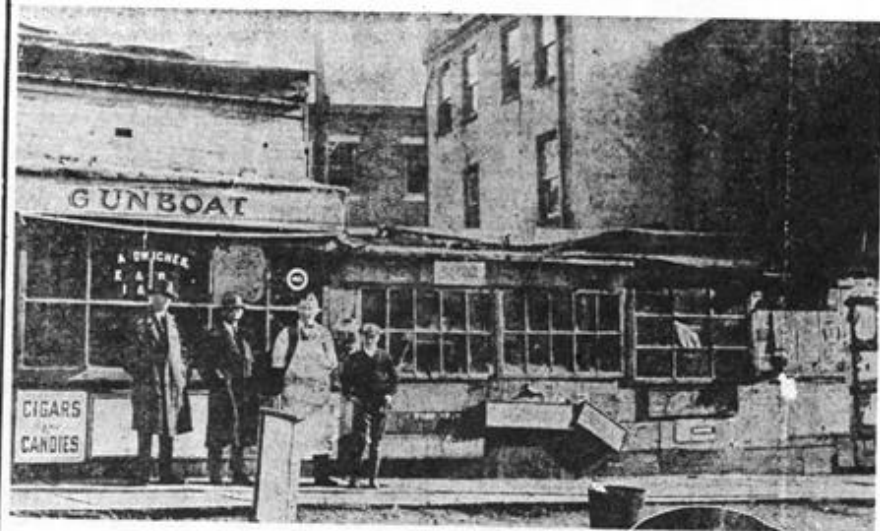
Connie Mack retired to East Falls after he turned the management of the "A's" over to his sons, Roy and Earl. Every Sunday after church, his olive green Cadillac, with the raised bronze insignia of crossed baseball bats on the rear doors, would be surrounded by young boys while he signed his autograph for them.

Mike Drennan was responsible for signing most of the players for the "A's" great team with the Hundred Thousand Dollar Infield of Stuffy McGinnis, Eddie Collins, Nap Lajoie, Home Run Baker, Wally Schang, Eddie Plank, Chief Bender, Rube Waddell, and many others on the great teams from 1903 to 1915. Later on, he signed Lefty Grove and other stars of the 1920's.

## EAST FALLS SPORTS ASSOCIATION

Every year in East Falls, we have teams worthy of the same excellent performance of the great Clover and

## THE PASSING OF THE GUNBOAT— WHERE THE FAMOUS CONGREGATED



*The Gunboat (Public Ledger, Nov. 5, 1922)*

"The Gunboat," a frame lunchroom at Ridge and Midvale Avenues, was razed about 1926, and with its passing came a touch of homesickness to an army of those prominent in the world of sports.

It was to the cozy corner of this shack of nautical architectural lines that forty or more of the leading professional golfers of the country used to hurry after a day of caddying at the Philadelphia Country Club, to feast on sizzling hot dogs.

And it was here that Jack Kelly and Paul Costello, World Champion Oarsmen, did early training on the Gunboat's Ham and Beans.

Here Jack Burke, and stars of the baseball diamond and football gridiron enjoyed "Java & Sinkers" with Vaudevillians of big-time fame.

"It has been sort of a home for all of us," said Edward C. Clarey, the Bala Golf Star as he joined the mourners who were sticking close to the Gunboat during its last days. Eddie called it the "Nineteenth Hole," and had been a

Dobson and other teams of the past. Beginning this year, 1976, however, there is a new format.

There are about 400 boys and girls of various ages under the sponsorship of the East Falls Sports Association, a newly elected, dedicated committee interested in the sports activities of the youth of East Falls.

The president is Rick Brasch; Dick Gardner is vice-president, and Jim Marino is athletic director.

For girls, there is field hockey, volley ball, soft-ball, and basketball. For boys, there is baseball, indoor hockey, football, and basketball. Two new tennis courts are also open to the public at the renovated McDevitt's Recreation Center.

The teams are paired according to age. Five to eight years are called "T Shirts."

steady patron since the early days when Ed Byrne was proprietor.

Byrne had become a chiropractor in Iowa, and John W. Welsh and Marty Cassidy had piloted the Gunboat since. Welsh, aside from his culinary skills with the hot dogs and a "Thousand-on-a-Plate" orders of beans, was a stakeholder of wagers made on virtually every important sporting event in the country. Wagers were laid in the little shack in a manner that proved the Gunboat had never housed pikers.

Many well-known people missed the Gunboat after its demise, including Elwood (Sweets) Shaw, who left the Falls to shine with the minstrel organizations, and those local vaudeville veterans Ed Carey and Jimmy Murphy; also Terry Beaty, Fred Pickard, Walter C. Kelly ("The Virginia Judge"), Bill Cone — the only golfer in these parts to make three consecutive holes-in-one; Charlie Carroll, John Cashman, Rube Oldring, and Mike Drennan — chief scout for Connie Mack's Philadelphia Athletics.

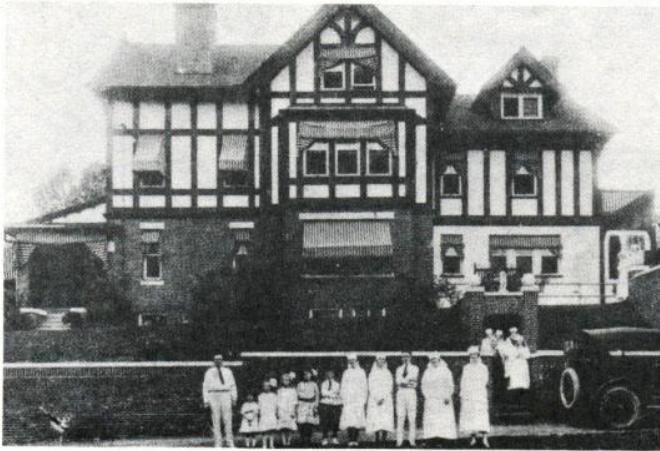
There are four teams in the 9 to 12 category: Phillies, Pirates, Giants, and Astros. They play in the East Falls Sports League.

The two teams in the 13 to 16 class are known as the Mets and the Pirates, and they play in the 21st Ward League.

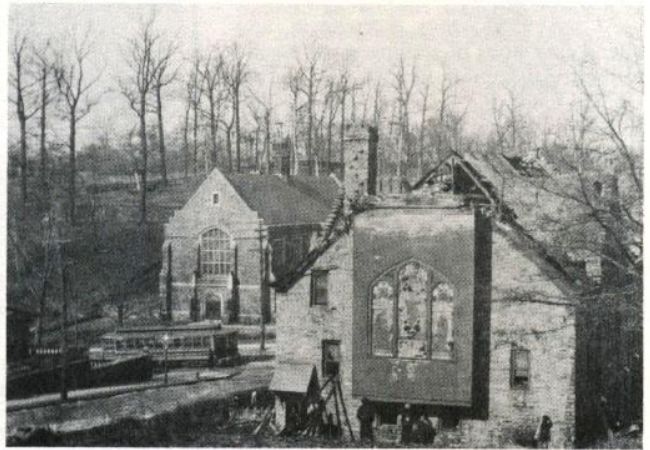
Leo Oliver, sports manager at McDevitt, threw out the first ball at Opening Day Ceremonies on May 2nd at "Leo Oliver Field."

There will be 3 football teams: the 65, 90, and 115 pounders. They will keep the name of the East Falls Falcons, and play in the 21st Ward League. Boxing lessons will also be given in October.

The members and teams of the Sports Association deserve everyone's support as they carry on the tradition of sports competition in East Falls.



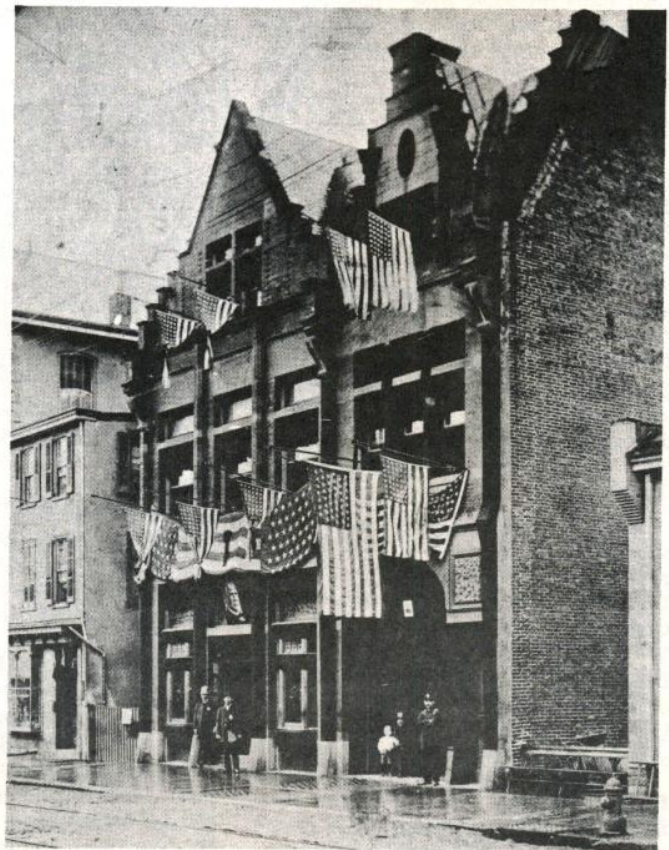
*P.H. Kelly Home, Conrad and Midvale, 1918 (where Mifflin School now stands). The Kelly family and servants.*



*Redeemer Lutheran Church, Midvale Avenue and Conrad Street, after major fire in 1917. Falls Library across Midvale; trolley car at corner; P.H. Kelly Home to the left.*



*Fire Company #35, Ridge Avenue near Midvale, sometime between 1892 and 1917. William Thompson, of 3529 New Queen St., was the driver.*



*Fire Company #35 and police substation, Ridge Avenue near Midvale, around 1900.*

*My Home Town*

*Through my mind old scenes I'm chasing, and the hardships I've been facing since  
I left that little town back in the East.  
In the Duck Pond we would wallow, all us kids from in Dutch Hollow, and at  
Dobson's the green apples made a feast.  
Now here I sit and shiver, thinking of that Schuylkill River and the folks it used to  
drawn in Cock Roach Row.  
And Bob Peel could make the Mission if he took time off from fishing, and he  
didn't have no other place to go.  
Rose McNeill was making jelly with her boy friend Growler Kelly. Squasher  
Welsh was softly singing "Silent Night."  
Someone threw a wooden bucket, like a chump he didn't duck it. Bunker Dornan  
was badly beaten in the fight.  
Jiggs Donahue with Big Head Cluffy, with Doc Gamble, and Matt Duffy, a four-  
some of the like was never seen.  
Doctor Gamble was caught cheating and he took an awful beating just because he  
took a chip shot on the green.  
And those shows with Carey — Murphy, with Sweets Shaw and four-putt Clarey  
they were never seen without a flower in their coat.  
You can shoot and hoot and holler, you can bet your bottom dollar, John Bradley  
washed the dishes in the old Gunboat.  
And those Clearfield-East Falls clashes, patching up our bumps and gashes. The  
Falls of Schuylkill would turn out to see the fray.  
It was kick and gouge and bite 'em, we were never taught to fight them. We were  
never taught to play football that way.  
Maybe I am growing older, for the weather's growing colder since they closed the  
"Drum Room" at the Mill  
And the Welsh's, Kelly's, and Sawyer's fought like Philadelphia lawyers. And  
those battles that we had gives us a chill.  
Now I'm growing old and mellow, so are you and Paul Costello. The Cassidy's  
have moved from Ginny Mill.  
McIlvaine is planting fewer, Charlie Carroll is growing bluer, but it's getting time  
for me to make my will.*

**By the late Mickey Welsh, the Clearfield Club trainer, and chief second to many of the leading fighters of East Falls, sent in a letter from his home in California during the 1950's, to Joe Kelley.**



*Garrett Garrettsen's great-great-great-grandson Samuel Garrett in 1939 in his then 70-year-old home at Vaux & Ainslie Sts. Portrait is his grandfather, Dr. Emmanuel Krail, early tax collector of Falls. (Phila. Record)*



*The old brewery in Dutch Hollow (between Midvale Ave. and the Norristown branch of the Reading Railroad.) From the C.K. Mills collection.*



*G. R. Stubblebine, 3724 Midvale Ave., 1927*



*On the 4th of July!*

# EAST FALLS CELEBRATES '76

By Fred Childs



In September of 1975, a group representing about 20 East Falls organizations and churches first met to decide what, if any, special activities should be held locally to celebrate our nation's Bicentennial. After several meetings and much discussion, a year-long program of events was announced in January, 1976.

The main attractions included a series of free concerts, an historical booklet, and a community-wide parade and picnic. It was estimated that \$8,000 would be needed to pay for these events, so several fund-raising activities were also planned.

Through the dedication of a small group of residents who volunteered their time and energy, the necessary funds were raised and the programs were carried out with great success. From the following list of events, it can easily be seen that East Falls participated very actively in the Bicenten-

nal celebrations, and supported one of the most energetic programs in this metropolitan area.

January 24th—Social Night at the Italian Club.

March 4th—"A Community of Two" at the Old Academy.

March 13th—Community Council Spaghetti Dinner at First Presbyterian Church.

April 3rd—Flea Market on Arnold Street.

May 8th—Carnival on Conrad Street.

May 22nd—Vaudeville Night at Textile College Hall.

June—Souvenir Program Book released.

June—"Open House" at Boat Clubs, Churches, Penn Charter, and Old Academy.

June 11th—Harrowgate String Band Concert at McMichael's Park.

June 16th—"George Washington Slept Here" at the Old Academy.

June 28th—Ecumenical Service at the Old Academy.

July 1st—Bicentennial Wagon Train ceremony at East River Drive and Midvale Avenue.

July 3rd—Community-wide parade through East Falls; all-day picnic at Ravenhill Academy.

July 4th—Special church services and bell-ringing.

August 11th—Band concert at McMichael's Park.

On June 11th, the East Falls Bicentennial Committee was awarded a Certificate of Official Recognition by Philadelphia '76, Inc., and the City of Philadelphia. This made East Falls' activities an official part of Philadelphia's Bicentennial celebrations.