

A Synopsis of the History of
MORELAND
TOWNSHIP
and
WILLOW GROVE

by Joe Thomas

Upper Moreland Historical Association

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Maps and Illustrations

The following maps and pen and ink drawings of local historic sites are part of the book, but are not included in this web site document. The book may be purchased at the Willow Grove Chamber of Commerce or from the Historical Association through the web site.

Maps

- Manor of Moreland, 1682
- Controversial strips of Manor land, 1685 – 1718
- Philadelphia Political Divisions, 1803
- Division of Manor among heirs, 1687 – 1702
- Manor subdivided and sold, 1691 – 1713
- Location of original meadow and swamp areas
- Topography
- Mineral Springs Park
- Location of early businesses
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Illustrations

- Dubree Manor House
- Frazier "Homestead"
- Joshua Potts / William Yerkes House
- Wynkoop Farmhouse
- Willow Grove United Methodist Church
- St. David Catholic Chapel
- Newtown Road School
- Fountain House Inn
- Mineral Springs Inn
- Mineral Springs Inn, Trumbauer 1895 Design
- Parkside Boarding House
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- Madden / Wagamon Boarding House
- Benjamin Morgan's Grist Mill
- Shelmire Mills Worker's House
- Yerkesville Mills Supervisor's House
- Willow Grove Volunteer Fire Company No. 1
- Upper Moreland Public Library
- John Lloyd House
- Benjamin Morgan House
- Orangeman's Home for Protestant Orphans
- George Blaker's Village Store
- O.E.C. Robinson House
- Reiser Homestead
- Rudolph Walther House
- John Schull House
- Rothwell's Drug Store
- Victorian House, ca. 1900

Original inhabitants of the Manor of Moreland

The Manor's early inhabitants were the Delaware Indians, the leading people of all the eastern Algonquians; a people who remained relatively at peace with Europeans for more than a century. The great Delaware confederacy, made up of large divisions, including the Lenni Lenapes of this area, the Shawnees, the Nanticokes, the Conoys and the Munsees, occupied an extensive territory in New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania and vicinity. The Lenapes had knowledge of agriculture and hunted for local fur-bearing animals such as deer, beaver, squirrel and fox.

The Delaware tradition of peace with the foreigners was maintained after the appearance of the English Quaker colonists in 1681, and the treaty meetings with William Penn in June of 1683. The most famous Delaware leader at these meetings was the councilor Tamanend (the English spelled it Tammany), who was described by missionaries as an ancient Delaware chief without equal and possessing the highest degree of wisdom, charity and hospitality.

William Penn, prior to his land grant to Dr. Nicholas More, made two purchases from the Indians that included the land within the limits of the Manor of Moreland. The first purchase, on June 23, 1683, was for two-thirds of the Manor which was all the lands lying between the Pennypack and Neshaminy Creeks, and was negotiated with Indian chiefs Essepenaika, Swanpees, Okkettarikon and Wessapoak for a consideration to be paid in wampum, guns, stockings, looking glasses, blankets and other goods. On June 7, 1684, Metamicon, whom the colonists call 'Richard', relinquished all of his rights to the lands on both sides of the Pennypack Creek from its source to its entrance into the Delaware River.

The last conveyance of lands by the Indians in this part of Pennsylvania, was made on July 5, 1697 in Philadelphia, by the celebrated Tamanend, his two brothers, Sethimac and Weheeland, his son Wehequeekhon, whom the colonists called 'Andrew' and who was to be Tamanend's successor, and his other sons, Yaqueekhon and Quenamockquid, for all the lands between the Pennypack and Neshaminy Creeks and extending several days' journey beyond the sources of those streams. This was the same tract mentioned before as having been purchased in 1683, however, this transaction was deemed essential, as the claims of the Indians to their lands frequently conflicted from having no real boundaries and holding it in common. It was the policy of William Penn to secure their general consent and to cause no jealousies among them that might conflict with their peaceful relationship.

While it appears that no Indian settlements existed within this part of the Manor, artifacts substantiating their travels through the area have been found along Round Meadow Run in Willow Grove's War Memorial Park and in the creek near Fulmor Station by Mr. John Eichman, archaeologist for the Upper Moreland Historical Association.

From 1750 to 1764, the Indians, every Autumn, came to Philadelphia in considerable numbers, sometimes in groups of fifty to one hundred. They would camp for several weeks at a time in various parts of the Manor, particularly in the woods around Hatboro, spending most of their time in making and selling baskets, mats and splint brooms. They came mostly from the area between the Susquehanna and Delaware Rivers, and sometimes brought considerable quantities of furs along with them. It is written they took delight in painting their faces and decorating themselves with various kinds of trinkets.

William Penn

Admiral William Penn and family were considered a middle class family, having both a home in London and an estate in Ireland. It was during times spent at the Ireland estate that

the Admiral's young son, William, came under the influence of a Quaker preacher. In 1600, he was enrolled at Christ Church College at Oxford and within a year was expelled for religious non-conformity. Following that experience he became a devoted and active member of the Friends. In 1668, he produced and distributed writings expounding Quaker beliefs and was arrested and confined for a year in the Tower of London. In 1670, he was again arrested for preaching in the streets of London and was sent this time to Newgate Prison.

During the next ten years, Penn was involved in other religious controversies; lobbied against the persecution of the Quakers; became a trustee of West New Jersey; and entered into Whig politics in an effort to secure religious toleration.

While settling his late father's estate, he realized that the King of England owed his father a debt of 16,000 pounds. There are two accounts of how this debt was incurred: one is that the elder Penn loaned the king the money while he was in exile; and the other is that when Britain was at war, money was at a premium and the military was not being paid. Young William in settling the obligations owed his father, approached the king with the proposition that instead of giving him the 16,000 pounds, he instead compensate him by granting him land in the new world. On March 4, 1681, King Charles II signed a charter granting Penn absolute governorship over land he named 'Pennsylvania', for an annual rent of two beaver skins per year to the crown.

On October 29, 1682, Penn arrived in Pennsylvania to found a colony devoted to recognizing freedom of conscience and religious toleration.

In 1684, a boundary dispute with Maryland forced him to return to England. While there, he also attempted to recruit more settlers for Pennsylvania and petitioned the King for religious freedom in England. Shortly thereafter, King Charles II died and James II was named King. James was dethroned and William and Mary came into power. William and Mary did not like Penn and in 1692 suspended his governorship, but not his proprietorship. In 1694 his authority was restored. Penn's first wife, Gulielma, died in 1694 and two years later, 1696, he married Hannah Callowhill in Bristol, England. Penn was fifty-four years old at the time; Hannah was twenty-four. Hannah possessed an excellent business sense, having learned from her parents the science of marketing and accounting. In 1699, Penn, his wife Hannah, their daughter Letitia and Penn's secretary, James Logan returned to Pennsylvania.

Penn's children included: son, Springett (1675); daughter, Letitia (1678); son, William, Jr. (1681); son, John (1700), the only child of Penn to be born in America; son, Thomas (1702); daughter, Margaret (1704); and son, Richard, (1706).

In 1701, he went back to England to oppose a legislative attempt to make Pennsylvania a crown colony. He would never again return to this country. Before departing, he undertook the revision of the Constitution and laws of Pennsylvania and agreed to a Charter of Privileges for Pennsylvania.

Penn had a steward named Philip Ford, who handled the finances of the colony, including sales of land. Ford, a man of dubious character, charged exorbitant commissions and squandered money amassing a debt of 10,500 pounds. Taking advantage of Penn's trust, he told him about the colony's debt and that a loan was necessary to satisfy creditors. Penn signed a document which turned out to be a deed of conveyance making Ford the proprietor of Pennsylvania if Penn did not personally pay the colony's debts. Ford died and his widow sued in 1708. Penn, then in his sixties, could not pay and was again put in jail.

Over the next three years, Penn's second wife, Hannah, appealed to her fellow Quakers for help, raising 7,600 pounds, which the Ford family accepted as settlement. Penn was then released from jail.

Penn suffered a stroke in 1712 which left him partially paralyzed and unable to speak or write his name. During the period of his infirmity, Hannah became the de facto Proprietor of Pennsylvania. Penn died in 1718 at the age of 74 in the family's home near Reading, England. Hannah died in 1726.

Nicholas More

Very little is known of Nicholas More's life in England except that he was born around 1638. He was an Anglican (Episcopalian). His marriage to Mary Hedge, the daughter of a wealthy London merchant allowed him to associate with the group of wealthy Quakers interested in settling America. Sharing interests with Penn regarding establishment of a colony in Pennsylvania he was made president of the "Free Society of Traders in Pennsylvania" before he and his family left England in 1682 for the new world. The object of the "Free Society" was the purchase of lands, with a view to agricultural settlement, the establishment of manufacturing businesses, for carrying on the lumber trade, fisheries and trade with the Indians. He arrived in October 1682, a few days after Penn. While still in London, he purchased 10,000 acres of land from Penn in October of 1681, which Penn called the "Manor of Moreland." The deed to the grant was finalized in 1684 and required More to pay Penn and his heirs forever, a silver shilling for every one hundred acres annually.

On December 4, 1682, at Chester, Dr. More was chosen by Penn to be Philadelphia's representative to the first Provincial Council and was also chosen by Penn to be Speaker. In 1683, at a meeting of the Assembly, several members reported to the Governor and Council that Dr. More, in a public place, had spoken strongly against their proceedings. He was requested to avoid such discourse in the future as it was considered unreasonable and imprudent.

In 1684, he was again a member of the Assembly for the County of Philadelphia and much to the opposition of some of the members was re-elected Speaker.

On June 4, 1684, Penn commissioned Dr. More and four others as provincial judges for a term of two years. On July 12 of that year, the Provincial Council duly qualified More to act as one of the Judges of the Province and he was made chief justice. This was the forerunner of today's Supreme Court.

On May 15, 1685, the Assembly drew up a declaration against More and presented it to the Provincial Council in the council chamber. They charged him with ten articles of various crimes and misdemeanors including assuming unlimited and arbitrary power, sending unlawful writs to the sheriffs, refusing a verdict brought in by a lawful jury, refusal to be accountable to the Council, denial of Council's authority, assuming the power to set the times of holding circuit courts, and placing himself above the reach of justice. The Assembly resolved to impeach and charge him with these crimes and requested the Provincial Council to remove him from office. He was ordered to appear before a special committee appointed to review the charges, however More did not appear, but pleaded sickness.

Since Penn was back in England during the impeachment process, a letter was transmitted to him informing him of the Council's action and a second letter sent to Dr. More requesting him to desist acting in any court judicature. This was probably the first case of impeachment in this country. Penn did not approve of the Council's action and in a letter in 1687, changed the executive government to a board of five commissioners including Dr. More and two of his fellow judges; any three of whom constituted a quorum for transacting business. Whatever More was accused of, he enjoyed the confidence of Penn and spent his remaining years in an office of

highest responsibility. After a languishing illness, he died intestate on May 23, 1687, very heavily in debt.

In a letter dated September 13, 1686 from Dr. More to William Penn, and published by Penn in 1687 to prevent false reports about the colony, Dr. More gives a glowing account of the availability of all kinds of meats and grains, and writes: "...every one here is now perswaded of the fertility of the ground, and goodness of the climate, here being nothing wanting, with industry, that grows in England; and many delicious things, not attainable there; and we have this common advantage above England, that all things grow better, and with less labour."

The More family

Land grants by Penn many times included a lot in the city of Philadelphia. This was the case with the More family. Dr. More's 10,000 acres entitled him to 7 city lots; 3 along the Schuylkill River and 4 just north of Society Hill. The More city residence was on lot number six, on the southeast corner of Second and Spruce Streets. The house belonged to the Society of Free Traders of which Dr. More was president. As president, he was given the honor to live in the house and resided there the greater part of his time.

Sometime around 1685, More began to build himself a mansion, which he called 'Green Spring Plantation', and other buildings suitable for maintaining the estate. The estate was located along present day Oxford Avenue between the old Oxford Church and Roosevelt Boulevard in Somerton. Construction of the buildings was never completed. This site was in the extreme lower portion of the Manor, which later became part of Philadelphia.

Dr. More's family included his wife Mary; a daughter Mary; Samuel; Rebecca; Sarah; and Nicholas, Jr.

Following the death of Dr. More in 1687, his wife Mary, nee Mary Hedge, did not long remain a widow. She married John Holme, the first Baptist in Philadelphia and a Justice of the Peace. They later moved to Salem, West New Jersey. Mary died in 1702; John in 1704.

Daughter Mary married Elias Keach in 1687 and built a cabin in the Manor, southeast of present day Bethayres, where they lived for several years. In 1688, with twelve of their neighbors, they organized the first permanent Baptist congregation in Pennsylvania. This became the Pennepak Church in Lower Dublin Township and Keach was its first pastor. In 1692, the Keaches sold the greater part of their inherited land and sailed for England, never to return. Mary was the only member of the More family to actually live in the Manor.

Young Samuel did not marry and died in 1694 at an early age.

Rebecca died in childhood.

Sarah married William Sluby by the year 1700 and resided in Philadelphia. The Slubys became the guardians of Sarah's younger brother Nicholas in 1703, then around eighteen years of age. Sarah and her husband later moved to Chichester in the county of Chester.

Nicholas, Jr., married Priscilla previous to 1713. No further information found.

Boundaries of the Manor

Nicholas More never held title to all of the land, which later comprised the Township of Moreland. Penn in his land grant to More intended the northeast boundary to be County Line Road, thinking that this road was going to be 825 yards southwest of where it is today. When County Line was permanently established in 1685, the intervening strip of land was sold to other settlers.

Then in 1689, following More's death, while the Manor was being divided among his children, the Proprietary Commissioners of Property directed a re-survey of the Manor and found an 'overplus' of about 1,300 acres, again on the northeast side. This second strip was 550 yards wide and it too was sold to other settlers.

This double strip of land, referred to as 'The Strip' in legal documents, comprised the area between Byberry and County Line Roads. In 1718, after the More family sold their holdings in the Manor, the Court of Quarter Sessions re-united 'The Strip' with the Manor to create the Township of Moreland.

In 1784, upon the formation of Montgomery County, the lower, irregular part of the Manor extending nearly to the Delaware River, containing approximately 3,700 acres, remained inside Philadelphia County and became a distinct Township of Moreland. However, in 1854, it was merged into Philadelphia and lost its separate identity.

The boundaries of Moreland Township are: *on the southwest side*, Welsh and Moreland Roads; *on the northwest side*, Township Line and Blair Mill Roads; *on the northeast side*, County Line Road; *and in the southeast*, from a point at the intersection of Moreland and Pine Roads, the boundary extends cross country in a northeast direction to County Line Road.

The Manor divided among the heirs

Dr. More, in ill health during his final years, died in May of 1687. On May 23, 1687, his wife Mary became Administratrix of the family properties and for fifteen years, presided over their liquidation until her death in 1702. Dr. More left no will and no instructions for any use he intended for the Manor.

On January 1, 1688, John Holmes, husband of the Dr. More's widow, and Elias Keach, husband of Dr. More's Daughter Mary met and decided on the following, which was endorsed by the Orphans Court on January 7, 1688.

It was agreed that 600 acres of the Manor, later to become part of Philadelphia, would be sold to pay for the outstanding debts of Dr. More. The agreement was accompanied by a plot plan with approximate acreage for the division of the rest of the Manor. The Manor, rectangular in shape, was divided among the More children in long strips of land extending from top to bottom. Mary More Keach received 1,552 acres, however it was in two tracts at opposite corners of the Manor. Rebeccah, already deceased, was given the two alternate sections to those of Mary, comprising 1,552 acres. Samuel received 3,104 acres; Nicholas, 1,552 acres; and Sarah, 1,552 acres.

The heirs of Dr. More did not retain their land holdings for very long, but began selling parcels as early as 1691.

The Manor is sold

Much of the Manor was sold piecemeal, largely to land speculators who were wealthy Philadelphians. Settlers were scattered unevenly over the countryside, but the speculators were in no hurry to sell as taxes were nominal and land prices were sure to increase with demand.

In 1691 and 1692, Mary More Keach and her husband, by then living in Burlington, West New Jersey, disposed of the greater part of their land in the Manor and sailed for England, never to return again. In 1738, the unsold part of Mary's inheritance comes into question. Mary had one child, Hannah, married to Revitt Harrison. Hannah appointed her son John, attorney for her lands in Pennsylvania in 1738, and he, soon after, arrived in the Manor to claim his grandmother's land. Not only was Mary's unsold inheritance to be settled upon, but also a one-

fifth claim to the land of her late sister Rebeccah. Unfortunately, Nicholas the son and his sister Sarah had calmly appropriated Rebeccah's land as the surviving kin in Pennsylvania and sold the land to others. Deeds of Release were never signed by Mary to any of the purchasers, therefore the settlers had to make settlements with John Harrison to obtain clear titles to their lands. These settlements were finally completed by the year 1746. John Harrison did not return to England, but took up residence in Hatboro, where he operated a village store. He died in 1747.

Samuel More, soon after coming of age, disposed of 300 acres of his 3,104 acre inheritance on October 10, 1694, which turned out to be his first and last sale. He died shortly after this transaction and in his will dated November 6, 1694, left his remaining property in equal shares to his mother, brother Nicholas and sister Sarah.

In 1695, following an audit of the More estate showing a debt of 270 pounds, 300 acres of land including the More Manor House were sold to satisfy the debt. This sale did not completely solve the More Estate's financial problems and on December 19, 1696, another 600 acres of unimproved land was sold.

By 1703, Sarah and her brother, Nicholas, were the remaining joint owners of the unsold, undeveloped portions of the Manor, comprising about 5,115 acres, mostly in the upper end of the tract. On March 26, 1703, they sold 1,200 acres to Thomas Shute and Nicholas Waln, two land speculators. This is the area of today's Willow Grove and a good portion of Upper Moreland. The land remained in their hands until Old York Road was actually in use in 1711 and 1712.

It appears that by 1713, all of the lands of the Manor were in the hands of others.

The first settlers in the Willow Grove area

James Cooper. In 1711, James Cooper, great, great grandfather of famous novelist James Fenimore Cooper, bought 300 acres of land just below the intersection of Davisville and Terwood Roads. Mr. Cooper was one of the earliest landowners in the Willow Grove locality, however, his having lived on his Moreland property is unsubstantiated. He was the proprietor of a store in Philadelphia most of his life. He died before signing his will, which the Court granted to probate in March of 1732. Cooper had six children. The land census of 1734 lists his youngest son, Benjamin, as still in possession of 100 acres, granted to him by his father in 1720.

Sampson Davis. In 1718, Sampson Davis bought land on the northeast slope of what is known today as Sampson's Hill. His property extended from York Road down the hill beyond where the Upper Moreland High School is located to Terwood Road and out to Davisville Road. Acquiring additional land from James Cooper, Sampson Davis built a grist mill on Round Meadow Run in 1727 at the southwest corner of Terwood and Davisville Roads. He built a cabin near where the Cold Spring Elementary School stands, which later gave way to a substantial dwelling where governor Sir William Keith was a frequent visitor.

James and Jacob Dubree. In 1719, records indicate James Dubree purchased 200 acres of land on the edge of Round Meadow Run, while his father, Jacob, purchased an adjoining 100 acres. This combination of land encompassed most of what later became Willow Grove. Jacob died around 1742, leaving his property to his son. By 1746, James put the entire property up for sale, advertising that he would sell his farm having "20 acres of meadow, a double house, good barn, and a fine young orchard." The property did not sell in 1742, for on July 3, 1762 after the death of James Dubree, his wife Rachel and Thomas Hallowell, executors of James' will, sold a "certain plantation and tract of land containing 33 acres, 47 perches of land to John McGlaughlin (Yoeman) and Mary, his wife." Mr. McGlaughlin sold the same property to John Paul, keeper of the tavern "The Wagon" along with three other properties on June 19, 1767.

A year later, 1768, John Paul and his wife Sidney advertised his tavern and the Dubree property for sale. They lost everything at Sheriff's Sale in 1770. The property was purchased by William Shoemaker, hatter, of Cheltenham Township on March 16, 1770; then by David Cummings, coppersmith, of Philadelphia on September 10, 1777; and by Samuel Potts, yeoman, on November 7, 1809.

James Dubree is thought to have settled on his purchase in 1720 or soon after according to the records of the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting (Quaker) dated September 1720, which read, "Jacob Dubree applied on behalf of his son James Dubree who intends to remove with his wife to Abington, for a certificate for him and his wife Joyntly." Like most early settlers, the Dubrees probably built a cabin to last ten years without repairs, as recommended by the Proprietary Land Office. When lime and building stone became available, they built a single-story farmhouse to which was added a two-story symmetrical Georgian-style structure around 1736. The home was located on today's Park Avenue and was demolished in 1967.

"The Homestead." The large white house on the corner of Inman Terrace and York Road is listed by Montgomery County as having been built in 1725. While no mention is made of the original owner, maps indicate that by 1849, it was in the hands of a William J. Sloan. An 1877 map shows the property then owned by Jeremiah B. Larzalere, a wealthy businessman, banker and politician. The property was acquired in 1889 by William W. Frazier following his retirement. Frazier was another wealthy businessman, banker, philanthropist and former Civil War Captain.

Joshua Potts. The Rev. Joshua Potts, first pastor of the Southampton Baptist Church, Hatboro's first schoolteacher, and one of the founders of the Hatboro Union Library in 1755, built a small stone home just off of York Road in Upper Moreland in 1759. Rev. Potts died in 1762 and his widow Anna sold the house and ground to William Folwell. The house was willed to Joseph Folwell who sold it to his father-in-law, Isaac Boileau in 1772. Mr. Boileau's assets at the time included a house, land, two carriages, four horses, two cows, and three Negroes.

Nathaniel Boileau. Nathaniel Boileau inherited the Potts property from his father Isaac, in 1797. He was an influential man and his credentials included being elected to both state and federal legislatures. A man of wealth, he was also a philanthropist. He built a new home, now the Hatboro YMCA, and invested much of his own money into the building of Loller Academy. In his later years, his investments failed and he died a pauper.

William Yerkes. Joseph Yerkes purchased the property, known as "Ashland Farm" from Mr Boileau and willed it to his son William. William Yerkes was an attorney, a judge, a Chief Justice of Pennsylvania's Supreme Court, and had served as a Major in the Union Army during the Civil War. Judge Yerkes added the larger right-hand section to the house in 1784.

Gerrit Wynkoop. Gerrit Wynkoop is listed as having taken up residence in Moreland Township in 1717. The Wynkoop farmhouse, still standing on the Pennypack Trust property, is thought to have been built by John Van Buskirk in 1734. The house has been expanded a number of times over the years since its acquisition by the Wynkoops around the mid 1700s. The Wynkoops were heavily involved in politics with Henry Wynkoop (1737-1816) being a member of the Provincial Assembly of Pennsylvania and a friend of Washington, Hamilton and Adams.

Fauna and flora in Colonial times

Fauna. From the writings of William J. Buck: At the early settlement of Moreland, the shad and herring ascended the Pennypack Creek in vast numbers. After the erection of several dams for a mile in Lower Dublin, they could no longer get upstream and soon disappeared. Fish caught in nets in the Pennypack were suckers, roaches, sunfish, pike and chubs; however, the dams and pollution greatly affected their survival. Eels and catfish remained plentiful and did not suffer the same fate as the others species. Mussels could also be found in great numbers.

Up to 1720, wolves in severe winter were exceedingly troublesome to sheep as the log pens they were kept in were inadequately constructed to keep them out. Deer would browse within a few yards of dwellings and were hunted for food. Bears were often killed with clubs, the last one seen was near the Welsh Road school house in 1772. Wild turkeys were occasionally shot; James Dubree, in 1702, shot one by moonlight in a tall hickory tree, which weighed thirty-two pounds.

The last fox was killed along the Pennypack in 1847 and thought to no longer exist in the area thereafter. Raccoon hunting by moonlight in 1817 was a favorite diversion. Muskrats became more numerous along the streams as their natural enemies were eliminated. They, along with rabbits, even though many were destroyed every year, multiplied and were destructive to crops and fruit.

Wild turkeys were occasionally seen in flocks as late as 1785. Turkey buzzards would often be seen in flocks of forty and fifty until 1795, when their numbers lessened. Wild pigeons were seen in immense flocks, particularly in 1793, that were sometimes more than a mile long, and probably half that distance in width. Previous to 1810, they bred in the woods in great numbers, and often forty nests were counted on one tree. In the spring and fall, so many were caught in nets as to require horses and wagons to haul them away.

About the year 1812, immense numbers of blackbirds would be seen in the meadows near Willow Grove. Eagles were shot on occasion; one shot in 1778 by Thomas Hallowell, had carried away several lambs; in 1817 one was shot which had a wingspan of seven feet, one and a half inches, and weighed eight and a quarter pounds. Another one with a seven foot wingspan was shot by Samuel Hobensack on Huckleberry Hill in 1843.

Pheasant and ruffed grouse frequented the hills around the township.

Historian Buck in his writings mentions that “several species of that somewhat rare animal, the star-nosed mole, have here been captured.” Muskrats abounded in the creeks and streams of the area and hunters on occasion have shot snipe and woodcock.

Flora. To include a catalog of the thousands of indigenous and naturalized plants of the area in this tract would be an overwhelming task and would only duplicate the comprehensive list found in Bean’s voluminous history of 1884 (P. 425).

Most plants in his botanical litany certainly exist today, while some few may have succumbed to the progress of development and to the incursion of exotic and intrusive species.

Concerning trees, Buck writes: “Among our indigenous trees are the following edible fruit-bearing kind: walnut, butternut, shellbark, chestnut, cherry, red plum, mulberry and persimmon; the others are red, black, white and chestnut oak, hickory, maple, poplar, beech, sassafras, cedar, gum, dogwood, pine, ash and elm.” He goes on to describe the size of several trees: “Of our trees...a chestnut a half mile east of Willow Grove measures eighteen feet in circumference, another on the farm of Isaac Warner is twenty-one feet. On the farm of the Hydropathic Institute is a cherry tree twelve feet and a walnut of eighteen feet in girth, cut down in 1851, on the farm of Stephen Walton.”

Round Meadow swamp and surrounding geology

The Swamp. One prominent natural feature dominating the local landscape in Colonial times was the sizeable swamp that inundated the area that is War Memorial Park today. The area covered by the swamp is described as being about one hundred and fifty acres extending from York Road east to a point near Morgan's Mill (Terwood Road). By 1882 the swamp's area had been reduced to less than twenty acres through the efforts of the settlers to reclaim the land for cultivation.

The remaining swamp, according to historian William Buck, still had growing on it, huge bunches of tussock (grass that grows in compact bunches), calamus (a perennial marsh herb also called sweet flag), several kinds of coarse sedge (a tufted marsh plant) and carex grasses, besides a number of alder bushes, a few stunted red maples and sour gums. A part of the swamp consisted of a black peat bog of from six inches to four feet in depth, lying on a substratum of white clay. The peat is formed by a species of moss which grows only on the surface of the water and as it decays beneath slowly, constantly accumulates. On the southern edge of the swamp could be found an area of wild cranberries, which according to tradition passed on by the oldest residents at the time, were indigenous to the locality. The swamp ultimately gave way to man's need to make better use of the land.

Kinds of soils. The soils of this area are primarily of four types: *syenite*, a composite of quartz, feldspar and hornblende; *granite*, along with syenite, are hard crystalline rocks extending from the Bucks County line through the Manor of Moreland to the Schuylkill River and the Delaware County line; *sandstone*, a sedimentary rock usually consisting of quartz sand and a cement such as silica or calcium carbonate; and *mica-schist*, a highly metamorphosed shale composed mainly of small flakes of mica combined with quartz.

Potsdam sandstone . Potsdam sandstone is a primal sandstone and is named for a great development of the mineral at Potsdam, New York. The oldest fossil yet discovered in Pennsylvania is the *Scolithus Linearis* and is found at Edge Hill and in the vicinity of Willow Grove and Rubicam Station. It consists of a straight, cylindrical, stem-like impression in the sandstone, usually smooth, but sometimes grooved transversally to its axis. Its diameter varies from one-eighth to one-half inch, and its length from a few inches to two or three feet. Its position in the rock is perpendicular to the bedding, and from this fact many think that the impression was produced by the boring of a marine worm. The end of the fossil terminates in a head, which is always found at the upper surface of the sandstone enclosing it. The impression looks like a large pin. These fossils are very abundant in the Potsdam sandstone in Montgomery County.

Several fine brown sandstone quarries were at one time in operation along the Pennypack near Hatboro.

Soapstone. Soapstone is a magnesian rock with a very soapy or greasy feel, is very soft and can readily be cut or carved. It is also known as steatite. According to Dr. Millie Wintz, environmentalist and historian with the Upper Moreland Historical Association, both Potsdam sandstone and soapstone have been found near the east end of the Hankin Tract in the township park system.

Red clay and kaolin deposits . Red clay is used in the manufacture of terra cotta and pottery and is a mixture of silica, alumina and water. Clays may come from granitic rocks or weathered shale. Kaolin is a hydrous silicate of alumina. It is very plastic and can be kneaded into almost any shape when mixed with water. White kaolin, free from iron, is used in making pottery. Both

red clay and kaolin have been uncovered in War Memorial Park during the Historic Association's archaeological digs.

Limestone. The great limestone belt of Montgomery County, which has furnished immense quantities of marble and lime, starts as a narrow belt in Willow Grove and widens as it extends fifty-eight miles west through Chester County and into Lancaster County.

Iron. In the neighborhood of Willow Grove there are indications of iron, but not in sufficient quantities to warrant success in mining.

Graphite. In the Welsh Road area, graphite, also called plumbago or black-lead, was found and in May of 1850, a mine was opened and operated for a while until it became too expensive to obtain it and the mine was abandoned.

Topography of the area

Bean's history describes the area: "The lands are agreeably diversified by well-marked ranges of hills, and with beautiful and fertile valleys. The county is watered by many streams ..." Willow Grove fits this description with the additional claim to two unique features: One of those "well-marked" hills is the highest point in Eastern Montgomery County and the other is that the center of the community began as a swamp, qualifying the area from Memorial Park to the intersection of Terwood and Davisville Roads as a flood plain.

Upper Moreland Township has three hills exceeding 400 feet in height: Frazier's Hill, the highest point in this part of the County at 430 feet; the Country Club Road hill at 410 feet; and the hill at Terwood and Edge Hill Roads with a height of 400 feet. There are six other hills ranging from 320 feet to 390 feet in elevation. Frazier's Hill was one of the sites used as a triangulation point in surveying the coast of the United States. Mr. Ferdinand Hassler, superintendent of the United States Coastal Survey, and his staff camped on the hill in the summers of 1840 and 1841.

While many of the streams and tributaries have been diverted, filled in, or simply dried up, there are still a large number which create a patchwork across the township. The Willow Grove swamp no longer exists, but Round Meadow Run, one of its sources of water, is a viable stream and at times overflows its banks onto the flood plain.

A flood plain is a strip of fairly level land that borders a river or creek and is periodically submerged beneath floodwaters. Floodplains develop alongside old creeks and rivers and have the characteristic features of creek meanders and marshes. Where artificial or natural drainage eliminates marshes from flood plains, they form fertile farmlands. The early settlers of Willow Grove converted the swamp to useable land by planting willow trees, which require great amounts of water to thrive.

Homes of the early settlers

The first settlers, in their struggle to provide housing for their families, were faced with the difficult task of clearing the land to be built upon. The entire family pitched in to clear the area of trees and large rocks. Some lived in temporary caves covered with hewn slabs or bark while they undertook this challenge. Others built tent-like structures made of tree branches and covered with cloth or built temporary sod and mud huts.

Families lived under these extremely primitive conditions while their cabin was under construction. Cabins were made of logs or split logs with the spaces between logs filled with clay to protect against the weather. Early roofs were thatched, which eventually gave way to shake or shingle roofs. The cabins were of simple design, usually one room with a fireplace at one end,

called an end-chimney construction; had a steeply pitched roof; and small windows filled with oiled linen in place of expensive, hard-to-get glass. In many cases it had an attic or sleeping loft accessible by ladder. One necessity was to build near a spring and have the cabin face south for protection from the cold north winds. Once the cabin was built, a small clearing was made for a garden.

With the advent of milling and accessibility of lumber, homes were built of post and beam construction, which was a timber frame of vertical posts 6 feet or more apart and horizontal beams mortised to the ends to form rectangular rooms. The outside was enclosed with shingles, while the inside was covered with clay or clay mixture and whitewashed. The floors many times were dirt and the windows small to preserve heat. Folk building, as it was called, was done without benefit of formal plans and was frequently done by the occupants. Houses grew according to the needs of the family

After York Road was established through Willow Grove in 1711-1712, the first settlers were not without access to some supplies and materials from Philadelphia. Their pioneering efforts were not as restrictive as those who made their way into the backwoods on foot or horseback. While mechanical tools and equipment were years in the future, they did have a few tools of iron and steel, and some vessels of tin and wood.

The houses built by the early settlers previous to 1728, were, with few exceptions, made of logs. While there was an abundance of sand, clay and stone, the absence of lime made the manufacture of mortar out of the question. With the availability of lime from Abington, stone houses were beginning to be constructed, and by 1776 a majority of the homes that had been built were substantial stone dwellings. However, their barns and stables were still usually built of logs, rudely constructed, and covered either with straw or split overlapping clapboards, which tended to warp and admit the rain in stormy weather. The greater number of houses were one story with hipped roofs. The fireplaces or hearths were usually large and served both cooking and heating purposes as well as for light. To save time and labor in cutting wood, the settlers would use 'back-logs' or large logs that were rolled into the back of the fireplace and once kindled with smaller wood in front would burn for several days.

By 1776, stoves were generally used and were of rather large size, often weighing three to five hundred pounds

Family life

The early settlers were drawn to the river and creeks, not only by the fertility of the land, but for the abundance of game and fish. The first settlers were an agricultural people, who worked to secure their existence by rigid industry and frugal living. Many had to learn new domestic habits, having come from an established lifestyle and society overseas. Their first want, of course, was a place to live, which in some cases meant digging a temporary cave in a hillside. Log cabins were their next habitation, followed by more substantial dwellings of stone after lime for building purposes became available.

Everyone in the family was expected to do their share of the day's work and it usually meant laboring from sunup to sundown. The men, many eking out an agricultural existence, worked to clear the land, plant and cultivate crops for the family's use, and then protect it from foraging animals. Expanding, improving, and keeping the home in good repair was also an ever-present consideration.

Game, plentiful at the time, was hunted to put meat on the table. Were the settler fortunate enough to own sheep, they would be sheared and the wool woven for clothing and bedding.

Some of the sheep were butchered for food; and oxen, after working through the planting and reaping seasons, were fattened up and also slaughtered for food. Their hides were tanned and made into useful items for wear and other home uses. At times, the village tailor or shoemaker was called upon to bring his tools to someone's house to make up the home-produced materials into clothing and shoes for the family.

Autumn was an especially busy time; digging up potatoes, harvesting corn, winter planting was necessary for a spring crop, corn husking had to be done to feed the animals through the winter, collecting apples and storing some for the winter in a barrel buried in the ground, cider-making, and the chopping of firewood, a year-round chore, was even more essential for the coming cold weather. Using the fat rendered from butchered cattle and adding lye, a rather coarse, brownish soap was made for both washing clothes and the person. Candles, called 'tallow dips', were made from tallow or solid white animal fat. Tallow was also used as a lubricant.

During the 18th century, the women's role and work in and around the home was extremely difficult and exhausting. In poorer families, women's full-time job was homemaking. They had to cook meals, make clothing, and doctor their family in addition to cleaning, making household goods to use and sell, taking care of the animals, maintaining a constant fire for cooking and heating, and in summertime, working in the family garden. Many times they did considerable outdoor labor such as reaping, binding and raking. It was customary on large farms, to save time, for the women to take meals out into the fields in summertime.

In the early years, wells for water were uncommon as most of the water for family use was carried in from nearby springs or streams. By 1780, there were less than a dozen pumps in use in the entire Township, as most of the wells at the time were rigged with a windlass and the huge well-sweep was conspicuous in front of many farmhouses.

Both men and women had great social pressure on them to marry. Young girls were often married by the time they reached 13 or 14 years of age. Since flax was an object of cultivation, a spinning wheel, reel and sidesaddle were a part of the bride's outfit. Marriage was mostly for economic reasons and not necessarily romantic situations. Oddly, marriage was rarely the occasion for social festivities. The simple wedding ceremony was unattended by bridesmaids, best man, ushers or music.

Widows were also pressured to get married as soon as possible after losing their spouse. Many were re-married within a year or less.

Life expectancy

In the late 1600s and early 1700s, the average life expectancy was around 30 years of age, increasing to 35 around the time of the Revolution. Depending upon individual situations and lifestyles, many lived to what can be considered a ripe old age, but the hardships of the settlers in undeveloped areas brought the average life span down to the 35 year statistic. By the year 1900, this figure increased to 50, and by 1990, to 75 years of age.

Death in the family in Colonial times was an important social occasion and funeral feasts were common in most communities. Not only was it a part of the closure process in the loss of a family member, but it helped alleviate the loneliness of living in a sparsely settled countryside. A certain element of rejoicing accompanied the grief. Many people simply believed that death was a mere "passing over from time to eternity," as William Penn once wrote.

Intermittent fevers were commonplace, particularly in spring and fall, however, after better dwellings were constructed and cultivated vegetables and fruits were abundant, these fevers disappeared. In 1793, the year of the yellow fever, and during the cholera epidemic in the

summer of 1849, not a death occurred to a local resident; and only the usual number died from other diseases, while elsewhere the mortality rate doubled. As the population increased and people came in greater contact with one another, typhus, scarlet fever and tuberculoses occurred more frequently. It is presumed, while not mentioned by the references used for this writing, that cancers and heart disease played a role in the mortality rate of the early settlers.

As the struggle to survive lessened, improved nutrition and better sanitation played an important role in increasing longevity. Much later, of course, antibiotics and vaccines created dramatic increases in life expectancy.

Clothing

In poorer families, clothing used for church, the “Sunday best”, was rarely used for other occasions. Old and young commonly went half the year barefoot, and those who were able to wear shoes during the summer were considered in fortunate circumstances. In going to a church meeting they would frequently carry their shoes to save wear and only put them on when in sight of the meeting-house.

Women wore ankle-length dresses consisting of two parts, a bodice and a skirt, sometimes the same color, sometimes of different colors. This style apparently held true into the 1900s as evidenced by photographs taken at the Willow Grove Park in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The bodice was buttoned all the way from neck to waist. Occasionally the sleeves were separate and tied to the bodice at the shoulders. An apron was generally worn over the skirt. Stockings could be white or colored. Common colors of clothing were red, earthy greens, browns, blues, violets and grays. Contrary to popular myth, black and white were not the common colors worn.

Women’s hair was always worn up and pulled tightly back and usually under a bonnet or hat.

Men usually wore a short-sleeved, off-white linen shirt with a collar. Over that was worn a close-fitting doublet with long sleeves, broad padded shoulders, buttoned down the front with tabs at the waist. A cloak was often draped over the shoulders and a felt cap or hat finished the attire. Breeches were worn and were front buttoning pants extending to the knees, which were relatively baggy. Stockings were knee-length and shoes were generally low-heel, low cut leather shoes.

Contrary to popular stereotype, buckles were rarely worn on hats, shoes and belts.

Young boys (up to about age 8) and girls both wore dresses, generally of either wool or linen. The skirt was full-length, and the bodice was long sleeved and laced in back, with a high neckline. Blue was a common color for both girls and boys as well as gray, red, earthy greens, yellows and browns. About the ages of 7 to 9, boys began to wear clothing similar to their fathers, and girls began to wear dresses cut more like those of their mothers.

The Quakers who settled here made a concentrated effort to “go plain”, only wearing what was necessary to maintain modesty and keep out the cold. Their clothing was simple including heavy breeches for men and a simple dress with no frills for the ladies.

Quaker men were forbidden from wearing any “needless” pockets in their trousers, and were warned against broad hems, extra buttons, creases or anything considered absolutely unnecessary.

Quaker women’s dresses were plain in color as dyes were discouraged. Bright dyes were considered “proud”, and dark dyes were thought to hide dirt. Both were frowned upon.

Pastimes

The early settlers had little time from their struggles of daily living to consider engaging in a pastime. However, as they became more established and comfortable with their situations, toil alone was not enough to bring contentment. They soon developed sports and pastimes, perhaps only a few at first, to relieve the monotony of existence.

One sport that figured prominently was the fox-hunt. At the time, foxes were abundant and a threat to livestock, especially lambs and poultry. Bounties were offered by the County for the killing of both foxes and wolves. In 1724, a full-grown fox brought two shillings. The rewards encouraged many men to the sport and some kept hounds for this purpose. Hunts were conducted in winter, when snow made it easy to track the animals and hunger brought them out of their dens.

Shooting matches came into vogue before the Revolution and the competition consisted of shooting at mark with a rifle or gun. The winner was at times rewarded with a deer or bear, however, turkeys and poultry later became the prize.

Wrestling contests, quoit matches, and lotteries were common. Dancing was indulged in and included hoe-downs, Virginia reels and jigs. William McCalla, an innkeeper in Jenkintown, advertised in 1807, as having a ballroom forty by sixteen feet in dimension for dancing. Sleighing atop the winter snows was popular.

Other activities that lightened the labors of families and brought neighbors together were grubbings, house-raising, log-rollings, wood-choppings, flax-pullings, corn-huskings, apple-cuttings, apple-butter boilings, and the quilting party.

Story telling around the fireplace at night was commonplace at which time they might bring out portions of cider, cider-royal or metheglin, a combination of cider and whiskey.

The 1880s and 1890s saw the development of bicycling, amusement parks, golf, baseball, football, tennis, and other attractions for young and old alike.

Religion

Quakers (Society of Friends), 1683. In the early years, the Quakers were a dominant element in lower Montgomery County. They reached their peak in numbers and influence before the American Revolution, experienced some decline, and have remained relatively stable in membership for the last hundred years. In 1827, at their yearly meeting, they suffered a schism that divided them into two groups. The Orthodox wanted all Friends to accept a common set of beliefs, while the Hicksites were willing to tolerate a variety of positions and beliefs. The local meetings all became part of the Hicksite philosophy. They are: *Abington Friends*, founded in 1683, *Horsham Friends*, founded in 1716, and *Upper Dublin Friends*, founded in 1814.

Willow Grove United Methodist Church, 1888. George W. Quigley began weekly prayer meetings in 1887 and started a Sunday School in 1888. The first church service was held on May 20, 1888 in the creamery hall on Davisville Road and was conducted by a visiting minister from the Local Preachers Association of Philadelphia. When creamery hall proved not sufficient for the group's worship, two lots on York Road next to the Cherry Inn were purchased from David Cherry for \$600, and in 1891, construction began on a permanent church. In 1894 and three times again in 1895, the church was set on fire by arsonists and finally destroyed. The church was rebuilt and enlarged in 1897, and a Sunday School building added in 1903. The Methodist Church is the first church to be established in Willow Grove.

McKinley Memorial Baptist Church, 1902. A group of members of the Salem Church in Jenkintown met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Cottom in 1901 to organize a prayer band,

and on the first Sunday in June of 1902 called a council meeting in Wilgus Hall in Hatboro for the purpose of establishing a regular Baptist Church. Rev. J. B. Brooks, then pastor of Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church in Germantown, presided at this meeting and a church was organized and named in memory of the late American president, William McKinley. The church was incorporated under the laws of Penn-sylvania in 1904. The church moved from Hatboro to the Kentner Building on Moreland Road in Willow Grove; then to a brick building on Welsh Road; and around 1945 to the present location on Cedar Avenue. The land on which the church stands was donated by Mr. Thomas Cottom.

St. David Catholic Church, 1919. St. David Catholic Church first met in 1916 in a wooden chapel, which stood where the present church stands. In 1919, the Archdiocese decided that this mission chapel should become its own parish and Father Edward J. Curran was named the first pastor. With no rectory, Father Curran took up residence at the Mineral Springs Inn. The rectory was built in 1920, the same year the St. David School opened. Outgrowing the wooden chapel, a large stone church was built and dedicated on December 7, 1952. The school was expanded with a three-story addition in 1955, followed in 1961 by the construction of a new school on the corner of Easton Road and Summit Avenue. The parish today consists of a church, two schools buildings, a convent and a rectory. It serves nearly 2,000 families, and its schools have an enrollment of about 400 students.

First Presbyterian Church of Willow Grove, 1925. The first service of a group of local Presbyterians was held on June 27, 1920 on the front lawn of the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Rollins at the corner of Cameron and Bartram Roads. A Sunday School was held the following Sunday with about 100 people attending. In July of 1920, a portable wooden chapel was loaned to the group and placed on the property of the present church at Easton and Barrett Roads. They received their first full-time pastor in January of 1924. The church was formally organized on June 17, 1924 and became a part of the Presbytery of Philadelphia. They built their first permanent stone church in 1930 to replace the wooden chapel.

Jehovah's Witnesses, 1942. Car group missionaries from Philadelphia drove to outlying areas in search of groups to study the Bible. They met in interested people's homes. Private homes soon became too small and in 1942 they rented the Davisville Seminary on Davisville Road. In the 1950s they purchased and renovated the Bocci Club in Willow Grove. The group changed its name from the Davisville Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses to the Willow Grove congregation. They moved to Horsham in 1978.

Temple Beth Am Synagogue, 1947. Old York Road Temple Beth Am was the pioneer synagogue in Abington Township and derived its membership from Willow Grove as well as from the Old York Road area. It had its beginnings in Willow Grove in 1947 when services were held on the second floor of the Ehrenpfort building. The Hankin family was instrumental in the founding of Temple Beth Am.

Education

Early schoolhouses were few, were very small and teachers then were seldom competent for the purpose. The pupils started at age 6 and progressed through as many grades as the 'Readers' provided or until farm chores required them to stay at home to help with the work. The teachers nearly always boarded with the parents of the students, usually a week at a time at each place. Subjects taught later were limited to spelling, reading, writing and arithmetic. Geography and grammar were not even known to the students, and books and writing materials were extremely expensive and hard to get. The price of schooling per quarter was \$1.25 or two cents per day.

First School. The first school in Willow Grove is reported to have been a log cabin that stood at the corner of Park Avenue and Easton Road. The dates that this school served the small community are unknown, however, earlier historians cite the existence of a school in Willow Grove before 1776.

An act of June 30, 1836 established public schools throughout the state, which Moreland Township, by vote, rejected. Another act dated April 11, 1848 enforced the common school system upon all districts.

Newtown Road School, 1839. In 1839, George Rex, the owner of the Mineral Springs Inn, donated a half-acre of land on the south side of Newtown (Davisville) Road for the construction of a common school. There, the township built a two-story stone school that probably had no grade higher than the sixth grade.

Newtown Road School, 1895. In 1895, the old school was replaced by a larger, two-story stone structure built directly across the street. It was designed by the noted architect, Horace Trumbauer, and was built on a half-acre of land donated by the then owner of the Mineral Springs Inn, Charles Ehrenpfort. The seventh and eighth grades were added and the faculty expanded. The teachers voted each year to determine which one of them would serve as principal.

The Hatboro Public Spirit of January 19, 1895 describes the new school: "On the main floor are north and south school rooms, each 25 by 25 _ feet; middle school room, 26 by 32 _ feet; main corridor, 10 by 56 feet; clothes rooms, 6 _ by 17 feet; library, 16 by 24 _ feet. The school rooms are furnished with the latest style single desks. The stairs leading to the attic and basement are 4 feet wide. The height of the principal story is 15 feet in the clear; the height of the basement story is 10 feet in the clear. The basement contains play-rooms, boiler, fuel and store rooms; basement floor has two double entrances in the rear. The attic is unfinished and will be used for storage, etc., except that portion directly over the library which is designed to be finished when required for a teachers' room or committee room.

"The walls of the building are of stone from local quarries. The exterior shows rock face rubble work, all laid in best lime mortar and pointed outside with Alson cement. All trimming stone and stone steps at the two entrances are of gray granite from the Holmesburg quarries. The main roof and those on belfry and towers are covered with best quality of Chester slate, put on in the best manner; hip rolls and finials are galvanized iron painted; all valleys, bell deck and flashings are of best American tin."

Willow Grove Junior High School, 1919. In 1919, a four-room school was opened on York Road, a block north of the junction with Easton Road. It housed the seventh through the ninth grades. Graduates who wanted further education attended the Abington Township schools. In 1926, the district petitioned to expand the school to the twelfth grade and began construction to accommodate the new classes. In 1929, the Upper Moreland Senior / Junior High School graduated its first class. During the 1930s, the district, with the help of the Public Works Administration, added an additional classroom wing, an auditorium / gymnasium, an athletic field, and a concrete stadium.

By that time, the Davisville Road School became so crowded that the school office was used as a classroom for fifth grade and two sixth grade classes were housed in the Willow Grove fire hall.

By 1940, the York Road school was the only school in Willow Grove.

Fulmor Heights School, 1942. The Federal Government built the Fulmor Heights Project No. 1 to house employees of the Johnsville Center. They also erected a nine-room, two-story brick

school to accommodate the children of these employees, which was then sold to the Upper Moreland School District in 1943. Between 1948 and 1953, eight classrooms and an all-purpose room were added. The name changed from Fulmor Heights to Upper Moreland to Round Meadow in 1954.

Woodlawn Elementary School, 1952. Due to a building boom and increase in population, the need for a new elementary school was apparent. By the time Woodlawn opened in 1952, its ten classrooms were already inadequate. By 1956, twelve more classrooms and an all-purpose room were added.

North Willow Grove Elementary School, 1954. By 1958, this school's fourteen classrooms, library, administrative suite, and all-purpose room were so crowded that the library was being used for two classes, and the stage in the all-purpose room became a classroom. That same year, eight more classrooms were added to the building.

Upper Moreland Senior High School, 1959. The new high school was equipped with large, well-lighted classrooms, an auditorium, gymnasium, cafeteria, special project rooms for music, art, home economics, printing, and health education. It also had fields for major sports and five tennis courts. The school was intended for grades 10 through 12, however, space was at a premium in the lower grades and the ninth grade was transferred from the junior high school to the senior high school. An eighteen room addition was completed in 1963 and a new library was added in 1970.

Cold Springs Elementary School, 1962. This school had nineteen classrooms and was built to relieve the pressure in the elementary schools and allow the ninth grade to return to the junior high school. In 1966, seven classrooms and a library were added.

Upper Moreland Junior High School, 1970. Built to house the seventh, eighth and ninth grades, this school featured air-conditioning, an interior courtyard and commons area, an indoor pool, an air-conditioned auditorium whose seating area could be converted into five independent lecture areas, a library-media center, and departmental offices. The school is now referred to as the Upper Moreland Middle School.

Round Meadow Elementary School, 1973. Designed for 800 students, this school contained 30 classrooms, a multi-purpose room, cafeteria, music and art rooms, library-media center, speech room, large instruction room and a teachers' room. The old Round Meadow School was not immediately sold, but was used as a special education center for 10 classes of elementary students with learning disabilities. Following a legislative ruling in 1976 mandating the right of every child to a public school education, or mainstreaming, the school was closed and sold.

With the baby-boom era an event of the past and the stabilization of growth in the township, the schools that remain in the year 2000 are the Senior High School on Terwood Road, the Middle School on Orangemans Road, the Cold Spring Elementary School on Reed Street, and the Round Meadow Elementary School on Byberry Road.

Agriculture

From its beginning, Pennsylvania ranked as a leading agricultural area and produced surpluses for export, thus adding to its wealth. By the 1750s, an exceptionally prosperous farming area had developed in southeastern Pennsylvania. Buckwheat and Indian corn were the leading crops, though rye, oats, hemp and flax were also important. Wheat was the crop which made Pennsylvania the richest colony in the north. Potatoes were scarcely introduced, and hay was generally harvested from meadows. When the meadows gave out they harvested marsh

grasses for bedding and food. The soil, being new and fertile, was many times used without benefit of manure or lime, and plaster was still unknown.

The very early settlers, engaged in farming, did so in the most primitive ways and with the most basic equipment. Plows were unwieldy, were made of wood and had a wooden mould-board to turn the soil. The wooden mould-board probably had to be changed frequently due to wear. Wheat and other grains were cut with a sickle, a curved cutting blade with a short handle that required the farmer to spend the day stooped over while laboriously harvesting his crop. Hay was cut with a scythe, which had a longer blade and a handle that required two hands to use. The scythe was an instrument manufactured in Willow Grove in the early 1700s by the Dubree family and was the first industry in the area. The scythe cut a wider swath, but also required more exertion to operate. Crops were gathered by hand and involved family participation. Before 1790, large cellar barns were unknown, as grain was generally stacked.

Corn was planted in the Indian fashion for more than a century and was a useful crop in animal husbandry as the stalks were used as winter fodder and the ears for a high-energy food. By 1780, the Swedes were introducing root crops such as turnips, carrots and rutabagas. Potatoes, brought in from Mexico, became the greatest contributor to the food supply.

Another important grain product in southeastern Pennsylvania was whiskey. Every fifth or sixth farm was reported to have had its copper kettle. Whiskey was used to barter for other commodities.

Dairy farming was a viable part of the agricultural economy by the time of the Revolution. The latter half of the 19th century saw a number of dairy farms established in and around Willow Grove. Among the larger farms were the Willow Ridge Dairy, Overlook Farm Dairy, Silver Lake Farm Dairy, Willow Grove Dairy, J. C. Stuckert Dairy, and by mid-1900s, Buehler Dairy. In 1872, a Farmer's Cooperative Creamery was built on Davisville Road near the train station to process the milk from the local dairies. The Creamery's location was ideal for distributing the milk products by way of the railroad. The creamery later operated under the name Triebel's Creamery.

Inns, taverns and boarding houses

Willow Grove, located about 13 to 14 miles from Philadelphia was a good day's travel for a team of horses, and was an excellent site for an inn where weary travelers could dine and stay overnight, and horses could be changed if the stage coach was continuing on to New York or other destinations. Willow Grove was well known for its inns, their accommodations and good food.

The Fountain House Inn, 1717. Accounts of the Fountain House Inn list the date it began operation as 1717. If this date is accurate, it would make it the first structure of any kind in Willow Grove. Since records indicate the first parcels of land sold by the land speculators, who bought the land in 1703, to have taken place in 1718 and 1719, the land on which the Inn sat must have been sold around 1716. In a newspaper article from the 1920s, it states that many residents remember an old license plate dated 1717 hanging on the front of the building.

The inn was huge stone structure by the standards of the time, and while additions were made over the years and the barroom enlarged after 1900, the rooms remained basically the same. Originally it had eight rooms to accommodate travelers. This was later increased to eighteen rooms, each with solid oak floors and a fireplace. The maps of 1848 and 1851 indicate it was then called the Willow Grove Hotel or the J. Lukens Hotel.

The newspaper referred to above contained the following information: George Hobensack, of Church Street, said his father operated the inn in 1877 and that the inn got its name from the spring at the back of the building. (*This spring was called "the Hundred Horse Spring", and touted to having the capacity to satisfy that many horses in a day without going dry!*) The spring was later run through a pipe to the front of the inn to a trough supported by two willow trees. It was here that the farmers stopped to feed and water their horses before continuing on the City markets. Mr. Hobensack recalled how his father used to serve good meals for twenty-five cents; and that someone usually slept in the barroom so as to be on hand to serve breakfast to the farmers who started their day at 2 a.m. The Hobensacks ran the inn until 1884.

The inn's barroom contained a barber chair with Fred Shedeker as the first barber. Holiday times were looked forward to with anticipation as it was then that Mr. Larzalere would bring carloads of turkeys from Ohio and conduct a poultry sale at the inn.

From the Public Spirit newspaper of September 1, 1898: "The hotel license at the Fountain Hotel at Willow Grove has been transferred from John T. Wood to John McEvoy." The McEvoy family used the inn as their country place until the death of the parents, when the children decided to make it their permanent home. Julia McEvoy, who lived there with her brother and sisters reported that, "the walls are so thick that it took three months to cut through" when enlarging the barroom.

When motor vehicles replaced teams of horses, the farmers no longer stopped there to exchange bits of news. Instead, it became a place where 'city folk' came to spend their vacations. Among them was the famous composer and orchestra leader, Victor Herbert. It was said that Herbert composed the song "They Were Irish" for the McEvoy family during one of his visits at the Fountain House Inn.

The Fountain House Inn, after more than 250 years in Willow Grove, was demolished in 1961. It stood on York Road opposite Cherry Street.

The Wagon, 1762 / The Red lion Inn, 1776. The old public house, called the Wagon, stood on the north point created by the junction of York and Easton Roads. It was a large stone structure of three stories, containing 23 rooms.

The first building was erected on land owned by James and Jacob Dubree in 1719. There is a deficiency in the recording of deeds thenceforth for a long period. In 1762, John Paul kept a tavern there bearing the sign, "The Wagon". He advertised it for sale along with 102 acres in 1768, indicating: "stabling for a hundred horses, the best tavern between the Rising Sun (Philadelphia) and Coryell's Ferry (New Hope)."

During the Revolution it was known as The Red Lion Inn and was kept by Joseph Butler. It served as a hospital when the wounded from the battle of Edge Hill were brought there in 1777. William Homer, in discussions with the historian William Buck, recalled that divisions of the Continental Army encamped several times in the orchard in the rear of the tavern. The soldiers, mostly Virginians, practiced shooting at mark one hundred yards distant with rifles. Homer would cut out the balls from the trees with a hatchet so the lead could be remolded into bullets and used again.

The Inn was owned by William Heaton in 1787, and from 1809 to 1822, by Israel Michener, who was the first postmaster. In 1842, Jacob E. Buck bought the tavern and 18 acres. He renamed it the J.E. Buck Hotel. In April of 1857, Buck applied for a Tavern License following enactment of a law requiring a license to sell liquor passed on March 31, 1856. In the application, Buck describes the tavern: "That said House has been a regularly licensed House for about seventy years, and has always been kept as such, and has been kept by your petitioner for

fifteen years past. That your petitioner has in said House exclusively for the use of travelers, eleven bedrooms or chambers and has in the same sixteen beds and has besides very large rooms and the whole establishment is furnished with everything necessary to accommodate the public use. Said House is 44 feet front by 62 feet deep and 2 _ stories high.” Apparently the license was denied. According to an article in the Hatboro Public Spirit following the fire that destroyed the facility in 1906: “It lost its license in 1856 and for the past 23 years has been occupied nearly continuously as a store property.”

He also describes a large stone stable, 194 feet long, of which 106 feet is two story, sufficient for accommodating 75 horses or cattle.

In 1868, Buck sold the property to John E. Berrell, then owner of the Mineral Springs Inn across the street. It is said to have been a wise business move by Berrell, who closed the inn, thereby eliminating his competition.

The building was destroyed by fire on November 21, 1906. It was immediately to the rear of the meat and provision store kept by David J. Nolan, and was owned at the time by the estate of J. Monroe Aiman of Chestnut Hill. The fire began in an adjacent small frame barn and quickly spread to the inn, which was then being used by Nolan’s store and as a boarding house operated by Mrs. Emma Masterson. It is noted in the writings of some earlier local historians that the Inn during this period was called the “Glenside.”

The Mineral Springs Inn, 1803. George Rex, Sr., a blacksmith from Germantown, bought a house and thirty-nine acres of land in 1784, but it was not until 1803 that he obtained a license to operate a tavern. He built the Mineral Springs Inn and capitalizing on the abundant mineral waters on the property, attracted many Philadelphians to his summer resort. Adding spacious bath-houses increased the appeal of his then famous spa. William Buck, local historian gives us the following description: “Willow Grove abounds in springs of excellent water ... and the citizens of Philadelphia spend a few weeks or months agreeably each summer away from the impure air and confined streets of the city.”

The original Inn was a frame structure, four stories high, with wrap-around porches on the first two levels. As its fame grew, it housed up to 250 patrons a night during the summer season.

George Rex, Sr. was elected Justice of the Peace sometime prior to 1838. In 1839, in a philanthropic gesture, he gave a half-acre of land on the south side of Davisville Road for the purpose of building a two-story stone school building.

In 1811, the Inn was kept by another George Rex, a nephew of George Rex, Sr., who eventually inherited the property in 1841 from his uncle.

Competition among inns is evidenced by a response to slanderous remarks in 1811 in Poulson’s “Advertiser.” “The Subscriber (*George Rex*) takes this public method to return his sincere thanks to the Citizens of Philadelphia – and his friends in general for the very liberal encouragement extended towards him for some years past.

‘It is with pleasure that he informs them that the improvements lately made will enable him to accommodate a number of lodgers with convenience, and no pains shall be spared to render their situation comfortable. The shower and plunging baths are in excellent order and free of access to lodgers and visitors.

‘He has the satisfaction to assure the public that the ineffectual attempts to injure the reputation of the Mineral Spring, have proved abortive; that it has lately been cleaned and the water analyzed and found to contain aerated vitriolated iron, the presence of which is known by the ochre which it deposits, its taste, the black color which it strikes with astringents and the blue color produced by phlogisticated alkali.

‘An expeditious and cheap mode of visiting the Grove is afforded by the Swiftsure New York State, which starts from M’Call’s Inn, N. Fourth Street at 8 o’clock every morning, and an opportunity offers by the return stage to arrive in the city in the early part of the following day.’

The Inn was sold to John Berrell in 1865. An article in a November 1875 issue of the Public Spirit indicated Mr. Berrell wished to sell the Inn and surrounding property. It gave an excellent description of what the property contained at the time: 39 acres of land, of which 8 were wooded; a hotel and dwelling combined; the hotel contained 45 rooms; there was a wash house; one stone and one frame barn; three large sheds; one frame house suitable for two families; a pavilion 75 x 45 feet; and a board walk to the train station. The asking price for the property was \$25,000.

There followed several owners including J. J. Sonnebaum in 1876, E. Bailey in 1877, and to Charles F. Ehrenpfort in 1890. Charles Ehrenpfort paid \$17,900 for the Inn and in turn sold it to Fred Ehrenpfort for \$150,000.

During Mr. Ehrenpfort’s tenure as proprietor he added a large picnic grove, created a sizeable lake for boating and swimming, added a dance hall, a carousel, an indoor rifle range, a number of small concessions, and a large shaded beer garden.

The following article appeared in the May 25, 1895 issue of the Public Spirit, citing the new look of the Inn following a complete renovation under the direction of noted local architect, Horace Trumbauer: “Improvements at Mineral Springs. The improvements to the Mineral Springs Hotel at Willow Grove, are well under way. The roof has been greatly changed and with the dormer windows and high chimneys, gives a colonial style to the building. This effect will still be further heightened by painting the walls yellow, with white and green trimmings. Electric lights have been introduced. An L has been built of colonial brick, which is to contain the barroom in the basement with dining room and kitchen above. The whole to be fitted out in colonial style.

In the Park adjoining, improvements are also being made. Trees have been planted and a large number of small tables, looking not unlike giant toadstools, have been built. The old buildings are being put in good shape and new ones erected. The Park will be lighted at night by electric lights. A new fence of iron pipe with rustic posts is also to be built along the front of the Park. New walks are also to be built and the present ones widened. Efforts are being made to have the improvements finished by the middle of next month when the trolleys are expected to commence running.”

In that same paper appeared the following advertisement: Mineral Springs Park, Willow Grove. Decoration Day. Opening of this beautiful Family resort. Grand Concert afternoon and evening by Prof. Hart’s Orchestra. El Nino Eddie, the world renowned tight rope walker, performed his daring feat over the Lake. Also various other attractions. Brilliant Display of Fire Works in the Evening. Admission Free.”

From the March 1898 Public Spirit: “C. F. Ehrenpfort expects to remove his toboggan and carousel from the Mineral Springs Park and place there a 600 light electric plant for his hotel and grounds. It will be constructed near the merry-go-round.” Then on March 12, 1898: “C. F. Ehrenpfort started to build his new electric plant to furnish lights for his hotel and park.” And in the June 4 issue: “The mineral Springs Hotel presents a fine appearance at night with its numerous lights. The porches, balconies and all about have rows of them.”

A previous news story contained this account: “C. F. Ehrenpfort raised the smokestack at his new electric plant this week. It is 39 inches in diameter and about 77 feet high. There will be two dynamos, one 800 light and one 100 light. The boiler is 100 horsepower and the plant is situated

in the pavilion that was used by the merry-go-round. A new building is to be built on the site now occupied by the stand near the railroad station (*The Ehrenpfort Block*). The building is to be 30 x 80 feet, one story high fronting on the pike. It is said it will be occupied as a drug store in front and pool and billiard room in the rear. Work on this building is to be started very shortly.

The Ehrenpfort family operated the Mineral Springs Inn until 1926, when they sold it for \$200,000. The Inn suffered greatly from the blight of prohibition, fell into shambles, and was razed in 1937. The Mineral Springs Park, comprising over nine acres, was purchased by the Willow Grove World War II Association following the war to create a suitable memorial to the veterans of that war. It later became a part of the Upper Moreland park system.

The Cherry Inn, 1870. David Cherry, probably the first tract developer in Willow Grove, built a series of frame houses on Cherry Street and Cherry Lane in 1859. Then in 1870, he built The Cherry Inn on the corner of Cherry Street and York Road. Residents recall the Inn as not being impressive in size and judging from the newspaper article below, its tenure as an inn was not all that long as it was used as a private residence 28 years later. From the August 13, 1898 Public Spirit: "David Cherry, flour and feed merchant, died of heart paralysis while bathing at Atlantic City. He was 67. He was an elder of the Abington Presbyterian Church and owned considerable property in Willow Grove, including the mansion now occupied by Thomas Rothwell and a row of framed cottages. He was for many years a summer resident of Willow Grove."

The "Mansion" in 1916 was owned by Dr. Franklin Watson. In the 1940s, the first floor of the Inn became a barroom, while the rest of the building became the residence of the owner. It was purchased in 1963 by the Willow Grove United Methodist Church and is used as a counseling center, renamed Aldersgate.

The Continental Villa Inn, 1717. The Continental Villa Inn was located at the junction of Easton and Mill Roads. The original tavern, measuring 15 feet by 15 feet, was built in 1717 according to the datestone. The tavern had a six-foot open hearth and a winding staircase to a room above containing shelves and cupboards for storage. The larger section of the Inn is thought to have been built around 1818, however, this date is unsubstantiated. The Inn had open beams and wide floorboards. Under one window, on the outside of the house, was a huge, shallow, basin-shaped stone protruding from the wall with a small hole for drainage used to work and dispense with waste water.

Next to the tavern was the ladies parlor equipped with a black Franklin stove. Next to the parlor was the dining room with a large floor to ceiling corner cupboard and in another corner a door concealing the dumbwaiter, which brought supplies up from the cellar. The last room on the first floor was the kitchen, equipped with a hand pump and sink, a large cook stove, large wooden dresser, and storage space.

The name Continental Villa is thought to have been given the Inn about the time of the United States Centennial in 1876. It was then that the Inn was refurbished with the latest refined conveniences for a country inn of the locality.

In 1851, it was owned by S. Soliday; in 1871 it was called the D. Parks Hotel and was purchased that same year by J. Cope; in 1893, it was owned by Anna Cope, and in 1910 by Elizabeth S. Roessler, who called it the Continental Farm. At this point it was no longer a boarding house. In the 1940s it was occupied by the Alderfer family. It was later demolished and the site cleared for construction of a gasoline station.

The Boarding Houses.

The last of the local boarding houses to remain in use today (2000) is the ***Parkside***, having survived nearly a hundred years to become an apartment house. Built in 1901 to capitalize on the influx of people coming to enjoy the amusements and music of the Willow Grove Park, this Victorian structure was host to the famous bands and leaders of the early 1900s as well as tourists from Philadelphia and surrounding areas. The ground-level floor at one time was a restaurant and the building was surrounded by spacious lawns and flower gardens. The five-story, frame house, with more than 40 rooms, was built by J. Catherwood Robinson, who lost it in a sheriff's sale in 1915. It reverted back to the Ridge Avenue Building and Loan Company, which ran it until 1924, during Willow Grove's boom years as a tourist attraction. In 1924, Milton and Edith Fleming bought the building and continued to operate it as a boarding house. During the second world war and the decline of the Park, the Parkside became a place for men to stay while looking for work in war plants. Basically, the outward appearance of the Parkside has remained unchanged and is a reminder of a simpler time, but one of grandeur in Willow Grove.

During the late 1800s and more than thirty five years into the next century, boarding houses thrived in Willow Grove, accommodating visitors attracted by the famous Willow Grove Park and its highly acclaimed entertainment. The community was regarded as a resort town with its attractions and mineral water cures.

Anna Stapler, whose parents owned a boarding house in Abington describes their daily routine: "Dining room waitresses became chambermaids soon after breakfast was over. It was the day of wash bowls and pitchers in each room and private baths were unheard of. During the day there was a great deal of card playing – euchre, whist and cribbage either in the parlor or out on the porch. Breakfast was a heavy meal with fruit, hot cereal, meat, potatoes, hot bread, coffee, tea and milk. No one in that day ever thought of skipping breakfast."

Among the boarding houses were the ***Edenfield***, ca. 1901, located a short distance east of the Parkside Boarding House on Park Avenue; the ***Phoenix Hotel and Annex***, ca. late 1800s, located just off of Welsh Road across from the Park, which by 1909 had become the Degree of Pocahontas Home for the Aged. The ***Madden & Wagamon Boarding House & Restaurant***, pre-1895, located on Park Avenue near Moreland Road.

The ***J. E. Buck Hotel***, in its declining days was operated as a boarding house by Mrs. Emma Masterson. At the time of the hotel fire in 1906, Mrs. Masterson, her aged mother, a younger brother and several boarders were the only occupants of the hotel.

Communication

Post offices. William Penn issued an order in July of 1683 for the establishment of a post office, the first of which was then granted to a man in Tacony. It was not until after the government reorganized in 1789, that congress established post offices and made arrangements for the transportation of the mail. In the beginning the system was slow and crude and mail was generally delivered by stage coaches passing through the community. There were only three post offices in the state during colonial times, none in Montgomery County. The first to be established in the County was in October of 1793 at Norristown. It is apparent that Norristown represented nearly a day's trip for local residents since it was deemed necessary by the postmaster at Norristown to advertise the names of those who had not picked up their mail. Included in the advertisement of October 4, 1799, were: "Nathaniel Boileau, esq., near the Billet; and Daniel Jourdan, near the Billet."

Stores, inns, mills, and mechanic shops served as post offices throughout most of the 18th century. Unlike small post offices where profits were minimal, post offices in taverns and inns also promoted the interests of the tavern keepers. Unfortunately, mail and newspapers were delivered in bundles to be sorted through by potential recipients, and the newspapers were sometimes opened and taken by curiosity seekers before the actual recipient arrived.

Postage in 1805 for a single letter, for 40 miles or less, was 8 cents; under 90 miles, 10 cents; under 150 miles, 17 cents; and under 500 miles, 20 cents.

The first post office in Willow Grove was located in the Red Lion Inn in 1811 during the ownership of the inn by Israel Michener (1809 to 1822). Mr. Michener became the first postmaster in Willow Grove. The post office changed locations over the years to accommodate the increase in population and volume of mail: in 1897, it was located in a general store at Park Avenue and Easton Road; 1900, the Mineral Springs Inn; 1916, the Rush Building next to the train station (the mail had to be picked up at the aforementioned by residents as delivery had not been established at the time); 1920, the right-hand section of a double house at 71 Old York Road; 1951, at 31 Easton Road; and in 1962, it moved to 611 North Easton Road.

Newspapers. The first newspaper printed in Moreland Township was edited and printed by Oliver L. Search in Hatboro in June of 1840. It was called the "*Literary Chronicle and Bucks and Montgomery Advertiser.*" It continued for several years in Hatboro and then moved to Newtown where it became the "Newtown Journal." It was discontinued in 1849.

The first issue of Hatboro's *Public Spirit* was printed in September of 1873 on a Washington Press, similar to the press used by Benjamin Franklin, which printed one page at a time with the type being set by hand. The *Public Spirit* became *Today's Spirit* in February of 1973, making it the oldest continuing business enterprise in Hatboro. In the first issue in 1873, the founder, William T. Robinson, M.D., wrote, "We will devote our columns to the best interests of the people, and advocate those interests with force and persistence. We will do our best to reform abuses to right what we believe to be wrong." The original issues consisted of four pages, the first and last pages preprinted with national and international news, were bought as 'boiler plates.' The inside two pages were printed in Hatboro. Dr. Robinson served as a Civil War Surgeon with the Bucks County Regiment and later as lazaretto (hospital for contagious diseases) physician for Philadelphia. Upon his death in 1900, his sons, Ernest and Penrose, took over the business as editor and manager respectively. Ernest was a Willow Grove resident and lived in the house next to Calvary Presbyterian Church.

The Robinson brothers started another newspaper called *The Willow Grove Guide* in 1925. In 1929, Ernest was succeeded as editor by his daughter, Ruth Robinson.

As times changed, so did printing methods. The Washington Press was supplanted by a primitive cylinder press, first powered by hand, then by horse, then by steam and finally electric power. Rolls of newsprint replaced the cumbersome single sheet method.

Telegraph. The first message by telegraph in Pennsylvania was sent from Norristown to Philadelphia on January 2, 1846. It happened less than two years after Samuel F. B. Morse sent his historic first telegraph message. The 'magnetic' telegraph lines from Philadelphia to Wilkes Barre and New Hope, were extended through the area in 1849 along the Easton and Middle (Huntingdon Pike) Roads. Rates in 1846 were ten cents for ten words sent up to fifty miles; from fifty to one hundred miles, the charge was twenty cents, and from Philadelphia to New York a quarter. By 1854, messages were printed on tape rather than by Morse code. The telegraph was invented in 1838; the patent granted in 1848.

Telephone. The telephone was invented by Alexander G. Bell in March of 1876 with the first being installed in Philadelphia that same year. Telephone service arrived in Montgomery County in the late 1870s and early 1880s. By 1925, there were 700 telephones in the Willow Grove area. The Bell Telephone office, located at the corner of York and Easton Roads at the time, moved its switchboards to the second floor of the new World War I Memorial Hall around December 22, 1925 to prepare for the expanding growth of the community.

Business and industry

Abundant natural resources of the colony made for early development of industries. Sawmills and grist mills were usually the first to appear, using the power of the numerous streams. Arts and crafts, as well as home manufactures, grew rapidly. Textile products were spun and woven mainly at home. As communities developed and grew, the need for special services also developed. Among the early businesses were: the **blacksmith**, who with forge, anvil, hammer and tongs worked up agricultural tools for the farmers, ‘tires’ for the wheelwright, fashioned horseshoes and repaired iron objects used around the home and farm; the **wheelwright**, who needed the talents of both carpenter and blacksmith to make wheels of wood bound with iron for the wagons and carriages of the day; the **saddler**, who made saddles and harnesses out of steer hide to meet the specifications of the buyer; the **silversmith**, who worked silver with artistic talent into all manner of utensils, both practical and ornamental, either by molding it or beating it into shape; and the **shoemaker**, who carefully measured the buyer’s foot so as to shape the shoes or boots to the size and style required, sometimes taking his equipment to an out-of-the-way home to do his work. Other businesses vital to the growing needs of a growing community were the **apothecary**, the **cooper** or barrel maker, the **gunsmith**, the indispensable **carpenter**, the **mason**, and of course, the **mill**.

The Dubree Scythe Factory, 1732. The first “industry” in the village of Willow Grove was a scythe factory built in 1732 and operated by the Dubrees, Jacob and James, father and son. The factory was located on Round Meadow Run, just off of York Road at the intersection with Easton Road. There is no existing description of the factory, however, it is imagined that it was small compared to the grist mills of the area. It is also imagined that the power generated by the Run and waterwheel were used for grinding wheel purposes to sharpen the long blade of the scythes and possibly for the turning of the scythe handles. A dam to power the factory was built 80 yards to the west in the meadow in front of the Manor House on Park Avenue, now a parking lot.

Preparing grain for bread to feed the people and for feed for domestic animals was one of the most indispensable wants of a newly settled people. English rulers were also glad to receive from America, cargoes of flour; hence grinding and preparing flour for export was a leading and extensive business in the early days of the country. It is not known if the local millers were among the exporters of flour. The sawmill was usually attached to most grist mills, but was often seen by itself on small streams that only furnished power in spring or wet weather. In addition to grist and saw mills - flour mills, plaster mills, cotton mills and a paper mill were also established along the Pennypack Creek or its tributaries.

The Davis, Parry, Morgan Grist Mill, 1727. In 1727, Sampson Davis, perhaps the second settler in the Willow Grove area, established a grist mill on Round Meadow Run at the intersection of Terwood and Davisville Roads. Davis sold the mill to Thomas Parry in 1731. The mill was greatly expanded before the Revolutionary War by John Parry, who was then listed as the owner. After a series of short-term owners, the mill was purchased by Benjamin J. Morgan in

1847. The property remained in the Morgan family until 1954. By 1850, the area was an important cross roads from Huntingdon Valley and the Shelmire Mills, to Willow Grove, to Newtown, and to Horsham Meeting. The area became known as "Morganville" and the mill complex included the grist mill, the miller's residence, a spring house, a carriage house, two barns, and ten worker's houses. Five of the structures remain today (2000).

From the June 13, 1896 Hatboro Public Spirit: "Benjamin Morgan died on Tuesday last at the home of his son W. F. Morgan, near Willow Grove in his 85th year. He was one of the oldest residents of these parts, having for a half century conducted the grist mill that bears the Morgan name. Of later years he has been blind. He was a man greatly respected for his probity and fine traits. Two children, a son, William F. Morgan, who succeeded his father in the milling business, and a daughter, the wife of Capt. A. C. Markley of the U. S. Army, now stationed in Philadelphia. The funeral will be held on Sunday, internment at Horsham Friends."

William Morgan, at some point, added an ice-house to the mill building, cutting blocks of ice from the nearby pond to sell to local residents. A newspaper article (undated) states: "W. F. Morgan's ice house, near Willow Grove, was burned to the ground on Wednesday morning about quarter of eleven. The building was a large frame structure about as high as a three-story house. It was nearly empty as no ice was obtained from the pond close by last winter. The frame landing platform alongside the railroad siding was also burned. This is now being rebuilt and a small storage house is also being constructed, so that the ice business can be continued without interruption."

The Yerkes, Shelmire Mills, pre 1760. Silas Yerkes, farmer and miller, built a grist mill on the Pennypack Creek at the juncture of Huntingdon and Creek Roads sometime before the year 1760. In 1787, he sold the mill and property to George Shelmire, who increased his holdings in 1794 with two acquisitions: the land and water rights of the late Josiah Yerkes, and the water rights, dam and certain lands of John McCulloch. Twenty years later in 1814 and 1815, George Shelmire sold his properties and water rights to his sons Jacob and George the younger. In 1825, the sons added the second grist mill to the property. In 1829, Jacob bought out his brother's interest and became the sole owner. In 1838, he added a plaster mill. Plaster was used to fertilize the land. The tax rolls of 1841 listed Jacob Shelmire as having two grist mills, a plaster mill, and six dwellings. The mills and property passed from the Shelmire family hands in 1869; was resold in 1876 and again in 1882. In all probability, inconsistent water supply for running the mills and cheaper flour produced by steam-powered mills in the cities doomed the mills in the area, including the Shelmire Mills.

The Lloyd, Hart, Hallowell, Mason Grist Mill, 1762. In 1758, Thomas Lloyd, an early pioneer, sold 27 acres of land along today's Masons Mill Road to his son Samuel. On this land in 1762, Samuel and his brother James constructed a grist mill and a large home. The mill and property was sold by the Lloyd family in 1768 to Joseph Hart, who later sold it to Dr. William Hallowell. It is known that Dr. Hallowell was operating the mill in 1851. The mill was acquired in the late 1800s by George Mason. The mill and the miller's house were demolished in the 1970s during the conversion of the property into a Township park.

The Nesmith, Yerkes Mills, 1731. John Nesmith built a gristmill on Terwood Run in 1731 near the intersection of Terwood and Papermill Roads. Mr. Nesmith sold his mill and its water rights to Richard Yerkes, who added a cotton mill to the complex. This milling 'community' included the two mills, two large houses for the owner and supervisor, a blacksmith shop, a store, a number of worker's houses, and a school for the children of the workers.

The area around the milling complex was called “Yerkesville” for nearly a century. Later, when Charles Blaker had the village store, it was called Blaker’s Corner; then when the store was purchased by the Yerkes family, the name Yerkesville was restored. Still later, the area was called Terwood.

The mill villages began to vanish with the drop in water in the creeks, making water power inconsistent and unreliable; the loss of manpower occasioned by the Civil War; and the cheaper production of flour and other materials by steam powered mills.

Some businesses in Willow Grove during the 1800s:

William Hallowell, Physician, 1850	J. L. Rush Wagon & Carriage Shop, 1872
W. L. Kentner, Blacksmith, 1897	James Sentman, Carpenter, 1850
Nicholas Kohl, Watchmaker, 1850	Benjamin Stoker, Wheelwright, 1850
Krier Store & Post Office, 1857	Schiffendecker’s Hydropathic Institute, 1848
Henry Morris, Store, 1850	Jacob Thomas, Blacksmith / Cooper, 1850
Newport Phosphate Works, 1872	Triebels Creamery, 1872
Isaac Rittenhouse, Blacksmith, 1850	John Walker, Mason, 1850

Roads and creeks

Old York Road. The history of Old York Road began on June 27, 1693, when the people of Cheltenham Township petitioned the Provincial Council for a convenient road to Philadelphia. The petition was granted within two months, however, the project was never started, probably due to legal problems. Eighteen years later, on January 27, 1711, a petition was again submitted by some residents and freeholders of Buckingham and Solebury Townships requesting that a convenient road be laid out from their areas down to Philadelphia. Along with their petition they also submitted a possible route for the road that would begin at the Delaware River, then to the Buckingham Meeting House; then across the land of Thomas Watson, Stephen Jenkins, George Shoemaker, and so forward the most direct course to Philadelphia...“the said road promising, as intended to be laid out, to be of great use and service to the public.”

The Council selected a group of twelve men by name, stipulating that any six would be satisfactory, to lay out the road and return their recommendations to the Secretary’s office within six months.

In August 1711, a meeting was scheduled for residents to state their objections to the road, but no one attended and a new meeting date was set for January 11, 1712. At that meeting the Council announced that the recommendations for the road were reviewed and some alterations made that seemed most convenient. By May of that year petitions objecting to the road began coming in, the petitioners claiming that great damage would be done to their properties.

After numerous objections, changes, and the work of three juries, Old York Road was laid out from the Delaware, starting about four miles above New Hope and following the Lenni Lenape Indian Trail through Willow Grove and on down to Fourth and Vine Streets in Philadelphia. Along the way it undoubtedly included some existing public rights-of-way already in use. Opening a road in those days consisted principally of removing a sufficient number of trees to allow teams of horses and wagons to get through. Most often it did not include the removal of stumps and large rocks. To open Old York Road through densely wooded country in the early 1700s was a great undertaking. About this same time, a wooden bridge, the first along the road, was built over Round Meadow Run in Willow Grove. In 1755, the steep grade over Sampson’s Hill was reduced by blasting and filling. Old York Road was a toll road at the time.

Welsh Road. According to a petition and grant of March Sessions, 1711, a road was laid out “from the bridge between the land of John Humphreys and Edward Foulke, in Gwyneth, to the

mills on Pennepack Creek,” at a ford in Moreland Township, which grant and laying out the court, in September, 1712, confirmed. This was the original Welsh Road, leading from Spring House to Huntingdon Valley, where the early settlers went to have their grain converted into flour.

Easton Road – North. This section of Easton Road was referred to at various times as Keith Road, Governor’s Road, the Doylestown-Willow Grove Turnpike, and finally Easton Road. The Colonial Records of 1722 indicate that the governor, Sir William Keith, who had a mansion in Horsham, requested that a road be built from his home to Willow Grove connecting with the Old York Road. Nicholas Scull, Surveyor General of Pennsylvania, laid out the road by way of “the Meeting House, and from thence to a small bridge, commonly called Round Meadow Run, where it meets against the Abington or New York road.” The bridge is mentioned several times in old records and must have been built between the years 1711 and 1720.

In 1828, a company was contracted or chartered to construct a turnpike from Doylestown to Willow Grove. Failing to raise enough money for the project, it was delayed by ten years. In 1838, a second charter was applied for, and the road was completed by 1840. John Warner, one of the supervisors on the project stated that that year (1859), in Moreland Township, because of so many streams, there existed 95 Township bridges.

Byberry Road. Byberry Road was laid out in 1720 to allow transportation between the Quaker meeting houses in Horsham and Byberry. It was also known as the Fox Chase and Huntingdon Valley Turnpike.

Davisville Road. Originally called Newtown Road, it was built in 1731.

Terwood Road. Terwood Road was laid out in 1731 and was referred to as “Parry’s Road” because it extended to Parry’s Grist Mill (later known as Morgan’s Mill) at the intersection of Davisville and Terwood Roads.

Easton Road – South. Originally called the Germantown and Willow Grove Turnpike and “The Plank Road”, it was incorporated in 1853, with a route five miles long through Cheltenham, Abington and Moreland Townships. It was to be a road sixty feet wide with held up the construction and it was not completed until the year 1857. The “Plank Road” was not easily kept in repair for obvious reasons, and after some years the entire road was macadamized. Despite the new surface, it was for many years still called “The Plank Road.”

The Germantown and Willow Grove Turnpike was also a toll road. After the opening of the Willow Grove Park in 1895, traffic on the “Plank Road” increased tremendously. At first the bicyclers and then those who came in cars complained loudly and bitterly about the numerous toll-gates and the high tolls charged. The complaint indicated that it cost more in tolls to get to Willow Grove than a trip on the train. After extensive litigation, “Plank Road” became a free road in 1915.

Toll road charges depended on the distance between toll-houses and varied from one horse – one cent, to one horse – ten cents. The fee was doubled for two horses. The tollhouse keeper usually put the gate down at 9 p.m., except on Thursday night, which was market night when the farmers took their produce to Philadelphia. He would then re-open the gate from midnight to around 4:30 a.m. or until all the wagons had returned. Anyone using the gate after 9 p.m. the rest of the week would have to awaken the keeper.

Peter Kalm, in his “Travels” in 1748 stated that, “there are not yet any milestones put up in the country; the inhabitants compute the distance by guess.”

Creeks. The major creek in Upper and Lower Moreland Townships is the Pennypack. It traverses nearly the length of both townships and has many tributaries including Round Meadow

Run, which meanders through Willow Grove. The Huntingdon Valley Creek running across Lower Moreland joins the Pennypack near its point of exit from that Township, while the Southampton Creek joins the Pennypack as it passes through Bryn Athyn. The Poquessing Creek, emanates from the extreme lower corner of Lower Moreland Township and exits a short distance from there into Philadelphia County.

The creeks and tributaries of the Manor were extremely important to the settlers as sources of water for drinking, bathing, washing clothes, catching fish for food, and of course, power to drive the many mills so vital to subsistence in those days.

Transportation

During the first seventy-five years after the settlers arrived in the area, transportation was done on foot or if distance was involved, on horseback. Huge sacks, wallets (flexible folding case), baskets, and panniers (basket carried on the back of an animal) were used to transport produce and goods to Philadelphia. Men on horseback could be seen surrounded with poultry, pork, butter, flax, and on occasion with live calves and sheep conveyed to market by these means. Old and young, men and women, were usually conveyed on horseback for both business and pleasure; and to get to their place of worship on Sunday.

Sleds and wagons. Sleds were generally used before wagons. Wagons were at first very rudely constructed with little or no iron and the wheels were of solid wood cut from the end of a log. The wheels were placed on the ends of two heavy axletrees affixed to the bed of the wagon. The weight of the wagon alone would require the strength of two horses to pull it due to the conditions of the primitive roads made with little regard for removing rocks and stumps, or the fording of streams. In unfavorable weather, particularly in spring and late fall, the roads were rendered so bad that it was almost impossible for the wagons to get through.

In Willow Grove, the earliest wagon makers were located on Davisville Road just east of the train station. According to an article in the Public Spirit dated March 28, 1884, "Fulton and Rush have contracted to build a new wheelwright, and express and farm wagon shop. The 'Grove Haywagon' and the 'Fulton Express Wagon' are well known in the city of Philadelphia for their quality."

By the year 1776, Moreland Township had five gristmills, four stores, three taverns, and five blacksmith shops and not a church, post office, turnpike, or even a line of stage coaches for the conveyance of passengers.

Stagecoaches. While a stagecoach occasionally passed through Willow Grove before the Revolutionary War, they were discontinued during the war and the British occupation of Philadelphia.

In 1792, John Nicholas established a stage coach line from Easton to Philadelphia, starting on Mondays, making one trip a week, and returning on Thursdays. The coach departed at 6 a.m.; the fare was \$2.00 each way. The stage also carried the mail. In 1810, Mr. Nicholas increased the round trips to the City to three, making Doylestown a stopover for the night.

In 1800, a semi-weekly line was established by eight partners, along the same route from Bethlehem to Philadelphia; the fare being \$2.75. This same cost was applied to baggage weighing one hundred and fifty pounds.

Before 1802, a stage line, starting at 8 a.m. from Mann's Inn in Philadelphia was running along Old York Road on the way to New York pulled by a four-horse team and carrying the mail. One of the more popular drivers on this line was John Jones of Hatboro. In proceeding

from Philadelphia, they breakfasted at the Red Lion Inn in Willow Grove, where the Easton stage also stopped and changed horses.

In 1813, a line was established from Doylestown to the City; the fare being seventy-five cents. In 1815, tri-weekly trips were made and the fare increased to \$1.75. The line was called the High Grass Line and the proprietors were Charles H. Mann, Jacob E. Buck and Joseph Hamett. In 1846, two lines were running in competition to each other, the second line being started by Daniel Shelmire of Abington. The fares were reduced to seventy-five and fifty cents.

From 1825 to 1832, William Shouse, a hotel proprietor in Easton and a partner, Col. Reeside, introduced a line to compete with Mr. Nicholas of Easton. With this opposition, the travel time was reduced from fifteen hours to eight on good roads. One of their relay stations was at Willow Grove.

Around 1854, Willow Grove had five daily stagecoach lines stopping from Philadelphia: one from Easton, one from New York, two from Doylestown, and one from Hartsville.

On Mondays and Saturdays during the summer season these stagecoaches were generally drawn by four horses and sometimes six and could travel up to forty miles a day. During the winter with snow and early darkness, the distance was about twenty-five miles. In summertime, the passengers were oppressed by heat and road dust; and in winter by the extreme cold. Some of the early coaches were nothing more than wagons with long wooden benches, no back rests, on which travelers sat for up to eighteen hour rides. Sometimes they were forced to get down from the wagon to help lift the coach out of a mud hole or rut. Generally stopping at an inn around ten o'clock in the evening, cramped and weary, they ate a frugal supper, went to bed and awaited the wake up call at 3 a.m. to continue their journey.

The arrival of the stage was a time of bustle with the incoming friends, relatives, strangers, newspapers and the mail. The driver was an important person as he was imposed upon for a variety of errands.

Trolleys. The Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company was the outgrowth of many independent lines, which in turn sprang from horse-car lines running on tracks beginning in 1858.

The trolley line of the People's Traction Company was extended in 1895 as far north as Jenkintown, when resistance by Abington residents temporarily impeded its progress. By the time the Willow Grove Park opened in 1895, tracks had been laid on both sides of York Road. The success of the Park hastened construction of the Bucks County Railway Company line from Doylestown, which reached Willow Grove in 1898. This line, under the control of the Union Traction Company, successor to the People's Traction Company, became part of Philadelphia Rapid Transit in 1902.

All of the Philadelphia routes running directly to the Park funneled into the York Road line. The ride up and back from the City was delightful, running north on one side of the road and south on the other.

As early as 1901, the right of way had been secured for a line to Willow Grove through Glenside and plans for construction were announced in 1903. At about the same time, a five-acre terminal was built in Willow Grove opposite the Park between Easton and Davisville Roads. The Glenside ride was a delightful one also, going completely through open country outside the City limits. Glenside at the time had only an occasional house.

All of the Philadelphia cars built between 1892 and 1899 were four-wheel dinkies, open and closed. After that period, only double-truck, eight wheelers were added to the line. Some of these were 12-bench opens called "Dreadnaughts" or "Greyhounds."

The lines to Doylestown and Hatboro were discontinued in 1931. The Old York Road line (Numbers 24 and 55) was discontinued in 1940. The Glenside line (Number 6), greatly shortened to City service, was discontinued beyond City limits in 1958.

At their peak, 110,000 trolley cars carried 15 billion passengers a year over 50,000 miles of track. The bus, first used in 1907, did not become a threat to the trolley until the 1920s. The automobile however, was a more formidable foe. The trolley companies fought a delaying action by carrying freight, putting on diners, sleepers, parlor cars, double-deckers, smokers, and funeral cars. The Depression was the final blow.

Trains. In 1833, Samuel Breck, after riding in a train, wrote: “If one could stop when one wanted, and if one were not locked up in a box, with fifty or sixty tobacco chewers, and the engine and fire did not burn holes in one’s clothes; and the springs and hinges did not make such a racket and the smell of smoke, of the oil and of the chimney did not poison one...” and he continues with the pleasures of train riding. Many of these problems did not exist by the time the North East Pennsylvania Railroad opened through Willow Grove, with the first stream-powered train arriving on December 18, 1872 on the way to Hatboro and Hartsville. The North East became a part of the Reading Railroad in 1945.

Public services

Montgomery County Society for the Recovery of Stolen Horses and Bringing Thieves to Justice, 1799. The Society originated in Moreland Township and in addition to answering local needs, served parts of Horsham and Upper Dublin. In the early days they held their annual meetings in Willow Grove and had a membership of forty-five men.

Willow Grove Volunteer Fire Company No. 1, 1907. Historic accounts mention the existence of a fire company as early as 1854. A hand-drawn map dated 1857 indicates a “Fire Engine” located near the intersection of York and Easton Roads on Round Meadow Run. This is believed to have been nothing more than a hose and bucket cart kept in a small shed. If a fire company existed at the time, it must have been disbanded by the turn of the century because after a destructive fire on November 21, 1906, a group of residents recognized the need for a fire company. To this end they held meetings at the Knights of Columbus Hall across from Cherry Street on York Road.

A petition and application for a charter were filed with the Montgomery County Court on December 26, 1906, which was granted on March 6, 1907. A horse-drawn cart was purchased and kept at the Knights of Columbus Lodge. In 1908, a water line was extended from Abington Township and fire hydrants were installed. Between 1912 and 1924, several makeshift used motorized vehicles were pressed into service. In 1925, a two-story brick building to house the fire equipment was constructed on Davisville Road. As the town grew, and additional equipment was purchased, this building was expanded in both 1937 and 1949. In 1967, a new, larger building was built at the corner of Davisville Road and Abbeyview Avenue and was dedicated in 1968 along with the first tractor trailer ladder truck. In 1993, a substation was built near the intersection of County Line and Davisville Roads.

Police. Most rural communities did not need services such as a police department until their population increases demanded them. Law enforcement was handled on an individual incident basis by a county constable or sheriff and later by the state police. Under a new constitution of 1839, the office of constable was established in every township and elected by the voters. The need for a policeman in Upper Moreland was recognized in 1925 as a result of factions in Willow Grove being accused of “rowdyism” and threatening the reputation of the community.

Discussions were held that year by the Commissioners on seeking approval from the Montgomery County Court to hire a traffic policeman.

It was not until August 13, 1926 that Earl Swayze was approved by the Court to be the first policeman in Upper Moreland. Swayze was the Chief of the Fire Department, an ex-serviceman, one of the organizers of the American Legion Liberty Post 308, and a resident of Willow Grove for more than twenty years. He served for ten years as Police Chief.

The Upper Moreland Police Department grew with the community and in the 1940s had a staff of twenty-five members which increased to forty policemen and support personnel by the year 2000.

Second Alarmers Rescue Squad, 1938. Chartered under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a non-profit organization, the Second Alarmers Association began operating in April of 1938. Several residents of the community joined together to create a group that would care for and provide a much needed service for firemen, police and other rescue workers. Their first call was on April 2, 1938 and the Association's first annual report indicated that 35 calls were answered, serving 95 companies with 2,542 firemen, and traveling over 635 miles to spend 98 hours in service.

From the original truck, the Association's equipment expanded to include a truck in 1940 to serve as an aid station ambulance; another truck in 1947, which was replaced in 1963 with a bus. The Association's first ambulance was donated by the Willow Grove Veterans of Foreign Wars. Over the next several years, four more ambulances, a canteen bus and a light rescue truck were added. In 1990, the Association's original building on Davisville Road was demolished and a new, larger facility was constructed and dedicated on October 4, 1992. The Association is an indispensable and highly regarded asset to the community.

The Upper Moreland Free Public Library, 1928. In 1928, the Willow Grove Civic Club opened a small library on Moreland Road, between Church and Cherry Streets. It was later moved to larger quarters at the corner of Davisville and York Roads. It closed in 1934 due to the Depression and its pressures on families and the Township.

In 1956, a group of residents formed a Library Committee from the North Willow Grove School's PTA to address the issue of starting a library. Mrs. Hilda Mills, chair of the committee, requested aid from both the Township Board of Commissioners and the School Board. A library tax, placed on the 1958 general election ballot failed.

In February of 1959, a small basement at 68 North York Road between Cherry Street and the railroad tracks was rented with six families pledging to underwrite the rent for six months. Mrs. James Hitt and Mrs. Louis Capaldi, professional librarians, volunteered to process books donated by local residents.

A charter was issued for the library in March of 1959 by the Court of Common Pleas of Montgomery County and the new library opened on April 25, 1959. In December of 1959, the Board of Commissioners agreed to lease a township-owned house at 109 Park Avenue to the library for a period of two years. In 1962, a full-time librarian, Mrs. Ruth Goering, and two part-time clerks were hired. Between 1964 and 1967, the library temporarily moved to another township-owned building at the corner of Easton Road and Park Avenue during the construction of a new township building. In June of 1967, following completion of the new building, the library moved into the basement of the facility. In 1997, having outgrown the confines of the basement accommodations, a new, separate and larger building was constructed on Park Avenue. The library has 15,000 square feet of space, tripling the space of the old facility, and houses 60,000 volumes.

Local government

While the Manor of Moreland was established in 1684, it was not referred to as a township much before 1718. The minutes of the County Commissioners commence in 1718, at which time *Assessors* and *Collectors of Taxes* had been appointed for Moreland Township. Later, immediately upon the formation of a township, the court would appoint a *Constable*, and one or two *Overseers of Highways* and the same number for *Overseers of the Poor*, these constituting the only local officers until near the time of the Revolution. Once houses for the poor were established, the office of Overseer of the Poor was abolished.

As a second class township, Moreland relied on the County for much of its political, financial, and legal authority. Justices of the Peace were limited in their jurisdiction, and taxation originated or was supervised at the County level. Rural communities did not need services until their population increases demanded them. So long as the roads were in good repair, the businessmen and local residents were willing to regulate themselves by voluntary cooperation. Willow Grove in 1776 had only five dwellings and by 1850 this number increased to twenty dwellings, so the need for local government was not driven by necessity.

Through a new County Constitution of 1839, the offices of Justice of the Peace, Constable, two Supervisors, Assessor, Assistant Assessor, Auditor, Treasurer, and Clerk were established in every township and elected by the voters. School Directors were added later. The first elections for these offices were held in March of 1840. Power of government was now in the local hands.

On January 2, 1917, Aaron S. Swartz, president judge of the court of Montgomery County, decreed that Moreland Township be divided into two townships to be known as Upper Moreland and Lower Moreland. He appointed three men from each township to the office of *Road Supervisor*. The three from Upper Moreland were John J. Bready, W. L. Kenton, and Newton Duffield. *The early Road Overseers became Road Supervisors, and later, after assuming many administrative duties for services other than road maintenance, became the forerunners of the present day township commissioner form of government.*

In 1926, The Willow Grove Board of Trade was established and according to its year book had as its purpose, briefly stated: 1. To promote integrity, fair dealings and good faith among the businessmen and the community in general, 2. To strive to increase the wealth, industries, influence, trade, population, and the betterment of all civic interests and welfare of the citizens of Willow Grove, and 3. To encourage the building of good roads and to see that the streets of Willow Grove are kept in good condition.

Some of their activities included erecting signs on all approaches to Willow Grove with the slogan, "Famous the World Over"; support for a school board bond issue; meetings dealing with such topics as township government, borough government, civic improvement, fire zoning, street lighting, property assessments, etc.; a debate on the value of changing from a second class to a first class township; numbered houses of Willow Grove; changed names of streets to avoid repetition; circulated petitions for fire plugs and electric lights; placed no parking signs along York Road; repaired the intersection of York and Easton Roads; and was considering widening Davisville Road. The Board also rendered a comprehensive report of the advantages of Borough Government for Willow Grove.

The Board of Trade apparently worked in conjunction with the *Road Supervisors*, referred to as *Township Supervisors* in 1926, in the making and carrying out of governmental decisions and community improvement.

A headline in the April 19, 1928 Hatboro Spirit proclaimed, "Moreland Now First Class. No Objections Filed. Many Improvements Now Possible. To Name Com-missioners. In accordance

with the decree of the Montgomery County Courts, Upper Moreland became a township of the first class. Rapid growth in population warranted the change. Township Commissioners to be named by the Court.” As it turned out, the Commissioners were elected by the voters, not appointed.

The August 8, 1929 Hatboro Spirit carried the following: “Seek Offices In Moreland. Change To First Class Brings Out Many Candidates. Primaries September 17.” The article pointed out that Upper Moreland would become first class in 1930 and with the change in government, five commissioners were to be elected to replace the Township Supervisors. Early candidates for Commissioner were O.E.C. Robinson, Clinton W. Morgan, Arthur Hill, Max Marschner, T. Frank Miller, and James Weston. Five others filed as candidates later.

At the time, Upper Moreland was divided into two districts. District 1 would elect a Commissioner for a four-year term, while District 2 would elect for a two-year term. In addition, there would be three “at-large” candidates elected by both districts for four-year terms.

The Hatboro Spirit of September 19, 1929 ran the results of the election:

Commissioner, 1st District: James W. Weston

Commissioner, 2nd District: John Riley

Commissioners-At-Large: Arthur Hill, Francis Ball, Clinton W. Morgan

Treasurer: W. L. Kentner

School Director: Frank C. Valentine

Assessor: Russell Sherman

Assistant Assessor: L. M. Olt

Upper Moreland became a first class township on January 1, 1930. Today there are seven Commissioners representing the seven wards of the township. The terms of Commissioners are staggered to ensure continuity of government. At the Board’s regular monthly meeting, formal action is taken on all business that requires resolutions and ordinances, and the awarding of contracts. The seven Commissioners also chair or serve on the committees of local government, i.e., the Administrative Committee, the Parks and Recreation Committee, the Budget and Finance Committee, the Public Health and Safety Committee, the Public Works Committee, and the Community Development Committee. Issues discussed at committee meetings are then moved to the regular Board of Commissioners meeting for action.

Famous Willow Grove Park

The Willow Grove Park, most of which was in Abington Township including the larger amusement part of the facility, was the attraction that gave Willow Grove country-wide prominence and world-wide fame. Peter Widener and William Elkins, two influential men in the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company, conceived the concept of creating a park to entice Philadelphians and others to ride their new trolley line. The first trolley car arrived in Willow Grove by way of Glenside on May 11, 1895. The trolley soon included a special car for carrying bicycles, “so that the ladies might pedal out to Willow Grove by wheel, but ride comfortably home if overly fatigued.”

The Park opened a year later on May 30, 1896. The ideas of a park at the end of a trolley line and concerts by famous bands were to be copied across the country. Concerts at the Park, referred to as a ‘noble experiment’, were a regular part of the annual schedule beginning in 1897. They actually began on opening day with the Frederick N. Innes Band, the forerunner of the ‘experiment.’ Innes’ ‘Famous Fifty’ gave two concerts daily and it is reported they were paid \$2,000 a week. On the 4th of July of that first year, 45,000 came to the new Park. One old

resident, seeing the large holiday crowd, remarked, "Such a mess of people was never seen in the Grove."

On Memorial Day, 1897, Walter Damrosch and his orchestra started a series of concerts to the great reluctance and apprehension of the Park management. His concerts continued afternoon and evening until the middle of September. Audiences numbering between 15,000 and 20,000 on special nights greeted the Damrosch orchestra with unprecedented exuberance. To present a well-rounded program on Monday nights, a complete symphony was presented, and on Friday nights, Wagner became a favorite of the people. Damrosch and his orchestra returned to the Park for five more seasons. Orchestras frequently seen and heard at the Park were those of Victor Herbert, Frederick Stock, Nahan Franko, Wassali Leps, Theodore Thomas, the Russian Symphony, and the New York Symphony led by Damrosch.

Many bands also came to the Park. They included the Carlisle Indian Band, Patrick Conway, Arthur Pryor, Giuseppe Creatore, Kilties Band of Canada, Banda Rossa under Eugenio Sorrentino, the Ladies Military Band, and Stewart's Boston Concert Band. John Philip Sousa, 'The March King', of U. S. Marine Band fame, appeared in 1901 and thereafter yearly until 1926, with the exception of one year, 1911, when on world tour.

As a result of these musical triumphs, parks all over the country engaged bands and orchestras, however, it was Willow Grove Park that became known as "The Music Capitol of America."

The train, later becoming part of the Reading Railroad, carried 583,348 passengers to Willow Grove in 1903, and on the last Sunday of that season, carried more than 45,000 visitors to the Park. It was estimated that in the summer season of 1909, the total attendance at the Park was 3,000,000. In 1926, 100,000 people attended John Philip Sousa's final concert.

The land area of the Park was impressive in size. The part bounded by Easton Road and Park Avenue, York and Moreland Roads contained beautifully manicured lawns, irregularly-shaped ponds, lovely flower gardens, gazebos and pavilions, all divided by meandering walking paths. It also held the superintendent's house, an elegant stone home designed by noted architect Horace Trumbauer; and a guard house for the Park's own police force. The portion bounded by Easton and Davisville Roads, York and Moreland Roads contained the Park's power plant, greenhouse, trolley maintenance building, sewage disposal plant, and Park office. The section bounded by Moreland and Welsh Roads, Easton and a point just short of Preston Avenue, was the main amusement area; while an irregular tract of land beyond Welsh Road extending into the Crestmont area was not used at all.

The Park's police or guard had a staff of nearly twenty men whose duty it was to ensure tranquility and adherence to the rules of dress and demeanor. Old photos reveal that the ladies were clothed in floor length dresses, while the men wore suits, ties and usually a straw hat. Bad language was not tolerated as evidenced by the story of a woman who complained to management that she overheard one noted band leader dressing down a member of the band in objectionable language. That band was never invited to return to the Park.

The Park's amusements evolved as experience dictated success or failure of individual attractions. One building called The Theatre housed 'The Biograph', featuring kinetoscopes, mutoscopes, X-Rays, and phonographs. Other features included The Mystic Moorish Maze, The Little Scenic Railway, The Mountain Scenic Railway (later called 'The Alps'), The Midway, The Casino Restaurant, a Promenade, the famous Electric Fountain in the lake, the Soda-Water Fountain, the Ladies' Pavilion, a Lake Pavilion, a Bicycle-Swing, the Bicycle Track, the Band Shell and Pavilion, a picnic grove, Shooting the Chutes on a Bicycle, the Captive Flying

Machine, the Venice with its canals along the world-famous Riviera, Tours of the World was a movie shown to viewers seated in train coaches giving the illusion of movement, a miniature railroad powered by a real steam locomotive, the Mirror Maze, Candyland, famous for its popcorn taffy, and two fancy pagodas labeled 'Orangeuce' dispensed that newly popular drink. Other attractions were a Toboggan, a Ferris Wheel, Ye Old Mill, two Carousels, a Photo Shop, The Skooter, The Caterpillar, Dance Land, a Merry-Go-Round, the Thunderbolt Roller Coaster, Skee Ball, an electric launch on the lake, and Bluebeard's Palace. The slogan for the Park was "Life is a Lark at Willow Grove Park."

The Bicycle Track was the subject of a short article in the Public Spirit on March 26, 1898, which stated: "The Willow Grove Cycle Track has been leased for the coming year by the American Cycle Racing Association. The Association already has under contract, Edouard Taylore, champion of France at middle distance racing."

A novel roller-coaster ride was called the "Coal Mine", (later called The St. Nicholas Colliery) supposedly a reproduction of the St. Nicholas mine in upstate Pennsylvania. Riders descended the mine in a coal car replica of those actually used to enter a mine. This attraction burned down in 1930, killing several persons. James Michener fictionally dramatized the incident in his first novel, "The Fires of Spring", which is thought to be autobiographical. Michener worked at the Park in the 1920s while attending Swarthmore College. He performed all sorts of odd jobs. In his novel he reveals various con games he encountered while working as a ticket seller, including ingenious ways of cheating the Park management out of a good percentage of ride fares. He also told of gypsies who made annual visits to the Park with their tricks to bilk the public.

Another amusement to have a tragic ending was "The Chase Through the Clouds." The ride featured two passenger cars pulled to the tree tops simultaneously and then released to gravity and the chase was on. They criss-crossed each other's paths in the headlong race. At one point the cars would hit a sharp turn high among the tree tops. One night, one car plunged off of the track into the trees killing several riders and injuring many others. It was the end the ride.

Around 1926, the park was purchased by Meyer Davis, who had his own orchestra that performed for dances at the Park. Mr. Davis added many new innovations to amuse his patrons. He introduced performances by elephants, an exhibition of tropical fish under the auspices of the Pennsylvania Fish Culturists Society and others, a Perfect Foot Contest sponsored by the Chiropody Society of Pennsylvania, the Inez Wood Diving Nymphs, Balloon Rides, The Tokio Café, The Rustic Lunch, The Lakeview Café, and performances by bands such as that led by Paul Whiteman, the Sultan of Jazz.

The thirteen and a half acres of the Park lying in Willow Grove was purchased in 1945 by the Hankin Brothers and developed into a shopping center with the Penn Fruit Supermarket opening in 1947, followed by Snellenberg's Department Store and G. C. Murphy's Store in 1953.

The amusement portion of the Park was then purchased by the Hankins in 1958 and a 116 lane bowling alley, the largest in the world, built on the Moreland Road side. The Park's rides were beginning to deteriorate from age, wear and weather and some had to discontinued and demolished.

About 1970, a syndicate leased the amusement section of the Park and converted it into a theme park called "Six Gun Territory" which gave it a western flavor.

The days of the once glamorous Willow Grove Park, famous the world over, came to an end on April 14, 1976, and was demolished to make way for a giant mall.

Area names past and present

Very often in early times, small communities were built around local mills and included housing for the owner, the mill supervisor, and the workers. In addition to the mill itself, the site may have included barns, carriage houses, and other out buildings. Names for these settlements usually took the name of the owner of the mill complex. Such was the case in this area. In other instances, the name of an area was taken from the first settler, or the first store owner, especially after the government began putting post offices in general stores in outlying regions. Roads and streets were often named after people who settled that locale or were prominent citizens; and sometimes the name of a road indicated its destination such as a business or a meeting house.

Abington: In 1792, it was called Shepherd's, probably after the owner of the local inn; by 1787 it was known as Mooretown, after Mary Moore, who then owned the inn. A map of 1897 indicates it was then called Abington Village.

Blaker's Corner. Intersection of Terwood and Papermill Roads, named after George Blaker, mid to late 1700s store owner. His store served the Yerkesville milling complex.

Cedar Avenue: Between York and Easton was called Lakeview Avenue in 1916.

Center Avenue: Between York and Easton was called Grove Avenue in 1916.

Cherry Street: Named for David Cherry, early merchant and land developer.

Davisville Road: Formerly called Newtown Road

Easton Road, North: Originally called Governor's Road or Keith's Road after Pennsylvania Governor Sir William Keith; later known as the Doylestown & Willow Grove Turnpike.

Easton Road, South: Referred to as Plank Road; officially as the Germantown & Willow Grove Turnpike.

Frazier's Hill: And Frazier Avenue were named after William Frazier, former owner of the entire hill area in the late 1800s. Manor Avenue is named for Frazier's manor house still extant on the hilltop.

Hatboro: Or Hatborough; formerly Crooked Billet.

Horseheaven: This is the name given to the highest elevation in Montgomery County, better known as Frazier's Hill. In the 1700s, five stage coach lines passed through Willow Grove on their way to New York and other cities. Willow Grove, being 13 or 14 miles from Philadelphia, was about the limit of a horse's endurance for a day, and was a convenient location to change horses. The stage coaches, being pulled by nearly all four-horse teams, were subjected to considerable wear and tear from the particularly poor conditions of the roads. Those horses, because of age or infirmity, that succumbed to the stress were buried on the northern slope of the hill between Church Street and Davisville Road. Hence the name Horseheaven.

Huckleberry Hill. Huntingdon Road hill between Terwood and Masons Mill Road.

Huntingdon Valley: Originally called Goosetown.

Mill Road: Named so because it originally went from Easton Road to Morgan's Mill at Davisville Road. The railroad rerouted Mill Road to end at York Road.

Moreland Road: Called New Welsh Road in 1897. A map of 1916 shows Moreland.

Morganville: Milling community at the crossroads of Terwood and Davisville Roads, named after Benjamin Morgan, the owner.

Quigley Avenue: Named for George W. Quigley, founder of the Willow Grove United Methodist Church in 1888.

Solidaysville: Or Saladaysville as noted on an 1851 map. This referred to the area at the junction of Easton and Blair Mill Roads and was probably named for the local store owner or land owner.

Sampson's Hill and Sampson Street: Named for Sampson Davis, a 1718 settler.

Shelmire Mills: Milling community at Huntingdon and Creek Roads, named for the George Shelmire family, who operated the mills in 1787.

Summit Avenue: Between York and Easton was called Highland Avenue in 1916.

Terwood. An early name for the area at the crossroads of Terwood and Papermill Roads. The name Terwood is believed to be a corruption of the word Tarewood from the stream that went through the area to the Pennypack Creek.

Terwood Road: Formerly called Parry Road, it led to Parry's Grist Mill at Terwood and Davisville Roads.

Yerkesville: Milling community at the crossroads of Terwood and Papermill Roads, named for Richard Yerkes, operator of a grist and cotton milling complex.

How Willow Grove got its name

Records indicate that as early as 1722, the Willow Grove area was referred to as 'round-the-meadow', later shortened to **Round Meadow**, owing to the great 'S' shaped curve made by the Old York Road between a large meadow on one side and a 150-acre swamp on the other. The road was laid out on an existing Lenni Lenape Indian trail.

Around 1768 to 1770, the Wagon Tavern was sold at the junction of York and Easton Roads and it was renamed The Red Lion Inn. The Inn became well known throughout the area for its amenities and food and was a stop on the stagecoach lines of the day. The popularity of the Inn lent its name to the area and by the time of the Revolution, the Willow Grove area was called **Red Lion**.

In the late 1700s, farmers north of the town would drive their livestock to Philadelphia to the market and to city buyers. During these drives they would stay overnight at the local inn, usually sleeping on the floor due to overcrowding, while their livestock was kept in enclosures nearby. Between the years 1780 and 1790, one of the enclosures gave way and the farmer's pigs roamed the area trampling and foraging the local gardens. The incident resulted in a lawsuit respecting swine, for trespass and damages, and the area was then referred to as **Pigtown** and sometimes **Pig's Alley**. This name clung tenaciously to the area for nearly a hundred years.

In 1792, a mapmaker named Reading Howell of Hartsville, was working on a map of townships of Pennsylvania. Tradition has it that while preparing that part of the map concerning the local area, he saw a farmer planting willow trees in an effort to draw off water from the swampy surroundings and asked the farmer what he should designate the place by on the map. The farmer's reply was certainly influenced by his occupation of the moment and he suggested **Willow Grove**. Reading Howell's map of 1792 is the earliest mention of the name Willow Grove.

The division of Moreland Township

Upon the formation of Montgomery County in 1784, the lower portion of the "Manor" remained inside Philadelphia County and became the Township of Moreland. With the City-County Consolidation Act of 1854, it was merged with Philadelphia and lost its separate identity.

Moreland Township. The remainder of the "Manor" became Moreland Township. It had a length of six miles and a width of three miles. The population in 1790 was 1,284; in 1830, 2,044; and in 1880, 1,746. In 1883, with Hatboro incorporated and taken out of Moreland Township

statistics, there existed five hotels, five general stores, three dealers in flour and feed, one dealer in fertilizer, one in agricultural implements, one coal and one lumber yard.

Hatboro. Hatboro was incorporated on August 26, 1871 and contains an area of about 600 acres or 1.56 square miles. It is one and a half miles from north to south and three quarters of a mile at its widest. According to an 1880 census, it listed 586 inhabitants. At the time it had two hotels, two drug stores, one hardware store, one shoe store, two confectionery stores, one furniture store and three general stores. It also had two carriage manufacturers, two tin-shops, two bakers, one machine-shop, two flour-mills, one livery stable, one lumber yard, one wheelwright, and two coal yards.

Bryn Athyn. The citizens of Bryn Athyn applied for separate government in 1915 and were seeking to govern its own affairs because it had objectives not shared by its neighbors. On February 8, 1916, Judge Aaron S. Swartz decided in their favor on secular grounds such as taxes, land titles, and self-management, although the residents were clear in their determination to establish a religious community for followers of Emanuel Swedenborg. Bryn Athyn, a borough, contains about 1.90 square miles of land.

Upper and Lower Moreland. At the close of 1916, the remainder of the Township of Moreland was divided, forming the two townships of Upper and Lower Moreland. The Upper Moreland land area is 7.58 square miles, while that of Lower Moreland is 6.77 square miles. The following is taken from an article appearing in the Public Spirit, circa 1916: "A largely attended meeting of citizens of Moreland Township was held on Wednesday evening in the firemen's hall, Willow Grove, to consider the advisability of dividing the township. The former committee, consisting of Henry W. Hallowell, Israel Hallowell, Harry G. Ely, of the lower end; Clement Keightly, C. A. Patterson, C. W. Morgan and Mr. Rollins, of the upper end, was continued, to have a survey made and a petition prepared to be presented to the court so the citizens can vote on same at the next election, or some date the court may specify." The article goes on to briefly describe a possible dividing line. Then more about the meeting: "George W. Quigley presided and H. Benton Leedom was secretary, pro tem. Remarks were made by Israel Hallowell, Harry G. Ely, Harry Hallowell, H. Benton Leedom, C. W. Morgan, J. Dyre Moyer, C. A. Patterson and P. P. Gheen.

'The agitation for division of the township follows an unsuccessful movement to incorporate Willow Grove as a borough, which has been temporarily held up, but which is likely to come forward again later on.

'There has long been more or less friction between upper and lower Moreland over the proper division of the tax money raised in the township.

'The upper end, about Willow Grove, is growing in population more rapidly than the lower end, and the advocates of division use the argument that it will sooner be ready for first-class township honors if rid of the slower progressing lower end. The lower end seems to be willing to get rid of the upper end, which they claim wants most of the tax money.'

Tract development of Willow Grove

Tract development in Upper Moreland began in 1859 with Mr. David Cherry building a series of private frame homes along Cherry Street and Cherry Lane. This was followed by the William W. Frazier Plan in 1892, thirty-three years later. Tract development was sporadic until the 1920s when seven areas of Willow Grove experienced appreciable growth in housing. While individual housing continued throughout the 1930s, there were no large tracts of land being developed. During the next twenty years there were forty- two tracts under development, twenty-

one of those taking place in 1950, 1951 and 1952. The map found in the printed history indicates the general area of each tract from 1859 through to the early 1970s; and the accompanying list gives the name of the development, the developer, and shows the streets and roads within each tract.

Architectural diversity in Moreland Township

Willow Grove and Upper Moreland Township, like most communities that evolved from basic early housing through the changes in construction trends over the years, has its share of houses that fall into specific styles from the Colonial to the Victorian, on down to the Sears and Roebuck catalog kit house. There are still many historic structures in the Township dating from the early 1700s to the turn of the twentieth century. They represent something special; perhaps a reminder of a time when life was simpler, or simply extant examples of bygone ingenuity and craftsmanship. Styles in some cases may be mixed through years of modification and thus affixing a style to a site may have to be that category into which most of the site's characteristics fall. The number of styles below is limited and is intended to serve as a partial aid in determining local construction styles. Illustrations of some of the sites may be found in the UMHA history.

Georgian (1700-1780).

Characteristics: Symmetry of floor plan and façade, usually gable or gambrel roof, central chimney, row of rectangular panes in or above the door, door flanked by columns or pilasters and capped by a decorative crown or a triangular pediment, and six-pane to twelve-pane double hung windows.

Italianate (1840-1880).

Characteristics: Two or three stories, low pitched hip (or sometimes gable) roof with widely overhanging eaves supported by large brackets, a cupola or tower, visually balanced facades, decorative bracketed crowns or lintels over windows and doors, and narrow single pane double hung windows and double doors.

Gothic Revival (1830-1880).

Characteristics: Overall picturesque cottage or castle appearance, steeply pitched roof with cross gables, extensive use of ornamental bargeboards, hood molding over windows, doors and windows incorporating the Gothic arch, wall on the gable end being uninterrupted.

Second Empire (1855-1890).

Characteristics: Two or three stories, mansard roof, heavily pierced with dormer windows featuring elaborate surrounds, multicolored slate shingles or metal shingles, pedimented and bracketed slender windows, ornate moldings and brackets (especially under the eaves), arched double doors, oftentimes porches or projected pavilions.

Eastern Stick (1860-ca. 1900).

Characteristics: Asymmetry and angularity, stickwork (narrow boards nailed to exterior walls so as to repeat and reinforce the structural skeleton), verandas with diagonal braces, steeply pitched intersecting gable roofs, wood siding (board & batten or clapboard), and gable trim.

Folk Victorian (1870-1915).

Characteristics: This most common Victorian style is similar to the Queen Anne style (see below), but plainer, less expensive and usually designed by the carpenter. Decorative treatment is usually confined to porch trim, gable trim and brackets under the eaves.

Queen Anne (1880-1910).

Characteristics: Steeply pitched slate roofs; irregularity of plan and massing, patterned shingles (fish scales), cut-away bay windows (large pane on bottom, small panes on top), partial or full width porch, some spindle work ornamentation, patterned masonry, towers, surging chimneys.

Colonial Revival (1870-1950).

Characteristics: Balanced façade, decorative door crowns and pediments, sidelights, fanlights, porticos to emphasize the front entrance, double hung windows with multiple panes in one or both sashes, frequent use of decorative cornices.

Richardsonian Romanesque (1880-1900).

Characteristics: Round arches over door and window openings, a heaviness of appearance created by rock-faced stonework and deep window reveals, asymmetrical façade, towers with conical roofs, porches with broad round arches supported by squat piers, steep-gabled wall dormers.

Shingle Style (1880-1900).

Characteristics: Distinguished by the fact that the house is covered nearly 100% by shingles, sometimes including the porch pillars; little or no external decoration, roomy porches, complex roofline.

Tudor (1890-1940).

Characteristics: Steeply pitched end gabled roofs, gabled entryway, multi-paned narrow windows (usually in bands of three), tall chimneys (often with chimney pots), masonry construction, decorative half-timbering in many cases.

Bungalow (1890-1940).

Characteristics: Small size, overall simplicity, broad gables usually facing the street, dormer windows, porches with large square piers or battered porch posts, and exposed structural members or stickwork.

Historic sites in the Township

The maps and listings that follow are based on the records of Montgomery County and the many years of research by Dr. Millie Wintz, historic sites researcher for both the Upper Moreland Historical Association and the Old York Road Historical Society. The maps indicate more than one hundred house or site locations, however, since this area of research is a work-in-progress, a number of the locations on the listings are not marked on the maps.

The maps and listings are found on pages 68, 69, 70 and 71 of the UMHA history of the Township.

People who passed through Willow Grove; some who stayed

Abercromby, Lt. Colonel Robert. During the Revolution, Col. Abercromby led a column of fourteen British Companies of light and heavy infantry, known as the 37th Regiment of Foot and the 17th Dragoons, up York Road from Philadelphia to Willow Grove, then north on Easton Road toward Hatboro to mount a surprise attack on Brigadier General John Lacey, Jr. and the Pennsylvania Militia. The result was a complete rout of Lacey's small force of men and is known as the "Battle of Crooked Billet."

Bennett, James Gordon, Jr. James G. Bennett, Jr. became the managing editor of the New York Herald Tribune in 1866 and it was he who sent the great newspaperman Henry W. Stanley in search of Dr. David Livingstone in the jungles of Africa. He spent several summers of his

childhood with his parents at the Red Lion Inn in Willow Grove where he spent his days roaming along Round Meadow Run collecting insects.

Bennett, James Gordon, Sr. James G. Bennett, Sr. was the founder and editor of the New York Herald Tribune. He and his family stayed at the Red Lion Inn at the junction of York and Easton Roads from 1848 to 1851. During that time, Mrs. Bennett was undergoing treatment at Dr. Schiffendecker's Hydropathic Institute located where the Cold Spring Elementary School now stands.

Bernstein, Leonard. The renowned composer and conductor taught music at the Meadowbrook School following his graduation from college and was a likely passer-by on his way to an outstanding career.

Boileau, Nathaniel. Nathaniel Boileau inherited "Ashland Farm" in Upper Moreland from his father Isaac, the third owner of the farm. Mr. Boileau was an influential man in his time. He was a member of the State and Federal Legislatures and a well-known philanthropist. He later built a grand house on York Road in Hatboro, now the Y.M.C.A. He also built the Loller Academy next door to his house and invested much of his own money into the project. His investments failed in later years and he died a pauper.

Bryan, William Jennings. William Jennings Bryan was born in 1860, was a practicing lawyer, politician, and was known as a great orator. He was defeated twice by McKinley in his bids for the presidency. He was appointed Secretary of State by President Woodrow Wilson. Mr. Bryan was a prosecutor in the famous Scopes Trial. He authored a number of books as well. The obverse side of a brass souvenir coin struck by the Willow Grove Park to commemorate Children's Day in June of 1900 shows his likeness, indicating that he attended this special occasion.

Buck, William Joseph. William J. Buck, the eldest son of Jacob E. Buck, was born in 1825 and was educated at the Doylestown Academy until the spring of 1842. His father purchased the Red Lion Inn in Willow Grove in 1842 and changed the name to the J. E. Buck Hotel. William lived at the hotel until 1866 and was principal of the public school in Willow Grove from 1847 to 1849. In 1857, he was elected County Auditor and was an occasional assistant in the United States Revenue Collector's office under David Newport. He was also a member and director of the Hatboro Library Company. Mr. Buck, a prolific historian and author, first published his History of Montgomery County in 1859. This volume, along with his many other works, are excellent present day reference resources. Mr. Buck bought a farm in Maryland in 1866 and moved there, but occasionally resided in Hatboro on a farm he inherited from his father in 1872. The Buck house still exists on Monument Avenue in Hatboro.

Cherry, David. David Cherry, a flour and feed merchant, was one of the first to engage in tract development in Willow Grove. After building the Cherry Inn in 1870, at the corner of York Road and Cherry Street, he went on to build a series of cottages along the new Cherry Street. Mr. Cherry was also instrumental in organizing the area's first church, the Willow Grove United Methodist Church in 1889. The Cherry Inn was purchased by the church in 1963 and was modified for their use.

Cooper, James. Thought to be one of the first landowners in the Willow Grove area, he sold part of his property around the intersection of Terwood and Davisville Roads to Sampson Davis in the early 1720s and also granted 100 acres to his son Benjamin in 1720. Mr. Cooper was the great, great, grandfather of the noted author, James Fenimore Cooper of "The Last of the Mohicans" fame.

Davis, Sampson. Sampson Davis, a Welshman, is considered to be one of the first settlers in the Willow Grove area, having first built a log cabin in the vicinity of the Cold Spring Elementary School. In 1718, he purchased the land from present day Sampson's Hill down through the Upper Moreland High School property out to the intersection of Terwood and Davisville Roads. The land belonged to his father-in-law, Thomas Shute, a land speculator from Philadelphia. At this intersection, Mr. Davis built a grist mill on Round Meadow Run about 1726.

Dubree, Jacob and James. Jacob and James Dubree, father and son, were Willow Grove's first industrialists, having built and operated a scythe factory in 1732 on Round Meadow Run at the intersection of York and Easton Roads. They purchased 300 acres of land in 1719, which encompassed most of the center of present day Willow Grove. It is believed they first constructed a log cabin as a dwelling place until building stone and lime for mortar became available. The smaller section of the "Manor House", once a familiar sight on Park Avenue, was probably built in the 1720s, while the larger, Georgian-style addition, was built some years later. In 1746, James Dubree advertised that he would sell his 200-acre farm, represented to have "20 acres of meadow, a double house, good barn, and a fine young orchard." The property, however, remained in the family until 1762 when James Dubree's heirs sold it to adjoining property and tavern owner, John Paul.

Earhart, Amelia. Amelia Earhart was born in 1898 and became the first woman to make a Transatlantic flight (1935) and the first woman to fly across the Pacific. In her attempt to fly around the world in 1937, her plane disappeared somewhere in the Pacific Ocean. Ms. Earhart was the author of several books. She visited Pitcairn Field, now the Naval Air Station in Horsham, to test fly the autogiro developed by Harold Pitcairn of Bryn Athyn. Ms. Earhart earlier attended the Abby Sutherland School for Girls, located in Abington Township, now the Pennsylvania State University Ogontz Campus. The History Room in the campus library features a photograph of Ms. Earhart along with one of her report cards.

Ehrenpfort, Fred. The Mineral Springs Inn was acquired toward the end of the 19th century by Charles Ehrenpfort, who in turn sold it to Fred Ehrenpfort. In the early 1900s, in order to compete with the Willow Grove Park for patrons riding the new railroad, Mr. Ehrenpfort added a large lake for boating and swimming, a dance hall, a carousel, an indoor rifle range, a number of small concessions and a shaded beer garden. Along the York Road frontage of his property, he built a number of one and two-story stores which to this day are known as the Ehrenpfort Block. The Ehrenpfort family operated the Mineral Springs Inn until 1926, when they sold it. The Inn was demolished in 1937.

Frazier, William West. William W. Frazier was born in 1839. He made his fortune in the sugar refining business as a partner in the Harrison, Frazier & Co. (1889), which later became the Franklin Sugar Refining Company. At the same time he was an officer in the Spreckles Sugar Refining Co. He was also a director in the Philadelphia National Bank, the Philadelphia Trust Co., the Western Saving Fund, the Philadelphia Board of Trade and many other commercial and civic organizations. Mr. Frazier was a captain in the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry, "Rush's Lancers", during the Civil War and held reunions with his men in Willow Grove for many years following the war. After his retirement, Mr. Frazier purchased much of the land between Davisville and Moreland Roads, and York and Edge Hill Roads, hence the name "Frazier's Hill", atop of which stands his manor house. He opened his "Overlook Farm" in Willow Grove for weekly summer vacations for inner city children and supplied the staff for the care of these children from local residents. Mr. Frazier died in 1921 and is buried in Philadelphia.

Graeme, Dr. Thomas. Dr. Graeme was born in Scotland and came to this country with Sir William Keith. He married the daughter of Governor Keith. Dr. Graeme was appointed a justice of the Supreme Court. Today's Graeme Park and the house, built in 1722, are the properties Dr. Graeme bought from his father-in-law, Governor Keith.

Harrison, President Benjamin. On September 5th of 1889, a parade and caravan of coaches with President Benjamin Harrison passed through Willow Grove on the way to Log College in Bucks County for a dedication ceremony. He was coming from Jenkintown, where he spent the night at the home of John Wannamaker, the United States Postmaster General. Harrison was the 23rd President of the United States (1889-1893). He died in 1901.

Hassler, Ferdinand. Ferdinand Hassler emigrated from Switzerland in 1805. To make ends meet, he accepted a teaching position as Professor of Mathematics at the West Point Military Academy in 1807; and leaving there in 1810, became Professor of Natural Philosophy and Mathematics at Union College in Schenectady, New York. In 1807, Congress passed an act to "cause a survey to be taken of the coasts of the United States..." Hassler was recommended to President Jefferson to run the survey. However the political climate with France and England stalled the survey until 1811, when President James Madison sent Hassler to England to secure instruments for the survey. He was appointed to the post of Superintendent of the United States Coastal Survey in 1816 and began the survey in 1817. The U. S. Office of Weights and Measures was created by Hassler and grew and prospered under Presidents Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren. In the summers of 1840 and 1841, Mr. Hassler and his staff camped atop Frazier's Hill, then the Krier farm, the highest point in eastern Montgomery County. The U. S. Geodetic Survey Marker buried on the hill is used by utility companies, highway departments, bridge contractors and others as a reference point for measuring distances. Mr. Hassler, at the time, had the trees cut down in order to sight the next point in the survey in New Jersey. Mr. Hassler died in Philadelphia in 1843 at the age of 62.

Herbert, Victor. Victor Herbert was born in 1859 in Ireland and became a world famous cellist, conductor and composer. He conducted the Pittsburgh Symphony from 1894 to 1904 when he organized his own orchestra. He composed a number of operettas including "Babes in Toyland" and "Naughty Marietta." Mr. Herbert and his orchestra made twenty appearances at the Willow Grove Park from 1902 through 1923. On these visits, he and his orchestra stayed at the Parkside Boarding House on Park Avenue, the Mineral Springs Inn on York Road, and the Fountain House Inn on York Road.

Kalms, Peter. Peter Kalms was a naturalist sent by the King of Sweden to study the new lands of his former subjects. In 1732, he is believed to have visited Frazier's Hill in Willow Grove, the highest point in Eastern Montgomery County, although this has not been substantiated. His description of the flora, fauna and topography of the area remain basically accurate to this day.

Keith, Sir William. Sir William Keith was appointed by England's Queen Anne as Surveyor General of the Royal Customs in the American Colonies. He was called Governor Keith and was well known by the residents of the area. His royal coach frequently traveled through Willow Grove on the way to his home just a few miles north of town.

Kennedy, John Fitzgerald. In October of 1960, three weeks before being elected the 35th president of the United States, John F. Kennedy gave a campaign speech from a flatbed truck on Park Avenue in Willow Grove. He was assassinated in 1963.

Lafayette, Major General. The Marquis de Lafayette was recruited in France at the age of nineteen to serve in the Colonial American Army under George Washington. He was made a

Major General by Washington and was a close advisor to the commander-in-chief. General Lafayette joined Washington at his encampment near Hartsville and accompanied him on his march down York Road through Willow Grove to engage the British at Brandywine.

Larzalere, Jeremiah Berrell. The Larzaleres were of Huguenot descent and came to this country after Louis XIV of France revoked religious freedom in 1685. Jeremiah was of the sixth generation of his family in this country. His father Nicholas married the daughter of Col. Jeremiah Berrell of Abington and had twelve children. Jeremiah was the third son, born in 1828, and was extremely active in a variety of endeavors throughout his life. He taught school in Horsham, had large agricultural interests, was involved in the shipment and sale of livestock, was a director of the North East Pennsylvania Railroad, was a school and bank director, was in politics and served as sheriff from 1872 to 1875. An 1877 map shows he owned a large portion of what was later to be known as Frazier's Hill including the "Homestead" house at Inman Terrace and York Road. Mr. Burrell, his father-in-law, owned the property at the top of Frazier's Hill.

Lloyd, Thomas. The Lloyds were among the earliest pioneers in the area. Thomas Lloyd bought 112 acres in Moreland Township around 1720. He built the first permanent structure on the land between 1720 and 1724 and lived in it until his death in 1781. The house stood for nearly another 100 years before being demolished to make way for the Pennsylvania Railroad. His son John built a large house in 1758 along Davisville Road, near Byberry Road, which still stands today. Another son, Samuel, built a grist mill near the Pennypack Creek around 1762, which many years later became known as Mason's Mill.

McKinley, President William. To commemorate Children's Day on June 19th, 1900, the Willow Grove Park struck a brass souvenir coin indicating that President McKinley visited the Park that day. McKinley was the 25th President of the United States (1897-1901), having defeated William Jennings Bryan in the elections of 1896 and 1900. He was assassinated in September of 1901 and was succeeded by Theodore Roosevelt.

Meade, General George. A probable, but unconfirmed passer-by, was General George Meade, who made his summer home in Abington after the Civil War until his death in 1872.

Michener, James. James A. Michener was born in New York in 1907 and was educated at Swarthmore College. During World War II he served as naval historian in the South Pacific. He was a prolific writer and Pulitzer prize winner in 1948 for his "Tales of the South Pacific." Mr. Michener worked as a ticket taker for rides in the Willow Grove Park during his youth. One of his early novels, "The Fires of Spring" deals in part with his experiences at the Park.

Morgan, Benjamin J. The first grist mill in the Willow Grove area was built at the intersection of Davisville and Terwood Roads by Sampson Davis in 1727. The mill was purchased in 1731 by Thomas Parry and was greatly expanded after the Revolution by John Parry. After a series of sheriff sales and short-term owners, the mill was bought by Benjamin J. Morgan in 1847. The mill prospered and remained in the Morgan family until 1954. The area around the intersection became known as "Morganville" and consisted of the mill, the miller's house, a spring house, a carriage house, two barns, and four worker's houses. The mill was destroyed in the 1960s, however, several of the other structures still remain.

Morley, Christopher. Christopher Morley was born in Haverford in 1890. He was on the editorial staffs of Doubleday, Page and Company, the Ladies Home Journal, the Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger, and the New York Evening Post. He was also a contributing editor of the Saturday Review of Literature. Mr. Morley was a prolific writer of novels and in 1920 wrote a glowing account of his visit to the Willow Grove Park.

Newport, David. David Newport was born in Philadelphia in 1822. At the age of twenty one he owned a farm near Willow Grove and was active in the Society of Friends in Abington. Following the Civil War and the founding of the Internal Revenue System by Congress, President Lincoln appointed Mr. Newport tax collector for the Congressional District of Montgomery and Lehigh Counties. In 1871 he felt called to the ministry and became a preacher of the Society of Friends. Mr. Newport later became involved in his brother William's phosphate manufacturing firm on the corner of Moreland and Davisville Roads.

Newport, William. The manufacture of phosphates was established by Shaw & Newport in 1875 in a facility at the intersection of Moreland and Davisville Roads. Two years later, Mr. Newport bought out the interests of Shaw and renamed the company, William Newport & Co. In 1880, his brother David became a partner in the firm. Production in 1884 was about 1800 tons with sales being mostly local. Phosphates were used to fertilize the surrounding farmlands.

Potts, Rev. Joshua. Rev. Joshua Potts was handicapped and was also afflicted with an incurable internal ailment which led to his demise in 1761 at the age of 43. Despite his handicaps, he became a prominent citizen of the area. He was one of the four organizers of the Union Library Company in Hatboro, was the first pastor of the Southampton Baptist Church, and was the first village school-master at a small schoolhouse on Byberry Road. In 1759, Mr. Potts built and moved into a small stone house in Upper Moreland, off of York Road and parallel to Newington Drive. The house stands today and has been maintained in nearly its original condition. The property was known as "Ashland Farm."

Rex, George, Sr. George Rex, Sr., a blacksmith from Germantown, bought a house and thirty-nine acres of land in 1784, but it was not until 1803 that he obtained a license to operate a tavern. He built the Mineral Springs Inn and capitalizing on the abundant mineral waters on the property, attracted many Philadelphians to his summer resort. Adding spacious bath-houses increased the appeal of his then famous spa. Mr. Rex was elected Justice of the Peace sometime prior to 1838. In 1839, he gave a half-acre of land on the south side of Davisville Road for the purpose of building a two-story stone school building. After a few years, the Inn was kept by another George Rex, a nephew of George Rex, Sr., who eventually inherited the property from his uncle.

Rogers, Henry Darwin. When the Department of Geology and Mineralogy was founded in 1835 at the University of Pennsylvania, Henry Rogers was appointed its first professor. While on the faculty, he became the first State Geologist of Pennsylvania and organized and directed the first Geological Survey of the state. Part of this survey brought Mr. Rogers and his staff to Willow Grove's Frazier's Hill to determine its structure and stratification.

Ross, Betsy. It is not unlikely that Betsy Ross, who moved to Abington in 1827 to live with her daughter Susannah Satterthwaite, had occasion to visit Willow Grove. She died January 30, 1836.

Schiffendecker, Dr. Charles. Little is known about Dr. Schiffendecker's personal life, however, his Hydropathic Institute attracted people from around the world to be treated with the healing properties of the local mineral waters. Dr. Schiffendecker established the Institute in 1848 just below where present day Cold Spring Elementary School stands.

Scull, Nicholas. Nicholas Scull, as a land surveyor had few equals, and for knowledge of the Indian language had no one superior. In 1722, at the request of Governor Keith, he made the survey of the road leading from Willow Grove to his residence in Horsham. It was called Governor's Road before becoming Easton Road. On numerous occasions he was sent by succeeding governors to settle disputes with the Indians. In 1744, he was commissioned sheriff

of Philadelphia County and in 1748, was appointed to the office of Surveyor General of Pennsylvania, a position he held for thirteen years. Mr. Scull died in 1761.

Shelmire, George. Prior to 1760, Silas Yerkes, farmer and miller, built a grist mill at the intersection of Huntingdon and Creek Roads. George Shelmire bought the property in 1787 and increased his holdings in 1794 with two additional acquisitions in that area. Mr. Shelmire sold his properties and water rights to his sons Jacob and George the younger. In 1825, Shelmire's sons added the second grist mill to the property and by 1838 added a plaster mill to the complex. Their holdings also included six dwellings, horses, cattle, and 161 acres of land. The area was called "Shelmire Mills" and was so indicated on maps of the time. The complex went out of Shelmire hands in 1869.

Sousa, John Philip. John Philip Sousa, known the world over as the "March King", was born in 1854 in Washington, D.C. He was conducting theater orchestras at the age of seventeen and played violin in Jacques Offenbach's Orchestra during its American tour in 1876 and 1877. He became the leader of the U. S. Marine Band in 1880 and organized his own band in 1892. Mr. Sousa composed more than 200 musical works including a great many famous marches. Mr. Sousa and his band were an annual attraction at the Willow Grove Park and made twenty-six appearances from 1901 through 1926. He died in 1932.

Trumbauer, Horace. Horace Trumbauer was an architect of note in his time and designed many significant structures in this area. Mr. Trumbauer opened his architectural office in Philadelphia in 1890, however he lived in Jenkintown. His first challenge in Willow Grove was the design of the Davisville (Newtown) Road School, followed closely by the design of the magnificent 'Grey Towers' castle-like mansion in Glenside for the sugar tycoon, W. W. Harrison. Mr. Trumbauer also designed the Willow Grove Park superintendent's residence, called the 'Lodge', a marvelous stone house; and was contracted by Charles Ehrenpfort, owner of the Mineral Springs Inn, to redesign the outside appearance of the famous hotel. Horace Trumbauer died in 1938. Among his other designs were the Philmont Country Club, the Edw. Stotesbury 147-room mansion in Wyndmoor, the Ogontz School campus for Abby Sutherland, and the Keswick Theater in Glenside.

Wannamaker, John. John Wannamaker, entrepreneur and merchant, was appointed by President Benjamin Harrison to the position of Postmaster General and accompanied the president in 1889 in a caravan of coaches through Willow Grove to a ceremony in Bucks County.

Washington, General George. General Washington commanded the Revolutionary Army and was with them in 1777 at their encampment near Hartsville, just a few miles north of Willow Grove. Enroute to engage the British Army at Brandywine, he and the army moved down York Road through Willow Grove. Washington later became the first President of the United States (1789-1797). He died in 1799.

Williams, Ted. Ted Williams played baseball for the Boston Red Sox and was probably the greatest hitter of his era. In 1952, Marine fighter pilot Williams took a refresher course at the Willow Grove Naval Air Station to learn to fly the F-9F Panther Jet. He flew 39 combat missions in Korea.

Wynkoop, Henry. Henry Wynkoop, born in 1737, was involved in politics by the age of twenty-three as a member of the Provincial Assembly of Pennsylvania. He was appointed Justice of the Peace in 1764 and later as Associate County Judge. He was a friend of Washington, Hamilton and Adams, and was elected to the first Congress of the United States in 1789. The Wynkoop stone house still exists on the property of the Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust.

Yerkes, Richard E. The Yerkes name figures prominently throughout the area in the early history of Moreland Township. The intersection of Terwood and Papermill Roads was referred to as Blaker's Corner, however, early maps indicate the surrounding area was called "Yerkesville." At this site in 1776, a gentleman named John Nesmith operated a grist mill and saw mill on Terwood Run. By 1850, the area was in the hands of Richard E. Yerkes, who also operated a cotton mill. The complex included several mills, the miller's house, a supervisor's house, a store, a blacksmith shop, a school, and six worker's houses. Five of the structures remain today.

Others. It is said that others of great importance in the colonies, such as **James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson** and **Benjamin Franklin**, passed through Willow Grove on the "advanced" road system to their various meetings with the governor in Horsham and on their way to New York.

Slavery

It is estimated that the population of Moreland Township in 1776 was 1,320, of which it is supposed 100 were African Americans. Of that 100, twenty-five were thought to be slaves.

Slavery, long associated with the southern states, was also widespread throughout the new colonies. A number of Pennsylvania's founders were slave owners. William Penn was a slaveholder, who later in life, after he returned to England, drew up a will granting them freedom upon his death. Benjamin Franklin not only owned slaves, but advertised and sold them. During his final days he joined the abolitionists and led the anti-slavery movement.

In 1726, Governor Sir William Keith, sold from his estate in Horsham, seventeen slaves. The buyers were his son-in-law, Dr. Thomas Graeme and a gentleman by the name of Thomas Sober. The seventeen slaves included ten males and seven females, ten of which were adults. One of the slaves was an Indian woman married to a slave.

Peter Kalm, in his 'Travels' in America in 1748 and 1749 wrote: "Formerly the Negroes were brought over from Africa, and bought by almost every one who could afford it. The Quakers alone scrupled (refused) to have slaves; but they are no longer so nice, and they have as many Negroes as the other people."

Willow Grove and surrounding communities are not normally thought of as pockets of slavery, however, it did exist in the early 1700's. Two of our earliest settlers, James Dubree and his younger brother Jacob, who lived in the manor house on Park Avenue and built a scythe factory on Round Meadow Run, were both slave owners. According to Jacob's will, "His old negro Sam and Selah, his wife, were to be freed six months after his death. His negroes, Bett, Peter, and Jride(?), were to be hired out, the boy till he was 31 years and the girls till they were 27 years; the money they earned was to support old Sam and Selah." In James' will he specified his "molato man, Jack" was to have the remainder of his life free, five years after his master's death.

An advertisement in the Pennsylvania Gazette dated October 1752 stated: John Jones, of the "Manor of Moreland, near the Crooked Billet" has for sale "a likely negro woman, about twenty-nine years of age, had the small-pox, and understands country business well. Also a negro child, a boy, one year old."

The 1776 list of taxables includes the following Moreland slave-owners: Samuel Ervin – 1, Isaac Boileau – 1, Richard Corson – 1, David Perry – 1, Samuel Boutcher – 2, Casper Fetters – 1, and Daniel Thomas – 1.

The 1787 assessment listed David Cummings as having two bought servants. The 1788 assessment shows nineteen slaves in the Township; and in the 1790 census these slave-owners: Isaac Boileau – 3, Garret Wynkoop – 2, Andrew Van Buskirk – 2, and Joseph Folwell – 1.

The Underground Railroad

Runaway slaves generally were men 16 to 35 years of age. Women and children also escaped in lesser numbers, and were more likely to be recaptured. Runaways most often were field laborers who endured harsh treatment from owners. Both men and women attempted escape for the same reasons: long hours of work, poor diet, fear of beatings, and being sold and separated from the rest of their family. Escapes usually did not follow a great plan and took place on weekends, holidays or during the fall harvest. This gave runaways a two-day start before the owner realized they were gone. They most often left with little food and clothing; and traveled at night to avoid slave catchers. The Underground Railroad rarely started in the south, so it was imperative that they reach areas in the north where ‘stations’ could be found to assist them. To do this, they used back-roads, waterways, mountains, swamps, forests and fields to hide their escape. They relied on the moss growing on the north side of trees and the North Star to keep them headed in the right direction.

Stations or ‘depots’ along the network of the Railroad were located at points a day’s journey apart and the fugitive would be brought there by a ‘conductor.’ Some of these conductors actually went into the deep south to assist the runaways by leading them along secret routes to freedom. Along the way were houses of friendship manned by men and women called ‘stationmasters.’ Conductors’ and stationmasters’ lives were at risk, so it was critical that their identities remain concealed.

When runaways sought refuge along the route, they needed to know whether a house was safe to approach. One of the most common signals was the statue of a black jockey with a red cap. Sometimes conductors would place a U.S. flag or a lantern in the statue’s outstretched hand to signify it is safe to enter. Without these signals, the runaway knew to wait or move on to the next depot.

As the Underground Railroad gained more supporters, increased numbers of runaways headed toward Philadelphia, either to stay or continue their flight toward Canada. In the year 1860 alone, it is reported that nearly 9,000 runaways entered Philadelphia. The impact of the area’s large Quaker population and widespread anti-slavery sentiment accommodated those who wanted to settle in the state. However, it is said most continued on to Canada.

Montgomery County was one of the strongest links in the Railroad, and Old York Road, running from Philadelphia through Willow Grove to New York, was one of the major routes. By day, it was merely a dusty, bumpy horse and wagon road that wove its way north through Eastern Montgomery County and was used by farmers to transport their produce and goods to the City. By night, runaway slaves traveled Old York Road seeking refuge in homes of abolitionists who vowed to aid them in their flight.

It is reported that two area residents provided safe haven for runaways on the Underground Railroad: one was *Dr. Charles Shoemaker* of Willow Grove; the other was *David Newport* and his two black tenants, who were the only free black people in Moreland Township at the time. According to a map dated 1851, Shoemaker’s house was located at Terwood and Edge Hill Roads, while Newport’s home was near Terwood Road just below Morgan’s Mill at the intersection of Terwood and Davisville Roads.

Superstitions

According to the historian, William J. Buck, people were generally ignorant; they knew more about the supernatural and believed in it rather than accept scientific explanations. It was commonplace for men and women, when their cattle were suffering from some disease or were lost through some other misfortune, to go to the Justice of the Peace to prosecute some person for damages because they considered them sorcerers or witches.

Cows were occasionally seen with red ribbons tied to their horns as charms, to make conjurations powerless.

'Witch Doctors' sometimes called 'Pow-Wow' Doctors were held in high repute and enjoyed renown among the settlers. It was thought their mysterious incantations led to the expulsion of not only witches, but physical maladies as well.

The moon was thought to possess a powerful influence and the almanac was often consulted to determine the proper time for seeding, planting, felling trees, splitting rails, setting posts, and a great many other things.

The divining rod was used to search for both hidden treasure and lasting water for wells. The rod was made of the fork of a sweet apple tree. Holding each branch of the fork in hand, the diviner would walk around until the stem of the fork would point to whatever the search was made for. It is said the power of the diving rod was such as to twist, or even, by not letting go in time, to wrench the holder's arms. Scarcely a well was dug without first using the diving rod and some individuals were famed for their success in its use.

Deserted houses, secluded graveyards and places where unnatural deaths took place would be avoided at night. A dog howling all night was thought to be a sign of foreboding, especially if a family member was absent. The dropping of a fork, knife or scissors to the floor or a cat washing herself was a sign of unexpected visitors. The clock striking during mealtime was the announcement of a death to come. A horse neighing on the way to a funeral was the sign another death would soon follow. Toads and barn

swallows must not be injured or it would cause the cows to give bloody milk. Friday was believed to be an unfortunate day for new undertakings or the making of garments. Old shoes were collected and burned and the ashes scattered to keep snakes and evil away. And if a boy were late for school on Shrove Tuesday, he would be a laggard the whole year around!

Legends of the area

Legend of Sampson's Hill. Records indicate that Sampson Davis built his cabin on Sampson's Hill sometime around 1720 and still lived there in 1734. At about the same time another settler built a cabin about fifty yards away on the south side of the hill. Both cabins were on the eastern side of the hill. Tradition has it that an Indian, somewhat drunk, during a winter snowstorm, ask at both cabins for shelter from the bitter cold weather. He was refused by both and with the onset of a violent snowstorm lasting a couple of days, was forced to remain outside in the elements. Two weeks later his frozen body was discovered by the roadside mid-way between the two cabins. The legend was born shortly afterwards that on stormy snowy nights, the Indian's spirit would make its appearance and keep vigil around the place of his death. There were reports that at a storm's most violent period, you could distinctly hear his wailings, shriekings and upbraidings. Others related having seen a white-sheeted spectre in the gloom of a storm.

As punishment for their in-hospitality, the Indian placed a curse on the hill that whenever a snow storm prevailed, he would be active throughout the night maliciously collecting the snow

and piling it in the resident's lanes and around their gates. He would then have the satisfaction of the people having to work through the day to undo the prank to get to their teams, to the road and to the store. The following night, the Indian would reappear and pile the snow higher and deeper. Some of the residents at the time reported having witnessed the appearance of winding-sheets, coffins, corpses and graves.

At times, to avoid the problem, the men changed their lanes and gateways to get rid of the inconvenience, to no avail. They even suggested a tunnel, but realized keeping the entrances open following snow storms would be just as much work as their present situation. They finally gave up the struggle and accepted the fact that it was useless to struggle against angry Indian ghosts or spiteful snowdrifts coming across nearby fields.

The Bird of Happy Omen. This legend states that on a winter night with snow on the ground, a woman acting as nurse to an aged woman who was very ill and not expected to recover had the following experience. About midnight, with a light burning on a stand near the window, the nurse knowing how serious the occasion was, took up the Bible and began to read at length. After a half-hour of reading she heard a peculiar noise at the window. Turning around to see what caused the noise, she observed distinctly a beautiful snow-white bird the size of a pigeon standing outside on the window sill, nodding its head and gently tapping against the window pane a dozen or more times. She sat quietly, determined to observe it more closely, when after a couple of minutes, it flew off and disappeared.

The nurse had often heard of some family traditions respecting the bird of happy omen coming to the sick chamber window to announce a speedy and happy demise to the unfortunate sufferer. Hurriedly, she aroused the other family members to tell them of the appearance of the white bird and upon their checking on the sick woman found she was actually dying and two hours later breathed her last.

Legend of Huckleberry Hill. Around 1760, a farmer named Derrick Kroons owned eighty acres of land, twelve cleared, on the north side of the hill. Tradition has it that several men followed the Pennypack Creek into this area to search for mines from information derived from the Indians. At a gathering of a number of men, the subject of one Anthony Larry's massive silver shoe-buckles and how they were acquired was addressed. Larry's explanation is not known, but rumor had it that he discovered a silver mine near Huckleberry Hill and had the buckles made in Philadelphia..

Derrick Kroons' longing for riches led him on a solitary search for the mysterious mine. One morning his hired-hand, Fritz, observed his master with a shovel and a grubbing hoe head across the field towards the woods. After being gone for two days, Fritz and several neighbors embarked on a vigorous search for Kroons. Having climbed to the top of Huckleberry Hill, Fritz spotted a garment of some kind lying on a fallen tree. Upon examination found it to be his master's coat and in searching the area found to his astonishment, Kroons' head and one arm sticking out of the ground where he was trapped under loose soil. Fritz at length extricated Kroons from his predicament and they returned to the Kroons farm. It is said he never recovered from his first attempt at silver mining.

Bartle Kusters, hearing the story, was of the opinion that Kroons had come under the spell of Indian chief Wessapoak, who, not having been fully satisfied with the land deal with William Penn, regretted the transfer and uttered a malediction that no good should ever come to any white man who desired to procure riches from the land until his spirit was appeased.

Bartle related his own personal experience of how he and several others out hunting raccoons came to the foot of Huckleberry Hill near the Pennypack. Seeing something shining, like a mass

of solid silver in the bushes, he picked it up. In a flash there appeared behind him a stalwart Indian Chief brandishing a tomahawk in one hand and beckoning for the treasure with the other. Bartle began to run, but the spirit gained on him until he dropped the treasure in his hand. At that moment the spirit of the Indian chief vanished.

Lesser-known legends. A lesser-known, rarely thought-of story associated with the township and one supposedly noted by Colonial writers is that the Jersey Devil, prior to taking up residence in the pine barrens of New Jersey, lived in a den in the Huntingdon Valley area of Moreland.

Another imaginative creature is the hairy monster, reportedly near fifteen feet tall, that inhabited Frazier's Hill and was so ferocious that it ate its own head.

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