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Pennsylvania History presents previously unpublished works that are of interest to scholars of the Middle Atlantic region. The Journal also reviews books, exhibits, and other media dealing primarily with Pennsylvania history or that shed significant light on the state's past.

The editors invite the submission of articles dealing with the history of Pennsylvania and the Middle Atlantic region, regardless of their specialty. Prospective authors should review past issues of *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies*, where they will note articles in social, intellectual, economic, environmental, political, and cultural history, from the distant and recent past. Articles may investigate new areas of research or may reflect on past scholarship. Material that is primarily of an antiquarian or genealogical nature will not be considered. Please conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style* in preparing your manuscript.

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On the cover: A rare daguerreotype of an unidentified couple by Sarah Garrett Hewes. Courtesy of The Library Company of Philadelphia.

INTRODUCTION: IMAGES OF COMMON WEALTH II

The Spring 1997 issue of *Pennsylvania History* (volume 64, number 2) was entirely devoted to the history of photography in Pennsylvania. The edition met with great success, winning that year the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives' Arline Custer Memorial Award recognizing the best books and articles written or compiled by individuals and institutions in the MARAC region; and the Society of American Archivists' Hamer-Kegan Award for increased public awareness of a specific body of records.

In mid-2013, *Pennsylvania History* editor Bill Pencak decided it would be good to produce another issue on the same theme, and already had accepted two articles (those on Terrance V. Powderly and Robert Ginsberg). He again invited this author to be guest editor. Alas, as we were gathering the other articles, Bill suddenly passed away in December. I greatly regret he will never see the results, yet I also feel he is looking down on me as I write these words.

Much has evolved in our world with regard to photography in the seventeen years since that issue appeared. This evolution could be called the computerization of photography, the movement away from a mechanically and chemically produced image. The Spring 1997 journal was put together using glossy prints or

transparencies, with text delivered to the publisher, often in person, on floppy disks. The issue you are reading now employs email, dropboxes, scans, and an editorial website to bring it together. The commercial use of polyester camera film has been entirely replaced by digital photography. The negative, the dominant means of producing an image throughout most of photography's history, has been eliminated in favor of an electronically produced direct positive. Slides as well have been replaced by PowerPoint presentations constructed from digital images. The motion picture industry has gone digital as well, and neighborhood theaters around the state and country are struggling with the expense to convert their projection equipment to the modern format.

Photography is now more immediate than ever before. The camera itself has been integrated into a hand-held electronic device, married with a clock, a telephone, a calculator, and a myriad of other technologies, to be kept in a pocket and accessed 24/7. It has become ubiquitous and hard to imagine life without such devices.

Yet the purpose, and use, of photography remains the same. It is a tool, like a spoon or a hammer, serving to make our lives more efficient. Digital snapshots can be instantly forwarded around the earth or even to the earth from other planets in our solar system. It enables us to share our lives with the global community. The artfulness in composing an image also remains the same, within the hand and mind of the photographer.

The monographs appearing here reflect recent research and information about how this tool is used and manipulated. Two provide overviews to the photograph collections of Terrance Powderly and H. Winslow Fegley, by William John Shepherd and Candace Perry, respectively. Powderly, that champion of labor, is not remembered as a photographer. Yet his images follow his work and interests and reinforce his lifetime of advocacy. We are grateful that these photographs were preserved and remain to be studied at Catholic University. Likewise, Winslow Fegley's collection at the Schwenkfelder Library is an outstanding and unique record of the homes and farms in east-central Pennsylvania, many of which no longer exist. Fegley, like Edwin S. Curtis and his efforts with Native Americans, wanted to record the Pennsylvania German way of life disappearing before him. Sarah Weatherwax examines the early years of photography in Philadelphia, offering new information about the little-known or researched female photographers operating in the commonwealth, and centers on the life of Sally Hewes. She also presents a vignette on John McClees. Jay Ruby gives thoughts on

GUEST EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Joseph Replogle, a nineteenth-century small-town commercial photographer, and how study of him and his images reveals much about what ordinary citizens expected from the medium. Edward Slavishak provides a thoughtful scrutiny of William Gedney's 1975 attempt to revisit the places Walker Evans photographed in Bethlehem in the 1930s, and their perceptions of urban decline.

Finally, Bill Pencak's dear friend Robert Ginsberg enlightens us with a deeply personal essay on the nature of photography and what it can reveal about each one of us. We are also grateful to Bob for helping to underwrite the production of his article in color.

What does photography teach us about humanity? Photographs can be considered the original "social media." People connect and respond to images more than words. It is therefore as a social media we present the following essays offering interpretation and analysis of photographs and photographers in the Keystone State from its very beginnings to the recent past.

LINDA A. RIES

Guest Editor

THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF TERENCE V. POWDERLY

William John Shepherd

Abstract: Terence Vincent Powderly (1849–1924) was a national celebrity who personified the American labor movement in the late nineteenth century during his tenure (1879–93) as head of the Knights of Labor, the era's largest organization of American workers. Unions were especially important in his native Pennsylvania and his reform efforts found a sympathetic political audience. He was also a dedicated public servant with three terms (1878–84) as a progressive mayor of Scranton and a reform-minded federal bureaucrat (1897–1924) in Washington, DC. In addition, he supported Irish nationalism, serving as a member of the secret pro-independence Clan Na Gael society and the Irish Land League political organization that favored the rights of tenant farmers. He was often photographed, or had photographs given to him, and late in life became an avid photographer with thousands of photographs preserved in his personal papers housed at the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC.

Keywords: Labor history, immigration, civil service, photography, Gilded Age

*T*erence Vincent Powderly was a national celebrity who eloquently personified the American labor movement in the late nineteenth century during his tenure (1879–93) as head of the

Knights of Labor, the era's largest organization of American workers. Unions were especially important in his native Pennsylvania and his reform efforts found a sympathetic political audience. He was also a dedicated public servant with three terms (1878–84) as a progressive mayor of Scranton and a reform-minded federal bureaucrat (1897–1924) in Washington, DC. In addition, he supported Irish nationalism, serving as a member of the secret pro-independence Clan Na Gael society and the Irish Land League political organization that favored the rights of tenant farmers. He was often photographed, or had photographs given to him, and late in life became an avid photographer with thousands of photographs preserved in his personal papers housed at the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC.¹

Powderly was born January 22, 1849, in the industrial community of Carbondale, Pennsylvania, to Terence and Madge Powderly, immigrants from County Meath, Ireland. His father had said, "Let us leave this damn country and go to America where a man may own himself and a gun too, if he wants to."² With eleven siblings, young Terence had scant opportunity for schooling, "I did not have the advantage of an education, I could read some, write but little."³ He was employed at age thirteen by the Delaware and Hudson Railroad and later apprenticed as a machinist to master mechanic James Dickson, who had in turn apprenticed under George Stephenson, the Englishman who invented the first railway line for the steam locomotive (see fig. 1).⁴

The 1869 strike and mine fire in Avondale, Pennsylvania, that killed 110 coal miners greatly influenced Powderly's life and induced him to join the International Union of Machinists and Blacksmiths in 1871, becoming local president in 1873.⁵ Powderly's union activities and the Depression of 1873 left him unemployed and blacklisted as a union agitator. He traveled North America searching for work and was often separated from his wife, Hannah Dever, whom he had married in 1872 and who barely survived delivering their only known child, a daughter who died a few days after birth on December 19, 1875.⁶ Powderly joined the local Scranton Knights of Labor in 1876, organized them into an assembly, and became their leader. Thereafter, he assumed national leadership in 1879. The Knights came into national prominence during his tenure, peaking in influence in 1886 with nearly 700,000 predominantly Catholic members, including many women. He became widely popular as crowds cheered him when he traveled, wrote songs and poetry in his honor, and named children after him. Unfortunately,

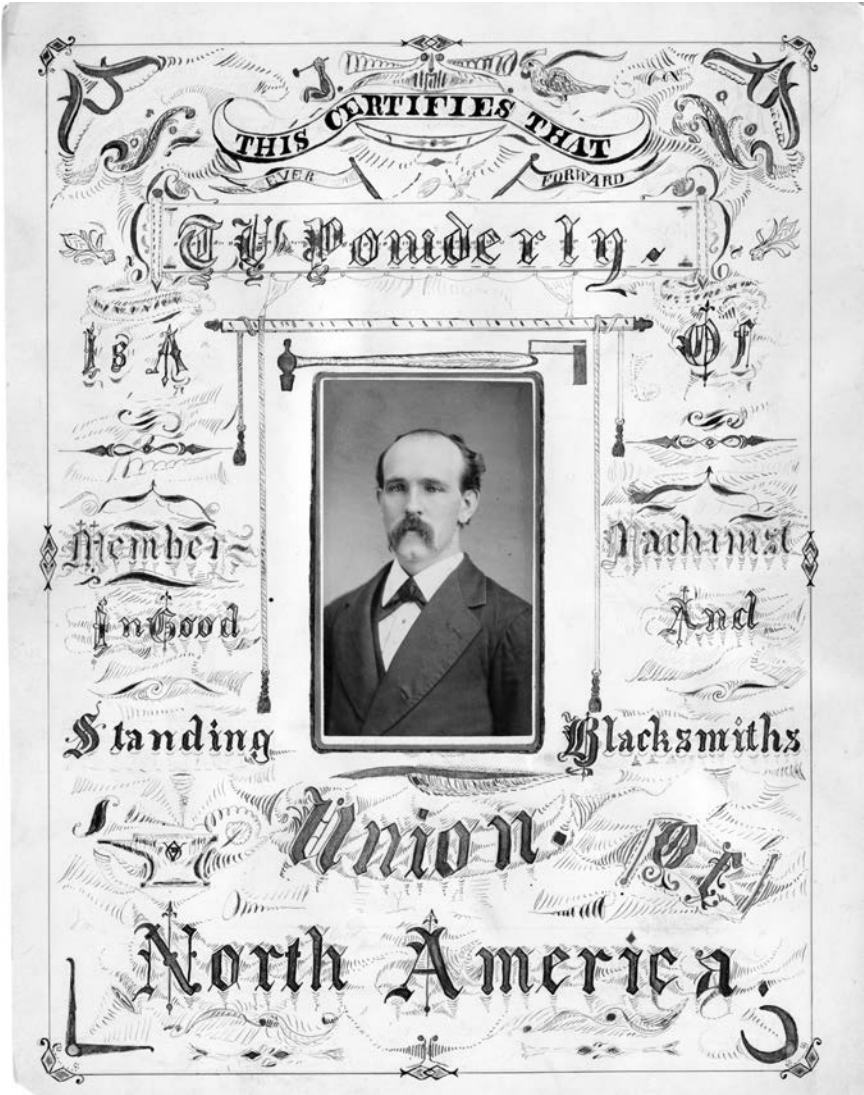


FIGURE 1: T. V. Powderly Certificate of Membership in Machinist and Blacksmith's Union of North America, ca. 1873. Photographer unknown.

he was increasingly vilified by various interests as his idealistic rhetoric was often belied by his instinctive desire to avoid conflict (see fig. 2).⁷

The Knights of Labor declined after the watershed year of 1886. First, the abortive Southwest Railroad Strike in March involving more than 200,000



FIGURE 2: Women delegates to the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor, Richmond, Virginia, October, 1886, with Elizabeth Rogers of Chicago and two-week-old daughter (her tenth). Photographer unknown.

workers against railroads owned by ruthless industrialist Jay Gould weakened Powderly because he had called off the strike. Second, the Knights were linked to the Haymarket Riot in Chicago in May that killed several and prompted a controversial trial followed by the executions of four men who may have been innocent. Finally, the founding of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in December 1886 by Samuel Gompers lured workers away so that Knights membership dropped to 120,000 by 1889. Thereafter, the Knights were beset with a divisive power struggle resulting in Powderly's removal in 1893 (see fig. 3).⁸

Even as the Knights declined there was some lasting success. Powderly had been born a Roman Catholic but had public differences with the institutional Church, resenting the attitude of many Church leaders who opposed labor



FIGURE 3: Knights of Labor headquarters, Philadelphia, July 15, 1892. Mary O'Reilly, James H. Mager(?), Mary Stephen, unknown, Tom O'Reilly, unknown, John O'Keefe, Ira C. Traphagen, unknown, Phoebe George. Photographer unknown.

organizations due to their secretive and ritualistic activities. He did, however, maintain close relations with several bishops and gained surprising support at a crucial period from Cardinal James Gibbons of Baltimore. Working together, they brought about reconciliation in 1888 between the labor movement and the Roman Catholic Church, including recognition by the Vatican. This rapprochement removed major obstacles to full Catholic participation in the American labor movement with a resultant swelling of union ranks with native-born and immigrant Catholics (see fig. 4).⁹

While engaged in the labor movement, Powderly was also a player in local Pennsylvania politics. In the 1876 presidential election he supported the largely agrarian Greenback ticket and, following the massive railroad strikes of 1877, activists organized a Labor Party that allied with the Greenbacks to make Powderly mayor of Scranton. During his three terms (1878–84) he progressively transformed the city into a modern municipality with an agenda



FIGURE 4: "Italian Laborers." Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania, May 27, 1913. Image by T. V. Powderly.

that included the establishment of a board of health, a sewage system, food inspection, and paved roads (see fig. 5).¹⁰

After 1894, stung by his rejection by the labor movement and now viewed as a troublemaker, Powderly was unable to find employment. Therefore, he studied law and was admitted to the Pennsylvania bar in 1894, eventually arguing cases before the supreme courts of Pennsylvania and the United States. He also returned to politics and (now disenchanted with third parties) joined the Central Republican Club of Scranton. He later stated, "I am a Republican because I am a Protectionist and believe my own country—being the best—should come first."¹¹

During the contentious presidential election of 1896 he avidly campaigned throughout Pennsylvania for the successful Republican ticket of William McKinley of Ohio and Garrett Hobart of New Jersey.¹² In 1897 the newly inaugurated president appointed Powderly as Commissioner-General of Immigration, a significant office under the US Treasury Department. After a lengthy Senate confirmation battle in which the opposition of old labor nemesis Samuel Gompers had to be overcome a triumphant Powderly assumed office in March 1898. As Commissioner-General of Immigration, Powderly investigated corruption at Ellis Island and fired nearly a dozen people. Unfortunately, his benefactor, William McKinley, was assassinated



FIGURE 5: T. V. Powderly. Scranton, Pennsylvania. "Taken Nov. 1909 while at home to vote and on way back." Image by T. V. Powderly.

in September 1901 and succeeded by New York's Theodore Roosevelt who terminated Powderly from office on July 2, 1902 (see fig. 6). This was the result of the slanderous efforts of those Powderly had fired who in turn convinced Roosevelt that Powderly was himself corrupt and had actively conspired with Roosevelt's political enemy Thomas Platt. Powderly, however, waged a vigorous campaign to exonerate himself.¹³ Following an investigation, Roosevelt reinstated Powderly in 1906 as a Special Immigration Inspector of the Department of Commerce and Labor charged to study the causes of emigration. After touring several European countries Powderly wrote a report advocating that American agents select prospective immigrants before they left their homes, travel with them on the ships bringing them over, and evenly distribute the arriving immigrants throughout America (see figs. 7 and 8).¹⁴

Powderly next served (1907–21) as chief of the Immigration Bureau's Division of Information, which until 1913—a period that included the presidency of Republican William Howard Taft—was part of the Department of Commerce and Labor. With the advent of the Democratic administration of Woodrow Wilson in 1913, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization reorganized and was placed in the new Department of Labor. For the next



FIGURE 6: Ellis Island, New York, September 3, 1913. Image by T. V. Powderly.



FIGURE 7: Powderly the world traveler: "Self and Satchel on Lawn," DC, September 17, 1911. Photographer unknown.



FIGURE 8: Scene in market, Trieste, Austria (now Italy), ca. 1906–1907. Image by T. V. Powderly.

eight years, Powderly reported to Commissioner-General Anthony Camenetti (1854–1923), a former lawyer and congressman from California who was very critical of Asian immigration (see fig. 9).¹⁵

Powderly also worked with Camenetti's boss, William B. Wilson (1870–1934), the Scottish-born first secretary of labor who had been a member of the Knights of Labor and a founding member of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). Wilson was a Pennsylvania congressman (1907–13) who had sponsored an investigation of mine safety conditions and helped organize the Federal Bureau of Mines in 1910. He also promoted the eight-hour workday for public employees and the creation of the Department of Labor that he headed (1913–21).¹⁶ Powderly's final position (1921–24) was commissioner of Conciliation of the US Labor Department under James J. Davis (1873–1947), a Welsh-born steelworker (see fig. 10).¹⁷

During these years Powderly maintained ties to labor leaders such as Mary "Mother" Harris Jones (1837–1930), the Irish-born "Miner's Angel" who was



FIGURE 9: First inauguration of Woodrow Wilson, parade, DC—March 4, 1913. Image by T. V. Powderly.

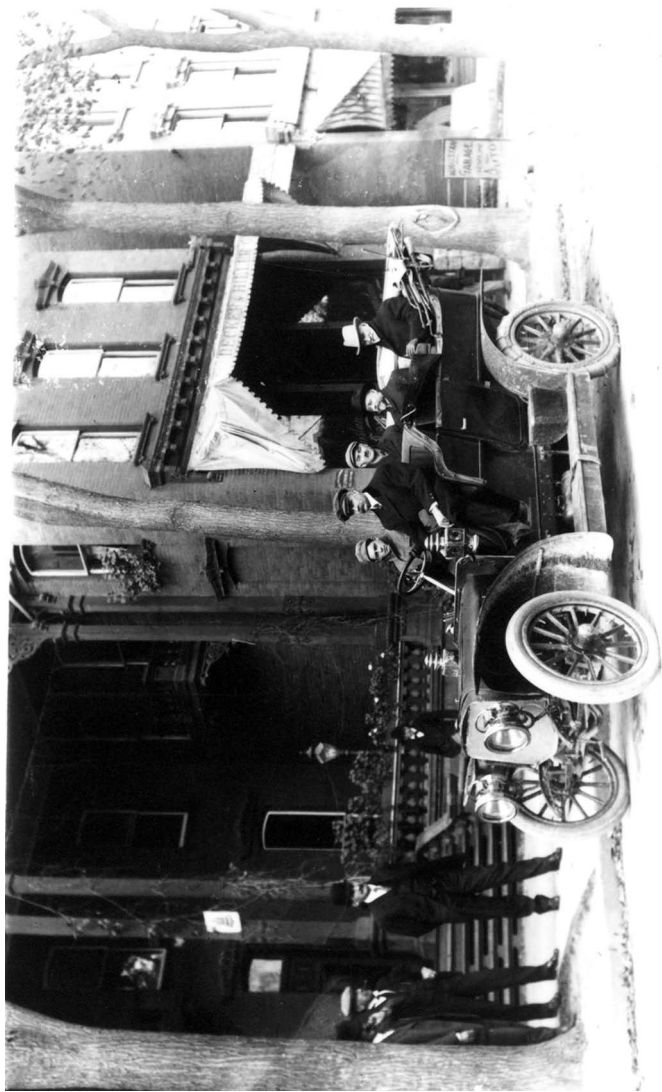


FIGURE 10: Auto with William B. Wilson, John W. Stewart, C. W. Larmon, and Professor Miltron Whitney, Albany, New York, October 12–14, 1909. Image by T. V. Powderly.

an iconic American labor activist for nearly sixty years. Affiliated with both the Knights and the UMWA, she was often photographed with Powderly and was his frequent houseguest (he also paid many of her bills). Another labor associate was the Illinois-born coal miner John B. White (1870–1934), UMWA president during the Colorado Coal Strike (1913–14) that included the infamous Ludlow Massacre. White was noted for his work on a ban on the employment of children under sixteen, old-age pensions, and workmen's compensation (see fig. 11).

While the photographs taken by others and given to Powderly related to his career as a labor leader and labor-related events and people, his own photographic work was focused on his later life in Washington and national and international travels as part of the fact-finding work as part of his federal employment. Overall, they are a rich archival resource documenting one man's turbulent journey through a tumultuous period in American history. Several thousand of these images (ca. 1902–21) survive, being transferred from unstable and highly volatile nitrate images to safety film in the 1970s, enhanced by the preservation of his meticulous notes identifying persons and subjects as well as camera types, shutter speeds, and f-stops on many of the negative jackets. According to one expert, "Powderly was a photographer of uncommon skill and professionalism. He seemed to be instinctively aware of what a good documentary photo was before the word 'documentary' became fashionable."¹⁸ Many sites and scenes caught his eye, ranging from shoppers gathering at Woodward and Lothrop ("Woodie's") and children playing outside the US Labor Department to a blacksmith on Fourteenth and G streets and an African American carpet salesman displaying his wares. Powderly was present at and photographed three presidential inaugurations, that of Republican William Howard Taft in 1909, and Democrat Woodrow Wilson in 1913 and again in 1917. He also recorded the Confederate Soldiers Reunion Parade in Washington on June 8, 1917, and military draft registration on June 5, 1917 (see figs. 12–14).

Powderly was apparently a great fan of the Washington Monument, with nearly four dozen images of perhaps the nation's most beloved shrine (see fig. 15). Ironically, Powderly did not photograph anything specific to the current home of his papers, the Catholic University of America, though he did record the nearby Soldier's Home, established in 1851, with two of the buildings used as the summer White House for several American presidents, most notably Abraham Lincoln, who lived at the Anderson Cottage. Finally, there was Powderly's beloved Petworth residence, his Washington



FIGURE 11: Powderly, with “Mother” Mary Harris Jones and John P. White, UMWA president, 1916. Photographer unknown.

home until his death, which was probably his favorite place to photograph. Having moved to the District in 1897, Powderly had obtained a three-story Queen Anne-style house in the Petworth area, a residential neighborhood in Northwest Washington bounded by Georgia Avenue to the west, North Capitol Street to the east, Rock Creek Church Road to the south, and



FIGURE 12: Blacksmith (with “hand forge”), 14th and G streets in DC, October 1913. Image by T. V. Powderly.



FIGURE 13: Confederate veterans parading in DC with American flag, June 8, 1917. 251658240. Image by T. V. Powderly.

Kennedy Street to the north. Powderly’s address, oddly enough, changed several times (from 502 Newark Street to 502 Quincy Street to 3700 Fifth Street) over the next two decades though he and the house never moved!



FIGURE 14: Draft registration, DC (0286-13), June 5, 1917. Image by T. V. Powderly.



FIGURE 15: Washington Monument, April 16, 1912. Image by T. V. Powderly.

Today it is the Dorothy Day Catholic Worker House at 503 Rock Creek Church Road NW.¹⁹ The neighborhood had been the site of the Tayloe family estates, becoming part of the city in the 1880s when two real-estate investment partnerships purchased the estates for development. The neighborhood grew with the expansion of the streetcar line up Georgia Avenue (then known as Seventh Street Extended or Brightwood Avenue) from Florida Avenue to the district line at Silver Spring, Maryland. He had lobbied diligently for this as president of the Petworth Citizen's Association (see fig. 16).²⁰

Powderly was also active in 1904 in leading the Citizen's Association in supporting the Policemen's Association's efforts to secure pay increases via congressional action. There were also complaints (eerily familiar in the twenty-first century) that the new streetcar service did not run frequently enough or provide enough seats.²¹ Powderly also used his position as a platform to advocate for home rule. In a July 4, 1908, speech at the Soldier's Home he also advocated the rights of Washington residents, including women, to vote, basing his theory on the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution stating that nothing could alter the fact that they were citizens of the United States (see fig. 17).²²



FIGURE 16: Powderly house at Petworth, Washington, DC, 1903. Photographer unknown.



FIGURE 17: "Suffragists on Picket Duty before the White House," January 11, 1917. TVP (0285-11). Image by T. V. Powderly.

In 1900 the Petworth household included Terence, his first wife Hannah, four of Mrs. Powderly's relatives, and Terence's faithful secretary Emma Fickenschier, later to be his second wife.²³ It was here that his first wife, Hannah, died at the relatively young age of forty-seven on October 13, 1901.²⁴ There were always many visitors in addition to the semi-permanent houseguests. In 1910, in addition to Terence and Emma, three of his relatives and one of hers lived there.²⁵ Ten years later, in 1920, there were four boarders.²⁶ After 1920 Powderly was in declining health, so much so that a concerned Mother Jones wrote, "Don't be dwelling on when we are going to take our final rest" and "don't be so despondent."²⁷ He died aged seventy-five at Petworth after a long illness on June 24, 1924. He was buried two days later in nearby Rock Creek Cemetery.²⁸ He had married his second wife, long-time secretary Emma Fickenschier, in 1919 and she survived him for many years, dying at age eighty-four on February 23, 1940 (see fig. 18).²⁹

Earlier American labor historians dismissed Powderly and the Knights as relics of the utopian traditions of the antebellum years that were unsuited



FIGURE 18: Powderly and Emma Fickenscher (later Powderly) in the lawn of their house in Petworth, DC, n.d. (circa 1908). Photographer unknown.

to the economic realities of the Gilded Age.³⁰ More recent studies presented the Knights as an authentic working-class organization with a convincing critique of industrial capitalism, making the case that Powderly was a worthy if flawed hero who articulated a progressive vision of laborers in the face of that era's inhumanity of the industrial capitalist system. In 2000 Powderly received due recognition as an inductee into the US Department of Labor's Hall of Fame in Washington, DC, joining rival Samuel Gompers, good friend "Mother" Jones, and fellow Pennsylvanian labor leader Philip Murray.³¹

NOTES

All images in this article are from the Catholic University of America, Washington, DC.

1. Terence Vincent Powderly's material legacy is preserved in his papers housed at the Catholic University of America (CUA) in Washington, DC. They document his impact on American labor and immigration history consisting largely of his official correspondence as leader of the Knights of Labor (1879–93), his tenure as mayor of Scranton, Pennsylvania (1878–84), and his service as a federal official for the Immigration and Labor departments (1897–1924). Additionally, there are his personal correspondence, photographs, memorabilia, legal files, and financial records. An online collection guide (or finding aid) can be accessed at <http://archives.lib.cua.edu/findingaid/powderly.cfm>. The Powderly Photograph Prints digital collection is at <http://www.aladino.wrlc.org/gsdll/collect/powderly/powderly.shtml>. Those wishing to research original Powderly materials at Catholic University are encouraged to call 202-319-5065, send an email to archives@mail.lib.cua.edu, or access the archives visitor's page at <http://archives.lib.cua.edu/visit.cfm>.
2. Terence V. Powderly, *The Path I Trod: The Autobiography of Terence V. Powderly* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), 5.
3. Powderly, letter to "Eddie," January 9, 1898, box 155, folder 6, Powderly Papers (hereafter TVP), Catholic University.
4. Richard Oestreicher, "Terence Powderly, the Knights of Labor, and Artisanal Republicanism," in *Labor Leaders in America*, ed. Melvyn Dubofsky and Warren Van Tine (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 32.
5. Vincent J. Falzone, *Terence V. Powderly: Middle Class Reformer* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1978), 10; Craig Phelan, *Grand Master Workman: Terence Powderly and the Knights of Labor* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000), 16.
6. T. V. Powderly diary, 1875, box 178, TVP.
7. Sandra Yocum Mize, "Terence V. Powderly, 1849–1924," in *Encyclopedia of American Catholic History*, ed. Thomas J. Shelley (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1997), 1163–64.
8. Falzone, *Terence V. Powderly*, 169–71; Phelan, *Grand Master Workman*, 254–57.
9. Henry Vincent Brown, *The Catholic Church and the Knights of Labor* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1949).
10. Falzone, *Terence V. Powderly*, 32–61.

THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF TERENCE V. POWDERLY

11. T. V. Powderly, letter to Warren Harding, February 7, 1921, TVP.
12. Powderly, *Path I Trod*, ix; Falzone, *Terence V. Powderly*, 174; Phelan, *Grand Master Workman*, 258–59.
13. Falzone, *Terence V. Powderly*, 184–89; Oestreicher, “Terence Powderly,” 56.
14. Falzone, *Terence V. Powderly*, 191; Powderly, *Path I Trod*, ix–x; Phelan, *Grand Master Workman*, 260.
15. Biographical Dictionary of the US Congress website, <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=C000069> (accessed February 28, 2012); Wikipedia at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthony_Caminetti (accessed February 28, 2012).
16. US Department of Labor website, <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/history/wilson.htm> (accessed February 28, 2012).
17. Falzone, *Terence V. Powderly*, 192; Phelan, *Grand Master Workman*, 260.
18. “The Photographs of Terence Vincent Powderly,” information pamphlet, CUA Archives, 1985.
19. Dorothy Day Catholic Worker at <http://dccatholicworker.wordpress.com/>.
20. Falzone, *Terence V. Powderly*, 190.
21. *Washington Post*, December 7, 1904, 8.
22. *Ibid.*, July 6, 1908, 2.
23. Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Washington, DC.
24. *Washington Post*, October 15, 1901, 7.
25. Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, Washington, DC.
26. Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, Washington, DC.
27. M. H. Jones to T. V. Powderly, May 3, 1923, Mother Jones Collection, TVP.
28. *Washington Post*, June 25, 1924, 13.
29. *Ibid.*, February 26, 1940, 20.
30. Phelan, *Terence V. Powderly*, 3–4.
31. *Catholic Standard*, February 10, 2000, 24, and March 2, 2000, 20.

MORE THAN “AN ELEGANT
ACCOMPLISHMENT”: SARAH GARRETT
HEWES AND PENNSYLVANIA’S EARLY
FEMALE PHOTOGRAPHERS

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Abstract: This article explores the role of female photographers in the earliest years of photography in Pennsylvania focusing on the life and career of Sarah Garrett Hewes.

Keywords: photography, daguerreotypes, women

In 1850, when Sarah (or Sally) Hewes began working as a daguerreotypist, the photographic process had been in existence for just over a decade. News of the eponymous technological wonder, which had been introduced to the public by Frenchman Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre in August 1839, quickly traveled across the Atlantic Ocean to Philadelphia and other American cities. Beginning on September 25, 1839, Philadelphia newspapers began to publish descriptions of how to create and fix an image onto a silvered copper plate.¹ Detailed step-by-step instructions translated into English by University of Pennsylvania professor of chemistry and Franklin Institute member John Fries Frazer first appeared in the November

1839 issue of the *Journal of the Franklin Institute*. Those with a curious mind and scientific aptitude now had the resources to attempt to replicate and improve the process and to explore its possible commercial applications.

Even those not interested in making daguerreotypes on their own had opportunities within a few months of their introduction to learn about this new technological marvel. As early as the December 1839 meeting of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, members had the chance to examine daguerreotypes produced by Philadelphia lamp manufacturer Robert Cornelius.² Philadelphia's Franklin Institute offered "monthly conversation meetings," which provided both men and women the opportunity to learn about "the scientific or mechanical novelties of the day," including daguerreotypes.³ Some public lectures and daguerreotype demonstrations in Philadelphia even specifically encouraged women to attend. On December 30, 1839, Walter R. Johnson, for example, advertised that he would be lecturing on daguerreotyping the next day in the Chemical Lecture Room of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College and illustrating his lecture with "various experiments and by a variety of samples of the art." Single tickets cost fifty cents, but "a gentleman and two ladies" would be admitted for only \$1.00.⁴ Savvy promoters of the daguerreotype process realized that women would be important consumers of the new technology, even if they were not expected to be practitioners.

Women, however, did experiment with the new process. Eliza J. Henry was one of five daguerreotype exhibitors at the Franklin Institute's October 1840 exhibition. The judges' report for the exhibition declared that the "Specimen Daguerreotype, by a Lady, [was] pretty good," but her work did not receive an award.⁵ A somewhat more enthusiastic description of all the exhibitors' work was expressed by the *Public Ledger*, which declared that the daguerreotypes on display "consist of views and miniature likenesses and portraits, some of them are excellently well executed, and it would be a matter of difficulty to award the laurel to either of these aspirants to renown."⁶ Among those vying for an award was a G. W. Henry who most likely was related to Eliza, but their exact relationship has not yet been determined. Both Eliza and G. W. appear to have been amateurs who did not pursue daguerreotyping beyond their initial willingness to experiment with the new process.

Although news of the daguerreotype captured the public's imagination, the number of people who pursued photography as either amateurs or professionals in its first two decades remained small. John Craig in his *Daguerreian Registry* lists approximately 875 photographers, suppliers, or those in related

industries working in Pennsylvania between 1839 and 1860.⁷ Using Craig's list along with other sources, sixteen women or approximately 1.8 percent of the total number were identified as working either as camera operators or as "photographic painters" who embellished images with color highlights. Philadelphia, as befitting its status as the most populous city in the commonwealth, supported 11 women working in the daguerreotype field among its 300 male practitioners, making women approximately 3.5 percent of the city's daguerreotypists. Female photographers are also known to have worked in Pittsburgh, Carlisle, West Chester, and Pleasantville prior to 1860.⁸ Overall, these figures are consistent with photo-historian William Culp Darrah's findings showing that women made up a small, but steady, percentage of America's professional photographers between the mid-1840s and 1890.⁹

As is typical in every profession, the quality of these early photographers' work varied greatly. In 1856 an anonymous writer, identified only as Cuique Suum (Latin for "to each his own"), surveyed photographic studios in both New York City and Philadelphia and published brief reviews in the periodical *Photographic and Fine Art Journal*. Of the fifty-eight galleries he visited in Philadelphia, two were headed by women (approximately 3.5 percent of the total). Although Cuique Suum pointedly specified which photographers were female in his brief reviews and only included honorific titles for the female operatives on his list, he seemed able to impartially judge the merits of their work regardless of gender. Although somewhat patronizing to the two women, Cuique Suum directed far more cutting words toward some of the male photographers. He dismissed the work produced in Ambrose Williams's Market Street daguerreotype studio as "dirty, dim and crying aloud for improvement." "We must pass this artist [William Sailer] in silence and tears," he declared about a competing studio. In contrast, Cuique Suum praised the daguerreotypist Miss Mahan. "We grant the lady every compliment of the art," he wrote, "and hope she will be able to raise her prices." A visit to Mlle. Gunn's studio led him to write: "Success to her, whatever her faults."¹⁰

Even if Cuique Suum seemed able to objectively rate the photographic work of women, the concept of female photographers was not met with universal approval. Mid nineteenth-century photographic literature debated the proper place for women in photographic studios. In 1854 the author of *The Daguerreotype Director, Reese & Co.'s German System of Photography and Picture Making* bluntly declared: "we shall yet believe that female Daguerreians are greatly out of place, pants or no pants."¹¹

Others saw a role for women in the photography business, although not necessarily as actual operators. Some tasks were seen as particularly appropriate

for female sensibilities. Montgomery P. Simons's 1857 book *Plain Instructions for Coloring Photographs in Water Colors and India Ink* received praise as a resource for the "hundreds of young ladies with taste and skill in coloring, who, by the aid of this little book, can apply that taste and skill to the coloring of Photographs, either as a means of earning money, or as an elegant accomplishment."¹² *The Photographic News* a decade later expressed surprise that so few women worked in photography's "productive departments" since "photography possesses so many branches which might be deemed peculiarly suited to the female capacity, requiring neat-handed skill rather than strength, and delicacy of taste rather than endurance." The article concluded that women lacked the seriousness of purpose to pursue the more technical aspects of photography since they expected to marry and give up working outside the home.¹³

While marriage and a domestic life may have been the expected norm for all women, some found their entrée into photography through a husband or male relative and worked in the field as part of a family business. Of the sixteen women engaged in photography in Pennsylvania prior to 1860, five can be identified as having a connection of some sort to men in the field. Elizabeth Mahan who advertised her Market Street photographic studio in the *Philadelphia Merchant and Manufacturer's Business Directory for 1856–57*, for example, was most likely connected in some way to the male Mahans who also operated photographic studios in the city.¹⁴ A more definite connection can be made between Mrs. Currie and her spouse. In 1854 and 1855 Mrs. William Currie was listed in Philadelphia directories as working with her husband who was identified as a "gent. talbotypist" (a talbotype is an early form of paper photography).¹⁵ Evidence of a family business is also found in the 1860 census where Mary Black, the daughter of Philadelphian photographer James R. Black, is listed as living in her parents' home and working as an artist. It is not too hard to assume that she was probably utilizing her artistic skills in her father's studio.¹⁶

Philadelphian Charlotte Hutton's interest in daguerreotypes may have been sparked by her silversmith husband who possibly supplied daguerreotypists with the silvered plates on which they created their images. Under the listing "C.M. Hutton" Charlotte Hutton advertised her services as a daguerreotypist in the business listings of Philadelphia directories in 1854 and 1855. Her decision to advertise using only initials for her first and middle names may or may not have been based on a desire to conceal her gender, since many of her male counterparts advertised using only their initials as well.¹⁷ Samuel Hutton apparently took over his wife's business in 1856 when he is listed as operating a "Daguerrean Gallery" at the northeast corner of Second and South streets, Charlotte's former location, with no mention of Charlotte.¹⁸

For other women, their entering the photography field appears independent of a male connection. Ann (Anna/Annie) McGinn, for example, independently operated a daguerreotype studio in Philadelphia from 1857 until 1862. Her five years as a daguerreotypist represent the longest time any female photographer in Pennsylvania remained in business during this period. She then worked as a photographer in San Francisco for several more years.¹⁹ Esther (known as Hetty) Kersey Painter was another woman who seems to have entered the world of photography independently of male family members. In December 1851 Painter, the wife of a telegrapher, advertised her daguerreotype studio in West Chester, Pennsylvania. "Hetty K. Painter respectfully informs her friends and the public that she is prepared to take daguerreotypes in the most approved and durable style," stated the advertisement. "Those wishing either family groups or single pictures, will please give her a call."²⁰ Painter was not, however, the first woman to operate a daguerreotype studio in West Chester. In the spring of 1850, Sarah Hewes and her business partner Samuel Broadbent had stopped in the Chester County seat and offered their daguerreotype skills to those in the area. Although Painter was living in Ohio in 1850 and probably did not have first-hand knowledge of Hewes's daguerreotype work in West Chester, Hewes may have paved the way for Painter to find community acceptance in pursuing what was an uncommon female occupation.

Painter's late 1851 newspaper advertisement provided the only evidence of her involvement with photography. By 1860 she had graduated from medical college in Philadelphia and quickly put her medical skills to use ministering to Union soldiers during the Civil War. After the war she continued working as a physician in the American West, as well as actively participating in temperance and suffrage organizations. Newspaper testimonials upon Painter's death related her astonishingly busy and productive life story, but made no mention of what seems to have been her very brief time as a daguerreotypist.²¹

Hetty Painter lived a life outside of societal expectations and norms, and to a lesser extent, so did Sarah Hewes. Hewes's story reflects the motivations and means that propelled and enabled women to practice photography in the mid-nineteenth century. As the daughter of a successful Quaker merchant, Hewes probably never expected to be employed outside her family's home and certainly not in such a male-dominated field. When a series of unfortunate, even scandalous, events made it necessary for her to support her young children, daguerreotyping was an avenue of paid employment initially made available to her through a male family member. Whether she entered the

photographic business reluctantly out of necessity or with the enthusiasm of an adventuresome spirit, the daguerreotype illustrated in figure 1 indicates that Hewes mastered the medium. Hewes has nicely positioned the older Quaker couple in front of a painted backdrop. Their interaction with each other as well as with Hewes appears natural and relaxed creating a pleasing portrait.

Sarah Sharpless, the eldest daughter of Quaker abolitionist Thomas Garrett and his wife Mary Sharpless Garrett, was born on April 15, 1819, joining an older brother, Ellwood. Within eight years, three more children were born to the couple. The Garretts, a family of some means, owned a farm and mills just outside of Philadelphia in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania. In 1822 Thomas Garrett moved his growing family to Wilmington, Delaware, where he established a successful mercantile, iron, coal, and hardware business in the city's commercial district. In 1828, when Sarah Garrett was nine years old, her mother died, and a year and a half later her father remarried. Thomas and his new wife, Rachel Mendinhall Garrett, added one more child to the family.²²

Only a few months after her mother's death, Sarah Garrett left home to become a pupil at Westtown School, a Quaker boarding school located in rural Chester County, Pennsylvania, about twenty miles from Wilmington. Several of her aunts and uncles had attended Westtown and her two younger sisters later followed in her footsteps. Sarah Garrett entered a school of slightly more than one hundred students, three-quarters of whom were female. With the exception of sewing classes, the girls' curriculum closely followed that of the boys and available classes included reading, grammar, science, spelling, arithmetic, and geography. She remained at Westtown for a little more than a year, leaving the school a week before her father's remarriage. It is not known if she continued her education beyond her time at Westtown.²³

On September 9, 1841, at the Wilmington Monthly Meeting in front of about sixty witnesses, twenty-two year-old Sarah Garrett married fellow Quaker Edward C. Hewes, a member of a well-off Wilmington family. The Hewes and Garrett families were united not only by marriage, but also through a business relationship. Thomas Garrett and Edward Hewes were partners in the Elk Iron Works, a rolling mill producing metal plates and bars, located in Elkton, Maryland. During their marriage, the young couple had three children, Mary, Emlen, and Charles.²⁴

Wedded life, however, proved to be less than blissful. The Wilmington Monthly Meeting minutes for June 1846 recorded that Edward C. Hewes had been charged with adultery. A few months later the committee sent to



FIGURE 1: Sarah Garrett Hewes, *Unidentified Couple*, half-plate daguerreotype, ca. 1850. The Library Company of Philadelphia. "S. G. Hewes" is embossed on the red-velvet pad.

investigate the charge made its final report. Edward Hewes was not "in a state of mind suitably to condemn his transgression," declared the committee, "[and] we testify that he is no longer a member of our Religious Society."²⁵ Certainly such a public condemnation of her husband in front of their friends and neighbors must have humiliated Sarah Hewes, but he was not the first member of either the Garrett or Hewes family to face similar punishment. Both of Edward's parents had been disowned in 1831 and soon after her marriage to Thomas Garrett in 1830, Sarah Hewes's stepmother had been expelled from the Wilmington Monthly Meeting because of her attendance at other religious services.²⁶

It is impossible to know how Edward Hewes's troubles affected their marriage, but by 1850 he had relocated by himself to San Francisco, California. Perhaps like many restless spirits, Edward may have been lured west by the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill near Sacramento in 1848. His western adventure, however, proved short-lived. Edward Hewes died in a cholera epidemic that swept through the area in the fall of 1850.²⁷ At the age of thirty-one, Sarah Garrett Hewes was now a widow with three small children to support.

At the time of Sarah Hewes's most pressing need for familial support, her extended family was experiencing its own troubles, which may have prevented them from offering assistance. A few months before Edward Hewes's expulsion from the Society of Friends, the business partnership between her father and husband had dissolved. "I found that I could not get along with E. C. Hewes in the concern [Elk Iron Works]," Thomas Garrett wrote, "as his name was a clog in consequence of his extravagance."²⁸ Thomas Garrett's anti-slavery work also compounded his financial woes in the late 1840s. Garrett had gained a national reputation as an abolitionist, helping to organize a network of like-minded citizens in the Philadelphia area who provided money, transportation, and general assistance to slaves fleeing the south. Thomas Garrett supposedly helped 2,700 slaves escape bondage during his time with the Underground Railroad. In 1848 he faced a serious legal challenge when charges were brought against him and an associate for damages they caused in assisting several slaves to escape. The court assessed the damages at \$5,400, but Garrett actually only paid a \$1,500 fine.²⁹ This fine did not impoverish him, but may have made it difficult for him to financially assist his eldest daughter when her husband left her and later when she became a widow.

Sarah Hewes's older brother, Ellwood, also experienced financial difficulties in the late 1840s. In 1845 he had opened a machine shop in Wilmington,

but disaster struck in 1849 when his shop burned to the ground. Ellwood then made a decision that influenced Hewes's life. Rather than rebuild his machine shop, he decided to pursue a career as a daguerreotypist. Ellwood Garrett was mechanically inclined and there is anecdotal evidence that he had experimented with daguerreotyping in its earliest days. He began studying daguerreotyping with Samuel Broadbent, an itinerant artist turned daguerreotypist, who in 1849 had opened a studio in Wilmington's new Glazier Building, a very advantageous studio location in the city's commercial district. By the end of 1850, Ellwood was advertising his own studio, located on the same block as Samuel Broadbent's business.³⁰

Sarah Hewes undoubtedly learned how to take daguerreotypes from her brother or directly from Samuel Broadbent. Evidence has not been found to indicate that Hewes ever worked in her brother's Wilmington studio. She apparently made the decision to join forces with Samuel Broadbent and partnered with him during her three years as a daguerreotypist. Although Samuel Broadbent's family had settled with him in Wilmington by 1850, Broadbent was not yet ready or able to give up his traveling life, and he now had a business partner, Sarah Hewes, with whom he could travel.³¹

If Sarah Hewes had chosen to work with her brother in Wilmington, she could have stayed rooted within her family and her religious community, not only sharing a studio with Ellwood, but also being in the same building as her younger brother Henry, a dentist. By choosing to work with Broadbent, a peripatetic non-Quaker, Hewes was in many ways leaving her comfortably familiar world behind. She was not yet a widow when she joined forces with Broadbent, but may have realized that with a husband in far-off California, and a family suffering financial strains, she needed to rely on herself for economic security. Unlike her brother, who was just launching his daguerreotype career, Broadbent had years of experience and partnering with him may have made more economic sense. Why Broadbent accepted Hewes as a partner or colleague is less clear, particularly since his nephew Charles Cook lived with the Broadbent family in Wilmington and was apprenticing with him as a "picture maker."³² Perhaps Broadbent simply recognized Hewes's talents as a daguerreotypist.

Probably sometime in early 1850, Samuel Broadbent made the approximately twenty-mile trip from Wilmington to West Chester, Pennsylvania, and opened a daguerreotype studio. As he had in Wilmington, Broadbent chose a promising site for his business. Located above the law office of Joseph J. Lewis on Market Street, the building, opposite the

county courthouse, next to a hotel, and only three blocks away from the Philadelphia & Wilmington Railroad depot, was conveniently situated in an area sure to be filled with potential customers. Ready to move on by early spring, Broadbent on April 2, 1850, placed an advertisement in the *American Republican* announcing that he had "made arrangements with Mrs. Hewes to continue taking Daguerreotype Portraits, for a short time, at the rooms recently occupied by him in West Chester." The advertisement assured potential customers of the quality of her work, stating that "Mrs. H., who having been associated with him, practices in the same style, and the same process as Mr. B; it being acknowledged superior to that of any other artist."³³

Broadbent and Hewes were not the only daguerreotypists to have recognized the advantages of operating a studio in what is considered West Chester's first office building. For at least six months in 1849, Messrs. Harned and White had operated a daguerreotype studio at this location. Shortly after Sarah Hewes vacated the premises in the spring of 1850, Phillip Price and Levi Crowl took over the space for their daguerreotype studio. And by the end of July 1850, yet another daguerreotypist, Thomas Van Osten, announced that he would be operating a studio above Mr. Lewis's office "for a short time."³⁴

After leaving West Chester, Broadbent returned to Wilmington by the fall of 1850, but Hewes's whereabouts for the rest of that year are unknown.³⁵ Sarah Hewes and her three children cannot be found in the 1850 census either living in their own household or in the home of any of her family members. Although the logistics of traveling around the countryside with three children under the age of eight seem daunting, Hewes may have continued working as an itinerant daguerreotypist, thus eluding the censustakers. A reproduction of a daguerreotype taken at the Sharon Female Seminary, located outside of Philadelphia in Delaware County, and attributed to Hewes was recently discovered (fig. 2) and indicates that Hewes took daguerreotypes in locations other than West Chester and Philadelphia.³⁶

Sarah Hewes and Samuel Broadbent joined forces again and began advertising their new studio in Philadelphia in April 1851.³⁷ The lure of a big city and its potentially large numbers of patrons must have been appealing, and Philadelphia was not a completely unknown locale for Hewes. Members of the extended Garrett family lived in the city, including her uncle Phillip Garrett, a watchmaker and machinist, whom Sarah is known to have visited as a girl, and her youngest sister, Margaret, who by 1850 resided in the city with her husband, James G. McCollin, an employee of the Bank of



“SISTER MARY” AND “SISTER JANE.”
From a daguerreotype taken at Sharon, by Sallie G. Hughes,
of Wilmington, Del.

FIGURE 2: Sallie G. Hughes [Sarah Garrett Hewes], *Sister Mary and Sister Jane*, reproduction of a ca. 1850 daguerreotype in *Friends Intelligencer*, May 16, 1903, p. 307. Haverford College Quaker & Special Collections (Haverford, PA).

Pennsylvania.³⁸ Her father's abolitionist activities also tied the Garrett family to like-minded citizens of Philadelphia and the surrounding area.

Broadbent and Hewes chose a central location in which to establish their Philadelphia studio. Chestnut Street, one block east of Independence Hall, was an area already crowded with daguerreotypists, but the traffic in and out of the area could support many studios. The firm established itself at 136 Chestnut Street (currently the 400 block of Chestnut Street), in a space recently vacated by daguerreotypists William Marshall and A. F. Porter.³⁹ On the first floor of their building was jeweler, Bailey and Co., who in the past had supplied daguerreotype plates and lenses to the trade.⁴⁰ Directly across the street was the studio of Van Loan & Co. and two doors away stood Marcus Root's gallery (fig. 3). On the next block, still another daguerreotypist, Frederick deBourg Richards, had recently opened a studio in Montgomery P. Simons's former space.

Although the space that Samuel Broadbent and Sarah Hewes took over had previously been occupied by a daguerreotype studio, the new tenants appear to have quickly begun making improvements to the facility. With the exception of the Julio Rae panorama of the block, pre-1851 views of the building show dormer windows on the upper story of 136 Chestnut Street. When Broadbent and Hewes began running advertisements in the abolitionist newspaper *Pennsylvania Freeman* on April 10, 1851, they attempted to catch the attention of the newspaper's readers with text reading "Something New. Broadbent & Co. Colored Skylight Daguerreotypes."⁴¹ What precisely a colored skylight daguerreotype was is not known, but skylights as an architectural feature would let in far more light than dormer windows, and would assist the operator in taking a successful daguerreotype. Broadbent and Hewes wanted to call attention to their building improvements, and mid-1850s views of the block show that the dormer windows of 136 Chestnut Street had been replaced with skylights (fig. 4).

As befitted a studio in a cosmopolitan city and facing many competitors, Broadbent & Co. emphasized the newness and diversity of their offerings. It was no longer enough to merely advertise the durability of their daguerreotype images as they had in West Chester, where they assured the public that "their pictures are strong as steel engravings and beautifully colored."⁴² In addition to the "colored skylight daguerreotype," now their studio also offered "beautiful landscape, picturesque or plain backgrounds" as options to customers who wanted to play a part in creating their own images. "Those who desire pictures or portraits[,] copied Stereoscope portraits of

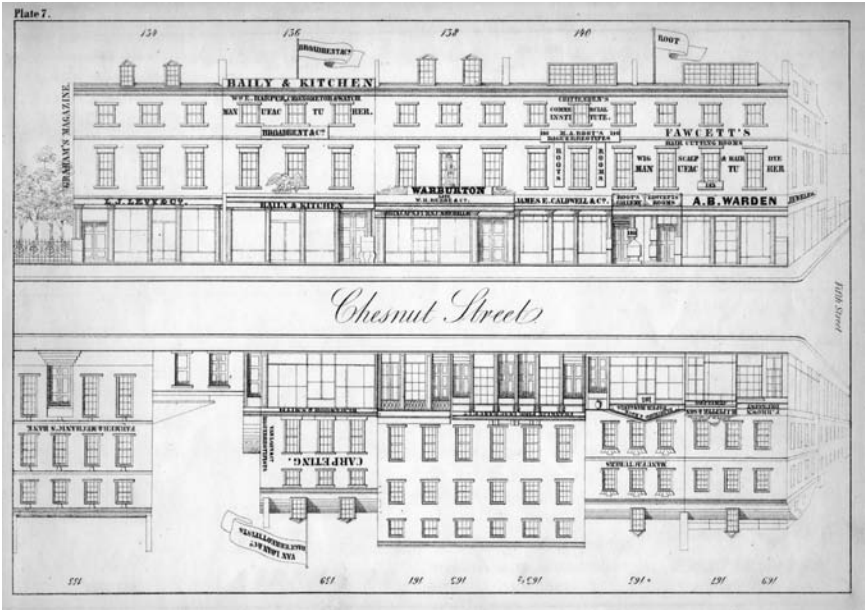


FIGURE 3: *Rae's Philadelphia Pictorial Directory & Panoramic Advertiser: Chestnut Street, from Second to Tenth Streets, Plate 7.* Philadelphia: Julio Rae, 1851. The Library Company of Philadelphia.

themselves, or miniatures on ivory or beautifully enameled on porcelain shall be faithfully served at 136 Chestnut St.” proclaimed the studio’s newspaper advertisement in a bid to entice the presumably more sophisticated urban customer.⁴³

The exact working relationship between Broadbent and Hewes is not known. Obviously, the name of the firm indicates that Broadbent was the senior person in the business and newspaper advertisements for the studio consistently list Broadbent's name first. An 1851 advertisement for their Philadelphia studio, however, gave equal prominence to both of their names under the larger heading of Broadbent & Co. (fig. 5) In none of these advertisements was there any attempt to conceal Sarah Hewes's gender. She is either identified as "Mrs. S. G. Hewes" or as "Sally G. Hewes." Perhaps the novelty of a female daguerreotypist might have been seen as an inducement to attract curious customers. Rebecca Norris in her article "Samuel Broadbent, Daguerreian Artist" suggests that Hewes and Broadbent had "a loose partnership, with each able to handle his or her own customers, but sharing studio space, expenses and occasionally workload."⁴⁴ Since Broadbent & Co. continued to operate under that name for more than a decade after Hewes's

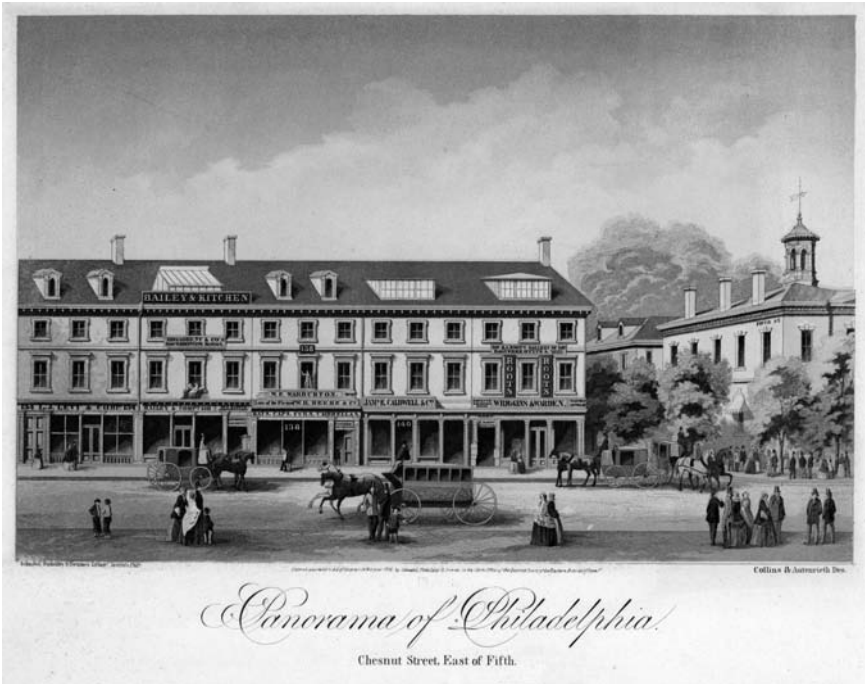


FIGURE 4: Collins & Autenrieth, *Chestnut Street, East of Fifth*, lithograph, Philadelphia: Schabel, Finkeldey & Demme, 1856. The Library Company of Philadelphia.

death, Broadbent either had associates in addition to Sarah Hewes or quickly acquired other partners after her death.

Sarah Hewes and Samuel Broadbent remained in business together on Chestnut Street until shortly before her death on September 3, 1853. Suffering from an unspecified illness, by early August 1853 Hewes had returned to Wilmington, Delaware to live in her father and stepmother's home. Apparently anticipating her own death, she made out a will selecting her brother-in-law and a cousin, both from Philadelphia, as executors for the estate and as guardians for her three young children. Hoping to ensure a successful future for her soon-to-be orphaned children, she requested that all her children “have a substantial and liberal Education out of the general fund” and that whatever money might be left over be divided equally among her two sons and a daughter.⁴⁵ A few weeks after writing her will, Hewes penned a letter to her younger sister, Anna, in

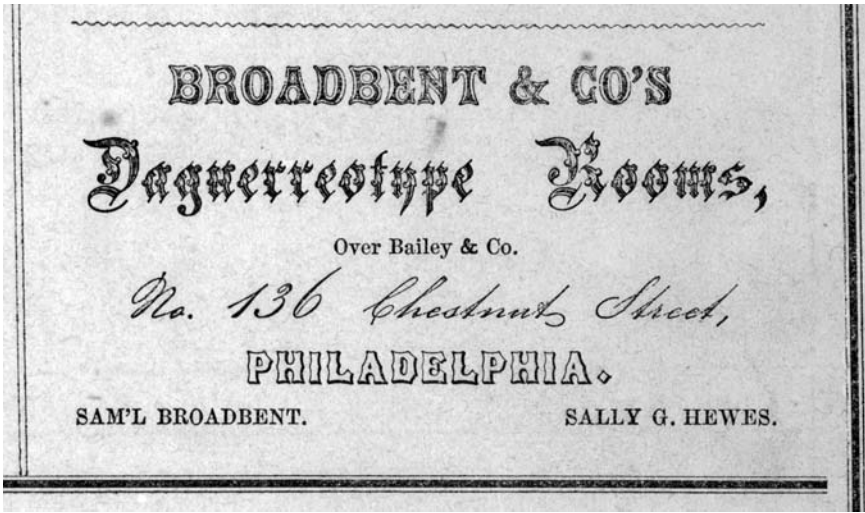


FIGURE 5: Detail from plate 7 *Rae's Philadelphia Pictorial Directory & Panoramic Advertiser: Chestnut Street from Second to Tenth Streets*. Philadelphia: Julio Rae, 1851. The Library Company of Philadelphia.

California, comforting her about her impending death. "I want to express the love I have for thee and thy Husband," she wrote, "and tho feeble in body tell you, how much you have occupied my thoughts on this sick bed." She enclosed strands of her hair and colorful leaves she collected from her time at "the water cure," and wrote, "I have loved the beautiful things of this life, the Bud, the Blossom, the evening Sunset and many, many things." She urged her sister to not fear death and wished her a fond farewell.⁴⁶ Sadly, her sister never received the letter since she died two days after Sarah Hewes wrote it.

Obituaries for the thirty-four-year-old Hewes appeared in the *Delaware Gazette* and Philadelphia's *Public Ledger*, but neither made any mention of her daguerreotype work. The newspapers merely reported that Hewes was from Wilmington and that her funeral would be held at the residence of her father, Thomas Garrett. The *Pennsylvania Freeman* printed a much longer tribute to the late Sarah Hewes in its November 17, 1853, issue. Reprinted from the *Saturday Evening Post*, Hewes's obituary was not typical of obituaries appearing in the *Pennsylvania Freeman* and its inclusion may reflect the importance of her father Thomas Garrett's abolitionist activities.⁴⁷ Although

almost no personal information about Hewes was included in this tribute, the genuine regard expressed for Hewes is evident amidst the flowery language. "A numerous circle bore witness to her well stored mind, enlarged intellect and kindly nature," praised the anonymous memorialist. "It may seem that this is but a tardy tribute to one so worthy and so regretted," mourned the author. "The writer was too selfishly sorrowful to record that sorrow earlier, and indeed hoped that some more able pen would commemorate the virtues of the loved and lost."⁴⁸

Sarah Hewes did not leave behind any cameras or photographic equipment among her personal effects. Her estate largely consisted of clothing, linens, tableware, and a few pieces of furniture. Her executors, however, carefully recorded that her estate was owed almost \$2,600 by Samuel Broadbent from notes dated 1852 and 1853. The last and largest note for \$1,600 was dated August 2, 1853, indicating that Sarah Hewes and Samuel Broadbent had a business relationship up until a month before her death.⁴⁹

Sarah Hewes's time as a daguerreotypist was relatively short and her tangible photographic legacy is not large, but her importance as a pioneering female daguerreotypist should not be minimized.⁵⁰ At a time when only about 2 to 3 percent of Pennsylvania's photographers were female, Hewes's decision to pursue daguerreotyping as her livelihood was unusual. Her daguerreotypist brother may have been her entrée into the profession, but unlike some of her female contemporaries who chose to pursue photography within the family circle, Hewes followed a more independent route, forming a partnership with one of Philadelphia's leading daguerreotypists. For three years she supported herself and family through her daguerreotyping skill and her willingness to adapt to changing circumstance whether that meant traveling the Pennsylvania countryside as an itinerant photographer or moving to Philadelphia to establish a studio. Sarah Hewes's experience illuminates a small, but important chapter in the history of the daguerreotype profession.

NOTES

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1. A.D.B. [Alexander Dallas Bache], "The Daguerreotype Explained," *United States Gazette*, September 25, 1839.
2. American Philosophical Society Proceedings, 1:155. Founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1743, the American Philosophical Society is the country's oldest learned society.
3. Alexander Dallas Bache, *Address Delivered at the Close of the Twelfth Exhibition of American Manufactures Held by the Franklin Institute*, October 1842, p. 13, and *National Gazette*, February 8, 1840. The Franklin Institute did not keep attendance records for lectures, but as early as 1825 each Franklin Institute member received a "ladies' ticket" for the lectures. (email between author and Susannah J. Carroll, curatorial coordinator, Franklin Institute, June 17, 2014).
4. *North American*, December 30, 1839, <http://www.genealogybank.com>.
5. The Franklin Institute, Committee on Exhibitions Archives, "American Manufacturers' Exhibition," "11th Exhibition 1840, Judges Reports, Correspondence, Other," "1840 Eleventh Exhibition, Judges' Reports—Fine Arts," report 3.
6. *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, October 20, 1840, <http://www.genealogybank.com>.
7. John S. Craig, compiler and editor, *Craig's Daguerreian Registry*, vol. 1 (Torrington, CT: John S. Craig, 1994), 264–74.
8. Ibid.; Linda A. Ries and Jay W. Ruby, *Directory of Pennsylvania Photographers, 1839–1900* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1999), and Pamela C. Powell, compiler, "Nineteenth-Century Female Chester County Photographers," Chester County Historical Society Library, West Chester, PA, research files were used to compile these statistics. The statistics, however, need to be used with caution. Craig was only interested in daguerreotypists and ambrotypists, while Ruby and Ries included photographers practicing all different processes. Although daguerreotypes and ambrotypes dominated the practice until about 1860, by the late 1850s photographers, including women, may have entered the profession having only produced paper photographs and, thus, would not be included in Craig's survey.
9. William Culp Darrah, "Nineteenth-Century Women Photographers," in *Shadow and Substance: Essays on the History of Photography*, ed. Kathleen Collins (Bloomfield, MI: The Amorphous Institute Press, 1990), 97. Darrah based his study on the names imprinted on cartes-de-visite, cabinet cards, and stereographs and concluded that women constituted 1.6–1.8 percent of American photographers during that period. He did not include amateurs or the names of female photographers only seen listed in city directories.
10. Cuique Suum, "The Photographic Galleries of America, Number Two—Philadelphia," *Photographic and Fine Art Journal*, April 1856, 124–26, <http://library.si.edu/digital-library/book/photographic-fine91856newy>.
11. *The Daguerreotype Director, Reese & Co.'s German System of Photography and Picture Making* (New York: Oliver and Brother Steam Printing, 1854), 21–22; reprinted in *Daguerreian Society Newsletter* 5, no. 1 (January 1993): 10.
12. Montgomery P. Simons, *Photography in a Nut Shell* (Philadelphia: King and Baird, 1858), 107.
13. "Employment of Women in Photography," *Photographic News* 11, no. 438 (January 25, 1867): 37–38.
14. Craig, ed., *Daguerreian Registry*, 3:374.

15. *McElroy's Philadelphia Directory* (Philadelphia: Edward C. and John Biddle, 1854), 114, and (1855), 117.
16. 1850 United States Federal Census. <http://www.ancestry.com>.
17. *McElroy's Philadelphia Directory*, 1854 and 1855, 602 and 647. The business listing in the 1855 McElroy directory includes forty-one daguerreotypists and twenty-eight use only their last names or initials. Charlotte Hutton is the only known female among the forty-one daguerreotypists listed.
18. *Philadelphia's Merchants' and Manufacturers' Business Directory for 1856–57* (Philadelphia: Griswold and Co., 1856), 108.
19. Philadelphia City Directories, 1857–62, and Peter E. Palmquist and Thomas R. Kailbourn, *Pioneer Photographers of the Far West: A Biographical Dictionary, 1840–1865* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 392.
20. *West Chester Village Record*, December 16, 1851. Newspaper clippings files at the Chester County Historical Society Library.
21. *West Chester Daily News*, August 24, 1888, and August 21, 1889; newspaper clippings files at the Chester County Historical Society Library. Painter is not identified in the 1850 or 1860 US Census as having an occupation and is recorded as keeping house in the 1870 US Census.
22. James A. McGowan, *Station Master on the Underground Railroad: The Life and Letters of Thomas Garrett* (Moylan, PA: The Whimsie Press, 1977), and Robert E. Seeley and Lori Clark, "Garrett Family, Upper Darby, Pennsylvania," unpublished genealogy, 2005, provided basic biographical and genealogical information about the Garrett family.
23. Westtown Boarding School, *A Brief History of Westtown Boarding School* (Philadelphia: Sherman and Co., 1873), 290, Girls Register, 1799–1836. Westtown School Archives and conversation between the author and Mary Brooks, Westtown School Archivist.
24. McGowan, *Station Master on the Underground Railroad*, and Seeley and Clark, "Garrett Family."
25. Wilmington Monthly Meeting, minutes, September 25, 1846, Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College.
26. Wilmington Monthly Meeting List of Members, 1827–85, US Quaker Meeting Records, 1681–1994, www.ancestry.com; mss. letter, January 29, 1830, in Folder V, Garrett Papers, Historical Society of Delaware.
27. Edward Hewes obituary, *Delaware Gazette*, January 14, 1851.
28. James A. McGowan, comp. and ed., "Thomas Garrett to John Clark, Ziba Ferris & Edward Bringhurst, February 2, 1847" in *Letters of Thomas Garrett* (Princeton, NJ: Ken-Ray Press, 1982?), 23.
29. McGowan, *Station Master on the Underground Railroad*, 9, 62.
30. Jon M. Williams, "Daguerreotypists, Ambrotypists, and Photographers in Wilmington, Delaware, 1842–1859," *Delaware History* 18, no. 3 (Spring–Summer 1979): 185–86. Family members claim that Ellwood made his own camera and plate after reading a pamphlet describing the daguerreotype method. Another story claims that Ellwood received from England one of the first available daguerreotype cameras.
31. 1850 US Federal Census, <http://www.ancestry.com>.
32. Ibid.
33. *West Chester American Republic*, April 9, 1850, newspaper clippings file at Chester County Historical Society Library.

34. Newspaper clippings files at Chester County Historical Society Library: No newspaper cited, January 29, 1849; *West Chester American Republican*, May 28, 1850; and *West Chester Village Record*, July 30, 1850.
35. The US Census taker visited Broadbent's Wilmington residence in September 1850.
36. The author would like to thank Paul Davis for bringing this reference to her attention. Mr. Davis is researching pre-1900 Delaware photographers and is exploring whether Sarah Hewes took daguerreotypes in Wilmington.
37. *Pennsylvania Freeman*, April 10, 1851, <http://www.accessiblearchives.com>. This advertisement ran through September 4, 1852.
38. McGowan, *Letters of Thomas Garrett*, 11–12, and 1850 US Federal Census.
39. Philadelphia city directories list Marshall and Porter as daguerreotypists at 136 Chestnut Street in 1850 and 1851.
40. Floyd and Marion Rinhart, *The American Daguerreotype* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1981), 417, lists Bailey & Ketchen (*sic*) as suppliers of daguerreotype plates and lenses and cites an 1842 *US Gazette* advertisement that could not be independently located. In 1842 *McElroy's Philadelphia Directory* lists Bailey & Kitchen as jewelers and silversmiths.
41. *Pennsylvania Freeman*, April 10, 1851, <http://www.accessiblearchives.com>. Publication of the *Pennsylvania Freeman* began in Philadelphia in 1838 by the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, a more radical organization than the Pennsylvania Abolitionist Society. Those who advertised in the newspaper most likely had abolitionist sympathies, or at least were aware that their advertisements would reach an abolitionist audience. Among daguerreotypists, Broadbent & Co. frequently advertised, as did the Collins brothers whose father is known to have attended an "anti-slavery picnic" in the summer of 1846. Thomas Painter Collins to Cynthia Collins, August 3, 1846, Collins Family Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, cited in Rebecca Norris, "The Eye Perfected: The Daguerreotypes of T. P. and D. C. Collins," *The Daguerreian Annual* 2006, 46. In the mid-1840s Robert Douglass, an African American daguerreotypist, also frequently advertised his Philadelphia studio; <http://www.accessiblearchives.com>.
42. *American Republican*, April 9, 1850.
43. *Pennsylvania Freeman*, December 9, 1852, through June 15, 1854, <http://www.accessiblearchives.com>.
44. Rebecca Norris, "Samuel Broadbent, Daguerreian Artist," *Daguerreian Annual* 2001, 140.
45. RG 245 New Castle County Probates, Sally G. Hewes, 1819–53, Delaware Public Archives, Dover, Delaware.
46. Sarah Hewes to Anna Edwards, August 21, 1853, private collection of Thomas Garrett Hewes II.
47. Conversation between the author and Krystal Appiah, curator of African Americana at the Library Company of Philadelphia.
48. *Pennsylvania Freeman*, November 17, 1853, <http://www.accessiblearchives.com>.
49. The Hewes estate was owed less than \$350 by other debtors. Copies of Sally Hewes's estate appraisal are in the Garrett Papers at the Historical Society of Delaware and the Delaware Public Archives.
50. In addition to the two daguerreotypes illustrated in this article, two other examples have been identified. Both are sixth-plate daguerreotypes of unidentified sitters. One, a tinted daguerreotype of a painting of a young woman, appeared for sale on eBay in 2000. The other Hewes daguerreotype was identified by John Craig as being either in private hands or in a Norwegian museum's collection.

THE LOGICAL PLACE TO TAKE A PICTURE: WILLIAM GEDNEY IN BETHLEHEM

Edward Slavishak

Abstract: This article uses the photographer William Gedney's visit to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in 1975 to consider three aspects of urban touring. First, Gedney's appreciation of Bethlehem's aesthetics derived from his adoration of Walker Evans's well-known 1935 photo from Bethlehem. Gedney mimicked Evans's moves forty years later, much like fringe tourists interested in urban decay in the twenty-first century study each other's images to establish valuable sites and styles. Second, Gedney's visit remained largely disconnected from the variety of economic and demographic change that occurred locally in the sixties and seventies. His focus on surfaces in his photography was echoed by his surface contact with the city itself. Finally, I argue that his photographs should be interpreted in relation to his previous work in the United States and India. Gedney's trip provides an opportunity to rework narratives of urban decline in the twentieth century.

Keywords: Photography, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, William Gedney, Walker Evans, tourism

*I*t was an unlucky start. William Gedney had been walking around Bethlehem for several hours with camera in hand. He had snapped dozens of pictures on that warm Sunday afternoon,

until it was time to break for dinner. It was only then that he realized his mistake. The New York-based photographer explained in his field-journal entry from September 29, 1975: “Discover the Leica I am using is out of focus . . . probably many of the pictures if not all will be out of focus. A whole afternoon’s work down the drain.” For a deliberate artist like Gedney, with two decades’ experience in photography and an affinity for the technical side of his medium, the misstep is surprising. At the same time, the error was of a piece with the rest of the haphazard visit to Bethlehem. Gedney stopped in the city on his way from New York to San Francisco and wrangled a room at the YMCA. He became queasy after eating canned gravy at a local diner and got lost several times during the day. It was a forty-eight-hour detour on a trip that had grand ambitions: he would lay the foundation for a photographic study of American life. Bethlehem was a low-key trial run; it was better to be blurry there than in the Bay Area.¹

For Gedney, Bethlehem was part work and part play—*work* because he was figuring out what types of urban forms he should emphasize in his new images, and *play* because it was a chance to mimic one of his professional idols. The venerated photographer Walker Evans had wandered the streets of Bethlehem forty years before, and it was there that he produced one of the iconic images of the twentieth century. Gedney was a devotee of Evans and likely decided to spend two nights in Bethlehem because of the city’s role in his hero’s career. As he moved around the town by day and by night, Gedney was rarely more than a few blocks from the cemetery scene that Evans had made famous in photography circles. The streets of the town bristled with a sense of the master’s presence. Gedney was intensely conscious of walking in Evans’s footsteps. He might not have thought of himself as a tourist, but he viewed Bethlehem through the lens of the celebrated image, just as many tourists experience a site only after wading through promotional materials. When he stood on the spot itself, Gedney described it as “the logical place to take a picture.”

I take that description seriously and use that spot on the southern edge of Bethlehem to consider photography’s ability to conjure a sense of place for historians. I examine three relationships that converged for Gedney: his interpretation of Evans’s Depression-era photography; the fit of his Bethlehem work among his previous projects; and the changes that had occurred in a city that was getting further and further from its heyday. In training my lens on these contexts, I situate five of Gedney’s images from those two days. His out-of-focus Leica can be used as a metaphor for the limits that he encountered when he tried to span the decades to recreate the

place from Evans's photograph. He could see only so much. It also represents the challenge for historians in using street photography to think about urban history. The image of city life connotes movement, yet Gedney's pictures were essentially still-lives of the street. His photo tour—short, meandering, and somewhat clumsy—might seem like little more than a hiccup in the career of a photographer who received more attention posthumously than while living. Looking closely at the collision of photographer and city, however, can illuminate the fleeting moments in which an outsider tried to get on the inside of the city. Before there were “fringe tourists” and connoisseurs of “rust-belt chic,” there were people like Bill Gedney.

A city boy by heart, Gedney loved what he saw in Bethlehem. His images and explanations of them suggest a different take on urban history's twentieth-century declension models—at least when considering cities as sites of meaning. As historians have demonstrated, the era during which Gedney visited Bethlehem was a time of emergency for both industrial cities and the residents of working-class neighborhoods like the one in which Gedney spent his time. Jon Teaforde notes the “morbid tone” with which many analysts in the mid-1970s described urban prospects. Demographic statistics, commercial de-investment, and a pervading sense of dereliction marked American cities at this time as grim shadows of their past glory. On the other hand, several recent works have shown that a “rise and fall” narrative overstates the glory of the glory days and oversimplifies the postwar changes as an inevitable, monolithic collapse. I affirm Alison Isenberg's take on city spaces as being constantly reworked during the twentieth century. Gedney's appreciation of Bethlehem was part of a larger movement toward aestheticizing elements of the urban milieu that would otherwise be categorized as “blight.” It might not have heartened the residents of Bethlehem to learn of his appreciation for the grim and the grimy, but his visit was a subtle example of a shift in perceptions. His ability to find value in the mundane and shabby put him in the vanguard of a style of touring that became much more prevalent by century's end.²

Evans and Gedney

Looking back from 1975, it seemed like the photograph kept appearing in the late 1930s: a dense, crowded view of a cemetery in Bethlehem with a cluster of rowhouses sitting behind it and the stacks of a steel works behind

them. Or perhaps it was a view of the steel works itself, with the houses and gravestones running interference (see fig. 1). Walker Evans produced the image in late 1935 while working for the Department of Agriculture's Resettlement Administration (RA). It appeared in his book *American Photographs* in 1938. The poet Archibald MacLeish used the image in the same year as one of many illustrations in his book-length poem *Land of the Free*. The picture helped MacLeish drive home his themes of uncertainty and disillusionment. Then the photo appeared as an 8×10 spread across two pages of the *US Camera Annual* 1939. It was the last of forty-one images reproduced in the book, and it was editor Edward Steichen's favorite. RA head Roy Stryker projected the image when he gave a lecture to the American Historical Association in December 1939. Stryker noted that the picture



FIGURE 1: Walker Evans, "Bethlehem Graveyard and Steel Mill. Pennsylvania." 1935. From Library of Congress, Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information Black-and-White Negatives. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa1998018003/PP/> (accessed June 2014).

epitomized how photography could be used by historians to document and interpret the past. By this he meant the indexical quality of documentary images, their ability to form a “pure record” of the nation.³

Evans’s 1935 photograph became iconic in the United States and was widely interpreted as a comment on the crushing, industrial everyday of the Great Depression. Evans developed a viewpoint in the early 1930s that a biographer calls an “anonymous” style. He shot street scenes directly, with an eye toward baldly presenting the conditions of the moment. But he was less interested in displaying the present state of the nation for his contemporaries than in portraying the *past* for future generations. The anonymity of his style came through a focus on small moments and obscure scenes. This ephemera, he reasoned, would speak to viewers much later, when the world they represented had passed. A large part of the images’ meanings, then, concerned their ability to evoke what the anthropologist Cornelius Holtorf calls “pastness.” Pastness is the perception that an object in the present is a holdover from the world as it was at some distant time in the past. Unlike calculating the age of an object or verifying its authenticity, considering pastness focuses on the expectations of the viewer and whether the given object meets those expectations through such visual cues as decay and patina. Evans was an eager student of both. The emotional distance that he tried to maintain in his work created what fellow RA photographer Dorothea Lange called a “bitter edge.”⁴

The edge came through in the Bethlehem photo as a matter-of-fact comment on the claustrophobia of a steel town. Employment was a relative luxury in the 1930s, but Evans’s composition managed to transform the mill that provided much-needed wages into a lurking specter. In Bethlehem the mill was part of the daily scene. A Bethlehem resident might not consciously stare at the steel works, and Evans matched locals’ sense of steel forming the background to everything. Beyond the fact that Evans’s image seemed to inventory the manmade environment, there was another prevailing lesson that observers took from it in the subsequent decades. The art historian Leslie Baier wrote that Evans “transformed peripheral awareness into deliberate, frontal observation.” Life in steel towns like Bethlehem became comprehensible to nonresidents through such photographs. People rarely appeared in Evans’s images of Pennsylvania industrial towns, so the emptied streets and cramped organization of the scenes spoke of lives being led in and around mills. Decades later, they still spoke.⁵

Gedney was one of the many who listened. Born twenty-nine years after Evans, Gedney came from upstate New York and, in the late 1950s, started

a rambling career as a graphic designer, commercial photographer, and then an independent photographer. Evans's work in Bethlehem was the type of imagery that Gedney wanted to pursue. He appreciated Evans's knack for keeping his emotions well concealed. The pictures stood on their own and allowed the viewer to figure out a spectrum of appropriate responses. Gedney scribbled a quote from the philosophical writer Eric Hoffer's journal in 1969 that reminded him of Evans: "to be civilized is perhaps to rise above passion; to be able to observe and report without giving way to anger or enthusiasm." Gedney filled his journals with statements by and about Evans and his collaborator James Agee. Many of the passages referred to the quest to get at subject matter dispassionately. If it was a bitter edge that Evans fostered, then it was not for the sake of being contrary. Gedney, like Evans before him, thought that life in the United States was already contrary enough.⁶

Gedney made a name for himself in the 1960s by shooting in the desperate places of the world. In addition to choosing the most ordinary views and shooting them with an air of detachment, Gedney also shared with Evans a travel record. Both men developed their skills on the streets of New York, and both traveled to the rural South to apply their approach to nonurban subjects. In July 1964, in his first major project, Gedney spent a month in the mountains of eastern Kentucky, living with the families of two unemployed coal miners. Gedney, who was thirty-one at the time, used dozens of rolls of film as he observed his subjects biding their time. Unlike the majority of his work after the sixties, his Kentucky pictures featured people in their home environments and used the physical scene as the backdrop to their action or inaction. His Kentucky series advanced his career in the New York art world. Without the stamp of mountain poverty to give his portfolio a topical focus (at a time when poverty in the Appalachian Mountains was a hot commodity), it is hard to imagine him receiving a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1966 or a Fulbright in 1969. When Gedney applied for the Guggenheim, he described the Kentucky work as a series on "the human being in conflict with his environment." He returned to Kentucky after eight years away, to follow up on the people with whom he felt a genuine bond. Even if his images managed to exude detachment, Gedney could relate closely to his subjects.⁷

By the time of his return to Kentucky in 1972, Gedney's career had taken him across the nation to shoot in San Francisco for months on end and to India for a year, working in Varanasi. In both locales he felt the weight of entrenched poverty. In San Francisco he followed roaming groups of hippies as they hung out in parks and squatted in decaying apartments. He was

fascinated by the squalor of their sleeping arrangements and their spare existence on the streets. In India he fixated on the sight of distant children framed by oversized, indifferent cityscapes. He started making more photos of unoccupied urban scenes. In the late 1960s, in a move that he pursued until his death in 1989, Gedney began shooting night scenes. In both San Francisco and India, he photographed at night, when the streets were either emptied of people and the architectural forms of the city became stark, or when the streets were actually filled with people sleeping anywhere they could. He shot in Knoxville, Detroit, South Dakota, and New York at night between 1966 and 1975. His aim was to make images that combined several ideas about the meaning of cities at night. He was fascinated by the repetition of patterns in urban streets and the “dehumanization” of streets through architectural and governmental policies. He wanted to pursue the chance encounters that seemed everywhere in the city—the “relations of beings unaware of their relationship.” Finally, he was fascinated by the street as a place of danger and crime. Night amplified the sense of abandonment that he thought of as an American syndrome; when objects and places turned old, they were dropped and forgotten. He found all of these things across the country when the streets turned quiet after sunset. But would they be in Bethlehem?⁸

Bethlehem, 1975

Gedney toured Bethlehem over the last two days of September 1975, five months after Evans died at the age of seventy-one. It would be months before he returned to the eastern United States, and Bethlehem was the place he started. Over the course of two afternoons and one late night, Gedney shot in the streets, as if updating Evans’s project after a forty-year hiatus. Most of his time was spent in South Bethlehem, the traditional immigrant and working-class section of the city whose residents lived close to the massive steel works on the Lehigh River. These were the streets that the *Bethlehem Bulletin* described as “right slab up against the belching smokepots of the steel company.” The South Side centered on two streets that historically served as the retail and residential hubs on that side of the river. Third Street, one block from the mill complex, was the once-vibrant shopping corridor. Fourth Street, two blocks from Bethlehem Steel, was lined with rowhouses, churches, schools, and ethnic social clubs. The southwestern portion of the

South Side housed the campus of Lehigh University, an unlikely neighbor for this neglected residential community. Gedney stayed at the YMCA across the river in the central business section of Bethlehem and ventured forth on foot by day and by car at night. The city was not particularly welcoming to visitors, at least not those who visited in late September. Since the 1950s the Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce had viewed the colonial history of the city as its main tourist draw. The chamber's tourism and convention committee dreamed in 1958 of competing with Williamsburg, Virginia, by taking advantage of the "Christmas City" reputation that they had cultivated since the 1930s. Everything marketable was north of the river. A city pitched as a yuletide family destination was not in the business of impressing South Side strollers.⁹

Three thousand people had left the South Side in the decade before, a number that comprised almost all of Bethlehem's population slump in the sixties. The remaining population of the South Side skewed older than the rest of the city, and its median household income was three-quarters of the local standard. It was also the part of town in which most Spanish-speaking residents lived, a factor that some critics used to explain the city's lack of investment south of the river. The mid-century steel economy had established a strong Spanish-speaking foundation in the Lehigh Valley. The Bethlehem Steel Corporation had sought workers in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean for the purposes of breaking strikes and saving on labor costs. The importation of workers caught on early, with several hundred Mexican workers arriving in designated train cars during the 1920s. Puerto Rican immigrants came in the 1940s and 1950s, and by the 1960s the South Side was recognized as the Hispanic section of town. The Bethlehem Human Relations Commission reported in 1970 that 7,400 local residents had Spanish as their first language and, of those, 6,200 were Puerto Ricans. By 1975 officials estimated that as many as 10,000 Puerto Ricans were in Bethlehem, most of them on the South Side. Several South Side churches that had once served European immigrants now attracted Hispanic churchgoers. The local press reported on ethnic tension as a fact of life in the Valley. Allentown's *Morning Call* connected the chilly relationship between the South Side and the city council to an "ill-concealed animosity towards South Bethlehem's new foreigners—the blacks and Puerto Ricans." Council members tended to see the northern half of Bethlehem as the future and the southern half mired in a strange mix of the past and the alien.¹⁰

The city around which Gedney shadowed Evans was arguably in worse shape than it had been in the 1930s. Bethlehem followed national postwar trends, with the population increasing modestly (from 58,000 to 72,000 people) and incomes generally rising over the decades. Steelworkers in Bethlehem were unionized after 1941. But the rising tide fell away in the first half of the seventies. Suburban growth had ringed the city with middle-class neighborhoods that worried Gedney a little as he drove into town. As he passed “those endless lookalike ranch houses and ubiquitous shopping centers,” he thought that there might not be anything worth seeing. The suburbs drained the city center of some of its retail and civic vitality, but the look and feel of South Bethlehem, with its 15,000 residents, encouraged him. In his journal Gedney described the experience of moving around the steel town. “The first thing you notice,” he wrote, “is there are no . . . bars covering the store windows. In New York City almost every store is barred on closing.” The observation says more about property crime in New York than about the wonders of Bethlehem, but Gedney interpreted it as a type of civility that could still be found in lower-tier industrial centers. Gedney continued, “The streets in Bethlehem are clean, the children look healthy, the homes are well kept.” Nine-tenths of the South Side had been built before 1940, yet the visual scene struck Gedney as fresh. He had seen enough dilapidation around the world, he thought, to know a real community when he saw one. Bethlehem might be a little rough around the edges, but it was not New York City, Varansi, or Grassy Branch Hollow, Kentucky.¹¹

His positive appraisal should be seen in the context of this previous work and as the aesthetic observations of a man passing through town; they did quite not correspond to the local reality. In the week before Gedney’s visit, the Environmental Protection Agency awarded the Lehigh Valley trio of Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton with an “adequate” quality of life rating. That dismal rating spoke to the valley’s economic slump, the lack of cooperation between various governmental bodies, and rampant pollution. Unemployment had tripled in the Lehigh Valley over the past several years. Between late 1973 and late 1975, the unemployment rate jumped from 2.5 to 7.5 percent, representing an additional 16,000 people without work. Two months before Gedney arrived, the city recorded its highest unemployment rate in fifteen years. Layoffs at Bethlehem Steel, Mack Trucks, Western Electric, and other manufacturers led the *Globe-Times* to observe, “By any standards the economic picture for the Lehigh Valley in 1975 was not a rosy

one.” The strain of unemployment added to an inflation rate of 7 percent to produce a national problem of stagflation that had a particular meaning for South Bethlehem. As economists and media commentators talked about the uptick in the “misery index” from coast to coast, local store owners who were hanging on by a thread saw their last chance at survival slip away.¹²

Economically speaking, the downtown and South Side sections were in trouble. Local newspapers provided regular rolls of stores closing throughout 1974 and 1975, some of them moving to the shopping malls that Gedney had passed in the suburbs, but most simply going out of business. The city was in a transition that saw many small, neighborhood stores close when their long-time owners retired and their children or grandchildren saw no point in pursuing dwindling profits. Jewelers, grocers, drugstore owners, and furniture dealers all shuttered their windows. When those businesses left the South Side, there were no new stores to step into the void. Instead, the shops sat vacant, often after the Bethlehem Steel Corporation had purchased them with an eye toward razing whole blocks and adding new employee parking spaces. This was the heart of what the *Morning Call* termed the “South Side Slide.”¹³

If Bethlehem appeared to be quite stable to Gedney in the 1970s, so, too, did Bethlehem Steel—if viewed from afar. Like other American steel manufacturers, Bethlehem Steel enjoyed great profits after the Second World War. Its executives were some of the highest paid in the nation. A local newspaper editor observed that the sixties were renaissance years for the city—years of “modernization, restoration, and reinvigoration,” with steel representatives intimately involved in local government. Yet there were also signs that the company was not nimble enough. Company leadership ignored researchers’ advice to implement efficient continuous casting processes in the 1960s, giving an advantage to Japanese steel makers. Imported steel and production by so-called mini-mills began to eat away at Bethlehem Steel’s market base, while rising labor and pollution control costs staggered the firm. Although it was not until 1977 that Bethlehem Steel recorded its first net annual loss in half a century, by 1975 the company was stumbling. It stood at what the historian Kenneth Warren called the threshold between an age of growth and one of contraction. There were just under 15,000 workers remaining in the Bethlehem plants in 1975, but that number continued to fall until the very end. On the day after Gedney left town, the Bethlehem Steel Corporation announced that it would close four plants in its fabricated steel division, starting a contraction that amplified over the next decade. Some of the

250 workers who lost their jobs in steel in early 1976 were transferred to other divisions, but the valley's unemployment rolls certainly grew, as they had been for several years. Unions could no longer outrun inflation, and labor's bargaining power slipped as a result.¹⁴

This was the city that Gedney photographed in 1975, if not quite the one that Evans had in 1935. It is not clear what Gedney was working toward in Bethlehem, but perhaps he thought of the town as a subject for an ongoing series that he called "Details of American Life." By 1975 he sought images of American life without people in the frame. His 1975 trip was funded by a National Endowment for the Arts grant. He described the project as a "series of pictures, close-ups of objects, buildings, furniture, etc., non human views that together will form a portrait of our culture." He shot these "non human" views in Bethlehem, images mostly without people in them, where the forms of architecture and landscape conveyed meanings. Yet he was only half-concerned with American culture when he toured the town; this was also an engagement with Evans through the *medium* of Bethlehem.¹⁵

Logical Places

With a Chamber of Commerce map and his unfocused camera, Gedney left the YMCA and headed south around 3 o'clock on Sunday afternoon. The first photograph to study here is an early shot from his afternoon walk, when he reached the South Side and walked along an alley paralleling Third Street. As he climbed south on the streets leading away from the river, Gedney kept looking back over his shoulder to the steel mill. When he reached the corner of Mechanic and State streets, he photographed the view down State toward Third (see fig. 2). The image captured four rowhouses in the foreground, cars parked along the sloping street, and the mill complex in the background. In front of one of the houses, four children stood, apparently unaware of Gedney's presence. Shooting to the northeast allowed him to frame the darkness of the houses against the white sky above the steel structures. The Bethlehem Steel works, he wrote, "dominate[d] the city," in both a social and a spatial sense. As mill worker Richie Check explained his career decision as a teenager: "Very few [of us] went to college. If your parents had money, you went. If not, you worked at Bethlehem Steel." The mill hovered in the background of the image, suggesting that Gedney was looking for an "Evans effect." This was the relationship that seized Gedney during his stay



FIGURE 2: Mechanic and State Streets, Bethlehem, 1975. William Gedney Photographs and Writings, Duke University, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

in Bethlehem—making the viewer choose, in effect, between the lives being led in the shadow of the mill and the mill itself. Third Street, barely visible in the bottom right of the photo, had not impressed Gedney as he had walked along it. Up here, with a little height to bring more of the South Side into the frame, there were greater possibilities.¹⁶

The very ground on which Gedney stood when he took this picture was the subject of a protracted tug-of-war between development-minded parties in Bethlehem and South Side residents who considered themselves pawns. The conflict concerned the South Side '76 project, begun in 1969. The South Side '76 General Committee emerged as a joint effort of the mayor's office and the Chamber of Commerce to bring an economic base back to the neighborhoods south of the river. Gruen Associates, one of the leading planning firms in the 1960s to advocate pedestrian downtowns served by expressways and arterial roads, was contracted as the project's main consultants. The firm had been known for twenty years as, alternately, the scourge and savior of struggling American downtowns. The Austrian-born Victor Gruen first designed suburban shopping complexes that drew people away from urban retail districts and later designed city-center shopping malls that never quite met expectations. Now, that planning eye turned to the South Side of Bethlehem and its escalating problems of declining commercial investment and low property values. As Gruen put it, "The South Side should be

a socially and economically attractive sector of Bethlehem.” The fact that it had not been for at least thirty years could not be overlooked. The analysts picked up on a pervasive sense that the area’s best days were decades past.¹⁷

The General Committee was composed of several officials from Lehigh, Bethlehem Steel executives, city and county planning officials, representatives from local banks and the Chamber of Commerce, and members of the clergy and the school board. Along with Gruen’s analysts, they presented their formal plan to the city council in July 1972. The plan was audacious, to put it mildly. The General Committee called for the construction of a spur road to connect the South Side to the planned Interstate 78 two miles to the south. Although Victor Gruen wrote thoughtfully about the need to separate the “humane” from the “functional” in urban designs, this plan placed the latter directly on top of the former in sections of the South Side that were considered irredeemable. As envisioned, the project required the destruction of over 200 houses and 37 businesses that lay along the path of the spur. The scene that Gedney captured in his photo from Mechanic and State streets would be completely leveled for the new corridor. The proposal also devoted the most development funding to the intersection of New and Fourth streets; the historic business core along Third Street would be bypassed with new traffic flows. Operating under the decades-old assumption that “pedestrianism” was the heart of an urban retail district, everyone involved knew what this meant. This situation, the planners admitted, would “almost certainly speed [Third Street’s] already rapid decline and deterioration.”¹⁸

Criticism of the proposal erupted immediately. Although there was never a critical mass of dissenters to derail the city’s plans, the South Side–based *Bethlehem Bulletin* served as the voice of locals who distrusted government and considered themselves shut out of decision-making. The *Bulletin* covered every move of the South Side ‘76 committee and consistently presented the development plans as harmful to the community. There were certainly some residents who resented the Gruen vision of “continued shrinkage of the Third Street Business Area to a size commensurate with its immediate adjacent market of industrial employees.” Others saw a thinly veiled conspiracy between Lehigh and Bethlehem Steel to turn the South Side into a vast money-making venture. The engineered collapse of Third Street struck some critics as the first step toward driving low-income residents out altogether. When the city council labeled the South Side as “blighted” in an attempt to get federal redevelopment funding, residents complained that their homes and streets had been sacrificed by the city and manipulated by powerful interests. Even so, the infrastructural spending that South Side ‘76 proposed

struck the *Bulletin* crowd as a wasted effort. “Who are they kidding?” asked a Third Street business owner. “Don’t they know that there has not been a new house built on the South Side from Fourth Street to Williams Street in the past 30 years?”¹⁹

Coincidentally, the South Side ‘76 General Committee disbanded approximately five hours after Gedney took this first photograph. That evening, the committee met one block west of where he stood, in the Hungarian Catholic Club. After speeches and a buffet dinner, the dozens assembled ended their official advocacy for the spur road. Despite the effort, federal money was simply not attainable for the project; without that aid, the city could never hope to redesign the South Side. Reese Jones, the former president of South Side ‘76, declared, “The North Side may have the intellect, but the South Side has all the hormones. It has spirit and pride.” That pride turned into celebration when the ambitious plans were scrapped. Construction of I-78 began nine years later, but the efficient spur road to connect the South Side never happened.²⁰

As he moved one block to the east, Gedney continued to turn back toward the mill and photograph. The next image captured an indistinct figure in the parking lot of a banquet hall on Hall and Evans streets (see fig. 3). In the back Bethlehem Steel’s blast furnaces popped up again. An image like this was pure experimentation. Gedney was testing the depths of the compositions that could be made from this height. He had not yet gotten to the higher



FIGURE 3: Hall and Evans Streets, Bethlehem, 1975. William Gedney Photographs and Writings, Duke University, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

ground that he would reach next, and he was figuring out what could be done from this alley between Third and Fourth streets. His walk illustrates geographer David Crouch's observation that "in tourism it is *through* rather than 'in front of' spaces that we experience where we are." He was not looking for an inert scene as much as *feeling* his way. The sensation of being embedded in a site plays a significant role in tourists' sense of place. The constant sight of the steel works, its seeming gravitational pull on the town's residents, epitomized how Gedney translated Evans. He might have been interested in city surfaces, but it took a good deal of engagement with the thickness and depths of cities before he could produce memorable "non human images" within them.²¹

Gedney's feel of a steel town like Bethlehem shared an attraction to "backstage" areas with the waves of fringe tourists that followed him. Fringe (or alternative) tourism depends on a conscious rejection of the traditional trappings of tourism, like commercial packaging and staged experiences. Travelers who consider themselves distinct from mainstream tourists deliberately seek out those zones that are not intended for display. To the fringe tourist, these zones feel more authentic and thus offer insights into a locale that could not be attained through prescribed channels. Fringe tourism is more than the yearning to get off the beaten path—it is a project to subvert the beaten path through countermessages. Among the varieties of fringe tourist sites, including disaster sites, places of mass death, and derelict buildings or towns, the industrial zones of cities offer perhaps the most accessible experience of life on the margins. Gedney spent so much time in alleys because he believed that those were the spots where one could see the nation anew.²²

The afternoon session might have been a warm-up for the night shoot that he planned for the early hours of the following morning. In that sense, this portion of Gedney's time spent in South Bethlehem was what the sociologist Allison Hui calls "travel-in-anticipation." Hui uses the term to designate the type of deliberate, goal-oriented movement in which ancillary sights or attractions are mere distractions from the goal. In the hands of another photographer, this image would have focused on the person in the foreground. Gedney had other aims in mind, so it decentered and de-emphasized him or her. His out-of-focus camera only heightened the sense that he was not very interested in the parking lot figure, who just happened to be in the way. Gedney was concerned with the dehumanization of the streets, yet he was an active partner in the process. He had pressing matters two blocks to the south.²³

After shooting several more images on Mechanic Street, the big moment had arrived. As Gedney told the tale, by moving further south, crossing Fourth Street, and climbing a low wall into a cemetery, he found himself standing—by chance—in the spot that brought him full circle with his idol. He scribbled in his shooting journal, “St. Michaels Cemetery where Walker Evans shot . . . at E. 4th St and Hill St. Came upon it accidentally, it is the logical place to take a picture from.” The old Roman Catholic cemetery had been maintained by the Holy Infancy Church on Fourth Street since 1961. Without funding or personnel to do much with the sprawling site, the church staff weeded only in the section of the cemetery closest to the street. The rest, as it stretched up the severe slope of South Mountain, became covered in a tangle of underbrush and dumped trash. Local youths used the cemetery’s upper sections as a playground, and vandals knocked over or sprayed paint on gravestones several times a year in the 1970s. High school students hired by the parish priest cut any grass that they could reach and bricked up a few mausoleums that had been broken into, but the effort could not hold back the sense that nature was reclaiming the cemetery. For South Side residents and the relatives of people interred there, the state of the cemetery in 1975 was a sign of “official indifference” for that section of town. A Fourth Street resident complained to the *Globe-Times* that she and her family were afraid to walk past or through the cemetery, for fear of being pelted by apple-wielding teens who had taken over. Gedney managed to get just high enough in St. Michael’s to reach Evans’s perch.²⁴

The next morning, as he transcribed his field notes in the style of an anthropologist, Gedney provided full details of his impression:

In wandering in South Bethlehem . . . I came upon an unkempt cemetery overlooking a sloping hill with rows of working class houses and in the background the stacks of the steel mill. Tall crosses are outlined against this social background. It was the most logical place I had found in walking around for three hours, from which to photograph. I start to photograph and suddenly it dawns on me that it’s been done before. Walker Evans photographed here in the . . . Thirtys and the photograph is in *American Photographs*. He got there first.²⁵

This idea of Walker Evans getting there first—commanding the heights of South Bethlehem—speaks volumes about Gedney’s experience of the town. He constructed the narrative to make it clear to himself that he recognized

the value of the site independently. He *knew* that this was the place from which to photograph South Bethlehem, even before he recognized it as a famous view. A professional photographer who had taken extensive notes about Evans's choices "suddenly" found himself replicating those choices. Gedney was proving something to himself.

The photos he took from St. Michael's Cemetery are not artistically noteworthy, apart from the connection to the image from 1935. One shot came closest to approximating Evans's, but Gedney was not standing high enough to replicate his counterpart's layering effect (see fig. 4). In this image, Gedney repeated his look to the northwest, catching some of the mill structures in the frame behind the rowhouses and gravestones. All of the elements were there, but the composition was merely a nod toward Evans—it was less than the sum of its parts. Gedney included the side of the Hungarian Lutheran Church in the photo, and the effect was to make the viewer place him or herself in the cemetery with the photographer. Lacking this context, Evans's image was *of* Bethlehem; with this context, Gedney's image was *within* Bethlehem.

If this was the logical place to take a picture, there were two reasons why it made such sense. First, a technical reason: this spot offered the type of formal composition that Gedney believed captured the essence of Bethlehem—what he described as "tall crosses . . . outlined against [a] social background." When he stated that Evans had been there first, he acknowledged that the terrain of Bethlehem had been inscribed by what sociologist Mike Crang



FIGURE 4: St. Michael's Cemetery, Bethlehem, 1975. William Gedney Photographs and Writings, Duke University, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

would call Evans's "picturing practices." Evans mapped the route, as it were, and a fellow professional like Gedney was compelled to follow. The scene from the cemetery essentially became an unofficial photo opportunity. It gave the photographer enough height to capture the dominating presence of the mill as it stood within the South Side, as opposed to, say, shooting it from across the river to the north. The mill was only useful for the type of photography that Evans and Gedney attempted if its relationship to the human side of Bethlehem could be depicted. What Gedney described as a "social background" was this sense of place—the entrenched nature of the steel works in the community.²⁶

His experiences in Kentucky and India were still on his mind in Bethlehem. He was preoccupied with the materiality of daily routines, "the little, the messy, and the jerry-rigged." Making many exposures of the ephemera of poverty, Gedney had documented the look of places shaped by distinctive ideas about people, value, and community. He dramatized the ordinary, fascinated by the *stuff* piled up and littered around sites. Before he left for Bethlehem, he wrote in his notebook a quote from Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*: "I don't like work, no man does—but I like what is in work—the chance to find yourself. Your own reality—for yourself, not for others—what no other man can ever know." Gedney wanted his "Details of American Life" series to show people's reality without showing the people. "Non human" images were meant to reveal the complexity of people's experiences, as if the experiences could stand on their own. The relationships between buildings and objects did the work. Still, there was a lingering suspicion in Gedney's images that much would remain unknown.²⁷

A second shot from the cemetery looked west toward the busier end of Fourth Street (see fig. 5). Gedney stood in the shade of St. Michael's trees and used the long row of houses to follow the course of the street into the distance. Seven small American flags poked out of the unkempt grass in the foreground, and the bright sky filled the top third of the frame. This photograph, in particular, suffered from the lack of focus in Gedney's camera. For the crispness and detail of Evans's work, it substituted a haziness that made the scene utterly generic. A viewer can take something from this image, though, by focusing on the disorder portrayed. This photograph shares the cluttered look of the other cemetery shot, and it was a clutter that delighted Gedney. By choosing not to capture people in his "detail" images, he presented their presence in the material they had left behind. People had placed the flags; people had parked the cars; people had swept the porches; and



FIGURE 5: Fourth Street, Bethlehem, 1975. William Gedney Photographs and Writings, Duke University, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

people had animated the town through the years. Bethlehem was still alive, if not kicking.

In the late afternoon, Gedney took a break to recuperate, refocus his Leica, and prepare for his night session. When he returned to the streets after midnight to shoot for three more hours, he presented the steel works as a spectacle, glowing in the night behind the houses of South Bethlehem. He returned to Mechanic Street and shot the view to the north down Hill Street (see fig. 6). He shot to portray the visceral presence of the mill in the city, and the darkness helped. The glow in the distance made the mill's domination of the city palpable. In the middle-ground of the image, a corner house with a steeple roof drew Gedney's attention as the most distinct building on the block. His focus on the house benefited indirectly from a recent, appalling incident on the South Side. The city council had improved street and alley lighting in the wake of a grisly crime that had occurred five months earlier. In late April, an intruder had bludgeoned and strangled seventy-eight-year-old Katherine Kerchmar in her home on Fourth Street, several hundred feet from where Gedney took this photo.²⁸

The murder stirred a vocal response from South Side residents, as they demanded that the Bethlehem Police Department assign foot patrolmen and police dogs to their neighborhood. The Kerchmar murder was the most shocking example of criminal activity that seemed to be increasing in the South Side. Speaking to news reporters, Kerchmar's neighbors described their



FIGURE 6: Mechanic and Hill Streets, Bethlehem, 1975.
William Gedney Photographs and Writings, Duke University,
David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

homes as “fortresses” barricaded against invaders. They offered a rundown of recent events that had everyone angry and afraid: a rash of thefts from mailboxes, frequent reports of prowlers, and the attack on an elderly woman by a man who posed as a meter reader. Long gone were the days when the old-timers left their doors open; now, some residents said they would not even answer their doorbell. A nearby storeowner observed, “A lot of people here are afraid—afraid to go out in the daytime, much less at night.” Street robberies and home burglaries had been prevalent over the winter, a bump that usually did not occur until the summer months. “People are getting worse,” offered a Third Street resident somewhat cryptically. A Fourth Street barber, whose customers told him that they were too afraid to continue coming to him, exclaimed, “I’m getting surrounded by rats and bums.” A jewelry store manager a block over summed it up: “Even policemen seem to be afraid to be here at night.” Gedney, the long-time *New Yorker*, ventured out into the South Side night without any mention of concern for his safety. He had admitted three years earlier that his fear of being mugged stopped him from photographing his beloved Brooklyn at night. Bethlehem seemed safe by contrast.²⁹

Once again, Gedney’s reaction was that of an outsider without local knowledge. Few residents of the South Side would have advised him to shoot at night. Bethlehem as a whole had become more crime-ridden in the years before Gedney’s arrival. The local crime rate more than doubled between 1970 and 1975. The city’s police commissioner could maintain as

late as the summer of 1973 that the most pressing crimes committed locally were “small, annoying burglaries,” but 1974 changed that. Violent crimes increased 60 percent that summer, and residents reported 108 burglaries that July alone. Police Commissioner Robert Galle noted that locals were “desperate for money,” and he pointed to a massive wave of thefts from parking meters as an illustration of that desperation. He also referred to national trends to help explain 1974’s 38 percent increase in all crimes and 41 percent increase in property crimes. Crime rates were increasing across the country, with the national murder rate increasing 30 percent between 1970 and 1974 and the robbery rate increasing 26 percent in the same period. Many law enforcement officials, like Galle, cited economic pressures as the main motivator. The crime rate in Bethlehem was 13 percent higher in 1975 than the year before, and, worryingly, the violent crime rate was up 66 percent. “People are out of work,” Galle explained, “and are simply turning to robbery to get money. They are just going out taking it from others.”³⁰

Less than a week after Galle’s pronouncement, Kati Kerchmar was murdered in her house on Fourth Street. Police quickly ran out of leads in the case, after questioning all the “super junkies and thieves” of the South Side. The case was never solved, and it took months for residents along Fourth Street to shake the fear and dread that the murder provoked. But it is likely that Gedney had no sense of the South Side’s recent history as he toured its streets in the early hours of September 29. There is no record of him having spoken to residents, or any evidence of research he might have conducted on the area. He agreed with the *Globe-Times* reporter who described the residential streets of the South Side as “well-kept, close-knit,” and alive with a sense of the past. Current events be damned.³¹

Conclusion

After waking up late the next day for a few last shots, Gedney drove west across Pennsylvania to Cleveland. By the end of October, he had set himself up for an extended stay in San Francisco. In November Gedney took notes on a *Rolling Stone* magazine piece about Walker Evans. The writer argued that Evans conveyed “a subtle . . . insistence on the ordinary.” Evans’s work, the reviewer continued, “invites contemplation, and contemplation induces revelation. Blink and it all seems ordinary again.” Evans excelled at a back-and-forth that made his pictures transcend the mundane while reminding the viewer that the scenes depicted were still ordinary. The Bethlehem that

Gedney depicted on film never quite moved beyond the ordinary, but the Bethlehem he experienced while making his images was special to him and seemingly prepared him for months of shooting on the West Coast. His brief stop in Bethlehem was as close to playing the tourist as he got in a thirty-year career that typically involved incremental microstudies of small locales. He breezed through Bethlehem, looking for the inner workings of the Evans legend. Shortly after jotting down his notes from *Rolling Stone*, Gedney shot roll after roll of pictures of Hollywood film sets, this time in perfect focus. His contact sheets display the artist's delight in finding the raw materials of cinematic dreams. His less spectacular negatives from Bethlehem conveyed an equal amount of appreciation. As he tried to produce meaningful images of the city, Gedney believed that South Side scenes still conjured up the moods he felt when he studied that famous shot by Evans. Fourth Street, Mechanic Street, and St. Michael's Cemetery lived on film as they did not in reality. He reworked their meanings in a way that residents might not have recognized.³²

We can learn something about modern relationships with the past if we consider how Gedney's trip resembles recent tourist approaches to mills, derelict neighborhoods, and industrial ruins. Detroit might be the most prominent example of a new style of urban touring, but dozens of cities and towns in the Rust Belt have attracted fringe tourists who are fascinated by the sights and moods of decay. The theme that they share with Gedney is an attraction to everyday life on the margins, with specific pasts disconnected from specific sites. Gedney was not interested in the specifics of culture or history in Bethlehem; he was content to appreciate the city's modest houses, weedy lawns, and cramped streets. Everything spoke to the "pastness" of the place, especially the mill in the distance. Fringe tourists also look for spectacles that they can feel, without requiring the deep understanding of contexts that historians, sociologists, and geographers encourage. The headings "social history," "labor history," and "local history" mean little when applied to this type of interaction with places. There are no lessons to be learned, at least none that move beyond generic narratives of waste, abandonment, and the plight of the underdog.³³

That is not to say that Gedney was aloof in Bethlehem. If he represents a model of tourism, it is not a model of passivity. It represents the type of touristic engagement that attempts a sensual immersion in an imagined scene. He imagined that scene through an old photograph. And he imagined himself *in the scene*, carrying on a practice that Evans had started. This

resembles the self-reflexive, exploratory type of rust-belt tourism that relies on the media of digital photography, video, and online commentary. Tourists looking for something to see (and something to feel) turn to others who have toured the backstage areas of industrial cities, and the impulse is to explore the scenery from the vantage point of the stagehands. They want to see behind the curtain.³⁴

Evans's work generated an elusive sense of pastness for Gedney. For some, that mood can be found in the twenty-first century in abandoned hospitals or pockmarked brownfields. For others, it might be a sense of the industrial past turned into a stunning backdrop, as at the SteelStacks performing arts stage that has occupied part of the old Bethlehem Steel grounds since 2011. Commentators (historians among them) often present these engagements with places as symbolic violence committed upon insiders by outsiders but, seen from the perspective of visitors like Gedney, they become a sincere attempt to experience something authentic. When Evans served as the photo editor of *Fortune* magazine in the 1960s, he encouraged readers to seek out real cities instead of imaginary ones when they looked at old photos. "It is better to renounce sentimentality and nostalgia," he wrote, "that blurred vision which destroys the actuality of the past. Good old times is a cliché for the infirm mind." Gedney's photos from Bethlehem help us see that the actuality of the urban past is as much a fantasy as the Historic Moravian District or the Christmas City. Logical places to take pictures might benefit from information kiosks or historical markers, but even without these devices, the physical spaces of a steel town like Bethlehem can create a curious, unfixed connection to the past. This mood is a more significant part of heritage tourism than we are likely to recognize when we take customary approaches to local histories and their enthusiasts. People play with the past at places like St. Michael's, and the relentless circulation of imagery makes it possible.³⁵

NOTES

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1. Projects notebooks, William Gedney Photographs and Writings, Duke University David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Durham, NC (hereafter Gedney Collection).

2. Jon C. Teaford, *The Rough Road to Renaissance: Urban Revitalization in America, 1940–1985* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 203; Allison Isenberg, *Downtown America: A History of the Place and the People Who Made It* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 2–12. Versions of the declension model appear in numerous studies as a reference to a civic vitality lost over the course of the twentieth century. David Nasaw observes that American cities “no longer sparkle as they once did.” Judith Modell describes residents of a de-industrialized town as relying on “memories of the good old days and the self-conscious contrasts between then and now.” Robert Fogelson declares, “nowhere . . . is downtown today as immense, as imposing, and as awesome” as city-dwellers from 1900 would have dreamed. See David Nasaw, *Going Out: The Rise and Fall of Public Amusements* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 256; Judith Modell, *A Town Without Steel: Envisioning Homestead* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998), 319; and Robert Fogelson, *Downtown: Its Rise and Fall, 1880–1950* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 397.
3. Edward Steichen, quoted in Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs: Images as History, Mathew Brady to Walker Evans* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989), 256; Caroline F. Ware, ed., *The Cultural Approach to History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), 228–30; Belinda Rathbone, *Walker Evans: A Biography* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2000), 109.
4. Cornelius Holtorf, “On Pastness: A Reconsideration of Materiality in Archaeological Object Authenticity,” *Anthropological Quarterly* 86 (Spring 2013): 430, 437; Rathbone, *Walker Evans*, 61, 84, 111.
5. Leslie Baier, “Visions of Fascination and Despair: The Relationship between Walker Evans and Robert Frank,” *Art Journal* 41 (Spring 1981): 56, 59.
6. Gedney memo book, Gedney Collection. In March 1969 Gedney attended a dinner honoring the ninety-year-old Edward Steichen on his birthday. His interest in documentary photography from the Depression era was strong, but he rejected the “self-glorification” as “disgusting.”
7. Guggenheim application, box 2, Gedney Collection.
8. Gedney notebook, 1967–69, Gedney Collection.
9. *Bethlehem Bulletin*, September 13, 1973; *Allentown Call-Chronicle*, March 23, 1958.
10. *Allentown Morning Call*: September 13, 1971, October 9, 1975, March 22, 1976, and December 4, 1988; *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, October 2, 1970, September 3, 1971, and February 26, 1974. The Holy Infancy Church on Fourth Street was “Spanish-oriented” by 1973 and St. Mark’s Lutheran Church had become a Spanish Evangelical church by 1974.
11. *Allentown Morning Call*, March 22, 1976; *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, January 27, 1971.
12. *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, February 27, 1976; unemployment figures taken from *Globe-Times* reports on December 27, 1973, April 24, 1975, and December 22, 1975; Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin’ Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New York: New Press, 2010), 222.
13. *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, September 22, 1975, April 10, 1974, and July 21, 1975; *Morning Call*, March 22, 1976.
14. Eugene Grace, quoted in John Strohmeier, *Crisis in Bethlehem: Big Steel’s Struggle to Survive* (Bethesda, MD: Adler and Adler, 1986), 28, 51; Kenneth Warren, *Bethlehem Steel: Builder and Arsenal of America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008), 193; *Allentown Call-Chronicle*, February 23, 1975; *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, October 1, 1975; Lance E. Metz, “A Short History of

- the Bethlehem Steel Corporation," in *Bethlehem Steel*, ed. Andrew Garn (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 42; Cowie, *Stayin' Alive*, 72.
15. Projects notebooks, Gedney Collection.
16. Richie Check interview, Lehigh University Digital Library, http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/cdm4/beyond_viewer.php?DMTHUMB=1&searchworks=cat10&ptr=020791 (accessed June 2014). The time sequence of Gedney's shots was determined by the numbered negatives and brief annotations on the contact sheets. All contact sheets can be viewed at Duke University Libraries' Digital Collection, <http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/gedney/?Subject=bethlehem> (last accessed June 2014).
17. Michael Cheyne, "No better way? The Kalamazoo Mall and the Legacy of Pedestrian Malls," *Michigan Historical Review* 36 (Spring 2010): 103–28; Gruen Associates, *South Side '76 Plan*, Lehigh University Digital Library, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/beyondsteel/> (accessed May 2014).
18. *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, September 19, 1973, and October 1, 1975; David R. Hill, "Sustainability, Victor Gruen, and the Cellular Metropolis," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 58 (Summer 1992): 322; Isenberg, *Downtown America*, 84; Gruen Associates, *South Side '76 Plan*.
19. *Bethlehem Bulletin*, September 24, 1970, and September 13 and 28, 1973; *South Side '76 Plan*.
20. *Morning Call*, October 1, 1975.
21. David Crouch, "Surrounded by Place: Embodied Encounters," in *Tourism: Between Place and Performance*, ed. Simon Coleman and Mike Crang (New York: Berghahn, 2004), 212.
22. On fringe tourism, see Tim Edensor, "Performing Tourism, Staging Tourism: (Re)producing Tourist Space and Practice," *Tourist Studies* 1 (2001): 74; Peter Varley, "Confecting Adventure and Playing with Meaning: The Adventure Commodification Continuum," *Journal of Sport and Tourism* 11 (2006): 173–94; and Erik Cohen, *Contemporary Tourism: Diversity and Change* (Oxford: Elsevier, 2004), 101–14. See also the related Urban Exploration guides: L. B. Deyo and David "Lefty" Leibowitz, *Invisible Frontier: Exploring the Tunnels, Ruins, and Rooftops of Hidden New York* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2003), and Ninjalicious, *Access All Areas: A User's Guide to the Art of Urban Exploration* (Toronto: Infilpress, 2005).
23. Allison Hui, "Moving with Practices: The Discontinuous, Rhythmic, and Material Mobilities of Leisure," *Social and Cultural Geography* 14 (December 2013): 896.
24. *Allentown Morning Call*, November 15, 1992; *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, September 23, 1973, and December 4, 1975.
25. Gedney notebooks, Gedney Collection.
26. Mike Crang, "Picturing Practices: Research through the Tourist Gaze," *Progress in Human Geography* 21 (June 1997): 359–73. Those picturing practices forged by Evans are still alive and well in St. Michaels Cemetery. In the age of ubiquitous cameras and photo-sharing, Evans's prospect gets regularly updated in travel blogs, photography blogs, and news reports. See, for example, <https://franktsmith.wordpress.com/tag/cemetery/>; <http://bethlehem.patch.com/groups/police-and-fire/p/graves-vandalized-in-south-bethlehem-cemetery>; and <http://daylightbooks.org/blog/2010/12/16/897> (all accessed June 2014).
27. Nigel Thrift, "Intensities of Feeling: Towards a Spatial Politics of Affect," *Geografiska Annaler* B-86 (March 2004): 75.
28. *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, April 27, 1976.

29. *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, April 28 and 29, and May 7, 1975; *Allentown Morning Call*, March 22, 1976; October 23, 1972 entry, Gedney Rollbook, Gedney Collection.
30. Teaford, *Rough Road to Renaissance*, 201; *Allentown Morning Call*, August 2, 1973, February 8, 1975, and January 7, 1976; *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, September 6, 1974, and April 22, 1975.
31. *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, April 29, 1975, and April 27, 1976.
32. Gedney notebooks, Gedney Collection.
33. For commentary on rust-belt tourism and its reliance on authenticity, see the geographer Jim Russell's blog at <http://burghdiaspora.blogspot.com/> and Alana Semuels, "Detroit's Abandoned Buildings Draw Tourists Instead of Developers," *Los Angeles Times*, December 25, 2013, <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/dec/25/nation/la-na-detroit-ruin-tours-20131226> (both accessed June 2014).
34. For many examples of tourists' photographic souvenirs from trips to fringe sites, see <http://www.reddit.com/r/urbanexploration/> (accessed June 2014).
35. Holtorf, "On Pastness," 431; Walker Evans, "When 'Downtown' Was a Beautiful Mess," *Fortune* (January 1962): 101; Stefan Roesch, *The Experiences of Film Location Tourists* (Bristol: Channel View, 2009), 73, 202.

JOSEPH REPLOGLE: AN UNKNOWN PHOTOGRAPHER OF MODEST TALENTS

Jay W. Ruby

Abstract: A review of the life and work of an unknown and modestly talented photographer from rural Central Pennsylvania offers an opportunity to contrast a social approach to the history of photography with the more common art historical paradigm.

Keywords: Photography, social history, Pennsylvania

Introduction

History is what we chose to remember, what happens to get saved, and how we make sense out of the past. The history of photography was first conceived by art historians, curators of museums, and collectors. It was constructed from a nineteenth-century notion of the lone genius creating masterpieces. The images floated outside of time, place, and the economic and social realities of production and use. There was a strongly felt need to legitimize photography as an important art form. As a consequence, the social practice of photography as experienced by the vast majority of people was ignored, neglected or dismissed as unworthy of serious contemplation.

In 1938 Beaumont Newhall, as the founding curator of photography at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, produced a fundamentally important history of photography as

art based upon the museum's collection. It was the beginning of a canon that has dominated discussions of photo history ever since.¹ About the same time, an alternative paradigm was being constructed by a professor of chemistry who was an advocational historian of photography—an interesting parallel to Heinz Henisch, a physicist and also an advocational historian of photography. Robert Taft's *Photography and the American Scene*, originally published in 1938, was among the earliest attempts "to trace, however imperfectly, the effects of photography upon the social history of America, and in turn the effect of social life upon the progress of photography."² In this pioneering study there is no discussion about whether a particular photograph is successful as an artistic expression; instead, readers find an examination of topics like the effect of the photo album on family life and the halftone process's impact on newspapers. From Taft's point of view, photographs become interesting because of the way in which they are made and used.

In 1977 Heinz Henisch's journal, *History of Photography*, was founded following the tradition started by Taft and became a place where the earliest traces of daguerreotypy in downtown Riga were discussed along with arguments about why the prominent place given to Alfred Stieglitz in the history of photography may not be justified. The Henisch social approach to the medium culminated in the publication in 1994 of *The Photographic Experience*, cowritten with his wife Bridget, the logical heir to the tradition started by Taft and which extends this examination beyond the United States to the entire world.³ This approach relies upon an intrinsic interest in learning about how photography manifested itself on the local level throughout the world rather than being supported by an articulated theory of photography. Social historians remind us of how many different kinds of people made and used photographs—an important counter to the Eurocentrism of many art histories of photography. It is in this tradition that my essay is founded.

I am concerned here with Joseph Replogle, a turn-of-the-century American photographer from rural central Pennsylvania. I want to make it clear that I am not discussing Replogle because he is important in the conventional sense of the word; nor am I claiming that his photographs represent some sort of undiscovered treasure trove of photographic art. On the contrary, my interest in these images and the social circumstances of their production and use is precisely because of their ordinariness.

Biographical Sketch

The record of the life of Joseph Replogle is sufficiently well documented in newspapers and photographs to get some sense of the man and his life. Here is how the *Juniata Star* described him in their “Special Port Royal Issue” of September 9, 1898:

For more than ten years Mr. J. W. Replogle, the subject of this sketch, has wielded the camera and dry-plate in this county, operating much of the time in Port Royal and adjacent territory, where he has built up a fine patronage. His fair dealing and skill has made him many friends and admirers. . . . He is now building a new portable gallery which he hopes to have completed in time to bring out at the Port Royal Fair next week. It is to be complete and up-to-date, and we predict for it a successful career.

Mr. J.W. Replogle, of Walnut, Pa., was born in Bedford county, January 6, 1860, removed to Mattawana, Mifflin county, in 1872 where his mother yet resides. He received his education in Juniata College, of Huntingdon, Pa. Taught in the public schools of Mifflin County five winters, and in Juniata county one winter.

He had three brothers—an engineer, a lawyer, and a doctor. He actually attended what was then called the Normal College from 1883 through 1885. He did not graduate but obtained a teaching certificate. At that time, a teacher’s course was two years in length. As many as fifty-eight Replogles have attended Juniata College. It is clear that Replogle came from a solidly middle-class and well-educated family.

When and how Replogle learned photography is unknown. According to the late photohistorian William Darrah, many colleges and even high schools taught the principles of photography as a practical demonstration in physics and chemistry classes. Figure 1 is the earliest photograph I have located of Replogle. The man on the left is unknown.

There is no evidence that Replogle practiced photography professionally, even part-time, before 1889. Figure 2 is the only surviving “genre” photograph I have located. It is signed, “J.W. Replogle, Mattawana, PA.” As Replogle moved to Juniata County in 1887, this is the oldest-known Replogle photograph. The picture has the appearance of an art photograph



FIGURE 1: Joseph Replogle and friend.



FIGURE 2: Genre photograph. Signed "J.W. Replogle, Mattawana, Pa."

taken for the pleasure of its composition. The commercial demands on a professional photographer seldom allowed people like Replogle the luxury of a personal style or vision. Clients want their portraits or views of their farms to resemble those photographs they were already familiar with. Was Replogle simply learning his craft and the picture we see an exercise, or did he at one time see photography as a means of self-expression as well as a business? We shall never know, but this is evidence that the aesthetic trends found in places like Philadelphia did diffuse into rural communities. There is no doubt that this image was made in a pictorialist or painterly style.

When Replogle moved to Walnut in Juniata County in 1887, he married a woman from that vicinity. But when he did, it was an event noted in the newspaper, the *McVeytown Journal*:

September 22, 1887 — A SENSATIONAL MARRIAGE — A beautiful Juniata county girl of twenty-five summers, daughter of a wealthy colored farmer captures one of Mattawana's prominent citizens [fig. 3]. The topic of conversation in our town is a marriage that has just come to light, which took place on the 8th, at Juniata county. . . . Mr. Replogle is a school teacher by profession and has passed twenty-seven summers. He is a man of good standing and has



FIGURE 3: Joseph Replogle and Mary Imes Replogle.

a large circle of relations in this section and Morrison's Cove, Bedford County. The bride is a beautiful daughter of a prominent and wealthy colored family, David Imes of Juniata County. . . . Born a freeman, David began life as a teamster, and married a mulatto girl, who was descended from Thomas Jefferson's private secretary. He continued in prosperity and settled on a small farm in Maryland. His first wife died after giving birth to several children. He then moved to Juniata County, Pa., where he married his second wife who was the daughter of a negro father and a white mother. He is the father of thirteen children and provided each of them with a handsome start in this world's goods having given each son the value of \$2000 in real estate and the daughter the same amount in cash [fig. 4].⁴

Mr. Imes was clearly a wealthy man if he had access to \$26,000 in real estate and cash for his children. The story of the Imes family is rich, complex, and worth a book-length treatment by itself. David Imes wanted his children to marry outside of their cultural and physical identity and disappear into the mainstream. According to local legend, he offered his children farms or

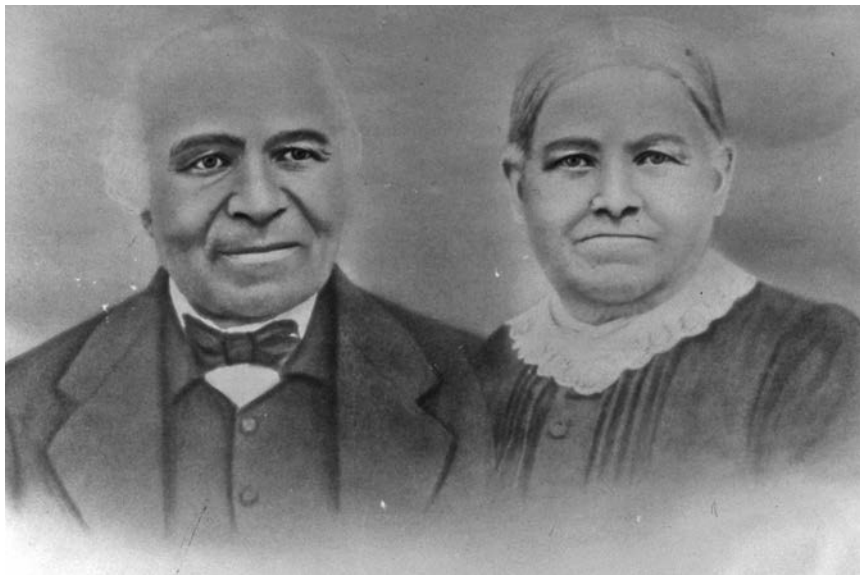


FIGURE 4: David Imes and wife, Sarah Wilson.

money as the wedding announcement states, but only if they would marry “white.” Mary Imes Replogle used the money her father gave her to purchase a farm in Walnut from John McNouser for \$1,300 cash on March 31, 1888. On May 7, 1891, she purchased an adjoining parcel for \$400 cash from her father (see figs. 5 and 6). In 1900 Replogle purchased the photographic studio of Joseph Hess, his chief rival. It was located on the second floor of a building on Water St. in Mifflintown (fig. 7).

The Replogles stayed in Walnut until 1904. His old studio became a mail-order house and his photographic business was sold to a local man from Port Royal. Joseph moved his children to Philadelphia where he became first a time-keeper and then a photographer for the Navy Yard, then called Hog Island. Mary Replogle died in 1905 and Joseph remarried in 1906. With Mary Godshall, he raised four children: Joseph, Margaret, John, and Benson. He retired from his position in 1932 and moved to Florida where he died in 1955 (fig. 8).

Before I discuss Replogle’s photographic practice, let me provide some additional information about his various roles in the community as it deepens our understanding of his life. They come from the small “Items of Local Interest” columns that still fill the pages of rural newspapers.



FIGURE 5: The Replogle farmhouse in Walnut, PA.



FIGURE 6: The springhouse that served as Replogle's darkroom.

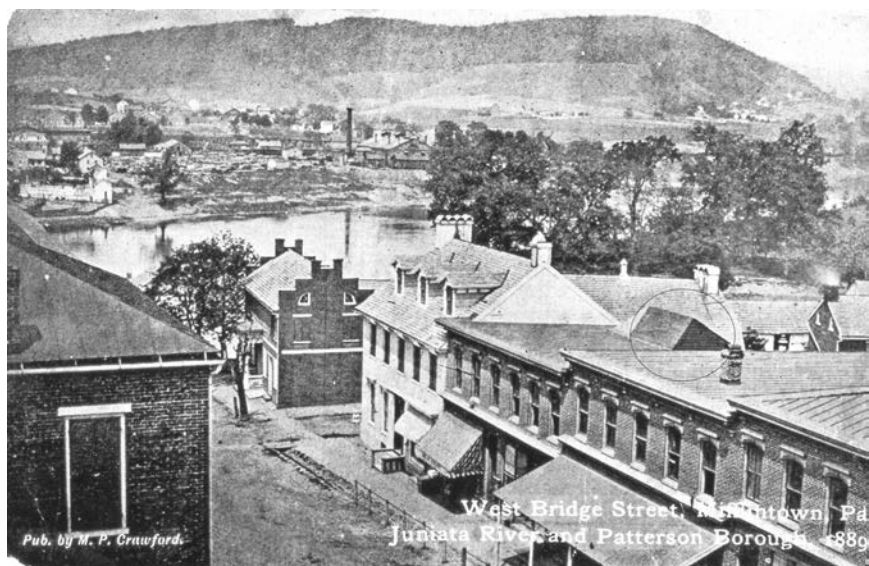


FIGURE 7: Replogle's second-floor studio on Bridge Street, Mifflintown, PA. Note skylight on roof.



FIGURE 8: Replogle and family in front of their Philadelphia home.

From 1887 onward, Replogle taught school and in addition functioned as a photographer by traveling the countryside taking portraits and views. It is uncertain when he stopped teaching to devote his full time to his photographic business. He was an excellent “advertisement for himself” and was always able to catch the attention of those who wrote for the newspapers. His activities were immediately noteworthy and remained so until he left the area. He overshadowed the other photographers in the area and became Juniata County’s most “newsworthy” photographer. Here are some of his activities:

He was active as a teacher. In 1889 he served on a committee to select books for the school and was actively involved in Teacher’s Institutes in 1889 and 1890, once being the president of the Institute, another time, giving a lecture on free textbooks and taking the affirmative position in a debate about whether or not a compulsory school law should be adopted.

Replogle was a prohibitionist and active in the local party where he was a delegate to the 1889 county and state conventions. It is interesting to note that his chief rival in the local photographic business, Joseph Hess, was also a delegate.

Replogle was apparently well regarded as a singer and performer in skits, gave “public entertainments” at Christmas and other occasions, and offered singing lessons.

He sometimes substituted for a local minister with a lecture and once delivered a talk on “What to Do with Loafers.”

He clerked at sales that may have been a source of additional income.

Replogle’s Life as a Photographer

Having now learned something of the life of Joseph Replogle, let us turn to his photographic practices. Using dry plate glass negatives, Replogle produced cabinet card photos and crayon enlargements. His photo kit was relatively simply—a view camera, negative plate holders, a focusing cloth, a tripod, printing frames, the chemistry to fix the images, and some props such as a chair and backdrops. For most of his professional career he carried them in a portable studio.

Manufactured dry plate glass negatives were a recent invention and a vast improvement over the older wet plate or collodion glass negatives that had to be prepared immediately before being used and developed soon after exposure. The dry plate technology meant that photographers like Replogle could purchase them by the box and use as needed. For most of his career,

Replogle used albumen printing-out paper for his prints. The paper was prepared using egg whites and then placed in a printing frame with a negative and exposed to the sun. When the image looked good, the print was then fixed. Some of the albumen images are yellow-brown or purple-blue in tone, a result of the common practice of gold toning. Finally, the print was placed on a precut cardboard mount, such as the one shown in figure 9.

Replogle purchased these decorative artwork mounts from a manufacturer like Collins of Philadelphia who offered hundreds of designs with the photographer's imprint. While Replogle moved into a studio for four years before he quit the business, all of the photographs I have located have the Walnut, PA, imprint. Being a good frugal Pennsylvania German, Replogle probably had purchased enough mounts to last him for some time. Cabinet cards are 6×4 inches in size and designed to be placed in photo albums. Some scholars believe cabinet cards were invented in the 1880s because the sales of carte de visite photos and their albums were on the wane. Carte de visite photographs were the size of a calling card and started the photo album craze.

Replogle charged \$1.25 to \$1.50 per dozen for the cabinet cards and also offered to copy or enlarge old photographs. He offered fifteen visiting card photos for twenty cents. As a promotion, he gave a life-size portrait free with a dozen cabinet photos. While I have not recovered any, Replogle's ads offer photo buttons in gold frames. In an attempt to broaden the market, he placed ads for Christmas and Easter photos as presents.

Replogle was incredibly successful in getting local papers to take notice of his activities. Here is an example:

February 21, 1889 — Port Royal Times — .W. Replogle photographed the Pine Grove school in Beale on the 15th inst. Mr. Replogle is an artist second to none in the county. He does good work, hence is kept very busy.

It is unclear to me whether these announcements that appeared with regularity in all of the surrounding local papers were paid ads or not. Two more examples:

July 10 and 17, 1889 — Juniata Democrat and Register — VIEWS AND FAMILY GROUPS — J.W. Replogle of Walnut will come to your home and take photos of anything you want and any size desired and give you entire satisfaction. The weather makes no difference. Prices very low.



FIGURE 9: Precut decorative cabinet card mount.

February 25, 1891 — *Juniata Democrat and Register* — Now in the early springtime is the best time to have your home photographed. J.W. Replogle is now prepared to do such work in the very best style. Cabinets and family groups are also taken right at the house by him. He will be glad to correspond with any who desire his services. Post Office Walnut.

Most of the images I have recovered were taken on location and not in Replogle's studio. Many are portraits. While it is clear that the pictures were taken out of doors, the model for the look of these images is the studio. Attempts are made to have some sort of background even if it is only a blanket in imitation of the painted backdrops most studios had. A chair is frequently present (fig. 10).

Babies were a frequent subject (see fig. 11). Photographers carried sheepskins so that they could wrap the child in the skin and literally stuff him or her into the chair, making it hard for the child to move and spoil the picture.

Figure 12 is a portrait of Francis Cooper, a medical student who came to Juniata County to hunt, fish, and take artistically intended photographs. Eventually Cooper married a woman from McCoysville and moved to the Spruce Hill area.⁵ His photographic practice is virtually nonoverlapping with Replogle as he was free to pursue his artistic interests without any concern with making a living from his photographs. A comparison of a Cooper family portrait (fig. 13) with one of Replogle's (fig. 14) makes clear the aesthetic differences between photographic artists who employed pictorialist conventions with those of a commercial photographer whose job it was to please his or her clients.

In addition to portraits of individuals and families, Replogle took groups. Such images have the potential of a greater return than portraits of individuals in that everyone in the picture could purchase a photo. This remains the basis of many professional photographers' practice today—for example, baseball teams. These images were enlargements and relatively uncommon at least among those photographs that have survived (fig. 15). Occasionally Replogle would take photographs that were not imitations of studio conventions such as this photograph of H. G. Patterson, veterinarian (fig. 16).

In the spring of 1889 the infamous Johnstown flood came to central Pennsylvania, destroying lives and property. Many professional photographers took photographs of the survivors and of the damage. Replogle took at least seven images and then offered them for sale (fig. 17). He ran the following ad in the *Juniata Democrat and Register* July 17 and 31 and August 7 and 14, 1889—



FIGURE 10: Cabinet card of an unknown woman with chair.



FIGURE 11: Cabinet card of an unknown child.



FIGURE 12: Cabinet card of Francis Cooper.



FIGURE 13: A family portrait by Francis Cooper.

Views of the flood, at Patterson, Pa., can be seen at the baggage room windows at the depot, taken in seven different ways. Mr. W.C. Brown, baggage master is agent for them, and will take orders at reasonable rates for these fine photos. They were taken on June 1 when the waters were at highest point by J.W. Replogle of Walnut, Pa.

Since the halftone process was not yet available to newspapers, this was the only way for people to obtain images of the disaster. I assume they found their way into albums and some were mounted on the wall. This is the beginning of photojournalism. Earlier images such as those of the Civil War were usually converted into line drawings and published in journals like *Harpers'*.

Like most professional photographers of his time, Replogle went to people's homes to make post-mortem portraits (fig. 18). Most often they were of children and were likely to be the only photographs the parents had of their children.⁶ When Replogle did move his practice into a studio, the images look remarkably like those he took outdoors (fig. 19).



FIGURE 14: A family portrait by J. W. Replogle.



FIGURE 15: Walnut Cornet Band.



FIGURE 16: Cabinet card of H. G. Patterson, veterinarian.



FIGURE 17: View of 1889 Johnstown Flood, Mifflin, PA.



FIGURE 18: Cabinet card of post-mortem portrait of unknown child.



FIGURE 19: Cabinet card of Replogle's son Mark and wife Lillian.

In 1895 Replogle offered a new type of image making, as this ad in the *Juniata Herald* indicates:

Photography by flash-light is one of the new departures by Replogle, the artist, of Patterson. We were lately shown a reasonably good photo of the members of Victoria Lodge of Odd Fellows in full regalia, which was taken in their hall in Patterson at a regular Friday night meeting. It is now possible to have your weddings, receptions, and other night gatherings photographed in good style. [fig. 20]



FIGURE 20: View of a minstrel show by flashlight.

Conclusions

Joseph Replogle was like thousands of rural and small-town photographers who practiced their profession at the end of the nineteenth century. He struggled to make a living in an area of low population and had to supplement his earnings by teaching and even clerking at sales. Eventually the struggle became too much and he moved to Philadelphia where he could more easily make a living being a photographer. His images follow the dictates of

conventions invented elsewhere and before his time. His goal was not to be innovative or original but to please his clients. They wished the images of themselves to resemble those they had seen before. Being artistic is not a way to make a living in professional photography then or now. The professional photographer who makes a living taking portraits of individuals and groups dominated the practice of photography from its inception until George Eastman made it possible for all of us to be our own image makers. Logically an accurate history of photography should focus on the Joseph Replogles of this world more than it has.

NOTES

This essay was delivered as a lecture on September 26, 2006, at the Penn State University Library as a memorial to the memory of Heinz Henisch. I wish to thank Bridget Henisch and Sandra Stelts for inviting me to give this lecture. All images in this article are from the Jay W. Ruby Collection at the Pennsylvania State University Archives and Special Collections.

1. Beaumont Newhall, *Photography: A Short Critical History* (1962; New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1938).
2. Robert Taft, *Photography and the American Scene* (New York: Dover, 1938), viii.
3. Heinz Henisch and Bridget Ann Henisch, *The Photographic Experience, 1839–1914: Images and Attitudes* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994).
4. This is a crayon enlargement popular in the 1880s and 1890s. An image was imprinted on a photo-sensitive canvas. The image was then outlined usually in pencil and then the emulsion was removed, leaving only the pencil sketch, then filled in with charcoal or color crayons. This process provided the masses with a portrait that did not look like a photograph but rather a painting.
5. Jay W. Ruby, *The World of Francis Cooper: Nineteenth Century Pennsylvania Photographer* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999).
6. Jay W. Ruby, *Secure the Shadow* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995).

THE H. WINSLOW FEGLEY COLLECTION
AT THE SCHWENKFELDER LIBRARY
AND HERITAGE CENTER

Candace Kintzer Perry

Abstract: In 1952 ninety-year-old Daisy Gery of Upper Hanover Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, donated photographer Harry Winslow Fegley's glass plate negatives and photographic prints to the Schwenkfelder Historical Library in Pennsburg, Montgomery County. Over the intervening sixty-plus years, this collection has become one of the most significant at the Schwenkfelder Library and Heritage Center (SLHC), as the institution is now known. The author provides a brief history of the photographer, journalist, and business owner H. Winslow Fegley that describes his activities beyond what he is most recognized for—photographs of rural Pennsylvania landscape and the lives of its inhabitants at the turn of the twentieth century. The article concludes with a discussion of current cataloging and digitization efforts of the collection at the SLHC.

Keywords: H. Winslow Fegley, historic photography, Pennsylvania German culture, Pennsylvania German architecture, Schwenkfelder Library and Heritage Center

*I*n 1952 ninety-year-old Daisy Gery of Upper Hanover Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, donated photographer Harry Winslow Fegley's glass plate negatives and photographic prints to the collection of the then-Schwenkfelder Historical Library in

Pennsburg, Montgomery County. Miss Gery was Fegley's sister-in-law; her sister Mary was Fegley's wife.

By this time both H. Winslow—as he chose to identify himself—and Mary were deceased. H. Winslow had died in 1944; his wife Mary had preceded him in 1929. Their surviving daughter, Beulah, had no children, and it is not too difficult to imagine that the surviving family members were casting about for a good repository for his collection. The Schwenkfelder Library, given its long association with Fegley through publications and personal relationships with the library staff and leadership, was a logical choice, and it was probably further reinforced by the fact that the library had just built a substantial new fireproof building on Seminary Street in Pennsburg. Over the intervening sixty-plus years from the time of the donation, this collection has become one of the most significant at the Schwenkfelder Library and Heritage Center, as the institution is now known, but is probably not as well understood as those who use it perceive it to be.

H. Winslow Fegley (1871–1944) was born in Hereford Township in eastern Berks County, Pennsylvania. Fegley was a fourth-generation Pennsylvanian whose grandfather George had established a store at Hereford that was succeeded in its operation by H. Winslow's father, Edward. H. Winslow, however, would follow a different path than his forebears. He attended Ursinus College in Collegeville, Montgomery County, and apparently received a master of arts degree from Eastman Business College in Poughkeepsie, New York. Though he stayed on at the Hereford store with his father until Edward's death in 1905, Fegley had a much different course charted for himself beyond the borders of the rural village of his birth.

At some point H. Winslow Fegley became actively interested in photography, but it is unknown exactly when this occurred. An *Allentown Leader* article from May 1, 1903, reported that Fegley “was awarded first prize in the photographic contest conducted by Leslie's Weekly, New York.”¹ Some of his subjects that have been identified in his existing prints, including the Northkill Church at Bernville, Berks County, were torn down in the early years of the twentieth century. Since Fegley did not strike out as a professional photographer and journalist and eventually owner of the H. Winslow Fegley News Bureau operating out of his home at 952 N. Fifth Street in Reading until 1905, he was obviously cultivating his interest in photography for some time, at least as a hobby.

In 1908 a brief biography of Fegley was published in *Who's Who in Pennsylvania* that provides essential clues as to how he wished to be perceived. The entry notes that after his father's death Fegley

then entered newspaper work as journalist becoming writer of illustrated feature articles for the metropolitan papers and magazines from all parts of the Union. . . . Mr. Fegley is a special photographer whose pictures bring prices with stories. His photos of Valley Forge were used by the leading illustrated and magazines of the world. He has a collection of news photographs embracing practically every imaginable subject and the demand for them comes the leading papers in the world.²

Fegley's legacy of photographs of the rural Pennsylvania landscape and the people in it was only a portion of what he was actually doing, but it is far and away the best-known aspect of his work. The 1987 Pennsylvania German Society book *Farming, Always Farming: A Photographic Essay of Rural Pennsylvania German Land and Life* ensured that his images of the hard-working people, their farms, churches, schools, and animals that he grew up with were known to new generations of researchers.³ His motivation to create this extraordinary body of work is not known, however, but understanding that he was assembling a library of photographs for dissemination through news agencies, magazines, and other media outlets—and to ultimately to make income from them—casts Fegley in a different light, one of ambitious businessman rather than an amateur photographer and historian.

Fegley's role as journalist, however, is not well known and probably never will be, in part due to the fact that for much of his newspaper work he may not have received a byline, and his other articles are not easy to find. Additionally, sketches instead of actual photographs were more commonly used in local newspapers prior to the 1920s, if illustrations were used at all. It appears that Fegley may have provided his images to the *Reading Eagle* from Reading, Berks County, as sketches can be frequently found in articles about the buildings or people that he documented appear to be based on his photographs. An *Eagle* article from July 17, 1904, on Frank Selak's goldfish farm in Cumru Township, Berks County—"Breeding Thousands of Gold Fish in Cumru"—features several sketches that may have been taken from Fegley's photographs (see fig. 1).⁴

Among his articles is a human-interest piece for the May 1915 issue of the journal *American Blacksmith* titled "A Unique Blacksmith Doing Unique Things," a title that provides little insight into the content of the article.⁵ Fegley reported on the Bethel, Berks County, blacksmith George Schnoke

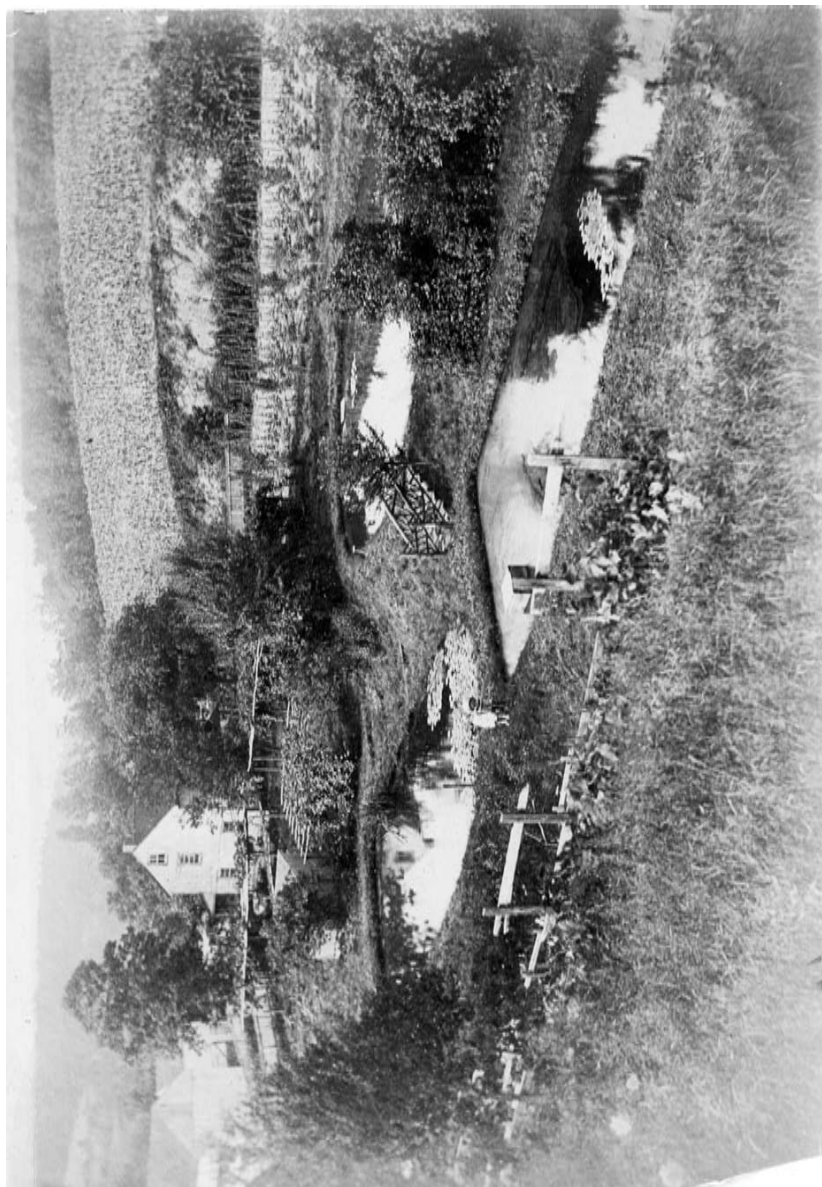


FIGURE 1: Selak's goldfish farm.

who had been in the business of making barrel locks—a cylindrical, nearly impenetrable lock—for forty years. Fegley photographed Schnoke holding a sample lock and his hammer as an illustration for the article (see fig. 2). The Schnoke portrait and other images of his shop are in the Schwenkfelder collection.

In March, 1915 Fegley had a short piece published in *House Beautiful* titled “Historic Stove Plates.” More a brief photo essay than an article, Fegley used his photos of the Oley Valley home and mill of General Daniel Udree, and his important image of the Moravian meeting house at Oley, a colonial half-timbered building. Fegley did modern architectural historians a great service by photographing it, as his may be one of the few surviving images of the structure. The stove plates (plates that made up the five-plate stoves) that Fegley discussed were attributed at that time to the Udrees’ forge at Oley.⁶

Fegley also supplied articles with photographs to trade publications such as *Brick and Clay Record* and others. His February 2, 1915, article with photographs was titled “How Reading Is Solving its Housing Problem: Building in Brick ‘for Beauty and Economy’ Pennsylvania’s Mountain City Demonstrates a New Residence Construction.” This article is one of several that show Fegley’s range and ability to write on contemporary issues, beyond the work for which he is best known.⁷

Also in the 1910s, Fegley acquired copyrights for his postcard photography. Many of his cards depicted well-known landmarks in southeastern Pennsylvania such as views of buildings at Valley Forge, while others were curiosities that he viewed as saleable. Copies of these postcards can be found today for sale on the secondary market. In 1917 Fegley applied for copyright on twenty-seven photographs, including the “Lily Chamber in Crystal Cave,” “The Old Mill in the Pennsylvania Settlement,” and “The Old Oaken Bucket,” in addition to several Pennsylvania landmarks.⁸ His image of the tallest sycamore tree in Berks County (on the Rothermel property in Maiden Creek Township, Berks County) received a copyright; photographic prints in the Schwenkfelder collection show the copyright prominently displayed on the front of the print (see fig. 3). A July 14, 1985, *Reading Eagle* article titled “Post cards of Berks date back to 1902” reported that the “biggest entrepreneur into the 1940s was Winslow Fegley, who had a studio in the area of Fifth and Spring Streets.”⁹

By this time Fegley had established the “H. Winslow Fegley News Bureau” at his Fifth Street address in Reading. A letter dated September 7, 1922, and addressed to the author and journalist Ida Tarbell in response for her request



FIGURE 2: Blacksmith George Schnoke holding his barrel lock.

for prices on Fegley's Mordecai Lincoln homestead photograph (to be had, incidentally, for \$5.00 per reprint) was written on News Bureau letterhead. The letterhead proclaims "No News Matter of a Libelous and Sensational Character Solicited" and "Immediate answers to all requests absolutely necessary to insure prompt news to the press in general."¹⁰



FIGURE 3: Tallest sycamore in Berks County.

After several decades during which the Fegley collection has gained an almost iconic status at the Schwenkfelder, and images from the collection have been the subject of books, articles, and even art installations, it is time for the institution to revisit the collection with the aim of better cataloging and public accessibility. Though Fegley himself was not a descendant of a Schwenkfelder

family, the mission of the Schwenkfelder Library and Heritage Center has always been to collect and preserve the history of the area traditionally defined as the Perkiomen Region, of which Fegley's birthplace, Hereford Township, is a part.

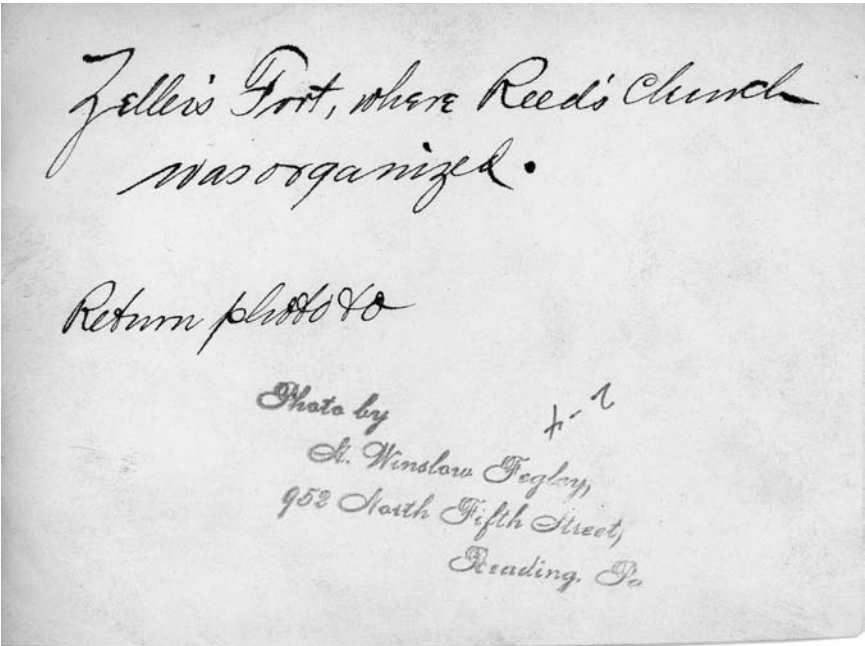
Cataloging the collection is a challenge. In some cases, Fegley misidentified his subject; for example, on a print of a photograph of the George de Benneville farm in Oley Township, Berks County, Fegley identified it as the "Bennethum Home" but thankfully (for today's cataloger) clarified it by adding "where the first service was held by the Universalists." Furthermore, many of buildings he recorded are no longer standing, and in some cases, Fegley may have been the lone photographer of the structure—that is, the aforementioned Northkill Church in Bernville or the Oley Moravian meeting house.

Among the most significant of the lost buildings are the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Pennsylvania churches that Fegley assiduously documented at the turn of the twentieth century. He photographed numerous churches—many of them from the early period of church building by Lutheran congregations in Berks County in the late eighteenth century—and he probably had no idea at the time that his would be some of the last images of these edifices. The lack of photographic documentation of these churches, and the numerous names they were often known by, poses a special difficulty when working to identify the images. For example, Fegley photographed Christ Lutheran Church in Dryville, Rockland Township, Berks County, sometime before 1910 (see fig. 4). The arresting image of the church and cemetery overlooking the little village of Dryville is among the photographer's most powerful. Within just a few years of the photograph, however, the congregation would replace its magnificent eighteenth-century church with a modern building that was better suited to their needs. The church is also known as Mertz, or Mertz's church, which further complicates research and confirmation that the image is, indeed, of the Dryville church. It seems that Fegley may have either developed an article or series of articles about these early Lutheran churches—or at least believed them to be newsworthy—as he noted on the reverse of his photograph of "Fort" Zeller (actually a colonial house in Newmanstown, Berks County): "Zeller's Fort, where Reed's Church was organized" (see figs. 5 and 6). Reed's Church was a very early colonial Lutheran church in Stouchsburg, Berks County.

Another difficulty that Fegley presents to the modern researcher is his occasional use of the name of the owner of a property in his day. Fegley was an important early twentieth-century recorder of the historic landscape and architecture of Oley Township, Berks County. In most cases he used the



FIGURE 4: George de Benneville House and farm.



FIGURES 5 AND 6: "Zeller's Fort," Newmanstown, Berks County, front and reverse.

names that are still associated with these properties—for example, the Keim house, the Kaufman house, and the Fisher house—but in other cases, such as that of the farm where Susanna Cox was accused of murdering her infant, Fegley used the name of the owner he encountered—Cleaver (see fig. 7). Today, Fegley's photographic record of this property is critical, especially because this farmhouse recently burned.

A significant step forward has been made in 2014 toward improving the accessibility of the Fegley collection. The Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia is currently scanning approximately 150 of Fegley's five-by-seven glass plate negatives and creating high resolution digital files that will be added to the Schwenkfelder's digital library, with the hope of moving toward a complete catalog of the collection—which also consists of prints from negatives that are now lost, in addition to the 150 glass plates—in the near future. Increased public access to the collection will encourage more research possibilities and foster a new understanding of H. Winslow Fegley's roles as early twentieth-century journalist, photojournalist, and business owner.



FIGURE 7: Cleaver House, Oley Township, Berks County.

NOTES

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2. John W. Leonard, *Who's Who in Pennsylvania: A Biographical Dictionary of Contemporaries* (New York: L. R. Hamersly and Company, 1908), 251.
3. Fegley's photographs of rural Pennsylvania German life were also discussed by S. M. Schürer in "H. Winslow Fegley and the FSA in Pennsylvania: Agenda and Context," *Pennsylvania History* 70, no. 3 (Summer 2003): 269–86.
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7. H. Winslow Fegley, "How Reading Is Solving Its Housing Problem: Building in Brick 'for Beauty and Economy' Pennsylvania's Mountain City Demonstrates a New Residence Construction," *Brick and Clay Record* 46 (February 2, 1915): 242–47.
8. Library Of Congress, *Catalogue of Copyright Entries Published by the Authority of Acts of Congress of March 2, 1891, of June 30, 1906 and of March 4, 1909 Part 4: Works of Art; Reproductions of Work of Art; Drawings or Plastic Works of A Scientific or Technical Character; Photographs; Prints and Pictorial Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1917), <https://archive.org/stream/catalogofcopyrig124libr#page/n5/mode/2up> (accessed June 30, 2014).
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JAMES MCCLEES: “BEST ADAPTED TO THE BUSINESS”

Sarah J. Weatherwax

Abstract: This vignette examines the business of Philadelphia photographer James McClees who successfully made the transition from daguerreotypes to paper photography.

Keywords: photography, daguerreotypes, Philadelphia

*B*orn in Coatesville, Pennsylvania, in 1821, James McClees moved to Philadelphia as a young boy. Philadelphia became a center for early American photography with the city's first commercial daguerreotype studio opening in the spring of 1840, and in 1844 McClees joined this new profession by working in the studio of Montgomery P. Simons. What attracted McClees to daguerreotyping is not known, but this was the start of a successful career that would span more than two decades and reflect the evolution of photographic processes and the profession.

Montgomery Simons may have trained McClees too well in the art of daguerreotyping for within a few years McClees had opened his own competing studio with a partner, former engraver Washington Lafayette Germon. McClees and Germon in an 1848 advertisement described their studio as having “every advantage of light, location and genteel privacy” and apparently the public agreed. As with most daguerreotypists, the bulk of McClees and

Germon's business centered on taking studio portraits, but the two men also advertised that they could produce "views of public buildings, store fronts, &c. taken according to order." The partners also gave instructions in taking daguerreotypes and sold photographic equipment.¹ McClees and Germon stayed in business together at different Philadelphia locations for almost a decade, producing award-winning daguerreotypes. When fire destroyed their studio in 1855, however, McClees decided to go into business on his own.

Although McClees may have been exaggerating slightly when he declared in an 1856 advertisement (fig. 1) that his was "the only establishment in the city in which all styles of photography are produced," he was certainly accurate in his implication that all his fellow daguerreotypists were not successfully making the transition to the newer forms of photography being introduced in the 1850s.² As early as 1853, McClees was making images by using glass negatives and printing the photographs on paper. The Library Company of Philadelphia's collection includes approximately seventy-five paper photographs of Philadelphia taken by McClees during the 1850s, making his work some of the earliest paper photographic views ever produced of the city. McClees traveled around Philadelphia, photographing churches, schools, residences, banks, hotels, bridges, and other noteworthy sites and printing them in both small and large formats (see fig. 2).


A year after McClees went into business on his own, the *Photographic and Fine Art Journal* published a series of articles evaluating studios in New York and Philadelphia including McClees' establishment. "We cannot speak too highly of this gallery," declared the article. "It is well arranged and fitted up and contains a splendid array of pictures. . . . The gallery is light, and shows the pictures to advantage. It is an excellent studio."³ The *Philadelphia Press* urged its readers "who have taste to admire and appreciate works of real merit" to visit McClees' gallery and view the works on exhibit.⁴

These reviews highlight the mid-nineteenth-century belief that McClees' studio, as well as other first-class photographic studios, were not just places of commerce—a site where one went to have one's portrait taken—but were destinations for those seeking cultural enrichment. Photographic manuals advised photographers to place sculpture, engravings, paintings, and other works of art in their waiting rooms to enhance the potential customer's experience. These status symbols also served to remind the public that top-notch photographers considered themselves to be artists on an equal footing with painters or sculptors.⁵ Endorsements from respected artists also added to a photographer's cachet. The 1848 advertisement for McClees and Germon's

new studio, for example, declared that it enjoyed the patronage of “the best Painters and Engravers in the city.”⁶

James McClees’ interest in aligning his photographic business with the fine arts may also have been an indication of the direction his career was to

J. E. MCLEES,
(SUCCESSOR TO MCLEES & GERMON.)



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No. 160 CHESTNUT ST., bel. SEVENTH,
PHILADELPHIA.

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Parties residing at a distance, who may possess a Daguerreotype of a **VALUED FRIEND**, can by sending the Daguerreotype, per Express, have returned to them a **Large Picture**, in either of the above Styles. Pamphlets containing full particulars will be sent on application. This is the only Establishment in this City, in which all Styles of **PHOTOGRAPHY** are produced.

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FIGURE 1: Advertisement in *Byram's Illustrated Business Directory of Philadelphia*, Philadelphia: J. H. Byram, 1856. The Library Company of Philadelphia.



FIGURE 2: James McClees, *Engine house of the Twenty-Fourth Ward Water Works . . . Philadelphia*, salted paper photograph, ca. 1854. The Library Company of Philadelphia.

move next. In 1867 he sold his Philadelphia studio to one of his employees and became a dealer in fine art. He had already given up the Washington, DC, photographic business he had opened in the mid-1850s. James McClees remained a fine arts dealer until his death at age sixty-seven in the spring

of 1887. The *Philadelphia Photographer* noted that with McClees' death, "one more 'father of photography' had gone to rest."⁷ McClees' career, which began when photography was in its infancy, diversified to include the selling of equipment and the giving of instructions, and evolved to embrace new technological advances as they became available. McClees' success was based on his talents and his ability to adapt to circumstances.

NOTES

1. Broadside, *McClees & Germon Daguerreotype Rooms, S.E. Corner of Chestnut and 8th Sts., Philadelphia* ([Philadelphia, Pa.]: G.S. Harris, printer, No. 119 N. 4th St., [1848?]), The Library Company of Philadelphia (sm # Am 1848 McClees 105443.D (Doret)).
2. *Byram's Illustrated Business Directory of Philadelphia, 1856* ([Philadelphia, PA]: J. H. Byram, 1856), 51.
3. Cuique Suum, "The Photographic Galleries of America. Number Two—Philadelphia," *Photographic and Fine Art Journal*, April 1, 1856, 125.
4. James E. McClees, *Elements of Photography* (Philadelphia: J. H. Jones & Co., printers, 1855), 35.
5. Philadelphia photographer Marcus Root wrote extensively about this topic particularly in *The Camera and the Pencil; or the Heliographic Art* (Philadelphia: Lippincott; New York: Appleton, 1864).
6. *McClees & Germon Daguerreotype Rooms*.
7. "Obituary," *Philadelphia Photographer*, June 1887, 373.0.

PENNSYLVANIA, HISTORY, PHOTOGRAPHY
(1959–2005): A PORTFOLIO

Robert Ginsberg

I had not thought of myself as a Pennsylvania photographer.

William Pencak, editor of *Pennsylvania History*, my colleague for nineteen years and friend for thirty, invited me to contribute a portfolio of my Pennsylvania work to the special issue on photography that Linda A. Ries was planning. A genial and gifted polymath, Pencak had worked together with me on many projects in semiotics, law, literature, and American history. I reviewed my collection of 10,000 slides to see if I might offer a selection.

I discovered that I *was* a Pennsylvania photographer.

Bill did not get to see the results. He died December 9, 2013.

I was a Pennsylvanian from 1963 to 1972, living in the Philadelphia area. From 1972 to 2002, I commuted from my Maryland home outside of Washington, DC, to Pennsylvania to complete my thirty-five years at Penn State. During 500,000 miles as commuter, I repeatedly re-entered Pennsylvania, seeing it in new light.

Brimming with its heritage, Pennsylvania attracts the visitor's camera eye. Follow the guidebook to the attractions! That is your duty as tourist, proclaims the state. Take your obligatory shots. You cannot miss them. History packaged as tourism.

The postcard, the brochure, the magazine, the poster, the video. That is the substance out of which history is made. Before we have seen the sights, we have already seen them.

Crisscrossing the state, as a photographer I had not been taking shots, an aggressive, possessive frame of mind. Instead, I have been taken by moments, experiences that stop me, hold me, and open me to something in the world, something I had missed. Photography not as a calculated art of accurate depiction of a notable object, but as an unanticipated act of subjectivity, a fresh dwelling in the world, a togetherness of subject with subject. Mutual disclosure. My photography deals not with the seen/scene. The unseen deals with me. Photography, though it peers through viewfinders and converts large objects to small prints, is always an enlargement. An enlargement of the heart.

Carrying about a camera, I found myself invited to become accessible to the world. So that I could be found by something that might make me more sensitive, attentive, appreciative, responsive, responsible. Photography as inducement to growth. Introduction to experience. Exploration of the environment. Initiation to the innerment.

The magnificent state capitol at Harrisburg promotes itself across the wide and often wild Susquehanna River (fig. 1). The edge of the developed East, officiously drawing itself up, facing the challenging lands of the West. The site invites the sight. A capital location.

Philadelphia makes its residents and visitors feel at home in a European past. Consider its acropolis in Fairmount Park, crowned by the Philadelphia Museum of Art, a majestic Parthenon of French Impressionist treasures. At the bottom of this "Fair Mount," along the Schuylkill River, extend the Greco-Roman structures of the nineteenth-century waterworks (fig. 2).

Philadelphia's grand cultural boulevard, the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, running from the foot of the Art Museum to City Hall in Center City, replicates the Champs-Élysées of Paris. Philadelphia's version, studded with statuary and memorials, has its own Rodin Museum, central Fountain of the Three Rivers (cf. La Place de la Concorde), Free (public) Library and Court House, echoing the eighteenth-century Naval Ministry and the Hôtel de Crillon in Paris, and the recently relocated Barnes Foundation with *its* treasures of French Impressionism.

At Philadelphia's central focal point of Market and Broad Streets stands its distinctive City Hall (fig. 14), a late nineteenth-century imitation of the

Paris City Hall. It is topped with a statue of William Penn, the city's founder, hat on head and hand in a gesture of welcome, peace, blessing, or assertion that this is the place for a peaceable kingdom of brotherly love. The City Hall tower was long the highest edifice in Philadelphia, historic landmark for ships coming in from the ocean. In the 1980s, it was unceremoniously dwarfed by massive skyscrapers. Relegated to history.

The celebrated Academy of Music on Broad Street, now the Avenue of the Arts, is modeled on La Scala of Milan. The Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul, the largest Catholic church in Pennsylvania, at Logan Circle on the Franklin Parkway, is modeled on a church in Rome. *Et cetera*.

Replicas repeat the presence of what has disappeared. Thus, the latest copy of the US Brig *Niagara*, warship of the dramatic Battle of Lake Erie, 1813, reflects the past at its dock at Erie (fig. 3), a projection of land that had been wrested from New York in 1785 to make Pennsylvania a Great Lakes state.

The original *Niagara* had been scuttled as means of preserving it. Later raised for reuse. Sunk again as beyond use. Raised again for commemorative use. Partially restored and retained on land. Dismantled as too rotten for restoration. Then reconstructed, containing pieces of the original, and made seaworthy. Don't give up the ship!

The bounty, or the burden, of Pennsylvania's history extends all across its landscape, from its big cities and great waterways to its verdant hillsides. At Valley Forge, nestled in an elbow of the Schuylkill River, where General Washington's ragtag army battled against the raging winter of 1777–78, an impression in the grass is a minimalist ruin. Unnoticed, it marks the outline of rebuilt barracks that subsequently vanished (fig. 4). A relic of a replica. Visible absence. In what is now a National Historical Park, the field lays claims to the history of what we have made for it. The grass reclaims what we have made.

We dwell upon bridges. Even without crossing them to what they connect. When they cross our path, we ponder our connection to them. Philadelphia's big bridges over the Delaware River stitch together the gaps in the American East Coast (fig. 5). Pittsburgh's bridges, where the Ohio River is born, open the way West (fig. 6).

Across a modest rail bridge over the ambling Brandywine River, the silent set of tracks in the countryside of Chadds Ford may still stop us in our tracks for contemplation (fig. 13). We are not going anywhere here. We are already there.

In downtown Chester, where William Penn first landed in his Province of Pennsylvania (Penn's forest), 1682, a bag of garbage floats in the Chester

Creek past the Big C Rollerdrome, a windowless building abutting a major rail line, formerly a fish market, subsequently active as roller rink and temporary home of the Penn State campus in Delaware County (fig. 7).

After the campus moved to its sylvan setting in the serene countryside outside Media, the old building burned down. The fire smoldered for several days thanks to the barrels of wax stored for the rink. Then the creek flooded, leaving no trace of the roller rink or campus in Pennsylvania's oldest city. Penn State Brandywine now thrives on its permanent campus in the idyllic suburbs (fig. 8).

As photographer, the touch of the human presence has stopped me more often than the full-scale monument. That touch may exhibit irony or incongruity, especially in broken signs, worn buildings, neglected surroundings. While signs and inscriptions are meant to convey a message, they live a life of their own that may engender other kinds of message.

After a day's work at the University, I would stop at a Dairy Queen for the reward of a Blizzard. Once, a winter blizzard had knocked down the signpost, but its service to the community was soon restored (fig. 9). Christmas trees, burial wreaths, or blizzards to please.

The Declaration of Independence, so fundamental to the history of Philadelphia, and to the United States, is celebrated throughout the city, including an elegant fountain at the edge of Fairmount Park. "Indipendence" is cut on its stone rim (fig. 10).

Hands-on wooden texture of barn in rural Crawford County (figs. 11, 12). The old structure remains whole, looking out at its farm through many a knothole.

Hands-on scholarly texture on my wife's desk in Wayne (fig. 15). In a scholar's life, always more remains to be done.

While the world appears to the photographer, photographs appear to the viewer. By means of photographic prints, the world makes public to viewers a glimpse of its fingerprints and footprints. We have grown accustomed to view photographs as windows through which we view objects that lie outside. Yet, sometimes, imperceptibly, we step through the open window and find ourselves within the scene. Absorbed in the light, in the color, in the dark, in the silence. Standing in the grass, at the riverbank, in the barn, on the bridge, in the room. We look out at the world from there. No longer apart from the seen, but a part of the scene. Participants.

Photographs offer gentle encouragement to the viewer to open the heart not just to that sight seen, that scene sighted, but to all the rest of the world that the viewer may then see without looking at photographs. Photographs can transform us from being viewers of the world to being presences in the world.

The fifteen previously unpublished prints that follow these words belong to history in the sense that they express my encounter of Pennsylvania spanning forty-six years. Regard them not as documents of what exists, for, in time, all things change and some things no longer exist. You might say that the experience that led to a photograph may have long since ceased to exist. In that case, photographs by their nature are things of the past.

Or you might come to see that the moment experienced has so imprinted itself that it is rescued from passing away and made permanently present. In that case, the prints remain as testimony of one person's engaged subjectivity in life.

What good is that?

If the real subject of these photographs is ourselves as subjects, then the chief value they can have is in the awakening of your participatory subjectivity. Experience shared is life enlarged. Picture that!



FIGURE 1: Harrisburg, across the Susquehanna River, 1988.



FIGURE 2: Old Waterworks, Schuylkill River, Philadelphia, 1965.



FIGURE 3: Reflection, Brig *Niagara*, Erie, 2005.



FIGURE 4: Imprint of Barracks, Valley Forge, ca. 1969.



FIGURE 5: Benjamin Franklin Bridge, Philadelphia, 1996.



FIGURE 6: Bridges, Pittsburgh, 1959.



FIGURE 7: Big C Rollerdrome and Penn State campus, Chester, 1967.



FIGURE 8: Shovels for Groundbreaking, Penn State, Media, 1986.



FIGURE 9: "Grave Mounds Coming," Delaware County, 1989.



FIGURE 10: "Independence" Fountain, Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, 1996.



FIGURE 11: Barn, Crawford County, 2005.

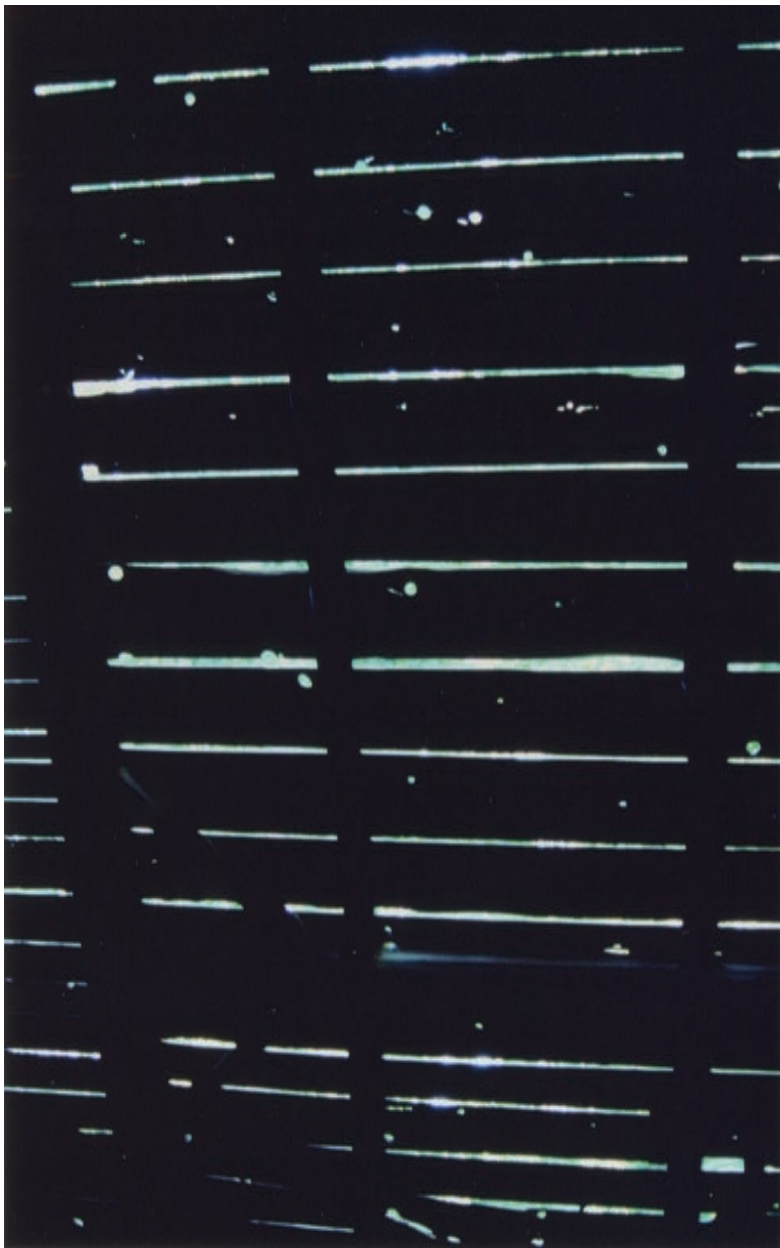


FIGURE 12: Interior, Barn, Crawford County, 2005.



FIGURE 13: Railroad Bridge, Chadds Ford, 1986.



FIGURE 14: City Hall, Night, from above, Philadelphia, 1992.



FIGURE 15: Study of Dr. Ellen S. Ginsberg, Wayne, 1972.

BOOK REVIEWS

Walter David Greason. *Suburban Erasure: How the Suburbs Ended the Civil Rights Movement in New Jersey* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2013). Pp. 215. Notes, bibliography, index. Hardback, \$74.99.

With his new book, *Suburban Erasure: How the Suburbs Ended the Civil Rights Movement in New Jersey*, Walter David Greason has managed to say something new and important about African American history and urban development. There are two keys to the book. First, he covers the entire twentieth century. That includes large events, like the Great Migration of the World War I era and the rapid growth of the suburbs following World War II, which aren't usually presented together. Second, he looks at New Jersey. When most historians look at the Great Migration they see it as a rural-to-urban phenomenon. African American sharecroppers and agricultural laborers leave the south to take industrial jobs in the urban north. Similarly, later suburban development is often

thought of as white Americans leaving the city while African Americans stayed behind.

New Jersey, though, was a different sort of a place. In the early twentieth century large parts of the state were agricultural. There were also the seaside resorts based primarily on a tourist economy. African Americans who came to these more rural areas had a very different experience than migrants to industrial cities. One example Greason gives is that because the size of the African American community in the cities was higher, it was possible for people to become divided over the best tactics to use in fighting oppression. At the time the NAACP pushed for social equality, while the Urban League focused more on economic achievement, and the Universal Negro Improvement Association advocated a version of Black Nationalism. In the smaller, nonurban communities of New Jersey Greason found that the membership of all three civil rights groups overlapped. African American ministers and schoolteachers formed a leadership group that belonged to all three groups and tried to both draw on them as resources for local efforts and lend legitimacy to their struggle against racism.

Nonurban African Americans in New Jersey usually coalesced around a civil rights message emphasizing education, thrift, self-respect, and community cohesion. They usually had some success in chipping away at formal discrimination. Part of this was because African Americans were not socially accepted by white residents, they did need them. New Jersey farmers needed agricultural laborers to toil in their fields. Seaside resort owners knew their upper middle-class guests expected to be served by African American porters, maids, and waiters. The combination of economic necessity and dignified protest created the grounds for change, such as creating more opportunities for higher education.

One of the strengths of this part of the book is Greason's use of oral histories and personal memoirs as evidence. Most small communities and religious or civic organizations have these sorts of records, but they're rarely drawn on by academic historians. The history of African American in the rural north has not received much attention. Greason does a good job of showing how it might be done.

After World War II, New Jersey changed. Overt racism, like the African American community had faced earlier, was no longer considered appropriate. Greason gives a great deal of the credit to the changes caused by the civil rights organizations that grew out of the earlier African American churches

and schools. Many other groups, like Jews and Eastern Europeans, who had been seen as outsiders by the dominant culture were now being accepted as part of a broader white community. At the same time, middle-class whites began to leave Philadelphia and New York City for the new outer suburbs in New Jersey. This migration created a variety of problems for African Americans. Economically, African Americans saw their jobs disappear. White farmers who turn their acreage into housing lots don't need agricultural laborers. As the seaside resorts shifted from serving an upper middle-class clientele to one that was more working class, the expectation of being served by an African American wait staff also began to disappear. Finally, in a formally segregated society, African American businesses were required to serve an African American clientele. Now African Americans could shop anywhere but had no money.

African American access to the suburbs was hindered by a variety of factors. At first Federal Housing Authority lenders and real estate agents both quietly discriminated against African Americans seeking home lots. Later, suburbs with self-government used zoning regulations to prevent the building of multifamily dwellings, or even houses on smaller lots. African Americans who lacked the resources to move often found themselves stuck in poorer enclaves, reflected what Greason calls "uneven development," where a lack of jobs, local tax base, and educational opportunities continue to hold them back. Worse, from a civil rights perspective, because the barrier to movement became monetary rather than racial, middle-class African Americans were able to move to the suburbs, severing the commonality of interest that used to hold the African American community together. Greason believes that in order to escape from uneven development, racial concerns need to be addressed directly by zoning boards and regional planning agencies. By adopting an official policy that the rules are color-blind, and that anyone can move to the suburbs who has the money, many African Americans have been marginalized.

While *Suburban Erasure* deserves the attention of anyone studying African American history or urban development in the Mid-Atlantic region, a few things would have made the book stronger. One would be the inclusion of maps, particularly showing how individual communities changed with the advent of suburbanization. Second, the book could be longer. In chapter 8, for example, Greason discusses the development of Morristown, Red Bank, Randolph, and Franklin in the space of nine pages. The historiographic

development of our current understanding of suburban development could also be discussed in more depth. Hopefully Greason will expand his arguments later. *Suburban Erasure* is an excellent start at bringing nonurban African Americans in the north into the wider scholarly discussion.

HAROLD AURAND JR.
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Robert P. Wolensky and William A. Hastie Sr. *Anthracite Labor Wars: Tenancy, Italians, and Organized Crime in the Northern Coalfield of Northeastern Pennsylvania, 1897–1959* (Center for Canal History, 2013). Pp. 447. Paperback. \$24.95.

Readers familiar with history of Pennsylvania anthracite coal mining in the twentieth century know of the Knox Mine disaster in 1959, when managers directed workers to illegally mine coal under the Susquehanna River, resulting in the flooding many Wyoming Valley shafts and galleries, and killing twelve people. The Knox Coal Company was the leaseholder of the River Slope mine from the Pennsylvania Coal Company and was but one of many lessees in an evolving corporate reorganization of access to mineral rights in Luzerne and Lackawanna counties. A compelling argument made in Robert Wolensky et al.'s earlier book, *The Knox Mine Disaster, January 22, 1959* (1999) (reviewed in *Pennsylvania History* 69, no. 3 [Summer 2002]: 458–59) was that the leasing system encouraged illegal mining in the quest for profits and in corruption among company officials and union leaders. In many ways, *Anthracite Labor Wars* takes as its start this devastating “end” of mining in the northern field. This book's purpose is to trace the origins of the pernicious system of leasing and subcontracting—when the owners of mineral rights got out of the mining business—and to trace the intricate, if not endemic, “culture of corruption” that these forms of tenancy spawned. In addition, this study reveals mineworkers' active—often violent, though ultimately futile—resistance to tenancy. For scholars of the region the study is a deep dive; and for researchers of other coal regions in the state and elsewhere, it will serve as the definitive source for comparative industrial and labor histories.

Robert P. Wolensky, professor of sociology emeritus at University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point, joins with William A. Hastie Sr., a former mine-worker (he was on-site at Knox in 1959) and local historian of Pittston,

to contribute an extensively researched history of mining and a history of mineworkers in the northern anthracite field as shaped by an evolving system of tenancy. Early chapters define two types of tenancy: the first was subcontracting in which a coal-owning company granted an individual miner a contract to mine coal or do development work in a mine; and the second was leasing, which was the practice of a coal-owning company to let a section of a mine, or an entire colliery, to an independent coal company. Whereas subcontracting dated back to the 1890s and continued in the twentieth century, the system of leasing came to dominate after 1935. These chapters supply a descriptive industrial history of mining around Wilkes-Barre, Pittston, and Scranton, and important business histories—and corporate restructurings—of the Erie Railroad's subsidiaries, the Pennsylvania Coal Company (PaCC) and the Hillside Coal & Iron Company (HC&I). Both companies benefited by demanding of their subcontractors and leaseholders more tonnage for less cost, and thus the contract miners and incorporated leaseholders became the drivers of labor's exploitations.

The four middle chapters of the book describe the thirty-year war (1905–39) workers fought over subcontracting, leasing, and many other grievances at the Erie Coal companies. The labor actions were not just against management but against the United Mine Workers and the union's inability to rid the region of subcontracting. There were wildcat strikes in 1905, a widespread, general shutdown in 1910 involving 12,000 employees (from all ten PaCC collieries and three out of four HC&I collieries), and the 1916 Industrial Workers of the World–led strike that began an alternative understanding of labor protest in the northern field. According to the authors, “The area's militant tradition [comprised] a series of labor movements undertaken against powerful forces by workers who were unwaveringly set on pursuing their own vision of the just workplace and community” (xiv). Further, Wolensky and Hastie cast special light on the Italian immigrants employed by the Erie companies who were receptive to the IWW's syndicalism and its demands and methods to eliminate tenancy.

Layers of grassroots protest and worker militancy become more complex when “insurgents” led strikes in 1920 and 1924–25, and especially during the violent contest in 1928 at PaCC's no. 6 colliery—involving the company's use of subcontractors as a cost-cutting measure, insurgent mineworkers, the UMWA's neglect of the subcontracting issue, and the manipulations of both workers and union locals by organized crime. The “Feud at No. 6” began with a company lockout and a shaft's reopening with six subcontractors and mining

machines. The 400-member workforce walked out and soon were joined by 1,300 men from the colliery's three other pits (one-third were Italians). Local 1703's officers refused to support the "mutineers," and why should they have? "[V]irtually all were subcontractors and other 'company men' who had gained office by controlling jobs and receiving favors from the bosses," claimed the insurgents, who then held an unofficial election of new representatives (95). District 1 president Rinaldo Cappellini refused to recognize the election, as did UMWA president John L. Lewis, and PaCC's management "applauded" the union presidents' decisions. During these first contentious weeks of what became a nearly year-long, district-wide revolt in 1928, the murders of six former and current Local 1703 officers, members, and subcontractors occurred, and Pittston "struggled to make sense of the mayhem. Why was it happening? Who was behind it?" Wolensky and Hastie supply two answers: "In the simplest terms, the aggressions pitted the subcontracting systems supporters against its opponents" and "organized crime remained an unspoken element in the bedlam." Connecting these answers more explicitly is coauthor Hastie (in an interview conducted in 1989) who spoke about the murdered Alex Campbell (elected check-weighman of No. 6): "he could not be intimidated or bribed by the organized crime boss Santo Volpe. . . . Volpe had Campbell and (the newly elected secretary of the local) Peter Reilly killed because they were also standing by the men" (104-5).

The authors meticulously document the contributive Mafia-element to the subcontracting rebellion in 1928, to leaseholding companies of PaCC collieries, and to the Italian workforce. Throughout the book readers are reminded that a third of the workers were Italian immigrants, mainly from Sicily, who "were particularly opposed to subcontracting because they had seen its adverse consequences in the old country's sulfur pits, including the involvement of organized crime" (97). The authors admit "it was not clear why so many Sicilians gained employment at the Erie coal companies," but the immigrants were hired as both workers and as subcontractors. The authors speculate that "it may be no coincidence that the [Erie] companies were the premiere architects of the subcontracting system, for Sicily's mining industry had long been structured around petty subcontractors who hired relatively large work crews, often with the assistance of *Padrone* labor contractors" (57). When PaCC and HC&I hired Sicilians as subcontractors "they, in turn, took on fellow countrymen as laborers and drove them with 'pushers,' 'hustlers,' and 'enforcers' in a manner similar to the old-world pattern." Sicilian mineworkers "knew of the systems harmful consequence in the

mines around their former homes . . . in south-central Sicily. They knew that organized-crime-affiliated miners were prominent among the subcontractors and they were determined to keep the system, as well as its criminal foundations, out of their American workplaces" (58–59). Some questions remain for future study about formal and informal labor recruitment systems, who was hired by subcontractors and leaseholding companies and stayed on the job, and about intra-ethnic and cross-ethnic alliances in the five alternative union movements *Anthracite Labor Wars* chronicles.

By the 1930s two dual union movements, the National Miners Union, led by the Communists, and the United Anthracite Workers of Pennsylvania, failed to dislodge the expanding leasing system. The book's final chapters track the proliferation of leases by each company, how several leaseholders grew into large operations, the continued connections to organized crime, and how tenancy shaped the final decline of the northern field. The authors claim that production in the northern field was sustained in the 1940s and 1950s, as "former subcontractors . . . investors, speculators, public officials, and persons with no mining background all scrambled to garner the [leases]" (194), yet if this was a benefit the costs to the region were incredibly high:

Tenancy spawned a regime of subsidence and other environmental hazards, as well as injuries, bribes, kickbacks, bogus inspections, short-weighting, illegal mining, shorted wages, broken union agreements, even murder. . . . They were predictable outcomes of systematic degradations initiated by the major anthracite corporations, their tenants (including alleged organized criminals), the mineworkers' union and its leaders, state regulatory agencies and inspectors, and, in certain cases, "coal hungry" mineworkers. (189)

The final chapter is curiously titled as postscript, but raises an important question: Why have Italians been neglected in the story of anthracite labor? This is the best chapter in the book in terms of engaging the broader historiographical and interpretive debates on immigrant (and ethnic) workers beyond the anthracite region and outside of Pennsylvania. However, it ultimately seeks an equal prominence for Italians *in the anthracite region* that Victor Greene saw in *The Slavic Community on Strike* among East European immigrants. The chapter argues that three narratives have "clouded" a contemporary, social memory of (and scholarly inquiry about) Italians as committed activists for workers' rights and economic justice. Italians' roles in the

anthracite region are instead shaped by past and present “stories” of them as “unfit” immigrants, or a hard-working people, overcoming many obstacles, and assimilating, or as gangsters as popular culture informs. To challenge and problematize these stories the authors recall the collection of “Italians” chronicled in the seven previous chapters—as interviewees, as labor leaders, insurgents, and strikers, as subcontractors and as leaseholders, as crime bosses, murder victims, and arrestees. As such a listing of multiple and oppositional roles suggests, it is not clear if national/ethnic/regional group-based identities are even useful constructs in understanding individual or collective action. This final chapter signals that there is more research to be done on “activist Italians and their multi-ethnic comrades,” and certainly if an “Italian Community on Strike” is to be written for the region, women and the family will need be included, as well as other working-class forms of mutual support and action, political alignments, and transnational connections.

That this volume would be foundation to researching such topics is unequivocal: the quantity of published and archival sources from which the authors draw is massive, including oral history collections held at Wilkes-Barre’s King’s College and over sixty more interviews conducted by Wolensky and contributing to the Northeastern Pennsylvania Oral and Life History Project, as well as union and court proceedings, government surveys, reports of special commissions, trade journals, coal company archival collections, and dozens of newspapers (and the endnotes to each chapter often quote at length from these sources). Collected and displayed on nearly every page of the study are over 250 reproductions of telegrams, newspaper headlines, advertisements, and proclamations, along with photographs of people, breakers, shafts, (and as frontispiece to each chapter a different miner memorial from the northern field). Two thorough appendices (75+ pages) supply definitions for anthracite mining terms, and helpful descriptions of laws and organizations, and the second appendix comprises nearly 500 biographies of major and minor figures in the study.

Anthracite Labor Wars effectively connects industrial, technological, and corporate histories of northern-field anthracite with mineworkers’ labor, livelihoods, and safety. “Coal pillaging and unsafe mining, along with wage, weight, and car cheating were hallmarks of the tenancy systems at PaCC, HC&I, . . . , Knox, and other companies. . . . The industry became engulfed in a culture of corruption where normal business dealings involved unethical and/or illegal actions” (184). This volume explains exceedingly well how tenancy systems inured the conditions under which workers mined

anthracite, and, indeed, their dignity at work, and we come to empathize with mineworkers' sustained militancy shaped by local concerns, their wild-cat strikes, dissatisfactions with the United Mine Workers, and creations of alternative union movements, in their attempts to resolve their grievances. Yet, as the authors conclude, those systems of tenancy became so pervasive, so entrenched, "it can be argued that subcontracting and leasing themselves constituted a type of *organized* criminal activity. Legal (and ethical) principles were systematically violated by companies, tenants, union leaders, and, in some cases, workers" (189).

RACHEL A. BATCH
Widener University

Cheryl Janifer LaRoche. *Free Black Communities and the Underground Railroad: The Geography of Resistance* (University of Illinois Press, 2014). Pp. 232. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth \$85.00.

A number of studies have appeared over the last few years that have expanded our appreciation of the range and complexity of the Underground Railroad (UGRR). LaRoche adds her voice to those who insist that more attention has to be placed on the pivotal role played by northern free black communities in the movement to undermine slavery. Hers is mainly a study of three black rural settlements, Rocky Fork and Miller Grove in Illinois, Lick Creek in Indiana, and Poke Patch in Ohio. It also has a wider frame of reference, taking in some of the many other black rural settlements (as well as a few of the urban communities) that were pivotal to what she inventively calls the "geography of resistance." Rocky Fork stood on 300 acres three miles west of Alton and was the first port of call for those fleeing slavery along the Missouri River and from southwest Missouri. Established in 1844, Miller Grove, which was settled by freed families from Tennessee, was a beacon for slaves escaping from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri. Lick Creek, located in a remote area southeast of Paoli, Orange County, seventeen miles from the Ohio River, was settled in 1817 by freeborn African Americans. By 1855 the settlement occupied 1,500 acres. Poke Patch in western Gallia County was settled in an area whose economy relied heavily on iron-ore furnaces. Situated where they were, these settlements were usually the first stop on the line to freedom.

LaRoche is also committed to expanding existing knowledge of what she insists is a much more complex and developed system of “pathways to freedom” than historians of the movement have acknowledged (84). This rather limited approach, she argues, has underestimated the number and variety of avenues of escape developed to ferry fugitives to safety. There were, among others, caves in which they hid, waterways along which they traveled, and iron furnaces, especially those in southern Ohio, where they found refuge and temporary employment. Together they formed what she calls the “landscape of freedom” (90).

LaRoche also sets out to demonstrate the pivotal role played by the black church, particularly the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church that, she argues, was the backbone of these communities. They were beacons of freedom attracting slaves on the run. It is this institution and the ministers who led them, she insists, rather than the popular and largely unproven claims of hidden tunnels, passageways, and closets, that should be the focus of examinations of the UGRR. She also insists that more attention should be paid to black fraternal societies, although given the nature of these organizations it is almost impossible to discern what role they actually played. Together these institution and societies, established and sustained by African Americans, both protected and sustained the fleeing slave and provided vital links to the world beyond slavery. “The first stops out of slavery,” she observes, “frequently consisted of internal, church-based paths to freedom and salvation” (3). While she does draw on traditional sources, she insists that these need to be supplemented by oral histories, archeological explorations and landscape studies if we are ever to arrive at a fuller understanding of the movement’s complex history and the role it played in undermining slavery.

Her approach produces some genuinely original insights into the workings of the movement, such as her exploration of the activities of antislavery missionaries from the American Missionary Association in and around Miller Grove in the 1850s, which provide invaluable information on the effort to undermine support for slavery in an area notoriously hostile to abolition. They not only sold Bibles, they also clandestinely distributed copies of Frederick Douglass’s newspaper, the *North Star*, as well as antislavery books and pamphlets, all the while working closely with the black community to protect fugitives. But there are other sections of the book that leave many assertions unanswered. She frequently asserts, as she does in the discussion of the Lick Creek settlement, that the church, the institutional center of the settlement, became the “consistent site” of refuge for escaping slaves.

While there is no doubt that the church was a (if not *the*) “focal point” of the settlement, she provides little evidence, save what she draws from the oral testimony of descendants of the first settlers, to show that the church was the protective mechanism that ensured the safety of those in flight (63). Her mapping does substantiate the connections between known sites of the UGRR and these settlements and churches. But her proof of the exact role of the church rest on repetitions of the claim exclusive of any hard evidence. Not that she is unaware of the problem or the need for nuance. At one point she writes that, before 1850, churches in these settlements were limited in what they could do by larger political pressures and so tended to focus mainly on administering to the spiritual needs of their flocks. After 1850 and the growing popular resistance to the Fugitive Slave Law, however, the church, she admits, found its political voice (139). If this is so, then the changing political climate provided the church with breathing room to act.

There is one omission that is surprising. The UGRR, as her subtitle (“The Geography of Resistance”) acknowledges, was, at its core, a political movement. Resistance by its very nature is political. Yet LaRoche makes little effort, with the possible exception of her discussion of activities of the missionaries at Miller Grove in the 1850s, to assess the political significance, local or otherwise, of these activities. There are also a few nagging errors that anyone familiar with antebellum African American history and the UGRR should have spotted. Let me point to a couple. She says that Calvin Fairbank, the Oberlin-trained minister, died in the Kentucky penitentiary serving a seventeen-year sentence for helping a slave to escape (50). Fairbanks had two brushes with the law, the first when he and Dalia Webster helped to get Lewis Hayden and his wife out of slavery, for which he was sentenced to fifteen years but was freed after serving four. The second involved the escape of Tamar, a Louisville slave in 1851, for which he was sentenced to the penitentiary and remained there until pardoned in 1864. Another involved he statement that Paul Cuffe, the Massachusetts sea captain, “transported several black families to Liberia” (108). Cuffe settled the families in Sierra Leone, not Liberia. She also claims that in the 1850s Martin Delany “preferred Liberia” as a point of settlement for African Americans (109). Delany would be surprised to hear that. She also asserts that Henry Highland Garnet “chose to settle permanently in Jamaica” after migrating first to Great Britain and Canada (121). Garnet spent a few years in Britain at the invitation of the Free Produce Movement before going to Jamaica as a missionary of the Scottish Presbyterian Church. He was back in the United States by 1855.

While these errors and shortcomings mar her analysis, they do not detract from her call for a more expansive approach to the study of the UGRR—one that recognizes the centrality of black rural (and urban) settlements. Churches undoubtedly were at the heart of these settlements but how one determines their actual role in the movement remains largely unanswered. It very well may be that, given the paucity of evidence, we can get no nearer to the “truth” than LaRoche has.

RICHARD BLACKETT
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Cooper H. Wingert. *Harrisburg and the Civil War: Defending the Keystone of the Union* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2013). Pp. 11, 126, notes, bibliography, index, author biography. Paper \$19.99.

Reviewing a book written by a fourteen-year-old young person, which, according to the series editor, is his sixth published work, is a difficult task if for no other reason than it is difficult to imagine having had the fortitude at that age to sit down and research and write a book. So regardless of what the remainder of the review notes, the beginning should indicate that for a fourteen-year-old, Cooper H. Wingert has done a fine job of researching and writing this thin volume. Likely, it fortells a bright future for this energetic and careful researcher.

Harrisburg and the Civil War: Defending the Keystone of the Union is one of a series of books published by the History Press that document American cities during the political and military conflict of the 1860s. Other Pennsylvania-focused editions describe this period in Germantown, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia. Readers interested in the mid-nineteenth-century history of Pennsylvania's capital or local impacts of the US Civil War alike will find this volume of popular history helpful. The book is comprised of seven chapters. Chapter 1 sets the scene in Harrisburg in 1861, beginning with a brief review of the history of this city hard on the eastern bank of the Susquehanna River. Wingert very briefly describes the history of the city, focusing particularly on Harrisburg's importance as a railroad and transport hub. A map of Harrisburg's situation along the Susquehanna and the local region, including major rail lines, is included and provides a basic geographic context

for understanding local transport options as of 1860. There is also some brief description of the city's business and social structures and the citizens' reaction to the outbreak of hostilities with the South.

Chapters 2 and 3, composing about 40 percent of the text, describe the creation, physical structures, operations, and soldiers' life within Camp Curtin. (If one considers that the final one-third of chapter 1 also details the creation and early operation of Camp Curtin, this topic then accounts for almost 50 percent of the book's page count.) Initially a hastily constructed rendezvous point for early Union Civil War enlistees and later a site for "assembly and training," Camp Curtin, named after the state's sitting governor, had extensive operations of varying types over the course of the conflagration. Much space in these chapters is devoted to the men who became early commanding officials. In fact, the early parts of the book might be entitled "Men Who Managed Harrisburg's Civil War Camps," so thick are the biographical sketches. The four final chapters are each rather short, providing some insight into "Civilian-Soldier Interaction in Harrisburg," "The Politics of Civil War Harrisburg," "Harrisburg and the Gettysburg Campaign" and concludes with a few pages about the city after the war's ending.

Harrisburg and the Civil War is basically a book about Camp Curtin and the other "subsidiary" (p. 43) camps in and around the city, many in close proximity to Camp Curtin itself. While a preliminary descriptive history of the city is provided, it is somewhat thin. Wingert provides descriptions of some neighborhoods and business locations. However, with descriptions of streets and intersections so common in the text, a map of the city detailing the main thoroughfares, camps, and other locations mentioned would be very useful and would make the descriptions much more informative. Illustrations, engravings and photographs abound and provide a visual context for understanding Harrisburg in the 1860s. The sentences in the text are well written, although the flow of text from paragraph to paragraph and topic to topic is often abrupt as if the book was a collected listing of brief biographies or descriptions rather than a unified whole. The inclusion of odd details of a place or its history occasionally interrupt the flow of the story of Harrisburg from 1861 to 1865, yielding a rather uneven text. Description rather than analysis dominates.

At times the text makes overly bold statements, or has inappropriate or noncontextualized word usage, such as, "Harrisburg's unrelenting industrial and economic growth came to a screeching halt on Friday,

April 12, 1861" (p. 23). While daily business activity surely halted while thousands stopped to consider the consequences of the events at Fort Sumter, "economic growth," a long-term development, surely did not. Later (p. 49), a reference to a smallpox "pandemic" likely means, "at best," an epidemic and further (p. 88) the use of the phrase "exorbitant prices" is not placed in its wartime context and again shows a lack of analysis of standard social and economic changes in times of military conflict. Throughout the text, small word-use issues like these and lack of historical perspective periodically mar the writing and lessen its impact. Generally, such instances simply indicate some lack of larger context into which the comments might have been placed or a lack of critical approach to some sources. Wingert's documentary style is quite well developed. He has used manuscript sources from across Pennsylvania and the country. His footnotes are abundant and often highlight the strengths and weaknesses of his evidence. In many cases, rather than make claims well beyond what his evidence can support, Wingert indicates the extent to which some evidence can be believed and where potential biases of interpretation exist.

For what it is, a small work in the popular local history genre, *Harrisburg and the Civil War* is strong. Not a work of historical analysis, rather it is a descriptive work, providing elements of the story of one city in Pennsylvania that played a key role in this difficult period. Wingert is to be congratulated for this contribution to the literature and encouraged to continue to develop his skills as a historian.

TIMOTHY CUFF

Westminster College

Donna Merwick. *Stuyvesant Bound: An Essay on Loss across Time* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013). Pp. 219. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$59.95.

Through the centuries Peter Stuyvesant has been described in many ways. He is often portrayed as an uncompromising tyrant whose failures cost the Dutch their colonial American holdings. At the other end of the spectrum Washington Irving presents a congenial figure unable to adjust successfully to a changing world. In *Stuyvesant Bound* Donna Merwick describes

Stuyvesant as an experienced and savvy leader who for seventeen years capably performed his duties despite many difficult circumstances.

An Australian scholar who has built a distinguished career analyzing the Dutch experience in early America, Merwick portrays Stuyvesant as a company man whose military and political skills helped transform a settlement on the verge of ruin into a vibrant commercial outpost. Along the way Stuyvesant, while serving as New Netherland's director general, adroitly maneuvered through several specific constituencies that regularly challenged his administration. Perhaps Stuyvesant's most problematic test came from his fellow Dutchmen. The author describes the local population as a bit less rambunctious than she did in an earlier work, *Possessing Albany* (1990). Nevertheless it was a collection of avaricious entrepreneurs who periodically attempted to undermine their leader's authority. Employing conciliation and compromise Stuyvesant was able to maintain civility. When dealing with another regular hurdle, the local Native American population, his policy was one of deterrence, essentially attempting to segregate as much as possible his countrymen from their Native American neighbors. Confronted by steady British encroachment Stuyvesant effectively resorted to diplomacy and avoidance. Ironically, it was his employer, the Dutch West Indies Company, which ultimately sealed Stuyvesant's failure. Merwick convincingly argues that Stuyvesant expertly promoted the company's interests despite minimal support. Finally, in 1664, amidst an imminent British attack, his employers all but ignored Stuyvesant's pleas for assistance. Instead the Company formally accused him of negligence and initiating attacks that resulted in the transfer of New Netherland to the British.

At the heart of Merwick's work, as the subtitle announces, is a story of loss. The author proposes to use "the trope of loss as a way into evaluating Stuyvesant's career and that of New Netherland generally" (p. xii). She begins her evaluation near the end and a low point of Stuyvesant's journey. A bound captive of local Native Americans, humiliated and powerless in the eyes of his countrymen, he awaits his British conquerors. In explaining how Stuyvesant fell to such depths the author uses three themes—duty, belief and loss—to assess his leadership. What emerges is a picture of a conscientious but wary employee of the Dutch West Indies Company who "learned to identify himself as the States' and company's servant" (p. 7). In fulfilling the duties embodied by the company's oath, an oath he considered sacred, Stuyvesant used the authority that he believed came with his position.

The relationship between Stuyvesant's secular and spiritual administrative responsibilities is particularly interesting. The author narrates several episodes when Stuyvesant's church related duties collided with local spiritual conduct. The solution required Stuyvesant to find a satisfactory middle ground that at times was impossible. During his initial five years in New Netherland Stuyvesant's autocratic leadership proved successful but as conditions in New Netherland stabilized his methods became less productive. Ultimately it was his inability to evolve with circumstances he had helped to create that led to his loss. Stripped of his position and scorned by his countrymen Stuyvesant spent the last five years of his life as a humble farmer under British authority in New York.

In telling Stuyvesant's story Merwick adeptly combines extensive primary research material with the interpretative techniques of a cultural historian and a dash of her own creativity. Part of that journey included wading through the voluminous collection of documents (which Merwick describes as "flat, repetitious, perhaps boring-maybe like most papers fed to a committee"; p. 132) that Stuyvesant used to defend himself against company accusations. The result is a compelling description of Stuyvesant and his world. Going well beyond works like Russell Shorto's recent monograph, this is not a book for the casual reader. Instead, it is a weighty scholarly assessment of the circumstances that motivated Stuyvesant. Merwick presents her interpretation by employing a narrative style sprinkled with touches of her own imagination that periodically transforms the narrative into a conversation between the writer and the reader. It is a technique that will engage some readers more than others but one that effectively presents the author's conclusions.

Though this must be considered an outstanding example of scholarship a couple of additions might strengthen the work. The author acknowledges that understanding Stuyvesant and New Netherland requires a contextual understanding of the Atlantic world as a whole. However, Merwick falls a bit short of providing that context. For instance, there is scant discussion about British and Dutch relations. This includes minimal assessment of the ramifications in New Netherland of the Civil War, the Navigation Acts, or specifics about the steady British expansion in colonial America. Likewise, while Stuyvesant's interaction with local Native American populations plays a prominent part in Merwick's New Netherland, there is little analysis of the effect that the Native American relationship with the British and French had on Stuyvesant and New Netherland in general. Finally there is no mention of

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slavery and minimal discussion about how Dutch interests in the Caribbean affected Stuyvesant and New Netherland.

In final analysis, *Stuyvesant Bound* is an impeccably researched, detailed, and imaginative picture of Stuyvesant and his world. It certainly adds new dimensions to our understanding of Stuyvesant and New Netherland. As such it should be considered required reading for scholars exploring the Dutch experience in colonial America.

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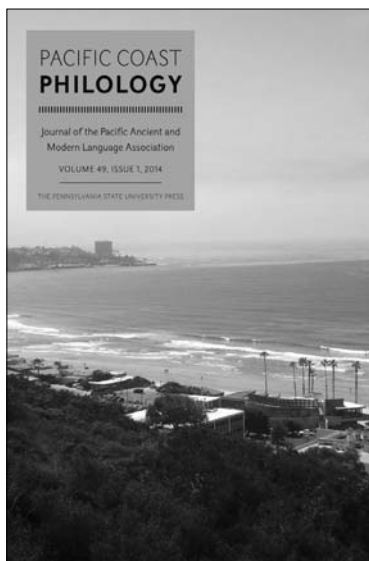
History (2005). He has also contributed articles in the *Newsletter of the Scotch Irish Society*, *Potomac Catholic Heritage*, *U.S. Catholic Historian*, and *Washington History* as well as book reviews in the academic journals *Catholic Library World* and *The Historian*, association publications such as the Churchill Centre's *Finest Hour* and the *Proceedings* of the U.S. Naval Institute, and the magazines *America's Civil War*, *Military History*, and *World War II*.

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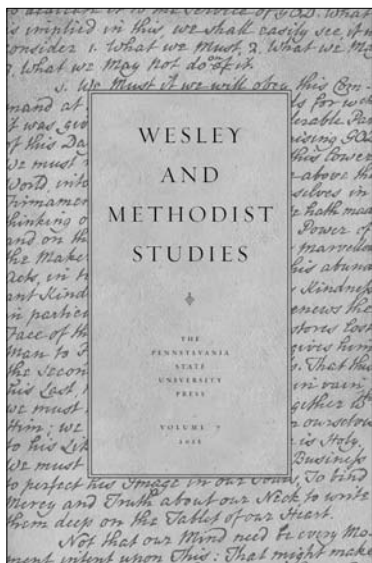
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