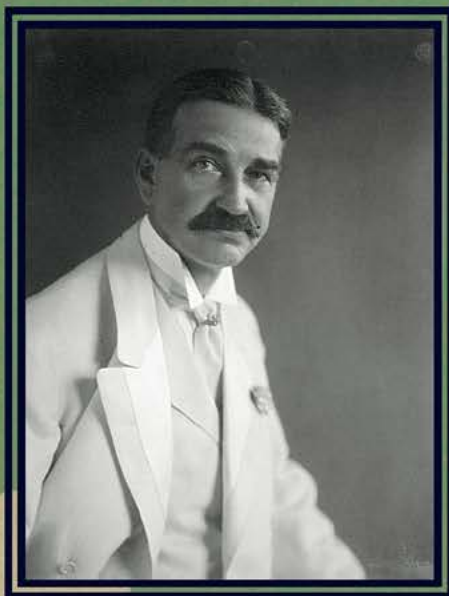


OZ in the Oilfields?

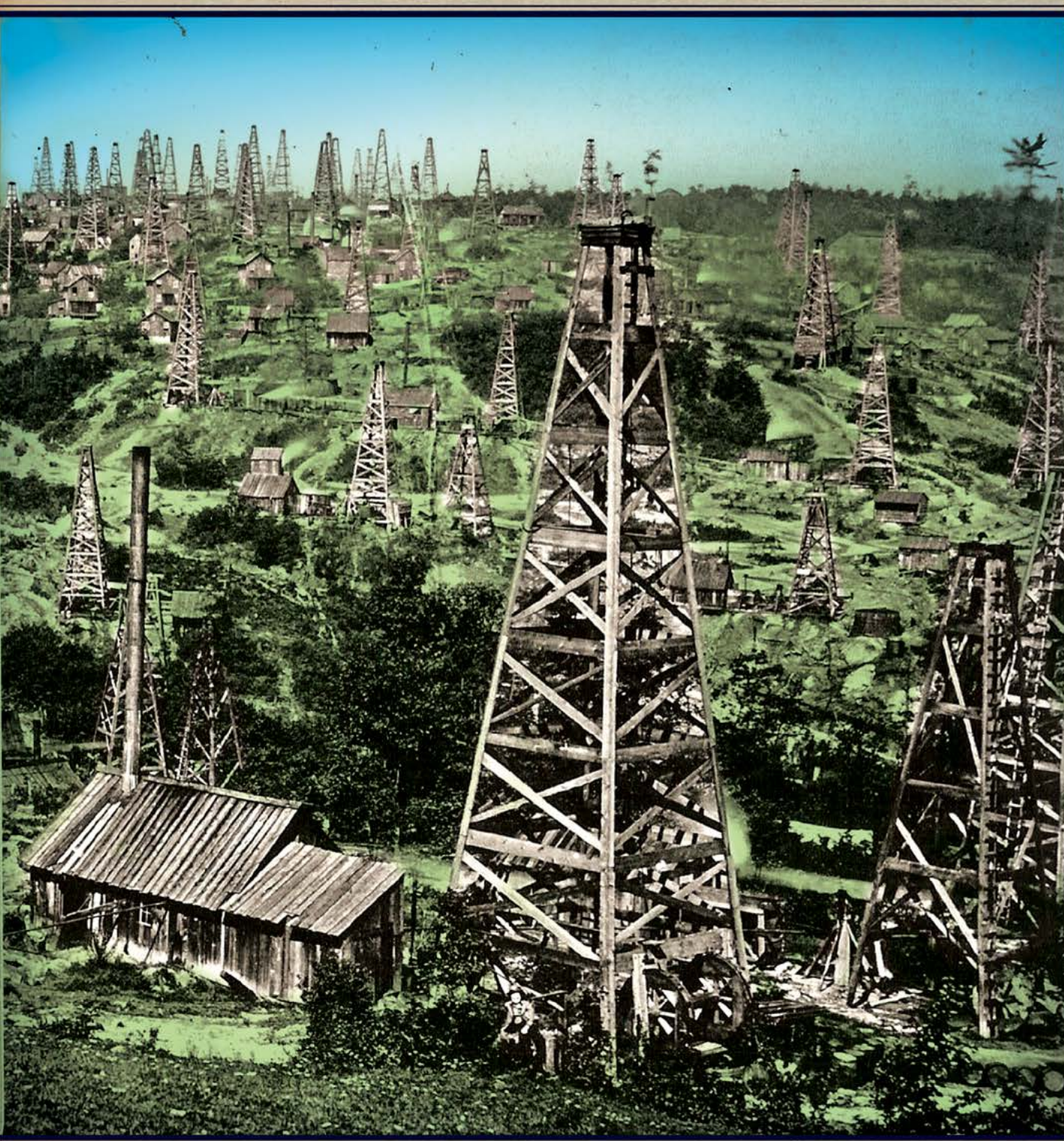


Searching for L. Frank Baum in Bradford

By Tim Ziaukas

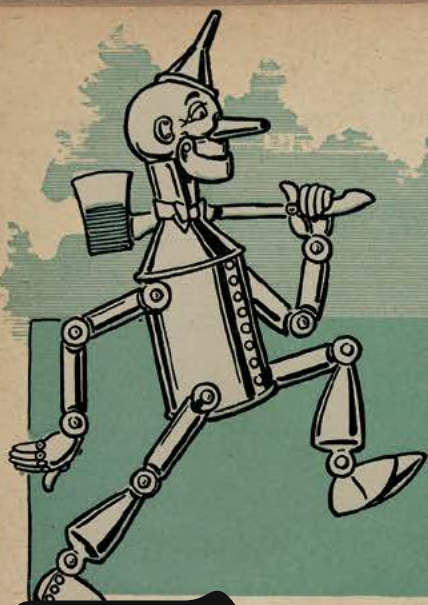
L. Frank Baum, c. 1908.

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Collection,
LC-USZ62-103205.



Triumph Hill Near Tidioute, circa 1871, by John Mather. This photo suggests the living and working conditions endured in the region during the oil boom.

Drake Well Museum Photograph Collection, DW 894.



The Tin Man and Toto, as illustrated in the original *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* manuscript.

Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collection Division, P28.B327 Wo., <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/rbc/gen.32405>.

For decades, the folks of Bradford, McKean County, have debated whether the author of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, L. Frank Baum, lived and worked in their northwestern Pennsylvania town before he published his iconic work. Some speculate that he wrote for—even founded—*The Bradford Era*, the newspaper that publishes in what the paper’s gothic nameplate dubs “the high grade oil metropolis of the world.” Baum-in-Bradford items are still a regular topic in the paper’s front-page “Round-the-Square” column, a compilation of local updates and curiosities. For at least 40 years, Baum has been among the column’s consistent topics, according to *The Bradford Era*’s former managing editor, Marty Robacker Wilder. “People want to believe that Baum was here in Bradford,” she says. “We want to believe it.”¹

But was Baum really in Bradford circa 1879, starting or writing for a newspaper, before he went on to produce America’s greatest fairy tale? Did Bradford’s oil boom inspire Baum’s vivid imagination? Wilder is still hopeful, and she’s not alone. In addition to scores of “Round-the-Square” contributors, many Baum biographers and scholars refer to the writer’s Pennsylvania sojourn. Nearly all place him in Bradford, and though only a few say he founded *The Bradford Era*, almost

all say he wrote for the paper, and one claims he opened a print shop in the oil boomtown.² But is there any proof of Baum’s Bradford residence? Very little remains in the way of first-hand accounts, and it is this lack of sources that allows the Baum-in-Bradford legends to thrive.

The scant evidence suggests that L. Frank Baum was never a resident of Bradford, never ran a print shop, never wrote for, much less founded, *The Bradford Era*. But the Baum-in-

Bradford hopefuls may just have been skipping down the wrong brick road looking for the region’s Oz connection: while the fantasy of Frank’s alleged Bradford ties still looms, the reality is that L. Frank’s father, Benjamin, *does* have a connection. Among other things, the family’s riches derived from the oil fields of northwestern Pennsylvania afforded L. Frank the leisure to later conjure the world of Oz.



Illustration of the Pennsylvania Oil Field, by C. Hornung, 1950.

The Bradford Club collection. Photographed and reproduced by Ed Bernik for Paul Adomites, Pennsylvania Crude: Boomtowns and Oil Barons (Forest Press, 2010).

The family's riches derived
from the oil fields of
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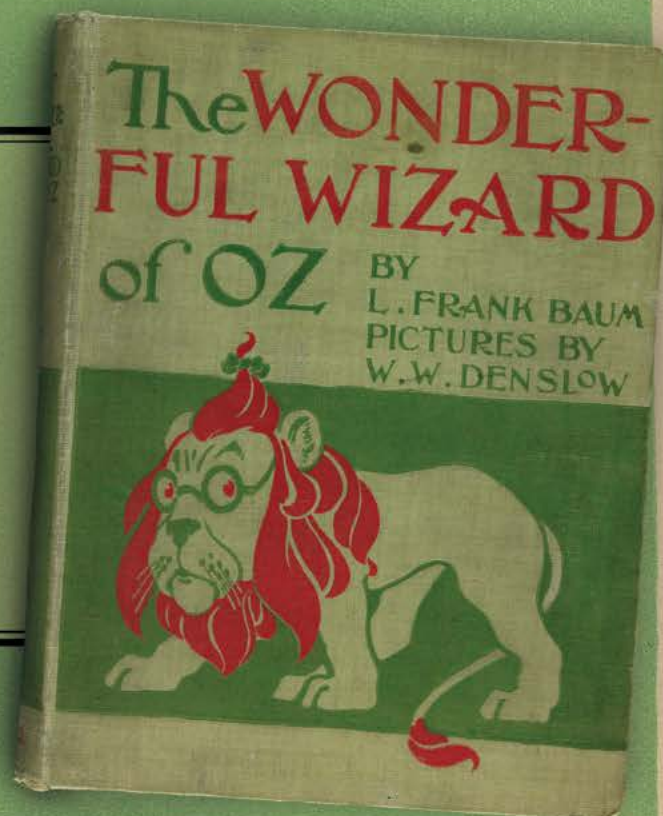
Cover page, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.

Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collection Division, P28.B327
Wo., <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/rbc/gen.32405>.



Learn More Online

Read *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* with its original illustrations from 1900.





The Wizard of Oz movie re-release, c. 1949.

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZC4-11775.



Dorothy and Toto find themselves far from Kansas.

Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collection Division, PZ8.B327 W6., <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/rbc/gen.32405>.

Lyman Frank Baum (he hated his first name and went by “Frank” all his life) was born on May 15, 1856, in Chittenango, New York, to Benjamin and Cynthia Stanton Baum.³ Only five of their nine children survived to adulthood. Benjamin, who dabbled in a number of professions, managed a struggling barrel-making company during Frank’s early years.

Frank’s life is punctuated by the great and powerful effect of his novel, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, published in 1900, its many sequels, as well as the book’s incarnations on stage and screen. The publication not only changed Frank’s life but also was instrumental in his posthumous and ongoing fame.

Even if Frank never lived or worked in Pennsylvania, his road to Oz went through the Keystone State. Cultural historian William Leach alluded to Baum’s Pennsylvanian trajectory in his study of Gilded Age American culture: “Just south of the Baum home [where Frank was born] were the oil fields of Pennsylvania, whose dark green oil—almost as green as the emeralds of Oz—first gushed their riches in the 1850s. Baum spent his childhood and youth in the shadow of oil.”⁴ When Baum emerged from that shadow, the emerald-tinted Pennsylvania crude fueled not only a global economic

transformation, but, perhaps, the imagination of a boy whose fairy tale, written to please a child, went on to amuse—and instruct—the world.

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz proved to be the American equivalent of England’s *Alice in Wonderland*, Italy’s *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, and Denmark’s tales of the Little Mermaid. Throughout the 20th century Baum’s novel and its characters—Dorothy, the Cowardly Lion, the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Wicked Witch of the West—were absorbed into American popular culture, eventually emerging as a kind of Rosetta Stone for the national psyche. The story of the little orphan girl, living on a bleak Kansas farm, who gets whirled to a strange land and then begins a quest to get home, meeting an array of wonderful creatures along the way, has been read as a parable of American economics, a proto-feminist tract, and a Freudian search for the self, among other critical interpretations.⁵ The 1939 film starring Judy Garland cemented many Ozian elements into the culture, adding phrases that, while not in the book, have ensured its immortality: “I have a feeling we’re not in Kansas anymore,” “Ignore that man behind the curtain,” and “Follow the Yellow Brick Road,” among many others. Sequels and prequels and spinoffs continue to proliferate, fallout from Oz’s initial impact.

The Oz effect on Frank’s life was enormous. It brought him success after a string of professional disappointments, and then became the commodity he mined for the rest of his life. As a result, Oz, in all of its

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incarnations, metaphorically installed a fun-house mirror before the details of the author's life, obscuring some elements and creating others out of whole cloth, according to Michael Patrick Hearn, the world's leading Baum and Oz expert who is currently writing a biography of Baum, in part to clear up the many errors that have crept onto the record. He notes that after Frank's death, his friends and family members added or deleted elements to his biography to elevate or obscure certain aspects of his and his family's past. This obfuscation begins with Frank's childhood.⁶

Many of the Baum biographies, for example, report that Frank developed rheumatic fever, leaving him with a delicate heart all his life, and his parents undoubtedly frantic and overly protective. "As a consequence," biographer Evan I. Schwartz writes, "the boy spent long hours racing through books but rarely doing anything too

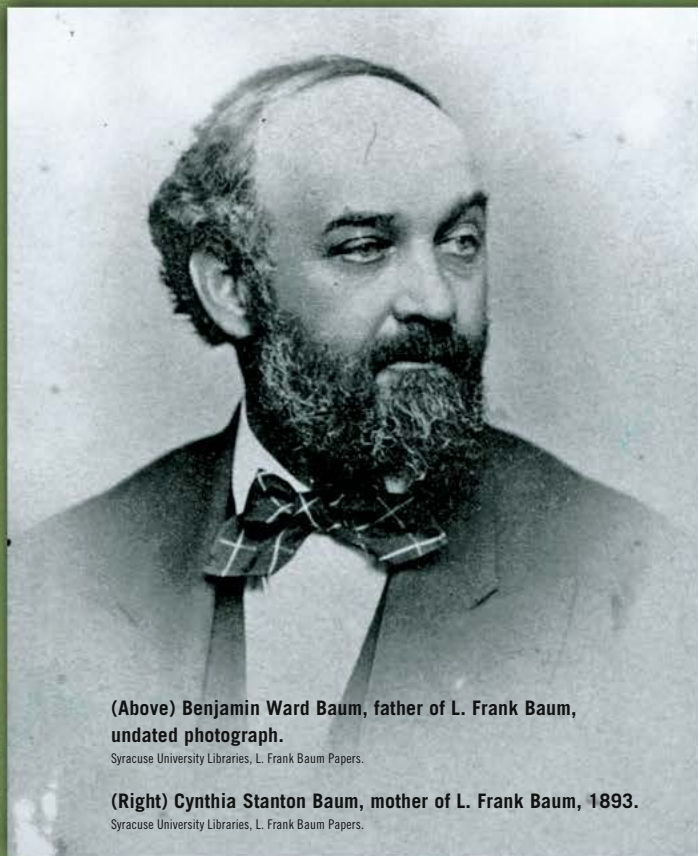
physical, given the state of his heart."⁷

Not so, apparently. "There's no proof that Frank suffered heart problems," Hearn says. "That [diagnosis] was the invention of his son, Frank, Jr. No one I spoke with who knew Baum was ever aware of his suffering from heart trouble. There are no contemporary references in letters, diaries, or interviews to

his ever having a bad heart or suffering from rheumatic fever."⁸

The heart-trouble tale is just the beginning of a number of fantasies that pepper L. Frank Baum's biographies and have skewed Baum scholarship for decades. Despite these reports, Hearn says, Frank's childhood seems to have been a happy—and healthy—one.

Just south of the Baum home were the oil fields of Pennsylvania, whose dark green oil—almost as green as the emeralds of Oz—first gushed their riches in the 1850s.



(Above) Benjamin Ward Baum, father of L. Frank Baum, undated photograph.

Syracuse University Libraries, L. Frank Baum Papers.



(Right) Cynthia Stanton Baum, mother of L. Frank Baum, 1893.

Syracuse University Libraries, L. Frank Baum Papers.



Shooting a well in the Bradford oil field.

Bradford Landmark Society collection. Photographed and reproduced by Ed Bernik for Paul Adomites, *Pennsylvania Crude: Boomtowns and Oil Barons* (Forest Press, 2010).

Baum and his dog, far left, at Ozcot, the house and rose garden in the writer's later, Hollywood years. His sister-in-law, Julia, stands center, and his wife, Maud, is pictured far right.

Syracuse University Libraries,
L. Frank Baum Papers.



Frank was born into a world on the cusp of cyclonic change. After the Civil War, America grew from a farming nation to an industrial power.⁹ The transformation was fueled by Pennsylvania oil, which shaped the fate of the “Royal Historian of Oz,” as L. Frank Baum came to be known.

Frank was three years old when Edwin L. Drake famously struck oil in Titusville, inaugurating the modern petroleum age.¹⁰ Petroleum in northwestern Pennsylvania in the early 1860s engendered a rush not unlike the gold fever in California in late 1840s. Production and profits soared. One Titusville oil well generated \$15,000 for every dollar invested.¹¹ Suddenly, “wildcats” (speculators who prospected amid the cries of feral felines in unsettled places like Bradford) prowled the sprouting derricks.¹² Enter Benjamin Baum.

Benjamin and his brothers were running the Baum Barrel Factory in Chittenango, New York, when news of the big strike in Pennsylvania hit. Leaving behind his wife and young Frank, “Baum has gone to PA” to sell barrels, which were in great demand, to the wildcats, his associate wrote. “Has the oil fever. Hope he

makes a fortune.”¹³ He did. But once Baum was there in the fields, he saw the potential in production and realized he could earn enough money to invest in other businesses.¹⁴

Benjamin prospected at Cherry Tree Run near Titusville and made a quick profit.¹⁵ He also helped to develop nearby Plumer, Venango County, and he and his brother founded a bank there. Always looking ahead, he diversified. He sold the barrel company in 1860 and was then off to New York City to work in stock-market speculation, then back to Syracuse in 1863 to run the Syracuse Bank. In 1866, he helped organize Neal, Baum & Company Wholesale Dry Goods, a white goods and notions wholesaling business, primarily to give his family members employment.¹⁶

Also in 1866, flush with success, Benjamin purchased the 3.75-acre estate named Rose Lawn and the 80-acre Spring Farm just outside Syracuse, New York, along with another 160-acre farm for livestock and horses.¹⁷ The farm was a place where Frank and his imagination could run wild, room after room, garden after garden, cat after chicken, planting the seeds that would bloom in the wonderful world of Oz years later.¹⁸ That imagination-inducing opulence

was largely financed with Pennsylvania crude.

Just like his father, Frank, then lolling about the bowers of Rose Lawn’s gardens, demonstrated a diversity of interests including writing, amateur publishing, stamp collecting, and thoroughbred poultry. In 1870, Benjamin bought his son a small printing press, as amateur journalism was the rage. Thus, Baum’s writing career began, and the road that led to Oz was taken.¹⁹ With little brother Henry Clay, Frank published *The Rose Lawn Home Journal* in 1870, filled with Frank’s stories, poems, and even installments of Benjamin’s “The History of the Oil Company,” a portrait of work in Pennsylvania oil fields.²⁰

While Frank continued his dabbling at Rose Lawn, Benjamin returned to the oil fields. Schwartz reports that by the mid-1870s, Benjamin shrewdly shifted his prospecting far from the chaos in Titusville. He set up shop 100 miles northeast of the boom’s new epicenter in burgeoning Bradford.²¹ The town was a well of speculation.²² In 1875, Bradford had about 550 inhabitants. Then the wildcats began the prowl. Three years later, there were 4,000 residents. The Bradford oil field was revealing its extent, overshadowing even its Titusville neighbor.



Younger brother Henry ("Harry") Baum, top left, with L. Frank, Maud (middle), and Harry's young bride, Elizabeth Dattan Baum (she was 22 years his junior), c. 1908.

Syracuse University Libraries, L. Frank Baum Papers.

He married Maud Gage in 1882, the daughter of Matilda Joslyn Gage, the brilliant feminist, suffragist, and abolitionist, who, with Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, wrote the first three volumes of the *History of Woman Suffrage*

Benjamin Baum's Bradford was a wildcat's outpost, as the town had been transformed nearly overnight into a Wild West moonscape, filthy and dangerous, pocked with seeping derricks and devious characters. It was a tough town with all-night bars, brothels, gambling dens, and dance halls: great places to spend the fast and easy money that was pumped from the gooey earth. Some called it Sodom.²³ But to Benjamin Baum, Bradford was the new economic Jerusalem. The town was on fire with oil fever and fortunes were pulled out of the ground. Benjamin bought property in McKean County, snatching up more than 100 acres in at least four plots he purchased for oil speculation in the late 1870s.²⁴

At its peak in 1881, Bradford oil supplied more than 83 percent of America's oil and nearly 77 percent of the world's.²⁵ The Bradford oil field eventually covered about 84,000 acres, mostly in Pennsylvania, but it inched into New York State to Richburg and Allegany, and between 1871 and the 1930s, the field gave up more than 350 million barrels of oil, making Bradford one of the world's top producing sites. Benjamin was in the thick of it, and, by dint of his presence, planted the seed for the Bradford rumors that emerged a century later.

While his father and brother were occupied with oil in Pennsylvania, Frank remained at Rose Lawn and began looking beyond poetry and stamp collecting. He took a job at his brother-in-law's dry goods store, Neal, Baum and Co., for a short while, but soon returned to the family farm and established his business raising exotic fowl. It was a triumph.²⁶

Frank specialized in Hamburgs, small, rare, beautiful fowl, which he raised, bred, and sold with considerable success. He eventually wrote a monthly trade journal on the birds, *The Poultry Record*, and his first published book was *The Book of the Hamburgs* (1886). In 1881, though, Frank abandoned the chickens and began a career as an actor and playwright.²⁷

By then, the window when Frank could have been in Bradford had closed. He married



(Above) L. Frank Baum's magical world of Oz came to life with help from the illustrations of William Wallace Denslow. In this woodcut from the book's 1900 edition, the Tin Woodman, the Scarecrow, and Dorothy scold the Cowardly Lion.

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZC4-5343.

(Below) *Benninghoff Run, 1865*, by John Mather. Northwestern Pennsylvania's hills became home to forests of derricks during the oil boom years.

Drake Well Museum Photograph Collection, DW 498.

In 1891, Frank and family traveled to Chicago, where the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition very likely inspired the Emerald City of Oz.

Maud Gage in 1882, the daughter of Matilda Joslyn Gage, the brilliant feminist, suffragist, and abolitionist, who, with Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, wrote the first three volumes of the *History of Woman Suffrage* (1881-1886).²⁸

Frank continued his theatrical career, but when Maud became pregnant, he began work at the family-owned Baum's Castorine Company, makers of axle grease.²⁹ Frank's steady job was a welcome relief, as Frank Joslyn, the first of Frank and Maud's four sons, was

born on December 4, 1883. By the end of the 1880s, Frank and Maud were off to the Dakota Territory to be near Maud's family, where Frank opened a novelty shop and later edited a newspaper, the *Aberdeen Saturday Pioneer*.³⁰ Maud gave birth to their second son, Robert, on February 1, 1886, and nearly died in the process, leaving her bed-ridden for long periods and weak for years.³¹

Back East, tragedy struck.³² Frank's brother Benjamin contracted pneumonia and died on February 18, 1886. He was 36. Just eight months

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Benninghoff Run
1865



(Left) Maud Gage Baum, wife of L. Frank Baum, and her sons (left to right), Robert, Harry, Kenneth, and Frank, Jr., 1900.

Syracuse University Libraries, L. Frank Baum Papers.

(Opposite Page) A message from "the Heart of the Oil Country," 1870s. These postcards were used to promote a number of boomtowns.

Bradford Landmark Society.

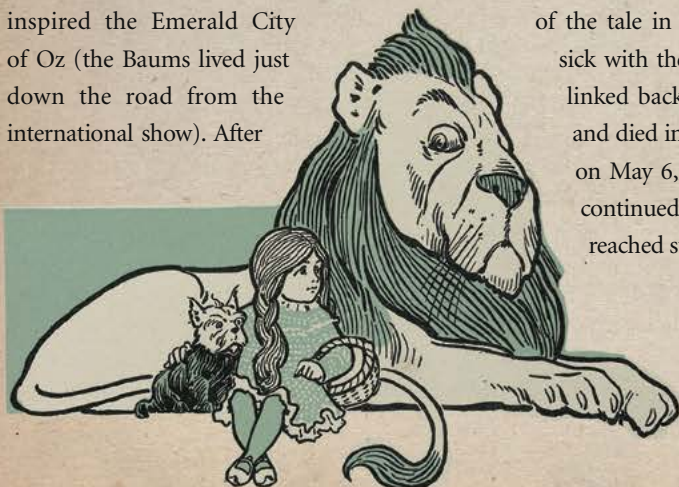
later, Benjamin Sr. was thrown from a carriage and severely injured. He sold Rose Lawn and with his wife Cynthia moved into a house in Syracuse. He traveled to Germany for therapy and then visited Frank in the Dakotas, but he died of Bright's disease, a condition of the kidneys, on February 14, 1887.³³ He was 66.

Frank, in a sense, then turned this page on the family's business. He wrote: "I see no future in [the oil business] to warrant my wasting any more years of my life in trying to boom it.... In this struggling mass of humanity [in the industrial East], a man like myself is lost."³⁴

In 1891, Frank and family traveled to Chicago, where the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition very likely inspired the Emerald City of Oz (the Baums lived just down the road from the international show). After

his mother-in-law encouraged him to write down the stories that he made up to great acclaim from his children, Frank published several children's books beginning in 1897. Several years later, he started his most famous novel with the help of illustrator William Wallace Denslow, and *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* appeared in 1900. Its first printing was an enormous success. Frank wrote 13 more Oz books and continued to work in the theater, staging *Oz* as a Broadway extravaganza in 1902. The stage version was a hit and gave Frank the confidence and the resources to go on.³⁵

Frank and the family moved to Los Angeles in 1910, and he worked in the early years of Hollywood, producing the first film version of the tale in 1914. L. Frank Baum took sick with the heart condition that some linked back to his days at Rose Lawn, and died in Los Angeles of heart failure on May 6, 1919. He was 62. His fame continued after his death as his stories reached successive generations.³⁶



But what of Bradford? How does it fit in? It doesn't. "The Bradford story is just wrong," says Hearn.³⁷

A line in the *Syracuse Standard* on November 19, 1899, in a story about the book Frank published just before *Oz*, titled *Father Goose*, planted the error: "Mr. Baum ... founded the *Era* at Bradford, Pennsylvania, which has become a flourishing daily."³⁸

There it is. And it's not true by a long shot, nor is it known if Baum himself fabricated the data or the journalist made a mistake. *The Bradford New Era*, as the paper was called when it was established by founder Colonel J.K. Haffey, had been published as a weekly since August 28, 1875 (replacing *The Bradford Miner*), before daily publication of the renamed *The Bradford Era* began on October 29, 1877. (There is no extant connection between Haffey and the Baums.)³⁹ Examining the *Era* for those years provides no evidence for locating Baum: stories then carried no bylines, and the paper published no masthead.

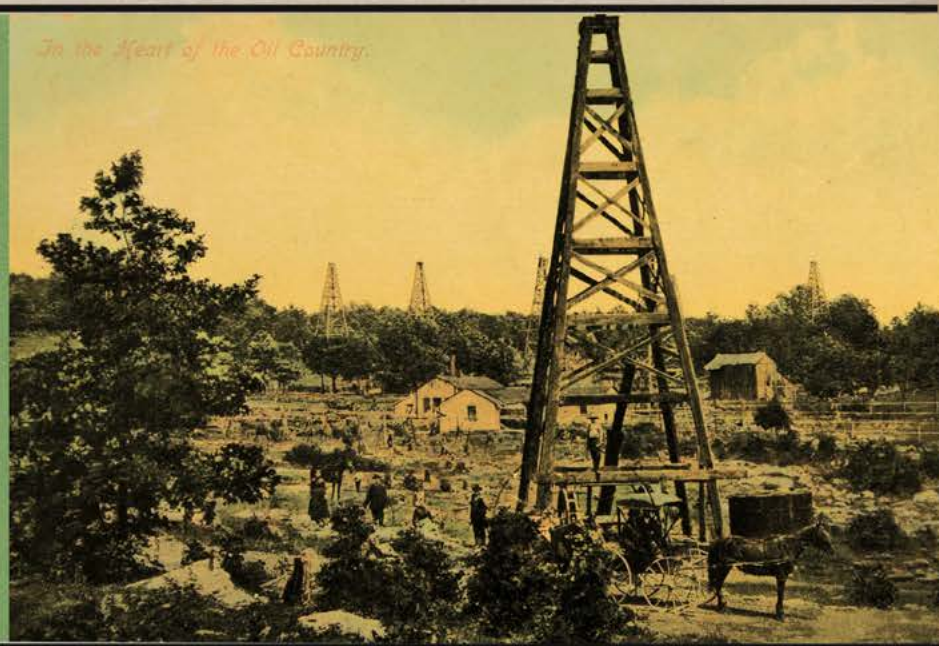
"Baum was not in Bradford then ... he was in Syracuse building up his poultry business, but for some reason, the Bradford rumor exploded," Hearn says. "Perhaps

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Learn more about Bradford's history with the Bradford Landmark Society.

**What Benjamin
achieved was
obscured and, fueled
by the fame of Oz
and its subsequent
incarnations, what
Frank did was
distorted or invented.**



because Bradford, after Titusville, is the most recognizable name, the most significant place, from that period ... and Bradford was the center of the oil boom during the time that Benjamin Baum owned property there during the early years of the oil industry.”⁴⁰

By the early 1880s, Frank was working in theater. He ran the Baum Opera House, which his father built for him in Richburg, New York, on the edge of the Bradford Oil Field, from December 1881 until it burned down three months later in March 1882. He then toured the field with his play *The Maid of Aaran*. “I think he played Bradford in 1883.”⁴¹ (All of this information Hearn has documented through contemporary accounts.) To make matters worse, there were other, unrelated Baums in the area, clouding the picture over time. One was W.T. Baum, who worked an oil well in Bradford but was no relation to the Oz-maker.

The concretizing of the confusion came with a biography of L. Frank Baum, published in 1961 by his son Frank Joslyn Baum and Russell P. MacFall, *To Please a Child: A Biography of L. Frank Baum, Royal Historian of Oz*, the title based off the reason L. Frank gave for writing fairy tales. In it, Baum and MacFall

write: “According to family tradition ... [t]hrough the influence of his father, [Frank] found a job on a weekly newspaper the *Era* in Bradford, Pennsylvania, where the elder Baum had considerable oil interests. Since that time the *Era* has become a daily, but back in the eighteen seventies Frank Baum’s *Era* was a typical small town, four-page weekly.... After about a year with the *Era*, Frank returned to the stage.”⁴²

“Family tradition was wrong,” Hearn says. *To Please a Child* inked the error into the permanent record. The circumstances around the production of this hagiographic portrait of his father lent themselves to whoppers. Acrimony prevailed in the Baum family since the sale of the movie rights to the book, now with the shorter title *The Wizard of Oz*, in the 1930s. Family members weren’t speaking to each other, let alone confirming facts and incidents for a potentially moneymaking biography, Hearn says.⁴³ Hard feelings endured for years. Frank’s son, however, didn’t live to finish the book: Frank Joslyn died in 1958, and Russell MacFall completed the manuscript.

“I think Frank Joslyn was trying to elevate his father, dignify his origins,” Hearn

says, so the devoted son bought into the *Era* story, making his father a journalist and even a publisher.⁴⁴ After all, the Syracuse paper had reported Baum’s Bradford credential.

And then the error—or debate about the alleged error—really took off in the 1960s, in both the “Round-the-Square” column of *The Bradford Era* and in the considerable academic industry and fandom that surrounds all things Oz that began then. By the early 1960s, the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz* was a few years into its annual telecast, a ritual for baby boomers that turned an initially commercially unsuccessful movie (it did not make a profit in its initial release) into the most-watched and -beloved film of all time, and all things Oz into valuable commodities.⁴⁵ That, coupled with a small northwestern Pennsylvania town’s desire to be attached to something so famous, cemented the legend.

Father Benjamin’s story and son Frank’s narrative seem to have gotten mixed up, elevated, and exaggerated. Suddenly and erroneously, in many published sources, Benjamin founded the second Bank of Syracuse (not true) and Frank founded *The Bradford Era* (also not true). Frank’s little-


Before the iconic Judy Garland film, Oz was recreated in many formats, such as "Fred R. Hamlin's musical extravaganza," in 1903.

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZC4-1600.



boy printing press was transformed into a professional one printing a Bradford daily and even, to some, anchoring a print shop, among other stretchers. What Benjamin achieved was obscured and, fueled by the fame of Oz and its subsequent incarnations, what Frank did was distorted or invented.

But the Baum-in-Bradford believers are not likely to go away, says the *Era's* former managing editor Wilder. Despite what Benjamin actually accomplished in Bradford, it's what his son, the Oz-maker, Frank, *might* have done that interests people, however flimsy the facts may be. Though the instances of Baum-in-Bradford stories have lessened in the past few years, Wilder says, "It's not going to go away. People want to believe it," she said, "and also, how do you prove that something didn't happen?"⁴⁶

What did happen, however, was that L. Frank Baum took many brick roads to the Emerald City, and he picked up something on each one that he deposited in Oz: his love of animals acquired at Rose Lawn; his feminist sensibilities, absorbed from his wife and mother-in-law; his dazzlement by the World's Fair, acquired in Chicago; and—long overlooked—the biographical and imaginative impact that Pennsylvania oil had on L. Frank Baum's life and in his fiction. 

Tim Ziaukas is Professor of Public Relations at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford. His last piece in *Western Pennsylvania History* was "Still Scary After All These Years: Mr. Yuk Nears 40," with Christopher J. McCarrick, 92, no. 3, Fall 2009.

He would like to thank Marietta Frank, Jeff Guterman, Judy Hopkins, Don Lewicki, Chris McCarrick, Gary Tessmer, the staffs at Bradford Area Public Library and Bradford Landmarks (especially Sally Ryan Costik), the quartet of Pitt-Bradford students in "the Baum seminar" in 2011 — Alex Davis, Kevin Erdelack, Danielle Little, and Alyssa Villano — and a special thanks to the Oz-pert himself, Michael Patrick Hearn.

¹ Interview with the author, June 6, 2012. Wilder worked at the *Era* from 1974 to 2012.

² Rebecca Loncraine's *The Real Wizard of Oz: The Life and Times of L. Frank Baum* (New York: Gotham, 2009), 61, notes, "Baum ... [relocated in] Bradford, Pennsylvania, a small oil town, where he worked on a weekly journal for a while." Katharine M. Rogers' *L. Frank Baum: Creator of Oz, A Biography* (New York: St. Martin's, 2002, 8), adds even more: "[T]hrough his father's influence, [Baum] got a job on a weekly paper, the *Bradford Era*." Angelica Shirley Carpenter and Jean Shirley's *L. Frank Baum: Royal Historian of Oz* (Minneapolis: Lerner, 20), reports that Baum "opened up a print shop in Bradford, Pennsylvania. There he founded the *New Era* newspaper." Even editor Jack Zipes in his introduction to the Penguin edition of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (New York: Penguin, 1998, x), the standard academic edition of Baum's work, writes that Baum "established his own print shop in Bradford, Pennsylvania, and wrote for the newspaper *The New Era* for several years."

³ In addition to Loncraine, Rogers, and Carpenter and Shirley, the best biographical treatments of Baum are Evan I. Schwartz, *Finding Oz: How L. Frank Baum Discovered the Great American Story* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009), and Michael Patrick Hearn's extensive introduction to *The Annotated Wizard of Oz, Centennial Edition* (New York: Norton, 2000), xxiii-cii.

⁴ William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York: Random House, 1993), 56.

⁵ Baum's novel has generated voluminous exegesis in a variety of critical perspectives, among them consumerist, feminist, economic, mythic, utopian, and queer theory. Most prevalent, though, has been the reading of the novel as a parable for the metals controversy of the 1890s, and, according to one proponent of this perspective, the novel "reflects to an astonishing degree the world of political reality which surrounded Baum in 1900" (48). Henry M. Littlefield, "The Wizard of Oz: Parable on Populism," *American Quarterly* 16 (1964): 47-58; also see Hugh Rockoff, *Journal of Political Economy*, "The 'Wizard of Oz' as a Monetary Allegory," 98 (1990): 739-60.

⁶ Interview with the author, May 9, 2011. Hearn has published *The Annotated Wizard of Oz*, edited *The Critical Heritage Edition of The Wizard of Oz*, and wrote the introduction to the first published edition of *The Wizard of Oz* screenplay, among other scholarly works.

⁷ Schwartz, *Finding Oz*, 6.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Hearn interview.

⁹ Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power* (New York: Touchstone, 1991), 37.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 26-34.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹² Leonardo Maugeri, *The Age of Oil: The Mythology, History, and Future of the World's Most Controversial Resource* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2006), 5.

¹³ Schwartz, *Finding Oz*, 18.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Hearn interview.

¹⁵ Rogers, *L. Frank Baum*, 2.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

¹⁸ Hearn, *Annotated*, xvi.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, xvi-xvii.

²⁰ Rogers, *L. Frank Baum*, 4.

²¹ Schwartz, *Finding Oz*, 18.

²² Paul H. Gibbens, *Early Days of Oil: A Pictorial History of the Beginnings of the Industry in Pennsylvania* (Glouster, Mass: Peter Smith, 1964), 112-113.

²³ Samuel W. Tait, Jr., *The Wildcatters: An Informal History of Oil-Hunting in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946), 57.

²⁴ The records at the McKean County Recorder of Deeds office show that between August 1877 and April 1880 Benjamin Baum purchased nearly 150 acres of land presumably for oil speculation.

²⁵ For the Bradford oil boom, see Linda K. Delaney, *The Gamble for Glory in the World's First Billion Dollar Oilfield* (Bradford, Pa.: Forest Press, 2007); E. Willard Miller, "The Industrial Structure of the Bradford Oil Field," *Western Pennsylvania History Magazine* 26, no. 1-2 (June 1943): 59-78. "The Bradford Oil Field," in Charles E. Williams, *Western Pennsylvania's Oil Heritage* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia, 2008), 39-55.

²⁶ Hearn, *Annotated*, xvii-xviii.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*, xx.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Schwartz, *Finding Oz*, 152-153.

³¹ Rogers, *L. Frank Baum*, 18.

³² Schwartz, *Finding Oz*, 113.

³³ For the death of Benjamin, Sr., see Rogers, *L. Frank Baum*, 18; Schwartz, *Finding Oz*, 119-120; for confirmation of the diagnosis of Bright's disease, *ibid.* Hearn, interview.

³⁴ Schwartz, *Finding Oz*, 113.

³⁵ Ethan Mordden, *Anything Goes: A History of American Musical Theatre* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 41-47.

³⁶ Rogers, 238-239; Schwartz, *Finding Oz*, 297-298.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, Hearn interview.

³⁸ *Syracuse Standard*, Nov. 19, 1899, "Quaint Verse Brings Fame," in the L. Frank Baum Papers at Syracuse University, Box #2, "Biographical Information."

³⁹ Bob Simbeck, "Civil War Vet Founded Daily Era's Weekly Forerunner," *The Bradford Era*, Bradford, Pa., Oct. 31 1977. Special Centennial edition, A-1 +.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Hearn interview.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Frank Joslyn Baum and Russell P. MacFall, *To Please a Child: A Biography of L. Frank Baum, Royal Historian of Oz* (Chicago: Reilly and Lee, 1961), 33.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, Hearn interview.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Schwartz, *Finding Oz*, 309.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Wilder.