

CHILD LIFE IN COLONIAL WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA.

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(Continued from January issue)

With the dawn the mother and father arose to be about their chores. To the mother fell the monotonous task of milking. Before leaving the house, however, she made sure of the safety of her smaller children during her absence, by tying them in bed. (90) This prevented them from rising and playing with the fire or wandering from the house into places where they might be in danger from snakes and wild beasts, while she was away. (91) On her return she turned them loose that they might rise and dress for breakfast.

In the earliest days, before sheep, which furnished the wool for homespun, could be raised, (92) the clothing which these children donned, as well as that of their parents, was made of deer skin. (93) After sheep were introduced, there was a little more variety, though all the garments were still made at home. Sometimes, when deer skin or wool was scarce, the industrious housewife exercised her ingenuity in making cloth from buffalo wool or nettle bark. (94) These latter materials, though not quite so pleasing to the eye, were still very serviceable.

If the boy had proceeded to dress in the order in which boys do today, he would have first slipped into his underwear. As such garments are never mentioned by the early writers, they were, in all probability, unknown or at least considered as unnecessary. His shirt was usually of deer skin (95) though those of tow-cloth (96) or linsey-woolsey (97) were not uncommon. Generally

90 McKnight, C., *op. cit.*, p. 200.

91 *Ibid.*

92 Before sheep be raised the number of wolves and other wild beasts, which preyed upon them, had to be nearly exterminated or driven farther from the settlements.

93 Tryon, *op. cit.*, p. 158, who quotes it from Hildreth, S. P., *Pioneer History*, p. 392; see also "Moravian Diaries of Travel Through Va." *Va. Ma. of Hist. and Biog.*, XI, 117.

94 McKnight, C., *op. cit.*, p. 200.

95 *Ibid.*, p. 652.

96 *Ibid.*, p. 200.

97 *Ibid.*, p. 199.

his pantaloons were made of buckskin, (98) at least before wool could be procured for the homespun, (99) which was later used. At a still later date corduroy pants and overalls were common. In any case the trousers were supported by leather or woollen "gallowses." (100) Rarely did the boy wear stockings, (101) but those which he had were likewise a home product. (102) For shoes he wore moccasins made after the Indian fashion, (103) but, if he had lived near Pittsburgh in 1789, he might have persuaded his parents to have bought him some "store" shoes. (104) If he had had occasion to use his hat before breakfast, he would have put on, in the summer time, one made of chip or oat straw; in the winter time, one made of skins, usually the epic "coon-skin". (105) A hat of finer texture could have been secured in Pittsburgh (106) but most lads were not so fortunate as to live near the "city". However, having groomed himself in all but his hat, our lad was ready for breakfast, and we doubt if he wasted much time in his ablutions, if he was anything like the modern youngster.

His sister's toilette being a little more elaborate than as always, took a longer time, perhaps. If the woollen cloth had not been sufficient for the garments of both her and her brother, it can be imagined that she was given the woolens, since she had helped to spin and weave that material. (107) Linen, too, made from either flax or nettle bark, was quite common, and sometimes the linen and wool were woven together to make the popular cloth known as linsey-woolsey. (108) As in the case of the

98 Tryon, *op. cit.*, p. 158 (see note 93); also McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 153.

99 Van Voorhis, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

100 McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 153.

101 Parkinson, *Tour in America*, p. 593. This author is writing of the country near Baltimore, Md., in 1800, but if shoes and stockings were "rare" there at that time they must have been even more rare on the frontier.

102 Van Voorhis, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

103 McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 153; also McKnight, C., *op. cit.*, p. 200.

104 "Children's shoes" and "children's hats, fine and course", were advertised for sale by Elliot, Williams and Co., in the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, Jan. 17, 1789.

105 McKnight, C., *op. cit.*, p. 153.

106 See note 104.

107 McKnight, C., *op. cit.*, p. 652

108 McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 154; also McKnight, C., *op. cit.*, p. 199; also Doddridge, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

brother, if the girl clothed herself in underwear it has not been mentioned. Her dress "consisted of little more, in common, than a simple bodice and petticoat" or, as they were called, linsey coats and bed gowns. She knew little or nothing of ruffles, curls, combs, rings and other jewels. (109) Her stockings, when she wore any, like her brother's were homemade. (110) Generally both she and her mother "went barefoot in summer, and in the winter covered their feet with moccasins, calf-skin shoes, buffalo overshoes and shoe-packs." (111) If she were so fortunate as to have "store" shoes, she was very careful of them, and even when going to church would carry them until nearly there and then step into the bushes to put them on. (112) Her hat which hung on a peg in the wall was simply an ordinary sunbonnet or, if she were more favored, a bonnet of beaver or "gimp leghorn." (113) German parents usually dressed their girls "plainly but decently", (114) but one traveller, writing of the girls in one family, says: "I notice their shifts being made exactly like shirts, except the collar, they button at the top." (115) It is evident, therefore, that as far as materials and stuffs from which to make her dresses, were concerned, our frontier lass was extremely limited. However, if she could have reached Pittsburgh in 1786, she might have chosen from a list that included chinzes, cotton denim, fine Irish linens, cambrics, lawns, muslins, gauzes, and flannels. (116) Some girls did have this opportunity, and one old frontier father, who had to pay the bills for two of his daughters' wedding apparel, sadly laments the high cost of living in an article to the *Pittsburgh Gazette* on November 18 of that year. But most girls, like the young lady under discussion, had no such opportunity. In fact, this little miss had no time

109 Weld, *Travels Through the States of N. A. and the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada*. (4th edition), p. 152; also McKnight, C., *op. cit.*, p. 201.

110 Van Voorhis, *op. cit.*, p. 52

111 McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 154.

112 *Ibid.*

113 *Ibid.*; also McKnight, C., *op. cit.*, p. 201.

114 *Autobiography of an Irish Traveller*, I, 141.

115 "Extracts from the Diary of Abijah Hill", *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XIV, 192.

116 *Pittsburgh Gazette*, Sept. 2, 1786.

to bewail her lot as she clothed herself in her modest garments, if she were to reach the breakfast table before her brother had made away with her share.

The breakfast to which the children sat down was very meagre according to our standards. In the earliest days if their parents had been fortunate enough to have secured or raised a sufficient quantity of corn and a few hogs, they were regaled with the usual "hog and hominy", with pone or Johnny cake for bread. (117) If these provisions were lacking, they sometimes had no breakfast at all until the father or older brother had procured it from the woods. (118) In fact, before hogs were raised they had to depend almost entirely upon wild game for their meat. (119) And it was no uncommon thing for some of the families to live several months without a mouthful of bread of any sort. (120) At a later period, when cows could be kept, the mother might prepare for them a breakfast of a little milk boiled with meal or hominy, (121) and, if buckwheat were obtainable, some buckwheat cakes. (122) For years, coffee, as a drink for any meal, was unknown (123) so they necessarily had to have recourse to the more healthful drinks of milk and water. (124) By 1800, though, both tea and coffee had come into quite common use. (125) A rugged breakfast it was indeed, but altogether fitting for such rugged youngsters.

While speaking of their diet, it will be well to inspect their menus for dinner (they had no luncheon then!)

117 Doddridge, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

118 *Ibid.*, p. 98.

119 Boucher, editor, *A Century and a Half of Pittsburgh and Her People*, I, 261.

120 Doddridge, *op. cit.*, p. 98; also "Moravian Diaries of Travel Through Va.", *Va. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XI, pp. 123ff.

121 Wilkeson, *op. cit.*, p. 158; also *Pittsburgh Gazette*, Nov. 18, 1786.

122 McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, pp. 155, 158.

123 Warner, publisher, *Hist. of Allegheny Co., Pa.*, I, 131.

124 May, *Journal and Letters of Col. John May*, p. 145. Col. May, visiting at Squire Zane's, in Wheeling, in 1789, complains: "Have been here a month, and have never seen anything to drink on the table but cold water; . . . Once in a while Bohea tea for breakfast, . . ."

125 "Extracts from the Diary of Abijah Hill", *Paa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XIV, 191. Mr. Hill records: "My breakfast was this morning two cups of coffee without sugar, and three

and supper. Our foremost authority, Mr. Doddridge, states that in the earliest days the breakfast and dinner menus were the same. (126) We may infer, however, that their bacon was varied at this meal by venison, bear meat, wild turkey, or other game from the forest. (127) The "standard dish" at supper, for both children and adults, was milk and mush, though if milk were scarce, recourse was had once more to hominy. (128) The mush was eaten with sweetened water, molasses, bear's oil, or gravy. (129). Such were the common delicacies with which the frontier children satisfied their hunger.

But, we must not think that the above menus were exhaustive or unchangeable. If the homes were near the river, fish were a pleasing change. (130). If the foxes were not too voracious, chickens and eggs could be had. (131) Salted meats were provided for times when fresh meat was not procurable. (132) In the summer time fresh vegetables such as potatoes, (133) pumpkins and squashes, (134) roasting ears, (135) tur-

eggs; bread baked hard, and crust wet." (This was in a German home). Also Michaux, *op. cit.*, p. 163. writing in 1802, says, "the greater part of them drink tea and coffee daily". Also a contributor to the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, Nov. 18, 1786, writes, "my time of breakfast, which used to take ten minutes in eating milk, or pottage made of it, now takes my whole family an hour at tea and coffee."

126 *Op. cit.*, p. 88.

127 *Ibid.*, p. 82; see also "Moravian Diaries of Travels Through Va.", *Va. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XI, 122; also Jardane, *op. cit.*, p. 12. Mr. Jardine, writing in 1795, says: "Eating, as in every part of Pennsylvania, is pretty good; excellent venison often presenting itself three times a day".

128 Doddridge, *op. cit.*, p. 88; also McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 155; also May, *op. cit.*, p. 145; Col. May, at Squire Zane's in Wheeling, in 1789, complains: "always bread and milk for supper".

129 Doddridge, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

130 *Ibid.*, p. 82; also *Autobiography of an Irish Traveller*, I, 223; also McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 158.

131 *Autobiography of an Irish Traveller*, I, 154; also "Extracts from the Diary of Abijah Hill", *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XIV, 191, 193.

132 Michaux, *op. cit.*, p. 150; also Weld, *op. cit.*, p. 173; also Loskiel, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

133 *Autobiography of an Irish Traveller*, I, 154, 233.

134 Doddridge, *op. cit.*, p. 82; also Baily, *op. cit.*, p. 151; also May, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

135 Doddridge, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

nips, (136), beans, (137) carrots, (138) lettuce, (139) cabbage, (140) and onions (141) were to be had. Sometimes special dishes were prepared by the mothers to tickle the palates of her progeny. Sweet milk or butter-milk might be boiled and thickened to make a kind of pudding; (142) delicious doughnuts might be fried; (143) and, on rare occasions, they might be feasted upon a baked potpie. (144) German children were permitted to eat only sparingly of "boiled animal food" but made up for such privation by consuming "large quantites of vegetables", particularly salads. (145) They were also partial to cheese (146) and sausage, (147) but their most delectable delicacy, then as now, was "sourcrout." (148)

136 Weld, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

137 May, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

138 *Autobiography of an Irish Traveller*, I, 233.

139 "Extracts from the Diary of Abijah Hill", *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XIV, 193.

140 Baily, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

141 McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 153.

142 *Ibid.*

143 *Ibid.*

144 *Ibid.*; also Doddridge, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

145 Rush, *op. cit.*, p. 20; also "Extracts from Diary of Abijah Hill", *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XIV, 192. Hill writes of a German meal: "Salad with milk, oil, vinegar, bonny clabber and bread; Good God! how can they work so hard on such food!"

146 "Moravian Diaries of Travels Through Va.", *Va. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XI, 122; also *Autobiography of an Irish Traveller*, I, 141.

147 Loskiel, *op. cit.*, p. 23. Loskiel versifies:

"With mine host Sewitz, where we dined,

Our meal was scant, the same in kind

As almost daily was our lot;

'Twas sausage, tongue and ham we got."

148 Rush, *op. cit.*, p. 20. See also Baily, *op. cit.*, p. 136. Here Mr. Baily gives an account of a German meal, which, while it must not be taken as portraying a general condition, is worth repeating. The account is partly abbreviated as follows: "First of all, some sour milk was warmed up and placed on the table." Then the whole family consisting of seven or eight, partook of it, all sitting around one large bowl, and dipping spoons in one after another. After this stewed pork was served with hot pickled cabbage called "warm slaw". "This was devoured in the same hoggish manner, every one trying to help himself first, and two or three eating off the same plate, and all in the midst of filth and dirt. After this was removed, a large bowl of cold milk and bread was put on the table, which we partook of in the same manner as the first dish, and in the same order. The spoons were immediately taken out of the greasy pork dish, and

It is evident, therefore, that the pioneer children, usually had wholesome food of a sufficient variety. Thus, Mr. Doddridge, who lived and thrived, as a boy and man, upon such fare, asserts that most of the settlers were provided with "the richest milk, the finest butter and best meat that ever delighted man's palate", and that these foods "were eaten with a relish which only health and labor could command." (149)

A part of this food the children themselves helped to provide. Then, even more than now, fishing was a favorite pastime of the boys. And, if the records may be believed, their efforts were usually well rewarded, for the rivers of Western Pennsylvania abounded in pike, bass, catfish, suckers, sunfish, horn-chubs, mountain trout, perch, buffalo, sturgeon, and the slippery eel. (150) The smaller boys sometimes contented themselves by fishing with pinhooks for minnows, (151) but as soon as they were old enough to handle a pole of any size they vied with their older brothers and fathers in catching the larger fish. And there were *large* fish in these rivers in those days! Perch weighing five and one-half pounds (152) and sturgeon four and one-half feet long (153) were not uncommon, while in the Ohio, particularly, catfish were frequently caught weighing from forty to seventy pounds. (154) The excitement can be imagined when the small boy hooked one of these larger fish.

The children also assisted in the gathering of the wild fruits and nuts of which there were a great variety. In summer, strawberries, service berries, gooseberries, whortleberries, blackberries, raspberries and May apples

(having been just cleaned by passing through the *mouth*) were put into the milk; and that with all the *sang froid* necessarily attending such habitual nastiness. Our table, which was none of the cleanest (for as to cloth, they had none in the house), was placed in the middle of the filth and rubbish of the house; and a fine large fire, blazing at one end, served us instead of a candle."

149 Quoted in McKnight, C., *op. cit.*, p. 200.

150 McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 158; also May, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

151 McKnight, C., *op. cit.*, p. 731.

152 May, *op. cit.*, p. 36. Probably Col. May was referring to the wall-eyed pike, sometimes called perch in those days, for the actual perch is not known to have ever been seen that large.

153 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

154 *Autobiography of an Irish Traveller*, I, 232; also May, *op.*

(155) could be gathered from the clearings and forest near their home. In the late summer and fall wild fruits such as crab apples, black haws, cherries, plums, and grapes could be had. (156) And, for those who liked them, pawpaws might be gathered after the first frost. (157) At the same time nuts of many kinds such as hickory nuts, walnuts, hazel nuts, and chestnuts (158) were to be had in abundance. Hickory nuts must have grown to enormous size in those days, for one traveller records that he had found them "as big as pullet's eggs". (159) When the season came for the gathering of these products of the forest, the children assembled in large companies, when possible, and were escorted to the timber by a guard (160) who protected them from the dangers that lurked there. And well he should, for the deadly copper-head rattle snakes were very numerous (161) as were also bears, (162), wolves, panthers and "tiger cats", (163) especially in the earliest days; but most to be feared was their constant enemy, the Indian. When such dangers were imminent, it is doubtful if the feeling of dread was entirely dispelled from the minds of the children by the pleasures of their frolic.

However, the occupations of our pioneer children were not always so pleasant as fishing nor so frolicsome as the gathering of fruits and nuts. The boys were needed to help their fathers in the work of the farm and the girls to assist their mothers in the household duties. The German parents were especially careful to train their offspring in these respects, the first lessons they taught them being "*to fear God and to love work*." (164) Mr. Bailly noticed that the children of certain Irish families were reared in a similar manner, for he notes, in speaking of

cit., p. 88.

155 Doddridge, *op. cit.*, p. 71; May, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

156 Doddridge, *op. cit.*, pp. 71ff.

157 May, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

158 Doddridge, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

159 May, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

160 Doddridge, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

161 *Ibid.*, p. 65.

162 Ashe, *op. cit.*, p. 20; also Doddridge, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

163 Ashe, *op. cit.*, pp. 16f; also Doddridge, *op. cit.*, pp. 57ff.

164 Rush, *op. cit.*, p. 29. Dr. Rush also states; "The Germans take great pains to produce, in their children, not only habits of labor, but a love of it."

one particular family, that "their children are all brought up in industry, and have their time fully employed in performing the different necessary duties of the house and farm". (165) But, in general, all parents were equally conscientious in this respect, if records of the duties to be performed by their children are to be relied upon.

The boys' labor varied with the seasons. The most adventurous and therefore most appealing task or pleasure (as the boys regarded it) of the year, was the trip made in the late fall or winter to procure salt for the coming year, for salt was scarce in Western Pennsylvania, or in the state of Kentucky. (166) One man and some boys were chosen from each neighborhood to take charge of the horses, which were ridden to the depots but laden with sacks of salt on their return. (167) Consequently the boys had to make the entire return journey on foot, but in spite of this and the many other fatigues and hazards of the trip, all the boys who were old enough competed with each other to be selected for these distant excursions. (168) On their return they were veritable young heroes and were ever anxious to recite the story of their thrilling adventures to their awed companions. (169)

The remainder of the winter, as in all rural communities even at the present day, was a period of comparative idleness for the men and boys, except for the hunting, trapping, and procuring of wood for the huge fireplace. However, after supper was eaten and the cattle fed, the older boys often passed the long evenings sitting around the fire making axe handles and scrubbing brooms. (170)

But with early spring, when the first thaws had come their labors began in earnest. Then was the time to obtain their year's supply of sugar, and, when the hard maple trees were tapped, there was work for every member of the family. (171) While the older people were doing the laborious part of the work, the children were

165 Baily, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

166 McKnight, C., *op. cit.*, p. 652; also Boucher, *op. cit.*, I, 266.

167 McKnight, C., *op. cit.*, p. 652.

168 *Ibid.*

169 Boucher, *op. cit.*, I, 266.

170 Warner, publisher, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

171 Baily, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

engaged in graining the sugar and watching the kettle. (172) For the older boys and girls the nights were perhaps the merriest time, as it was then their duty to keep the fires going and the water boiling after their parents had gone home. (173) Sometimes enterprising farmers made a business of making sugar at this season, and employed boys as well as men to help in the work. (174) Later in the spring, when the frost was out of the ground the plowing began, and in this, too, the older boys were called upon to do their share. (175) When the ground had been tilled, they spent many a long day "dropping" corn and sowing the other grains, which later, while growing, had to be hoed and weeded.

When summer came with its bright sunshine and hot days, the harvesting began. In haying time the stronger boys took their places in the rear of the ranks of the mowers, (176) their scythes being hung well "in", so as to cut a narrower swath than those of the huskier men ahead. (177) If it was their first season at such work they were often cautioned "to stand and point out evenly, so as not to leave 'hog-troughs' on the meadow when the hay was raked up." (178) The younger boys sometimes helped by piling the swaths into haycocks. During the cutting of the grain the larger boys were given a sickle, instead of a scythe, and initiated into the mysteries of this kind of work. (179) Or if their services were not needed in this operation, they were assigned the duty of binding the grain, which the others had cut, into convenient sheaves. (180) After the grain was thoroughly dried, it was usually threshed with flails, (181) but sometimes it was tramped out on the barn floor by horses ridden by small boys. This method can best be

172 *Ibid.*

173 Boucher, *op. cit.*, I, 260.

174 Lincklaen, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

175 Parkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 387. Though this reference refers to people near Baltimore, it is not too much to infer that boys on the frontier also were required to help in the plowing.

176 McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 153.

177 *Ibid.* For boys' part in haying see also article in the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, Dec. 16, 1786; also Owens, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

178 McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 153.

179 *Ibid.*, p. 152; also *Pittsburgh Gazette*, Dec. 16, 1786.

180 Owens, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

181 McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 152.

described in the words of one who had no doubt, threshed many a bushel in such a manner, if one may judge from his description. He writes:

"The tramping was done by horses and by farmers who had good or extra barn floors. The sheaves were laid in a circle, a man stood in the middle of the circle to turn up and over the straw as needed, and then, with a boy to ride one horse and lead another, the 'tramping' in the circuit commenced. This was hard work for the boy; it made him tired and sore *where* he sat down. To prevent dizziness, the travel on the circuit was frequently reversed. One man, a boy, and two horses could tramp out in this way in a day about fifteen bushels of oats" (182).

Slight wonder, therefore, that the lads looked forward to the time when, all the crops being harvested and stored, they might prepare for the annual "salt trip" and its thrilling experiences.

As a general thing the girls' labor consisted in helping their mothers with the housework. There were the usual duties of cooking, baking, washing, ironing, scrubbing, and churning, in which the girls soon learned to help. But, since the women folk in those days had to supply the whole household with cloth for their garments the little ladies were early taught the arts of spinning, weaving, and knitting. (183) In winter they spun the flax; in the spring the wool; from the warp and weft of which they wove linen, linsey and woolen cloths (184) or knitted warm stockings. (185) Frequently the girls and women made merry at these tasks, by gathering, with their spinning wheels and looms, in the spacious rooms of the block houses, where they cheered each other with song and sprightly conversation. (186)

Their labors were not all within the house, however. They soon learned to assist their mothers in milking, (187), a duty which the frontier women always performed. In the sugar-making season they had their share of

182 *Ibid.*

183 *Ibid.*, p. 201; also Rush, *op. cit.*, p. 25; also Parkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 388.

184 Note by I. D. Rupp in Rush, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

185 Parkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 388.

186 Quoted from S. P. Hildreth, *Pioneer History*, p. 392, in Tryon *op. cit.*, p. 158.

187 Parkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 388; also Rush, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

the duties, as has already been noted. (188) During spring and summer the garden was their especial care. (189) This it was their task to cultivate and keep in order. (190) And sometimes, when the harvesting season was on, and the men were pressed for help or time, the women and girls forsook their household affairs to aid their husbands and brothers in binding the sheaves of grain or piling the hay in cocks. (191) Right heartily were they welcomed by the men and boys who well knew that with them came a "piece", or lunch, of which pie would constitute the major part. (192)

From the foregoing discussion, one can easily understand how it was possible for F. A. Michaux, traversing the territory in 1802, to record:

"In this part of Pennsylvania every individual is content with cultivating a sufficiency for himself and family; and according as that is more or less numerous the parts so cleared are more or less extensive; whence it follows, that the larger a family a man has capable of assisting him, the greater independence he enjoys; this is one of the principal causes of the rapid progress that population makes in the United States." (193).

Consequently, we can see that the importance of children as a labor supply was well recognized in those times.

But we must not gather the idea that parents made their children spend all their time at work, for the young people of that time had their games and amusements, even as now, though they were not so varied as those of the present day. Little is known concerning their holiday festivities, but Reverend David McClure, who visited this region in the winter of 1773, writes: "Christmas and New Year Holidays are seasons of wild mirth and disorder here." (194) This spirit was no doubt commun-

188 See page 113.

189 Rush, *op. cit.*, p. 25; also Parkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 388.

190 Mr. I. D. Rupp in a note, in Rush, *op. cit.*, p. 25, says (writing in 1875): "Not more than seventy years ago, the good housewife aided by her daughters, would cultivate the garden dress and keep it in order, decorate the cottage with choice honeysuckles, and direct the tendrils of the native grape, that shaded the house."

191 *Pittsburgh Gazette*, Dec. 16, 1786.

192 Owens, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

193. *Op. cit.*, p. 142.

194 Quoted in Hanna, *op. cit.*, II, 83.

icated to the children, for young Brackenridge tells us:

"The most prominent incident which fixed itself in my memory was the barring out of the schoolmaster at Christmas, in order to bring him to terms on the subject of the holiday. He made many and fearful attempts to take the castle by assault, but without success, and at last essayed to come down the wooden chimney of the log cabin, but the fire below, showers of hot ashes, and pointed firebrands soon caused him to reascend. He finally yielded to the demand of two weeks, doubtless much against his will." (195)

Evidently this was a common occurrence at the Christmas season and furnished much amusement for the children, large and small.

Other winter sports in which both children and adults participated were sleighing, skating and coasting. One traveller, visiting Pittsburgh in 1806, writes:

"In winter, *caroling* or *sleighing* predominates; the snow no sooner falls, than pleasure, bustle, and confusion. banish business, speculation, and strife; nothing is seen but mirth, and nothing is heard but harmony." (196).

But the children of Pittsburgh were not the only ones to enjoy such pleasures for in nearly every farmyard could be seen sleighs or sledges. (197) "Sliding and skating", moreover, were enjoyed to such an extent, and prevailed "so universally on Sundays", that a very pious subscriber to the *Pittsburgh Gazette* (198) saw fit to remonstrate against such pastimes being permitted on the day supposed to be set aside for worship. There is no record to show that his protest was heeded, so we may suppose that the sports continued unabated. As soon as the settlements were sufficiently large to warrant it, plays or entertainments were sometimes given by the young people. At Washington, Pennsylvania, on January 3, 1797, the young people presented the comedy called "Trick upon Trick or the Vintner in the Suds". An admission fee of twenty-five cents was charged, which was to be given to the academy at that place. (199)

With the vanishing of the snow and ice and the com-

195 *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

196 Ashe, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

197 Weld, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

198 Aug. 16, 1788.

199 Crumrine, editor, *History of Washington Co., Pa.*, p. 529.

ing of spring, the above mentioned amusements could no longer be enjoyed. Now came the sugar-making season with its attendant fun and merriment. (200) Marbles, too, the customary game of spring, was played by the youngsters, (201) some of whom, slyly gambled with them. (202) Hustle-cap, (203) also a game of chance and skill, something like our game of pitch-and-toss, was played at this season. At Easter time some of the young people boiled eggs in logwood, which dyed the shell crimson, and then scratched figures thereon. (204) The young men and women used these as love tokens, but the younger children struck them against each other and that which broke became the property of him whose egg remained whole. (205) However, summer was soon upon them and the amusements of spring gave place to those more fitting for the warmer weather.

Then, as ever in rural communities, running, jumping, wrestling, (206) swimming, (207) and other games calling for physical exertion, were the most popular. With the younger boys, the passion for imitating Indians was as common then as now. Thus, we learn that they practised throwing the tomahawk and using the bow and arrow. Some became quite skillful in the latter art and could frequently succeed in bringing down a bird or a squirrel. In imitating the calls of birds and beasts, also a favorite pastime with the boys, they were often so clever as to be able to lure within range of their weapons the wild game of the forest. (209). In the evening, the youngsters, tired by their play, were content to sit and listen to their mother (if they were fortunate enough to

200 See page 115.

201 Brackenridge, *op. cit.*, p. 10; also Graydon, *Memoirs of His Own Time*, pp. 29, 55.

202 Graydon, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

203 Brackenridge, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

204 Anburey, *Travels Through the Interior Parts of America*, II, 500.

205 *Ibid.* Mr. Anburey observed this custom in Maryland in 1781, but since many of the settlers in Western Paa. came from that state, it is safe to conclude that the cusom was brought with them.

206. Doddridge, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

207 *Pittsburgh Gazette*, Aug. 16, 1788.

208 Doddridge *op. cit.*, pp. 122f.

209 *Ibid.*

have such a learned one) tell them stories of knight-errantry or of Jack and the Giant, (210) before she tucked them into bed and sang them to sleep with the song about "Old Grimes". (211) For the older boys and girls dances were sometimes arranged. These were of the simplest kind, such as three and four-handed reels and jigs, for the contra dance, cotillions and minuets were unknown in the earliest days. (212) Concerning these dances, Mr. Baily, who, on his tour in 1796, danced with the daughters of a farmer who lived about thirteen miles from Pittsburgh, says they were "not much in the style of Bath and Paris, but sufficiently pleasing to drive away the gloom inspired by the surrounding wilderness, and to banish all idea of separation from civilized society." (213) A couple of years later these young ladies might have learned the then modern dances, if they could have taken lessons from B. Holdich in Pittsburgh, who advertised himself as being able to teach the "Minuet Cotillion, the Court or England Cotillion (composed by Francis), the Scotch Minuet, the Plain Minuet", "the Minuet de la Cour", "the most fashionable Country Dances, and the City Cotillion, as taught by Sicard and Quesnet in Philadelphia, New York, and Baltimore". (214)

Doubtless many of these summer pastimes were indulged in long after the autumn had come, but certain frolics belong to the late summer and autumn alone. When it came time to harvest the flax, which was done by pulling it out by the roots and leaving it to rot on the ground, a "pulling frolic" was announced, (215) and the young people gathered to perform this sugar-coated labor. (216) Surely it must have been an effective way to get the work done quickly and the young people unquestionably had their fun. The Germans followed a

210 *Ibid.*, p. 124.

211 McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 174. Mr. McKnight says that this song, written by Albert G. Greene, was sung in every pioneer family. It had many verses which he records, the first of which begins: "Old Grimes is dead, that good old man,
We ne'er shall see him more;
He used to wear a long black coat
All buttoned down before," etc.

212 Doddridge, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

213 *Op. cit.*, p. 151.

214 *Pittsburgh Gazette*, June 30, 1798.

215 McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 154.

216 *Ibid.*

similar method when the time came for the making of apple butter, which was their favorite "spread". Mr. Owens describes such a party in the following manner:

"The labor-saving apple-parer had not yet been invented, and boys and girls vied with each other in speed and neatness of paring and quartering the apples. These were occasions of great merriment, story-telling, jesting and coquettish repartee inspired the labor of the evening, and activity of tongue was only equalled by nimbleness of finger. When the apples had been prepared, refreshments were served, usually consisting of pies, cakes, cider, and other things so delectable to the German palate; after which the festivities of the evening would close with a good old-time 'jig.'" (217).

It was necessary that such tasks as these should be done, and, since the time that could be devoted entirely to pleasure was limited, the pioneers were wise in making these necessary tasks as pleasant and as full of fun as possible.

Certain games, that could be played at parties, were quite common the year around. These parties were not possible, of course in the earliest day, but as the country was settled and more children were brought closer together, such social gatherings of the young were more frequent. They were generally "called kissing parties because in all the plays, either as a penalty or as part of the play, all the girls who joined in the amusement had to be kissed by some one of the boys." (218) The coquettish objections of the girls to this part of the play were the sources of amusement, of course. Nearly all of these plays were musical and vocal. (219) A description of them can best be given in the words of Mr. W. J. McKnight, who, no doubt, had been a participant in many of them as a boy.

A popular play was for all the persons present to join hands and form a ring, with a dude of that time, in shirt of check and bear-greased hair, in the centre. Then they circled round and round the center person, singing—

"King William was King James's son,
And of that royal race he sprung;
He wore a star upon his breast,
To show that he was royal best,

217 *Op. cit.*, p. 116.

218 McKnight, W. J., *op. cit.*, p. 162.

219 *Ibid.*, p. 163.

Go choose your east, go choose your west,
Go choose the one that you like best,
If he's not here to take your part,
Go choose another with all your heart."

The gentleman in the centre then chose a lady from the circle, and she stepped into the ring with him. Then the circling was resumed, and all sang to the parties inside,—

"Down on the carpet you must kneel,
Just as the grass grows in the field;
Salute your bride with kisses sweet,
And then rise up upon your feet."

The play went on in this manner until all the girls present had been kissed.

Another popular play was to form a ring. A young lady would step into the circle, and all parties would join hands and sing,—

"There's a lily in the garden
For you, young man;
There's a lily in the garden,
Go pluck it if you can," etc.

The lady then selects a boy from the circle, who walks into the ring with her. He then kisses her and she goes out, when all the rest sing,—

"There he stands, that great big booby,
Who he is I do not know;
Who will take him for his beauty?
Let her answer, yes or no."

This play goes on in this way until all the girls have been kissed.

Another favorite play was:

"Oats, peas, beans, and barley grows;
None so well as the farmer knows
How oats, peas, beans, and barley grows;
Thus the farmer sows his seed,
Thus he stands to take his ease;
He stamps his foot and claps his hands,
And turns around to view his lands," etc.

A live play was called "hurly-burly". Two went round and gave each one, secretly, something to do. This girl was to pull a young man's hair, another to tweak an ear or nose, or trip some one, etc. When all had been told what to do, the master of the ceremonies cried out, "Hurly-burly". Everyone sprang up and hastened to do as instructed. This created a mixed scene of a ludicrous character, and was most properly named "hurly-burly".

Another great favorite was:

"Oh, sister Phoebe, how merry were we
The night we sat under the juniper-tree,

The juniper-tree, I, oh.

Take this hat on your head, keep your head warm
And take a sweet kiss, it will do you no harm,
But a great deal of good, I know," etc.

Another was:

"If I had as many lives
As Solomon had wives,
I'd be as old as Adam;
So rise to your feet
And kiss the first you meet,
Your humble servant, madam."

Another was:

"It's raining, it's hailing, it's cold, stormy weather;
In comes the farmer drinking of his cider.
He's going a-reaping, he wants a binder,
I've lost my true love, where shall I find her." (220).

One is reminded as he reads how these games were played, of certain games, as "The Farmer in the Dell", now played by rural children in certain regions of the country, and wonder if the latter are not descendant from the former.

Without doubt these boys and girls often quarrelled at their play, and, like all children, sometimes disobeyed their parents. For such misbehavior the punishments were probably as varied as they are now, but one thing is certain, the parents of that day did not believe in sparing the rod and spoiling the child. A writer in the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, March 10, 1787, makes the statement that "infants and boys are chastised by the hand of the parent and master", and Loskiel, who travelled through this region in the early days, and put down his observations in verse, writes of one occasion:

"A child that just had 'walloped' been,
Screamed lustily, as all, I ween,
Are wont to do when smart the blows
The parents' rod on them bestows." (221).

That such punishment was the common method of disciplining the school children is attested in many places. (222) The universal use of this mode of chastising the young is proof that it was effective, temporarily at least.
(To be continued)

220 *Ibid*, pp. 163ff.

221 *Op. cit.*, p. 24.

222 *Pittsburgh Gazette*, Nov. 24, 1798; also Lambing, *Allegheny Co., Its Early History and Subsequent Development*, p. 82;