Headquarters and Museum

THE FINLEY HOUSE

BEECH TREE LANE and BELLEVUE AVENUE
WAYNE, PENNSYLVANIA 19087

Visitors Cordially Welcome. Telephone MUrray 8-2668.

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Conrad Wilson, Editor
THE FAMED IN WAYNE

ERNST P. RAUM

The following paper was presented to the Radnor Historical Society by Mr. Ernest P. Raum, director of public relations, Valley Forge Military Academy, at a meeting on October 27, 1971, in Mellon Hall on the Wayne campus.

Mr. Raum, a member of the Board of Commissioners of Valley Forge State Park, is a founding member and former director of the Lower Merion Historical Society and a member of the Valley Forge Historical Society.

There is a favorite story told by the director of admissions at Valley Forge Military Academy concerning a reluctant new student and the boy's father. The registrar said he observed the father half-dragging his son through the main gate on opening day of school and overheard the father say to the boy: "If this place was good enough for George Washington, it is good enough for you." Needless to say, George Washington never did receive a VFMA diploma. He passed through the neighborhood, but that was a long time before the Academy and its Junior College opened its doors to specialize in the training of young men.

The story serves to illustrate the point that people believe Valley Forge Military Academy has been around a long, long time—when actually, this year is only its 44th. In this relatively short period of time Valley Forge Military Academy has put Wayne, Pennsylvania, on the world map. It has done this by attracting the attention of national and world leaders and by producing a long list of graduates who are the leaders of today in many fields of endeavor.

Let's first look at the alumni of this institution. The student, after all, is our product here and his achievements in later life measure the true success of our training program.

In the field of the military, initially—because this is a military institution—Valley Forge points proudly to a dozen grads who have reached flag rank. They include such standouts as General Lucius Clay, Class of '38, Maj. Gen. John Zierdt, who commanded the Redstone Arsenal during the early missile preparedness, and our new superintendent here, Maj. General Robert W. Strong, Jr., Class of '35, who has just completed a 30-year career in the Air Force during which he held such responsible positions as Chief of Staff of the 8th Air Force and commandant of cadets of the Air Force Academy.

Valley Forge is also proud of its 118 graduates who have died in the service of our country in three wars. We consider them our greatest heroes and they include such names as Eric Fisher Wood, Jr., a former Wayne resident who won the Distinguished Service Cross for his incredible valor in the Battle of the Bulge in World War II. His squad of 12 men wiped out more than 200 Germans in one single hand-to-hand combat mission during that battle.

The volume could be filled with the names of the greats in the business world who once walked the streets of Wayne in the cadet grey, such people as George Seybolt, '32, president of the Underwood Company (the people who specialize in that delicious deviled ham). He, like most of his former fellow cadets, is devoted to this school and he presently serves on the board of directors of the foundation which operates VFMA. Serving with Mr. Seybolt on the same board are such men as Guy B. Wheeler, Jr., '34, a former Devon youth who is now executive vice president of the Aldine Paper Company of New York City; William Pollock, '33, president of Mayer Pollock Steel Co., Pettsown. Also serving on the foundation board are William Zabel, '36, a Radnor resident who is president of Zabel Brothers Printing Co., Philadelphia, and Richard P. Mellon, '37, son of the late Lt. General Richard King Mellon, Pittsburgh financier, philanthropist and longtime friend of Valley Forge Military Academy.

This building in which we are meeting tonight is named for General Mellon who gave $1,000,000 for its construction and later set up a $500,000 endowment fund for its maintenance. The new indoor polo arena, which put an area the size of a football field under roof, is also named for General Mellon because of his intense interest in horses. It is interesting to note that General Mellon's gifts to VFMA were made after his son graduated. He wanted no favoritism for the boy, who did achieve the rank of captain and commanding officer of the academy's cavalry unit on his own merit.
There are a score or more of other alumni who are presidents of companies or corporations, including Henry E. Bowes, '32, president of Bell & Howell, which is no small firm; Jesse Bell, '42, president of the Bonnie Bell Cosmetics Firm; Houston Marshall, president of Houston Industries, Pittsburgh, and of the U.S. Golf Association, and Robert Leeds, '47, president of the Manhattan Shirt Co.

In the field of education there are such people as Brig. Gen. Alfred A. Sanelli, a former English instructor of the U.S. Military Academy who is now the academic dean of Valley Forge Military Academy, and Dr. I. Bernard Cohen, chairman of the Science Department of Harvard University.

In the literary world, Valley Forge's contributions include Sidney Offit, author of a dozen or more books, and J.D. Salinger, the writer who has often been called the modern-day Mark Twain. His writings include the renowned "Catcher in the Rye"—which has Valley Forge Military Academy as its setting—and "Franny and Zooey." He also wrote the words for the Senior Class Song which is sung every year at graduation here.

Needless to say there are many noted doctors, lawyers, dentists and other professional people among the old grads. Valley Forge has also contributed to the world of entertainment through such former cadets as Bill Todman, of Goodson and Todman TV productions; Edward Albee, the noted playwright; Paul Roebling, a New York actor; and Bill Willar who as Bill Edwards is the John Facenda of Honolulu. He can also be seen in character parts in the current "Hawaii 5-O" series on TV.

Valley Forge men have also scored in politics with a few serving in the United States Congress and a number in state legislatures, including Rafael Hernandez Colon, '53, who is now president of the Senate in Puerto Rico.

Valley Forge has had royalty in its corps of cadets. This happened in 1958 when a young man, answering to the name of Simeon Rylski, entered the Junior College. The name Rylski was one that his father had used when he traveled incognito but the "cover" for the young offspring did not last long. Mr. Rylski—all cadets are addressed as mister—was King Simeon II, who was the reigning monarch of Bulgaria from the age of 3 when his father, King Boris, died, to the age of seven when the Russians overran his country. He wanted to add a military background to his education and he heard that Valley Forge was the place to go. His presence here was supposed to be a complete secret—and it would have been except somebody forgot to tell the plan to Governor George H. Earle, a former U.S. Ambassador to Bulgaria and a friend of King Simeon's father. Simeon had gone to Earle's home in Radnor to stay overnight the day before he was to report for his plebe training at Valley Forge. On the day that the young man reported, Governor Earle in talking with a newsman mentioned that King Simeon had been at his house overnight and was headed for Valley Forge Military Junior College.

As public relations director I had heard nothing of a king coming to the corps. The fact was only known by the Superintendent and the Director of Admissions. I received my news of his enrollment from a Philadelphia newspaper. What followed was one of the most interesting experiences I have ever had as a public relations man. We were inundated with photographers, reporters and writers from all the major news media in this country and from European publications as well. The task that followed was one of trying to satisfy them and, at the same time, of respecting the King's wish for privacy. The latter was impossible, but I found the King very cooperative and understanding of my position. I also found the King to be one of the most sincere and intelligent young men I have ever had the opportunity to meet and work with.

His aide, a former Bulgarian Army colonel, occupied a room in Wayne. Every morning the King phoned the Colonel and was briefed on world events. He also ran his government-in-exile from that Wayne room. King Simeon to this day believes his countrymen will re-exile now operates from his home in Madrid, Spain, where it processes visa papers and for numerous Bulgarians scattered around the world. He is also now the father of four sons whom he already has enrolled in the classes of the 1980's at Valley Forge Military Academy.

Many famous people have sent their sons to VFMA because of its international reputation. Randy Rynski, vice president of the United Shoe Machinery Corp., graduated from the Junior College just three years ago. Actor Hal March, Pennsylvania Governor John S. Fine, Philadelphia Mayor Bernard Samuel, builder Henry Levitt and one of the Maguire sisters have also had sons here.

KING SIMEON II, the former monarch of Bulgaria, receives an award as a Valley Forge Military Junior College cadet from Lt. General Milton G. Baker in 1959.

One man who stands head and shoulders over others in modern History wanted his grandson to attend Valley Forge. He was Dwight David Eisenhower and the grandson was named for him. The younger Dwight David had a different idea when it came his time to go to preparatory school, but his famed grandfather could never forget Valley Forge. He
was a visitor here several times and spent the weekend on campus with his beloved Mamie when Valley Forge dedicated its new Officers’ Club building in 1962 in the former President’s honor.

General Eisenhower, addressing a gathering of more than 200 leading military, business, and civic leaders at the dedication dinner on that occasion, gave his humble theory of his personal success. He said: “It was multiplication of ‘ifs’ plus miracles of happenstance.” He added that he had often asked himself why he was chosen for a task when people of more or equal ability could have been. It was also on this occasion that Gen. Eisenhower said: “I am exceedingly proud of this beautiful building and I am proud that it is on a military school grounds.” He then asked the guests to join him in a toast to Valley Forge Military Academy . . . “Because what I believe in is being done here to preserve and foster America.”

Earlier in the day General Eisenhower reviewed a parade in his honor. As he left the reviewing stand he strode 20 feet to where the Cadet Regimental Commander was standing in salute. The general told the cadet: “I have never seen a finer parade anywhere.” He added that his appreciation be extended to each and every member of the corps and then said: “I hope I haven’t kept you gentlemen from your dates too long.”

The spot where General Eisenhower stood to take the review of a parade the year before is marked with a bronze plaque embedded in brick. It states: “General Eisenhower stood on this spot, May 28, 1961.” Scores of other notables have stood there since, but none place their foot on the marker. They always stand behind it or to the side of it.


GENERAL William C. Westmoreland, Army chief of staff, inspect s an honor guard of Valley Forge Military Academy cadets on a visit in May, 1961, when he was superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy.

It would almost be like a recitation of WHO’S WHO IN AMERICA to cite the distinguished visitors who have been attracted to Wayne by Valley Forge Military Academy. President Nixon has been here on a couple of occasions which were never publicized. He had asked for privacy and received it. General William C. Westmoreland, Army Chief of Staff, has been a frequent visitor; he spoke to the corps of cadets at chapel service on two occasions while he was superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy, and again as soon as he returned from Vietnam as commander of U.S. forces there.

General George C. Marshall, War World II leader of U.S. forces, former Secretary of State and author of the famed Marshall Plan, spoke at the dedication of the chapel which you passed on the way in here tonight. A letter General Marshall wrote concerning Valley Forge was placed in the cornerstone of this building when it was dedicated in 1959; it states, in part, that VFMA is the most outstanding military school in the world.

The pulpit of the adjoining Chapel of St. Cornelius the Centurion has been occupied by many renowned churchmen including Evangelist Billy Graham and John, Cardinal Krol of the Roman Catholic Church.

Other guests on campus have included virtually every governor and senator of the State of Pennsylvania since the Academy’s inception, ambassadors, secretaries of the army, and cabinet members of many administrations.

I will never forget the comment of one of these guests. He was William Scranton who attended a formal dinner party in this very hall shortly after he had been elected governor of the Commonwealth. In the gaiety of the receiving line that night he paused to call out to his press secretary, Jack Connolly, who was standing some 20 feet away: “Jack, I told you when we were in Cementville on the campaign trail that there would be nights like this!”
In all this name-dropping tonight, I have purposely avoided mentioning one name. To me that name is Wayne's most famed. He is the man who has made this institution. It was his personal friendships and contacts which brought the famous of the world here and it was he who instilled a motto into the sons of Valley Forge which has aided them in their successes. The motto reads: "From the embattled fields of Valley Forge went men who built America, from the training fields of Valley Forge go men who will preserve America." In days gone by, citizens of a town harboring such an individual would erect a bronze statue in his honor in the middle of their town square. In this day, and in the sophisticated area in which we live, such honor has been paid. He has served this country as a soldier, statesman and educator. He has twice turned down the honor of being secretary of the army of the United States because he has felt it was more important to stick to the job of educating future leaders. Valley Forge Military Academy and Junior College stands today as a tribute to him. I am talking about Wayne's number 1 citizen, Lt. General Milton G. Baker, the founder of this great institution, and the president of the Valley Forge Military Academy Foundation.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT
APRIL 30, 1972

Twenty five years ago a small group of people began meeting in private houses with the idea of founding a local historical society. Today, the Radnor Historical Society, incorporated in 1948, has a membership of over two hundred. It has a headquarters with substantial grounds (given in 1964 by Miss Dorothy Finley) which contains, among many articles of local interest, a fully catalogued library and a large collection of photographs, manuscripts and maps. A wagon house, built in 1965, holds a Conestoga and a Pittsburgh wagon, a Germantown carriage, an old work bench with tools, a farm sleigh and other pieces of farming equipment and an early hose cart from Wayne. These facilities are open to the public on Tuesdays from 2 to 5 P.M. and on other days by appointment.

This year, as usual, the Society has continued to be of help to the community in many ways. We have had meetings with Cub Scouts, Brownies and Girl Scouts as well as various school groups. Students from Eastern College have come to do local research. Information was given to the Philadelphia Vassar Club; to a group interested in the old Strafford School and to one of the Radnor Township commissioners concerning the history of Garrett Hill. As always we have done our best to answer many queries on genealogy and on specific Radnor properties.

Our Board of Directors has been active in more than just Society policy. Mr. Grant and Mr. Brooks cut down and removed two large dead trees from the front lawn. Mr. Herbert S. Henderson produced some beautifully painted hand-painted signs for use in the wagon house.

Among our accessions for the year (all of which are listed elsewhere in this Bulletin) are two of particular interest. Through the courtesy of Mr. R. Alexander Montgomery we now possess a collection of Xerox copies of deeds and papers belonging to the Montgomery family. We are grateful to the Sun Oil Company for the 1775 date stone taken from a house on Matsonford Road belonging originally to the Thomas family.

Mr. Horace Montgomery, to the regret of the Board of Directors, retires this Spring after devoted service to the Society both as Director and as former editor of the Bulletin. The Board also reluctantly accepted the resignation of Mrs. John W. Leonard, formerly Mrs. Robert W. A. Wood, who has moved from Pennsylvania.

In closing, I wish to thank our members and our friends for their continuing support. It is much appreciated.

DOROTHY H. THERMAN
President

NEW MEMBERS 1971 - 1972

Mrs. Robert Bookhammer
Mrs. George Miller
Mrs. Michael F. Carson
Mrs. Edward W. Peirce III
Dr. Harold E. Farmer
Adolph G. Rosengarten, Jr.
William P. Hutton
Alfred E. Shaw
David F. Lynch
Mrs. E. W. Thompson
George Miller

NECROLOGY 1971 - 1972

Miss Mary Allen
Mrs. Arthur I. Meigs

ERRATUM ET APOLOGIA

The 1971 BULLETIN inadvertently referred to the Society's devoted Treasurer of many years as Oscar Louis Ehmann Jr. Instead of Otto Louis Ehmann Jr. To Mr. Ehmann's memory and to his family the Society apologizes.
### RADNOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY
(A Non-Profit Educational Institution)

#### Annual Treasurer's Report

**April 30, 1972**

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Balance Cash in General Fund April 30, 1972 | $1,037.04

**TOTAL** | **$5,320.00**

**Savings** - $602.20

**Other Assets:**
- 300 shares Philadelphia Electric (Common)
- 30 shares United States Steel (Common)
- 5 shares Standard Oil (Common)
- 40 shares Chase Manhattan Bank (Common)
- Sauser Trust: $15,000 in Savings Certificates
- Real Estate, 113 West Beech Tree Lane, Wayne, including lot, Finley House, Wagon House, and contents of library and museum.

**CHARLES R. MEYERS, JR.**

Treasurer

Membership is open to all those interested, minimum dues $3.00 per annum. All contributions to the Society are deductible to the legal limit for Federal Income Tax purposes.

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**ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIETY**

**May 22, 1971**

The twenty-fourth Annual Meeting of the Society was held at three p.m. in the Warner Memorial Library of Eastern Baptist College, now Eastern College.

After greetings by Philip Lester, Chairman of the College's Alumni Association, Dr. John Ruth presented the film "Where We Walked", a history of the College property and area made by his American Studies Seminars of the past two years. The Society then enjoyed a walking tour of the campus under the guidance of D. William Zalkin, Director of Admissions.

Reelected to the Society's Board of Directors for a three year term were Charles E. Alexander, Mrs. Gertrude Ware Case, Mrs. Robert I. Cummin, Francis James Dallett, John H. Grant and Mrs. John W. Watson; elected to serve one year vice Mr. White and Mr. Wolfson (resigned), were Herbert S. Henderson and Conrad Wilson; to serve for two years vice Mr. Eilemann (deceased), was Charles R. Meyers, Jr.

At a subsequent Board of Directors meeting, the following officers were elected: President, Mrs. Therman; Vice-President, Mr. Brooks; Treasurer, Charles R. Meyers, Jr., and Secretary, Mrs. Cummin.

**October 27, 1971**

The Society met at eight p.m. in Mellon Hall on the campus of Valley Forge Military Academy to visit its museum and to hear Ernest P. Raum, Director of Public Relations for the Academy, talk on "The Famed in Wayne". His talk is printed elsewhere in this BULLETIN.

**February 10, 1972**

Patricia Talbot Davis addressed the Society in the Community Room of the Main Line Federal Savings and Loan Association in Wayne at eight p.m. on "The Curwens of Walnut Hill", a story of John Curwen and his descendants in the United States. The Society then enjoyed a walking tour of the campus under the guidance of D. William Zalkin, Director of Admissions.

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**April 20, 1972**

The Society met at eight p.m. in the house of Mr. and Mrs. George Pequignot, who introduced Mr. Pequignot, discussed Pennsylvania barns and his own efforts to remount a barn of 1870 into the handsome structure in which the Society met.

With the aid of Villanova University students, Mr. Pequignot moved earth and rocks, created a swimming pool, and a courtyard lined with blues blocks once embedded in South Street, Philadelphia. The barnhouse contains elements of the Berdgoll barn, as well as slate from the local Da Costa mansion which burned ten years ago, and thirty-two foot timbers from the former Chew holdings on Matsonford Road. The final structure proclaims Mr. Pequignot's respect for the Pennsylvania barn as a unique architectural form.
LETTER NO. 1

George Brooke Sr.
Radnor
Delaware Co Pa

To the care of Thos Tustin, Black Bare South fifth St Philadelphia

Calidonia June 12th 1825

Dear Father

I left Mr Calmont with a view of getting into better business I steered my course to New York not finding my business good Concluded to come to the westward so me of you could from here to Calidonia Livingston County State of New York I do not think I shall return to S.Smelds this winter I wish some of you could Send her word Soon as She expects me back

And I still remain your affectionate

Son George Brooke Jr

Calidonia
Livingston Co New York

1. Some dwellings were half painted, while the foundations of others, within five yards' distance, were only beginning. I cannot say how many churches, court-houses, jails, and hotels I counted, all in motion, creeping upwards. Several streets were laid out and named, but had not yet received their names, and many others were in the rear.

2. "We reached Lockport on the 26th of August, (1825), about 7 o'clock in the morning. At this place the canal is carried over the ridge by five large locks, through which the water is raised to the height of seventy-six feet. The locks are ten feet in number, being arranged in two parallel rows, so that while the boats ascend in one row, they may descend at the same time in the other. Through this arrangement the navigation is greatly facilitated, and the whole work, hewn through and surrounded by large rocks, presents an imposing aspect."

3. "Lockport is situated just above the locks. In May, 1821, it consisted of two log-houses; at present it contains not less than six hundred, some of which are stone houses..."

4. "The engineer took the blame when the engines broke down, failed to respond with the necessary promptness, being named, but not commenced.--their local habitation being merely signified by lines of stakes. Here and there we saw great warehouses, without window sashes, but half-filled with goods, and furnished with hoisting cranes, ready to fish up the huge pyramids of flour barrels, bales, and boxes lying in the streets. In the center of the town the apse of a Presbyterian church rose to a great height, and on each side of the supporting tower was to be seen the dial-plate of a clock, of which the machinery, in the hilly country, had been left at New York. I need not say that these half-finished, whole-finished, and embryo streets were crowded with people, carts, stages, cattle, pigs, far beyond the reach of numbers,-and as all these were lifting up their voices together, in keeping with the clatter of hammers, the ringing of axes, and the cracking of machinery, there was fine concert, I assure you."

5. "The engineer took the blame when the engines broke down, failed to respond with the necessary promptness, being named, but not commenced.--their local habitation being merely signified by lines of stakes. Here and there we saw great warehouses, without window sashes, but half-filled with goods, and furnished with hoisting cranes, ready to fish up the huge pyramids of flour barrels, bales, and boxes lying in the streets. In the center of the town the apse of a Presbyterian church rose to a great height, and on each side of the supporting tower was to be seen the dial-plate of a clock, of which the machinery, in the hilly country, had been left at New York. I need not say that these half-finished, whole-finished, and embryo streets were crowded with people, carts, stages, cattle, pigs, far beyond the reach of numbers,-and as all these were lifting up their voices together, in keeping with the clatter of hammers, the ringing of axes, and the cracking of machinery, there was fine concert, I assure you."

6. "Some of the most realistic and stirring issues in the United States in June, 1825 was transportation. The vast Mississippi Valley had been opened to settlement but would have to be firmly and profitably linked to the markets of the East if the nation was to be one. The steamboat was ready. Its practicality, even upstream against the shifting currents of the Mississippi, had been proved, and the monopoly of its developers broken. Overcoming the last major engineering problems, New York would open the Erie Canal in the fall. Freight would move from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic in one-third the time and at half the previous cost."

7. "Alert to this threat and, therefore, to the need of providing a competitive route across the state, Pennsylvania still vacillated between canals and railroads. In 1828, at last agreed on a practical, co-ordinated system of water and rail, it moved rapidly forward, but too late, into a race in which it could only hope to place."

8. "In the spring of 1825, drawn by curiosity and in search of a fortune, young George Brooke, Jr. of Radnor worked his way across northern New York to Buffalo and then down to Pittsburgh. There, caught in the enthusiasm for the opening West, he determined to seek a berth as an engineer on one of the new steamboats and, by way of training, took a job assembling an engine. In December, he announced to his family that he intended to make his living "in this western country.""

9. "From his correspondence with his family, nine letters have survived-five from George, Jr., describing his life along the inland waters, and four from home, each urging his return to Radnor. These are presented here not only for their interest to the Radnor historian but also as a reflection of the larger panorama of their period."
LETTER NO. 3

Lewis Brooke
Radnor
Delaware Co. Pa
Spread Eagle Post Office

Dear Brother

I received your letter in five days from Spread Eagle & also father's Roys letter came to hand between the two in company with one from my friend in Callendonia. I am now holding myself in readiness to go down the river as soon as it raises high enough for the Steam Boats to run. I am not in any business at present. The Steam Mill that I have been working at is now in Complete operation it will run 2 pair of stones & some other machinery. I am well satisfied that I joined in the business & have a prospect of making better wages than I can at manufacturing Cloth. John Stackers is here & he has had a Steam Boat built. Since I came here & is waiting for a raise of water he tells me that he has made enough to support himself & is going to rent Mountscul Lewis farm in the Spring. I am sorry to hear of his going on so rough a farm. As to your concerns at home you must manage them as best suits your selves for I think I shall not come home to Stay. I think I can make a living in this Western Country. If I follow Engineering its likely I shall come home next Summer to see you. Write soon & let me know how you all are. I should like to hear from home before I go down the river & I remain your affectionate Brother

Geo Brooke Jr

5. "When the waters are low, as is commonly the case, in the dry seasons of the summer and autumn, the majestic Ohio dwindles in a small stream, affording but limited facilities for navigation. Throughout the winter, the frequent changes from cold to moderate weather, produce rains and rapid thaws which occasion a series of freshets, and afford ample supply of water." James Hall, Statistics of the West at the Close of the Year 1836 (Cincinnati: J.A. James & Co., 1837), pp. 28-29.

6. The reference is to the French Creek which flows into the Allegheny River.

7. During the years 1814-1835, 173 steamboats were built at Pittsburgh and 164 at Cincinnati; in terms of states, 226 were constructed in Ohio and 264 in Pennsylvania during that period. See Hall, Statistics of the West... pp. 252-263.

8. Because the average life of a steamboat was only about four years, low building costs were important. The boat was built on the opposite side of the Monongahela was Consumed by fire a few days ago but did not injure the Engine. Father informs me that

9. The farm of Mountscul Lewis adjoined the George Brooke farm on the east and extended west into Newtown township. The section lying in Radnor, approximately 70 acres, had been part of the Amos Evans, now George Brooke, farm at one time. See Delaware County Deed Book O, pp. 495 and 500.

10. It was customary to transfer passengers and freight over land at the Falls of the Ohio at Louisville. At the time of this letter, a canal was being built around the Falls. However, it was not a successful solution—tolls were high, the canal narrow, etc.—and Louisville continued to be a transfer point.

LETTER NO. 4

George Brooke Senr
Radnor Township
Delaware Co. Pa

To be left at Spread Eagle Post Office

Pittsburgh Dcm 3d 1825

Dear Father

I am now on my way to New Orleans in a Trading boat in employ of company with Isaac Wickersham of Pittsburgh a brother of Wickersham who is one of the Society lately formed to live at the Valley Forge. I arrived here yesterday, business here is very lively as also at other places that I past by. The river is about 25 feet above low water mark & by the banks it aperes to have been 12 feet higher. We shall leave here in about 3 days. My object in going down the river is to get into my business below the falls. Should a birth there not please me I shall probably go on further. Steamboats are very numerous on this river. They generally run from 12 to 15 miles per hour down stream & carry from 1 to 200 hundred tons.

Produce here is Some higher than at Pittsburgh—good flour is not to be had in this part of country in consequence of destruction of the weevil last summer. I was informed at Maysville that wheat was brought down the river & manufactured there & sold for $4 when there own sells for $3. Bacon sells here for 4 dollars per hundred.

Juniata iron $120. Pittsburgh $5 to $90. Our loading is principally safe & glass which we expect to dispose of between here & new Orleans. I wish you to write and direct to Natchez Mississippi. I am very anxious to hear from you all. 

Your affectionate Son

George Brooke Jr

11. The average rate of speed upstream was about five miles an hour.

12. George Brooke, son of George and Hannah (Evans) Brooke of Radnor, and Mary Brooke, daughter of Jesse and Elizabeth (Clay) Brooke of Radnor, were married on February 14, 1828, before Wm. Muddler, Esq., J.P. of the County of Phila. See Eleanor Brooke Smith Family Records, copies of which are on file in the Radnor Historical Society. Hereinafter RHHS.
Cousin Levi Lewis

Dear Brother

Your letter was received in good time dated Cincinnati Dec 12th the post stamp Cincinnati January 14th it afforded us great satisfaction for we had not heard from you since you wrote from Pittsburg We have nothing to write very interesting excepting that Rose was married on the 22 to Isaac Roberts son of Allen Robberts of lower Merion I expect she will go to live with him on the 8 or 9th of this Month he has been a widower and still keeps house Owen has bought John Reeds place for about $40 per Acre rents it and lives on Mod Lewis Mod Lewis and Samuel Brooke has opened stores at Mount Carbon I expect we are doing good business Uncle William is likely to sell his Trap farm and Thomas and he cannot live together Business is not very flattering just now without commerce to be the busy body in Pennsylvania our markets are low flour $2.50 rye 25 corn good Crops in this place 60 oats 40 beef 7 good pork 5 but 20 our hay was very short selling from 25 to 30 dollars our woolen Manufactur seems to Complain cloths have been very low and will still Continue without a Duty which is talked of They have done building Mills on Flat Rock Canal I think if you were at home I might build something on Davis Creek you Speak of going to Mexico I imagine you will not like to be among a priest riding people there is a young Runwell living somewhere there from Chester County Nefu of John prices The South American Washington Boltier I think has his hands full to keep them in order We are all in good health I still remain your wisher

George Brooke
Natchez Mississippi
Ranor March 4th 1827

Letter No. 7

George Brooke
Ranor, Mississippi

Chief

17. Bushels of coal from the mines of Western Pennsylvania were lashed on great flat-boats, "French Creeks," and floated down stream past Pittsburgh, to Cincinnati. It was not until about 1845 that coal barges were towed—more accurately, pushed—down river by a steam-driven boat. See E. W. Gould, "Pittsburgh Coal Trade in 1825," Fifty Years on the Mississippi (St. Louis: Nixon-Jones Printing Co., 1889), pp. 497-506.

18. This canal was to link the Ohio with Lake Erie. Middletown is about 20 miles north of Cincinnati.

19. At this time, the Mexican boundary extended north to the Red River and east to the Sabine; i.e. Texas was still part of Mexico.

20. Roselinda, daughter of George and Hannah (Evans) Brooke of Radnor, married Isaac W. Roberts, widower, of Lower Merion, son of Algermon and Tacy (Warner) Roberts, on February 23, 1827. The only living descendant of their son George Brooke Roberts (1823-1897). See Thomas A. Glenn, Merion in the Welsh Tract (Norristown, 1890), pp. 109 and EBF1R.

21. This is probably Samuel, son of Jesse and Elizabeth (Clay) Brooke of Radnor, who died "of Mortification in his Leg (which was fractured by the overturning of a Stage)," 12th of 10th Mo., 1843, at Orwigsburg, Schuylkill County. EBF1R.

22. Mount Carbon was at the head of the recently opened Schuylkill Canal. It was also at the center of the "excitement, speculation, and daring enterprise" engendered by the sudden realization that anthracite coal was "richer than gold." Laborers and mechanics of all kinds...flocked to the coal region, and found ready and constant employment at the most exorbitant wages. Capitalists, arm-in-arm with confidential advisors, civil engineers, and grave scientific gentlemen, explored every recess, and solemnly contemplated the present and future value and importance of each particular spot. Houses could not be built fast enough. Eli Bowen, The Pictorial Sketch Book of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: Wm. B. Bloomswell, 1853), p. 176.

23. On May 25, 1814, William Brooke of Haverford, brother of George, purchased a tract of 110 acres in Upper Providence, Montgomery County, from the estate of his father, Matthew Brooke. This tract was sold, April 3, 1830, by Owen Brooke and Thomas Brockett, Executors of William Brooke, dec'd, to Abraham Minkiefer of Upper Providence, See Montgomery County Deed Books No. 30, p. 396 and No. 45, p. 506. "Thomas" is probably William's son Thomas (1778-1854).

24. In 1818, the Schuylkill Navigation Company had a canal and dam constructed at Flat Rock to provide water-power to sell to men willing to build mills there. By 1822, 12 sawmills had been established, 3 miles below the dam; 2 mile after the dam, 10 miles above, 2 more. The mill race was a large body of water-power and mill seats proceeded rapidly through the spring of 1823, then stopped until 1824. In 1824, the village which grew up around the mills was officially named Manayunk. See Charles V. Hager, Early History of Falls of Schuylkill, Manayunk, etc. (Philadelphia: Claxton Remsen, and Heffelfinger, 1869), pp. 31-82.
Dear Brother

Father received your letter dated at Richmond it being the last we have received since you write from Cincinnati in August last informing of your illness which gave us a double desire to know from you. I wrote to you some time in... John stackers was in this place about that time. I met him in town. He had no time to talke with him and neglected to see him while in Radnor. We were much distressed at the time of the letter he is supposed to go to Pittsburg and neglected to go to his house until we had taken post. I directed the letter to Cincinnati and father altered the direction to Pittsburg and let it in the hands of Mr. John Royer to inquire of you... Ohio

LETTER NO. 8

Radnor February 13 1828

George Brooke
Cincinnati Ohio

Care of Mr. Donaldson

Dear Brother

We had almost Despaired of ever seeing you again until receiving your last letters, your letter By Mr. Donnelson to Lewis was Received a few Days ago, father has been to see you about the place you wrote to him. I shall be very glad to see you. But that will entirely depend on yourself, for my part I never expect to leave Radnor as long as I live. Father and I have purchased James Quinns place a twelve month ago... Two Hundred Dollars that is about forty two Dollars per Acre. We have had a very alarming fever last fall that Swept off many valuable Sitizens amongst whom I am very sorry to Say was our Cousin Matthew Brooke. It was a serious loss to his family as well as myself for I Calculated having him for a neighbour. Cousin Marry Has a vendue this Spring from him and is going to live in it. I dont know that I have much more to say more than to tell you how I am and how it is going on. I shall go this Spring. I am in hopes that you will come home whenever you please and take a trip with us. I am still in Radnor... 1828.

N.B. I cannot help saying something about the Orthodox, of all Class of people they take the Lead hear... I hope you have none in your West Country for their Conduct hear is a disgrace to Moral Society let alone Religious. But they afford a good deal of pastime for our poor unbelievers as they call us. I should be glad to hear from Oifen

Lewis Brooke

Owen Brooke
N.B. I cannot help saying something about the Orthodox, of all Class of people they take the Lead hear... I hope you have none in your West Country for their Conduct hear is a disgrace to Moral Society let alone Religious. But they afford a good deal of pastime for our poor unbelievers as they call us. I should be glad to hear from Oifen


27. Matthew, son of William and Margaret (Moore) Brooke of Haverford, was born July 28, 1783 and died September 10, 1827, 44 years. EBSFL.

28. Mordecai Lewis died October 10, 1827, aged 25. He was the first person to be buried in the cemetery of St. Luke's Episcopal Church of Pottsville (now Trinity Episcopal Church), of which he was a founder, a vestryman and the recently elected warden. See F. P. Freeman, "History of the Society of Schuykill Co., Vol. 1 (1897), pp. 256-259. Date of death was secured through the kindness of George W. Barlow of Mahanoy City, from the church records.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


See also Eleanor Brooke Smith Collection of Family Records, copies of which are on file at the Radnor Historical Society.

ACCESSIONS — 1971-1972

Richard W. Barringer:
Standing lamp

Mrs. Edward F. Beatty, Jr.:
A collection of newspapers published by the Wayne Presbyterian Church 1888-1890
Pamphlet on the old Carr Schoolhouse

Mrs. Robert I. Cummin
Twelve issues of the Bulletin of the Montgomery County Historical Society
Pamphlet on the Chester County Historical Society by Peter Schiffer

Francis James Dallet
Miscellaneous documents including an Adelberger bill of 1916 made out to the Eutropian Society and an invitation to lecture and ceremony at Bryn Mawr College in honor of Miss Caroline Robbins, March 1971

Mr. and Mrs. Francis H. Diament:
Miscellaneous road and railroad maps
Passport of Albert L. Diament 1923

Herbert S. Henderson:
Signs for the wagons and wagon house

W. Cobbs Lamont:
Book, The Thomas Lamonts in America

Mrs. John W. Leonard:
Photograph album of George W. Schultz

Mrs. Joseph MeCall:
Negative of photograph of old house on Matsonford Road

Miss F. Neall Randall:
Purse containing ration tokens of World War II
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For the historical record — the Yorke Apothecary was opened by Edward J. Yorke September ninth, 1944 at what was then known as 118 Audubon Avenue in Wayne for the sale of drugs and items for health exclusively and has continued to operate in the same professional manner.

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