

Now and Then

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The Quilter (see page 220)

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COUNTRY HOUSES IN MUNCY TOWNSHIP

The following article is copied from the Luminary, August 31, 1883. It gives a pretty good picture of living in the township at the notable homes of the period although not all of them. Several such as those of William Watson and Peter Bellis may no longer exist and may have been nothing but small farm houses which took in some summer boarders. The map, which has been prepared to accompany the article, has been filled out with additional houses omitted in the article which are of historic interest.

Muncy township is one of the smallest townships in Lycoming county, but it is also one of the richest and most fertile. Running along the river are to be found some of the finest country places in the West Branch Valley. Here the valley is wide and the "broad acres" extend in all directions, making a pleasant picture to behold.

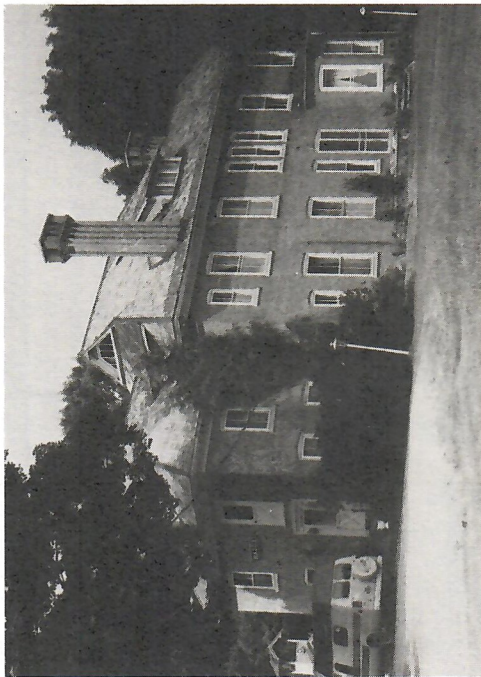
This township has always been noted for its fine estates. In early days a good part of the possessions of that famous old pioneer, Samuel Wallis, was located in this vicinity, and later the richest portion of Mrs. Hall's great farm—which contained thousands of acres and was by far the largest and most valuable estate in this part of the county—was also situated in Muncy township. After her death the property was divided among the heirs, and much of it still remains in the family, the country places of her grandchildren being among the most delightful in this vicinity.

A GLANCE AT THE HALL FARMS

The nearest of these to Muncy is Mr. and Mrs. Henry Ashhurst's place, "Oakland." Their beautiful house is located off from the road on the north side of the park, which consists of several acres and is conceded to be the loveliest grove in this vicinity. The house was occupied for many years by Miss S. E. Hall, but after the death of Mrs. Potter the place passed into the hands of her daughter, Mrs. Ashhurst, of Philadelphia, since which time many improvements have been made, the house being greatly enlarged and beautified. These improvements are not yet entirely completed, although the house is now a gem in its way. It is richly and elegantly furnished, and, with the beautiful view which has always been such an attraction at this place, "Oakland" is indeed a pleasant summer residence.

About half a mile from this place stands the large and magnificent summer residence of Mr. and Mrs. Granville Smith, of New York City. This splendid house was finished last summer, having been built under the direction of our townsman, Mr. James R. Wagner, who is one of the best architects in this part of the State. The house is built of brick, after an odd and original plan, and is located upon a hill, from which the view is extensive and very beautiful. It is large and commodious, with wide halls and ample piazzas. Every apartment, up stairs and down, except the kitchen, has an open fire place, and the whole building is finished in every part in the most careful manner. Altogether, this house is probably the most striking in the township.

Further on is Mr. Wm. Coleman Hall's farm upon which is the old homestead. Mr. Hall has recently rented the farms of his aunt, Miss S. E. Hall, and his cousin, Mrs. J. Dundas Lippencott, and now he has under his control several hundred acres of most valuable land. It was Mr. Hall's intention to remove from Philadelphia to his estate this spring, but owing to the feeble health of his mother, Mrs. James Hall, he was obliged to take her to England for the benefit of her health. We understand



This fine home, occupied by Granville Smith at the time of the article (No. 2) and now owned by John Noble, sits far back from the highway so that few people can observe it. On the east side is mounted the Halls Station railroad sign of the Reading Railroad.

he hopes to come up next year, and will probably make his home here in the future. It is almost twenty years since his father removed to Philadelphia, and their friends will be glad to have Mr. W. C. Hall again a resident in the county.

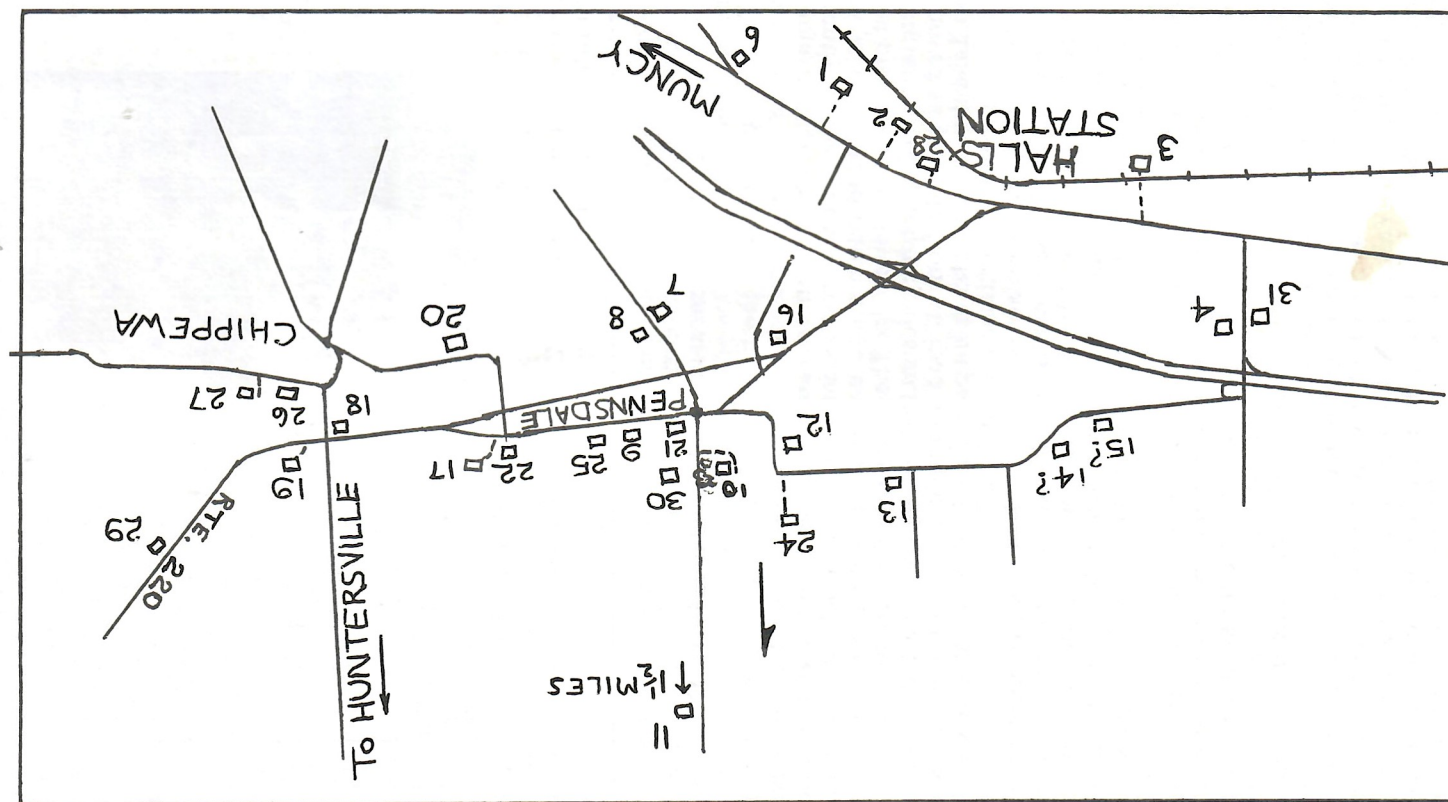
On the opposite side of the road is the summer residence of Rev. Dr. Jewett, of New York City, who spends about five months out of every year at this place. Dr. Jewett had his house enlarged and renovated recently at a cost of several thousand dollars. It is delightfully situated, and with its broad porches and beautiful lawn his place is among the most pleasant in the township. The house is beautifully furnished, there being an air of quiet elegance noticeable in every part that is as far removed as possible from all loud and vulgar styles of interior decoration. Like the other, this farm is a part of the Hall estate, Mrs. Jewett, like Mrs. Smith, being a granddaughter of Mrs. Hall.

Adjoining Dr. Jewett's place is Mr. George Bellis' farm—one of the best in the valley. The house is handsome, and during the summer a portion of it is generally occupied by boarders from New York. While on this subject we would say that we have been informed there is no truth in the report that Mr. Bellis has recently sold several acres to a New York gentleman for a summer place.

Another pleasant farm on the State road, though much nearer Muncy, is Mr. George Long's place, which is just on the border of the township. With its neat farm house and ample barn, the farm is one of the nicest in this vicinity.

We will conclude this article next week with some account of the places in the vicinity of Pennsville.

We gave last week some account of the Hall farm. Leaving the state road and going eastward we find some of the richest and most fertile farms in the Muncy Valley. The value of most of them is evident from the general appearance of the buildings, which is all that could be asked. Undoubtedly the finest place between Pennsville and Muncy is Mr.



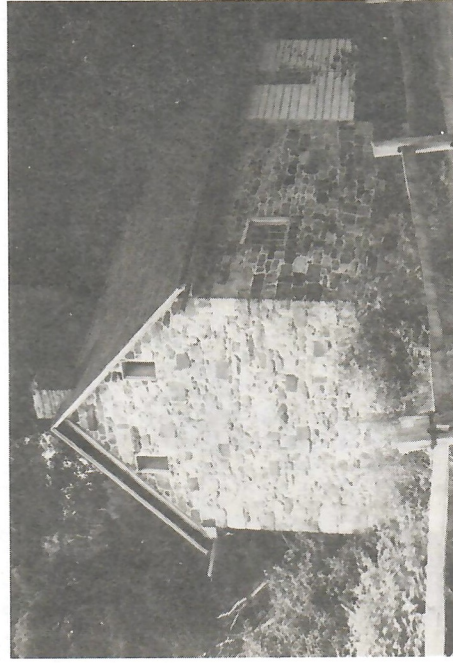
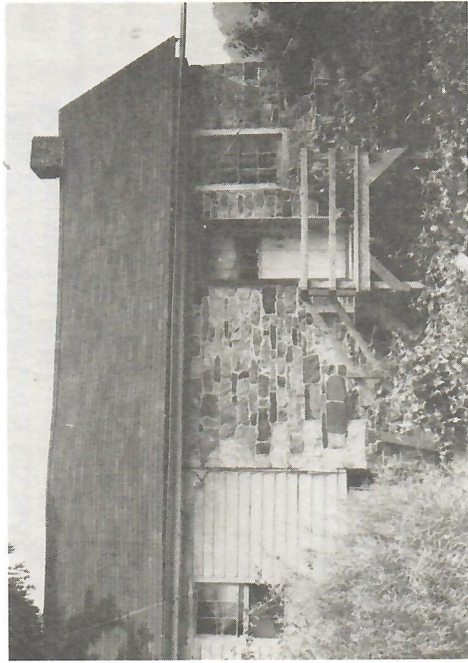
KEY TO HOMES SHOWN ON MAP

Houses Nos. 1 - 20 are mentioned in the article of August 31, 1883. The other homes, most of which are stone, were not mentioned in the article for unknown reasons. Some of the homes are illustrated and described in a Volume 16 article and are so noted.

No.	Owner	Notes
1	Henry Ashurst	Csehy Summer School of Music
2	Granville Smith	
3	William Coleman Hall	Muncy Farms. Vol. 16 p. 365
4	Reverend Dr. Jewett	Bush Farm
5	George Bellis	
6	George Long	House burned down Feb. 1, 1885
7	James Ecroyd	
8	George Rogers, Mrs. Creagh	
9	Thomas Warner	Restored by Thomas Clegg, Vol. 19 p. 176
10	W. S. Mendenhall	
11	Mrs. Mary Rogers	
12	Henry Ecroyd	Edgend, Vol. 16 p. 367, Vol. 20 p. 84
13	Michael Good	
14	William Watson	Exact location questionable along the road
15	Peter Bellis	Exact location questionable along the road
16	Mrs. Webster	
17	Chas. Ellis-W. M. Ellicott	Vol. 16 p. 366
18	Edward Marshall	Wolf Run House. Vol. 16 p. 365
19	Jesse Haines	Vol. 16 p. 370
20	J. P. Ort	Vol. 16 p. 367
21	Quaker Meeting House	Vol. 16 p. 364
22	Friends School House	Vol. 16 p. 370
23	John Carpenter	Vol. 16 p. 369
24	Benj. Warner	Built Circa 1860
25	Bulls Head Tavern	House of Many Stairs, Vol. 16 p. 369
26	Benj. Warner	
27	Wm Ellis	Vol. 16 p. 369
28	Bailiff House	Vol. 16 p. 369
29	Wm. Ellis	Built about 1823. Now John Nicholson farm
30	Lundy Homestead	Vol. 16 p. 369
31	J. Roman Way	

James Ecroyd's estate, which consists of several hundred acres and is as prettily located as any farm in Muncy township. The large and handsome house stands upon a hill whence a beautiful view can be obtained in every direction. The mansion is elegant, and the stables are also large and commodious. Mr. Ecroyd's horses are an attractive feature of his place, and never fail to delight gentlemen visitors.

Almost opposite the entrance to Mr. Ecroyd's yard is the summer residence of Mrs. Creagh, of New York City. The house is new and commodious, having been built a few years ago by Mr. Geo. Rogers, and occupied by him as a residence for a time. Mrs. Creagh's place is still one of the newest in the township, but it is fast becoming one of the most

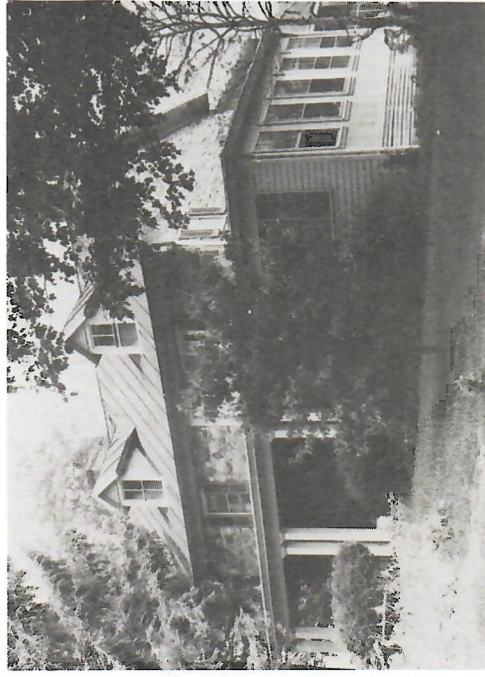


The second home of John and Elizabeth Carpenter built in 1797 (No. 23 on the map) is considered the most interesting home still standing in Muncy Township because it is the only small primitive house still standing similar in size to the log structures built by other settlers in the 1790s but now long gone. It sits on sloping ground so as to have a spring house in the downstairs. An attic was used for sleeping. In later years the wood portion was added. In 1804 Carpenter constructed a much larger home which is adjacent to this house.

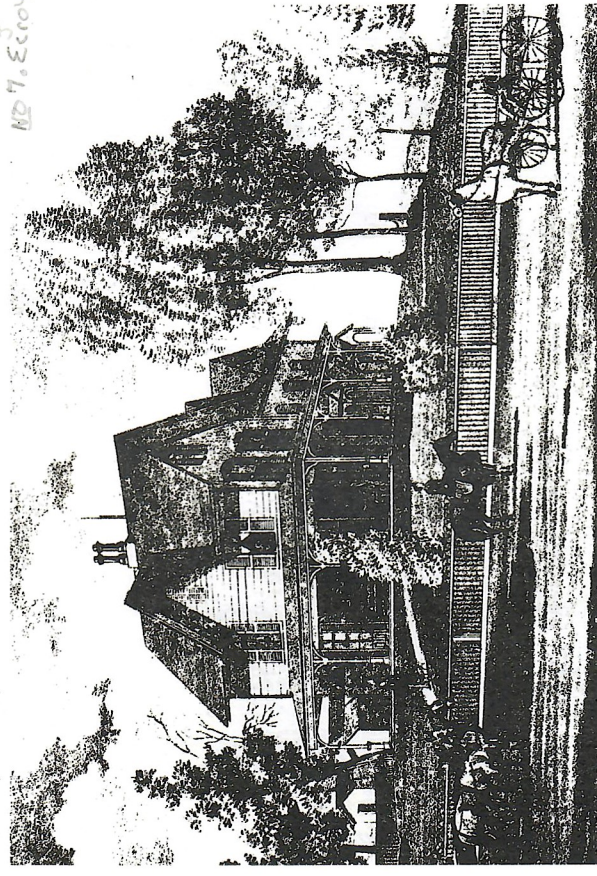
beautiful. Trees and shrubbery are adding to its beauty and comfort every season. Near by is Mr. E. Edkin's pleasant house, which is very tasteful and handsome.

Pennsville is famous for its quaint old stone Meeting House, which was built in 1799 and is still in excellent condition. It stands at one end of the village, and at the other is the Friends' School House, also built of stone. The houses of Pennsville are of no architectural interest, Mr. Thomas Warner's brick mansion being the largest in the place.

North of Pennsville the first place is Mr. W. S. Mendenhall's fine farm.

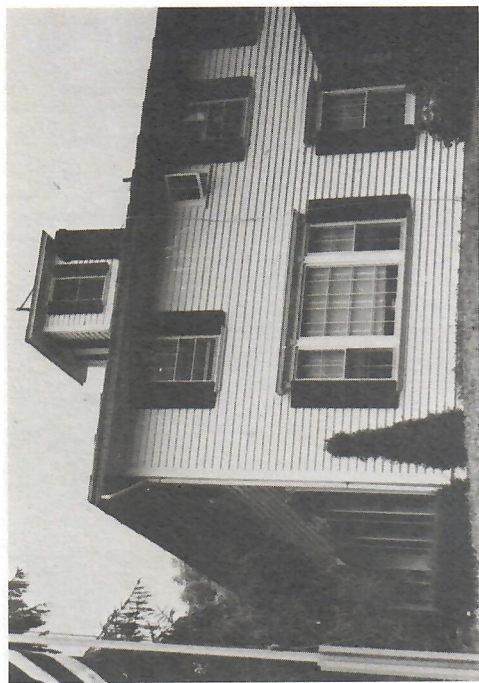


The third home of John Carpenter contrasts vividly in size with the 1797 home. (No. 10)



The pleasant old-fashioned stone houses are among the oldest in the township, one having been erected in 1794 and the other in 1795. Mrs. J. A. Young, of New York City, is spending the summer on Mr. Mendenhall's place which is really one of the pleasantest in the neighborhood. Further on the handsomest house is the country residence of Mrs. Mary Rogers which is about three miles from Pennsville.

West of the Meeting House the first house is Mr. Henry Ecroyd's stone mansion, and beyond are the valuable farm and country residence belonging to the family of the late Michael Good. Mr. William Watson's and Mr. Peter Bellis' farms lie further on. Both have pleasant places, and



The Mary Rogers home, (No. 11) was carved out of the woods. It has a "widows watch" cupola on top although with the forests all around, it is not known what could be seen. Now owned by Mrs. and Mrs. John Rathmel.

this summer have had a good many boarders from New York City. Mrs. Webster's farm is a little further south on the road between Pennsylvania and Hartly Hall.

Leaving Pennsylvania and going east, we soon reach one of the most magnificent country places in the Muncy Valley, that belonging to Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Ellicott, Jr. of Philadelphia. This is a part of the estate of the late Charles Ellis, who is so well remembered by many of our citizens. This farm is delightfully situated, and the house is one of the largest and handsomest in this part of the country. It is furnished throughout in the most elegant manner, and the whole property is kept in perfect, order, which always adds so much to the appearance of any place. Many think this place the pleasantest in this township of fine houses.

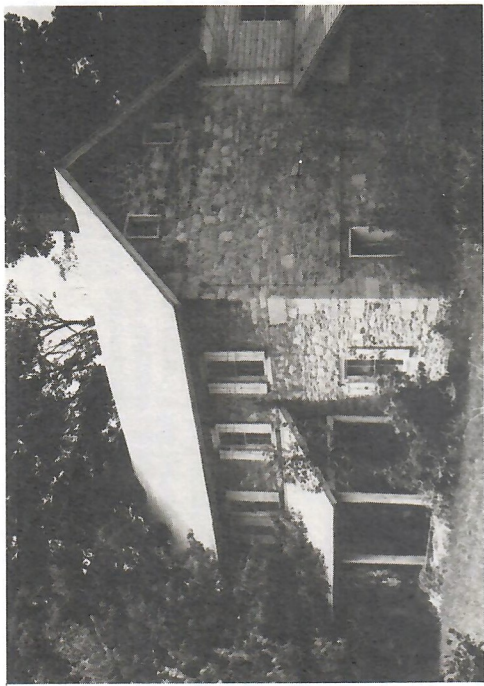
"Wolf Run House," the country home of Mr. Edward Marshall, of Philadelphia, is a large and handsome stone house set in the midst of a pretty lawn. Mr. Marshall has spent his summers here for many years, having erected this pleasant residence shortly after the close of the war. The quiet elegance of the house, and its furnishings, rather add to its beauty, and show the attractiveness of the surroundings.

Near Mr. Marshall's is Mr. Jesse Haines' pleasant old stone house, which is also delightfully located on one of the valuable farms of the Muncy Valley. Another fine farm in this vicinity is that of Mr. J. F. Ort's.

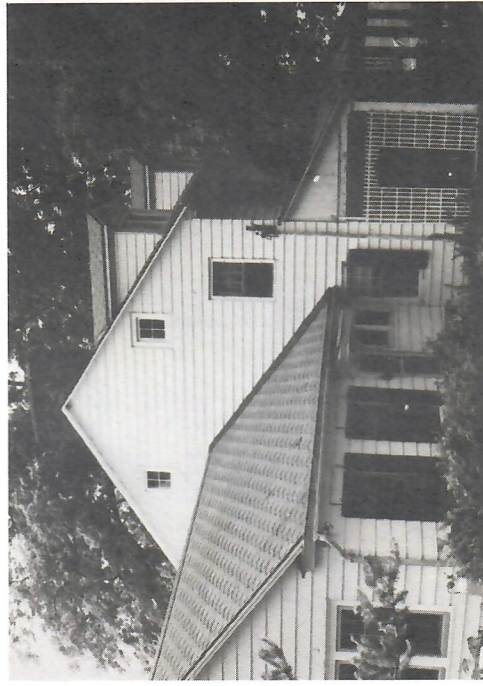
Our limited space will not allow us to add more to this article. We have given some account of the most notable country houses in Muncy township, as we thought such an article would not prove uninteresting to our readers. The township certainly contains more valuable places, in proportion to its size, than any other in this vicinity, and it seems likely to become even more popular as a place of summer residence in the future. In closing we wish to say that we are indebted to a Muncy township friend for considerable information about the places noticed in this paper.

Mr. Marshall has improved Wolf Run and built a handsome barn. This

is the old Haines homestead and has been owned by that family for close to 100 years. Jacob Haines used it for a stop on the "underground railroad." It is now owned by the three daughters of which Mrs. Marshall is one.



The Benjamin Warner home (No. 26) is very old, and was built on the Adalom, possibly being the reason for the construction of the road. Close by on the same road is the first home of William Cox Ellis who later built a larger home at Haines Corner (No. 18) and a third home (No. 29)



According to Marge Nicholson this home, which has been the Nicholson home for many years now, (No. 29) was built about 1824 by William C. Ellis. As the 1824 Genesee Road map does not show the Williamsport road extending east of Haines Corner in early 1824, it may be a little later. Unlike most of the other large homes in the township, this one is frame construction. Because it is a considerable distance from the highway, and below the road, it can not be observed - which may account for the lack of published information on this house.