

Living History

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Spinning Wool Yarn with the Walking Wheel. All demonstrations of traditional crafts at the Goschenhoppen Folk Festival include experienced workers and young apprentices.

East Greenville, Pennsylvania, August 9 & 10, 1994 25th ANNUAL GOSCHENHOPPEN FOLK FESTIVAL

Once again, the Goschenhoppen Folk Festival lived up to its good reputation for noncommercialized, informative fun, a celebration of things as they used to be. The one complaint: there is so much - ten acres and 165 eighteenth- and nineteenth-century craft demonstrations - you have to return next year to check out what you missed.

The Goschenhoppen Historians who supervise the festival are careful with the historical accuracy of the costumes of the 500 participants. There are no T-shirts on interpreters and none for sale with Goschenhoppen logo. The food is local - no hot dogs, hamburgers, or pizza - and there is an old style "church supper" served in the dining hall. Lectures, both scholarly and entertaining, in dialect and in English are presented during the day in the open air auditorium.

Twenty-five years ago, a handful of eastern Montgomery County natives became concerned that the ways of their pioneer ancestors would be lost. They were keenly aware that those who were still able to do the traditional crafts were dying off, and that there was need for hands-on education of the younger generations. The first festivals were family affairs that included all members of the craftperson's family. All were, and still are, volunteers. Nearly half of the 500 crafts people are young people apprenticing to, or helping, the skilled craftperson. It's a requirement.

(continued on page 5)

PENNSYLVANIA REPORT by Peter Sinclair

One Thursday in August, I went with a fellow New York barn enthusiast Roger Scheff to stay four days at the Christiansbrunn Kloster (*) in central Pennsylvania, in a small valley named Mahantongo, just east of the Susquehanna River. It is a relatively isolated valley with an open landscape of active farming surrounded by forest and mountain. We went there to bring the cloister, some new genes of a boar Old Spot piglet from a spring litter, visit a folk festival nearby on Friday, attend the cloister's Annual Open House on Saturday, and meet with Bob Bucher, a veteran student of Pennsylvania folklife, at Schafferstown on Monday.

In addition to their religious work, the Christiansbrunn order has established a museum of local history and is working to preserve as much as it can of local Pennsylvania German culture, including its buildings, farming practices, and folk traditions. Located on the site of an early Hepler family homesite, the cloister's Annual Open House is the same weekend as the Annual Hepler Family Reunion, held in a grove adjoining the farm.

Saturday was busy at the cloister with hundreds of Heplers and a handful of Past Masters, young and old, dressed for work in their eighteenth-century clothes. This year's event featured Patience, a pregnant Pinzgauer cow, and her future milk products. Clarissa Dillon and Karen Mullian cooked milk in a brass kettle hung over an open fire and made cottage cheese, called "schmirkees," by local people. Assisted by an occasional visitor, they churned butter and gave out samples on some of the fresh rye bread Brother Johannes baked in an outdoor oven. The buttermilk was well received and the whey given the Old Spot piglets.

(continued on page 4)

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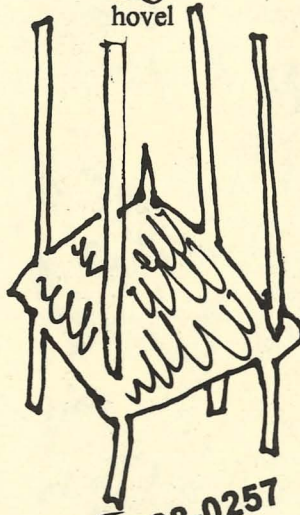
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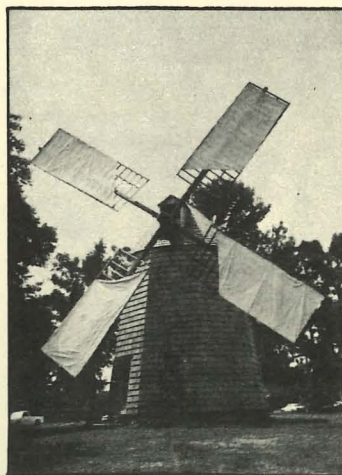
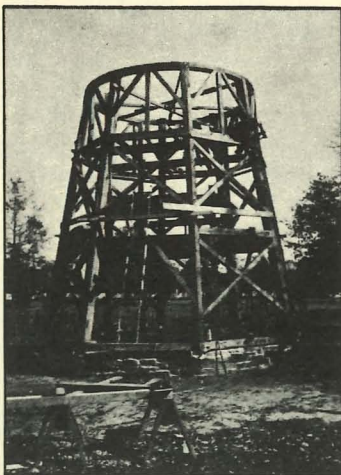
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FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

And especially to you who have subscribed, re-subscribed and advertised, who have read some of Living History over these past four years and gotten something from it, thanks for your support. I intend to edit and publish just four more issues. I will try to get them out on time, but I will also work to fill them with the best articles, news, and commentary that I can assemble.

Publishing this quarterly has been a great experience for me, a way of networking and examining living history and historical preservation in other areas of the country but I must spend more time with local projects I have begun and I must devote more time working for money. Despite a steady growth in subscriptions and advertising this venture has not been self supporting.

I began Living History in the spring of 1991 with a Catskill Mountain variety of sweet corn and the first half of an article on cooking eel stew. In summer, Clarissa Dillon exploded the historical tomato myth on page one and I presented the need for Dutch barn preservation. In autumn Betty Fussell lent a chapter on corn husking from her upcoming book on corn and in winter Steve Miller wrote about saving seeds and the program they have going at the Landis Valley Farm Museum in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Volume two introduced minor livestock breeds with an article by Don Bixby and by volume four I had become a pig farmer. Volume three visited Old Sturbridge Village, Fort Snelling, Fort Klock, Hopewell Furnace, the Adirondacks, the Mohawk Valley and Staten Island. On the brink of volume five, my bank account is low, my car has 180,000 miles and my land taxes are due.

I am only one person but things could change. I recently received a letter from a Massachusetts publisher offering assistance. I have also heard rumor of another Living History about to be published. There was a Living History before I came along, and so there might be one after I go. There seems to be a market for an independent journal on the subject.

Peter Sinclair

PIG UPDATE

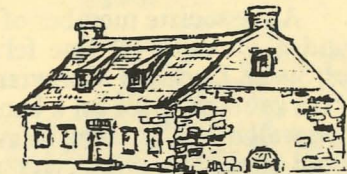
Living History and Christiannsbrunn Kloster will be selling breeding stock from a planned spring litter of pure breed Gloucester Old Spot Pigs. Breeder boars and sows will be \$85 each; feeders from other litters with less than 100 percent Old Spot genes will be \$50. The Old Spot is one of the four breeds of pigs listed critical by the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy, on its endangered list.

In the fall 1994 issue of the quarterly Food History News (Vol.6, No.2), an article by Rodney Staab, "Pork in the Historic Native American Diet," points out that the absence of domestic animals in North America, other than the dog, made hunting a "necessity." While the nations of the western plains adopted the European horse to improve their hunting, some Native American groups in the East and Midwest readily adopted chickens, cattle, and hogs. The author lists a 1846 census for livestock owned by 13 nations living at the time in Kansas. The three largest - Pottawatomie, Delaware and Shawnee - had a combined population of 3,813, and owned 519 oxen, 996 milk cows, 1,600 cattle, 3,103 horses, and 4,147 hogs.

A study of native words for pig indicates that they are derived from French and Dutch roots. A 1648 account reported the Delaware word for pig was *kwskus*, evidently derived from hearing the Dutch call to their pigs *kush-kush-kush*. As early as 1663, large numbers of wild hogs were found in the Shawnee country, probably the Ohio valley.

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(PENNSYLVANIA REPORT from page 1)

An associate member of the cloister and a purveyor of fine felt hats for ladies, Susan Lucas, in Moravian garb, sat with her mother Hilda on a bench by the low log wall of the kitchen, weaving cloth tape and paper Moravian stars and showing others how to do it. These serious students of historic household traditions practice and experiment with what they have learn from older rural people and read in books.



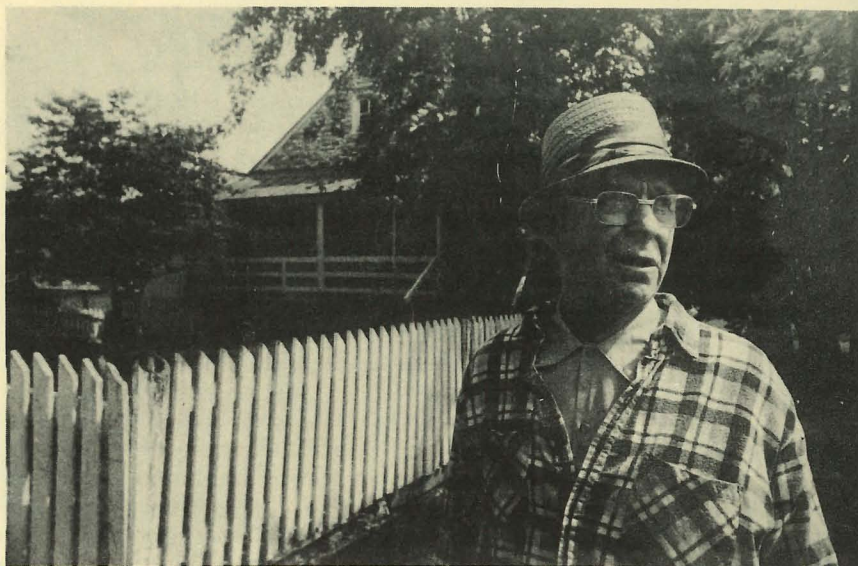
Log Kitchen, Christiansbrunn Kloster

Photograph by Roger Scheff

Four small historic log houses have been brought to the cloister and restored to their original form. During the past year, some old but useful timber-framed outbuildings were donated and moved there with the help of local people and associates of the order. An 1800 chestnut-frame building has been given windows, pine siding, and a plank floor to house the three hand-operated presses on which the order prints its newsletter. There is no electricity on the site.

Brother Johannes had written me about his interest in the historic *frackwerk* or half-timber houses, typical of the Mahantongo Valley. He has acquired a miller's house from the Erdman family and plans to restore this two-story *frackwerk* example, with central chimney, to serve as the site of the order's archive and library.

First settled in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century by second- and third-generation German immigrants,



Robert Bucher at the Alexander Schaeffer Farm Museum, Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, site of the Schaefferstown Annual Folk Festival, held the third weekend of July.

many Mahantongo pioneers from Schaefferstown, originally lived in crude huts while they planned their second houses, the ones built as a sign of accomplishment. These were built both of logs and with timber frames. Log building were built until about 1840, while timber-frame traditions continued into this century.

Tracing the evolution of *frackwerk* architecture in the Mahantongo Valley, from its early German and Swiss prototypes to a simplified American style is a fascinating archaeology for Brother Johannes and others who study and document its remains, hidden behind clapboard siding and modern additions. On Monday we went with him to meet Bob Bucher and examine two mid-eighteenth-century *frackwerk* examples in Schaefferstown, 40 miles to the south.

The Rex house of about 1740 has been carefully restored for modern living. Its gracious tenant let us examine it throughout and indicated things of interest. The house's original eighteenth-century form and outward appearance have long been covered and changed, but by crawling through a narrow dark attic, we saw evidence of its original half-timbered exterior walls and exposed timbers with scribed and painted imitation-brick between them, a true Baroque example of American *frackwerk*.

Next door, the Stiegel house is a recent Bucher discovery, with a 1757 date caved on the exterior of a corner post hidden by later siding. The house has just undergone a full archaeological examination and documentation by (HABS) Historic American Building Survey, the federal government's ongoing recording of historic structures. Its exposed interior, with all modern additions removed, provided a rare opportunity to study its design.

At lunch Bob Bucher talked of his work during the 1950s with Alfred Shoemaker, one of Pennsylvania's pioneer folklorists. "Shoemaker was the father of Pennsylvania folk festivals." Bucher told us, "and a mentor to many."

Shoemaker's book, The Pennsylvania Barn (***) published in the early 1950s, was the first serious study of an American barn type. The idea for the work came to him while visiting the British Isles and the Rhine valley to study folklore there. A true regional champion, Shoemaker urged his fellow field workers on, declaring he knew of only three log houses that remained standing in Pennsylvania. Bucher and his friends soon had 100 more. Clarence Culp was the

first to notice they were all the same. One fellow from Bethlehem thought they must have been built by the same person.

Today it is estimated that more than 1,000 log houses have survived in Berks County alone. "We thought we had learned everything," Bucher said, "but we continue to make new discoveries."

Peter Sinclair

(*) Christiansbrunn Kloster; RD 1, Box 149; Pitman, PA 17964.

(**) The Pennsylvania Barn, by Alfred L. Shoemaker, Don Yoder, Henry J. Kauffman, and others, published by The Pennsylvania Folklife Society., c. 1950.

(continued from page 1)

GOSCHENHOPPEN FOLK FESTIVAL 1994



Mike Baker Demonstrates Thatch He trims a *fackel* of rye straw with a hatchet on a wooden block. Behind him the first course of thatch has been woven to the roof lath with the heads of the rye straw up. The following courses will be applied with the heads of the straw down. German-American thatching traditions differ from Dutch and English.



Turning the Fackel After tying a bundle of rye straw with a few of its strands, Mike Baker forms the *fackel* by dividing the bundle into two parts and turning the right half one-and-a-quarter turns, this tightens the tie and he is ready to apply it to the roof.



Old Time Farmer's Market Fresh produce and sometimes a free sample of a regional delicacy cooked over an open fire are available to the visitor.



Wood Turning A hard working apprentice powers a lathe while his boss checks the accuracy of their product.

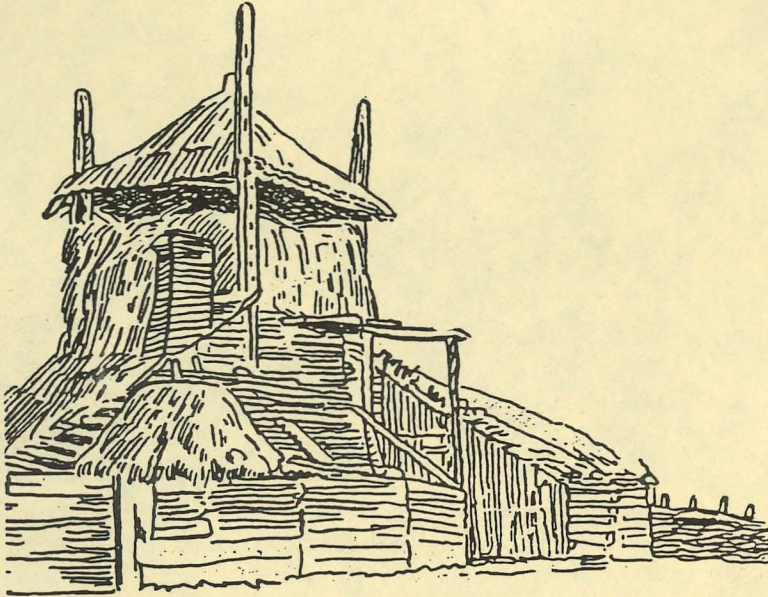


Coopering One man rives oak staves with a froe, others form them with draw knives and planes, while others, with metal hoops and hammers, build barrels and tubs of many shapes and sizes.

The Goschenhoppen Folk Festival is an hour and a half from New York City, and one hour from Philadelphia or Lancaster. Entrance fee is \$5, plus donation for parking.



Goschenhoppen Historians,
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Dutch Barrack with Adjoining Quarters, drawing from A.L. Shoemaker after a painting by Gerard ter Borch, Sr. (1584-1662).

THE BARRACK

by Peter Sinclair and Don McTernan

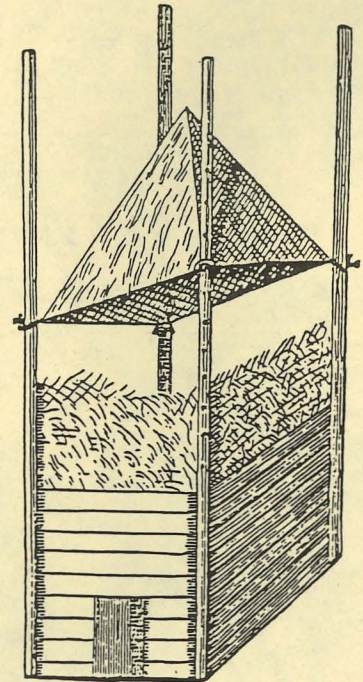
The barrack is a rudimentary type of pole-barn with a lightly framed roof that can be raised and lowered. A series of holes are drilled through the corner-posts about a foot apart, the roof plates rest on iron pins inserted in these holes. A simple, versatile structure the barrack could provide storage for loose hay or bundles of grain. The common farmer could easily build it or adapt it to shelter his livestock. The barrack served as an important structure in the establishment of many frontier farms in America (1).

Archaeological evidence indicates that the barrack existed during the late Bronze Age in Europe(2). The barrack(3) originated with the people of northern Europe and remains a working part of the rural landscape in the northern Netherlands today. Puritan immigrants to Plymouth called the barrack a "Dutch Barn"(4). Many of these seventeenth-century English pioneers had come to America by way of Holland, where they had seen the barrack in use.

Barracks were built by the Dutch who settled Manhattan in the early 1600s, and they remained common on the Dutch-American farms of the Hudson Valley of New York and New Jersey for 300 years. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries - long after the introduction of tractors, portable hay bailers, and other more progressive ways of farming - some farmers continued to use barracks to store their hay, whether because of tradition or poverty. Today they have nearly disappeared.

In two articles on the cultural geography of New Jersey published in 1968 and 1973(5), Peter Wacker mapped the distribution of approximately 80 barracks in the northern half of the state. The map is based largely on written records of the colonial period.

In 1977, a three state field study and documentation of surviving barracks by Donald McTernan(6) could locate only seven surviving examples, all of them in northern New Jersey. A number of barrack fragments reused in later barns have since been found, widely distributed in New York and New Jersey.



English Helm (barrack)

Illustration from a book by the Swedish naturalist, Peter Kalm, of his 1748 visit to England on his way to America. Kalm was quite taken by a helm (barrack) which he was shown there. The four posts were 30 feet long and set into the ground. They were placed 14 feet apart and the thatch was 9 inches thick. At the bottom, horizontal oak boards were nailed to the posts forming an 8 foot wall. The roof was lifted by the farmer's shoulder and he used a crooked stick to hold the corners of the plate fast.



"Yon, The Fidler and Sam, The Witch Doctor". This photograph from "Life in the Old Dutch Homesteads" by J. Hosey Osborn was published in the 1930s. It was probably taken in Saddle River, New Jersey. The author does not write about the two men but the photograph tells us much about their culture and way of life. The dog coops on the right and the doctor's gun, show that the men were hunters as well as farmers; the sled behind Yon drew firewood and large game in the winter; and the fiddle Yon holds indicates that they knew how to have a good time.

The thatched barracks behind the men, with their additions and enclosures, are a good illustration of the adaptability of this architecture. It shows a remarkable similarity with examples of barracks in Dutch paintings of the sixteenth and seventeenth- centuries.

In the 16 years since McTernan's article, there have been many published accounts, photographs, and illustrations of American barracks identified but only a few additional examples have been discovered.

One of these, built of telephone poles and two-by-fours in the early 1940s, stands eight miles north of the West Hurley, New York, office of Living History, in the township of Woodstock. The Woodstock barrack was built for a recent immigrant from the Netherlands, the late J. C. Van Rijn, an engineer and entrepreneur who founded Rotron, a company that still manufactures cooling fans for computers. He had the barrack built to shelter hay for his riding horses. Van Rijn designed his barrack like the contemporary ones he knew in his homeland, with a manufactured crank, cable and pulley system to raise and lower the roof. This modern system was unknown in America, where a more primitive but less costly devise had been developed for the same task.

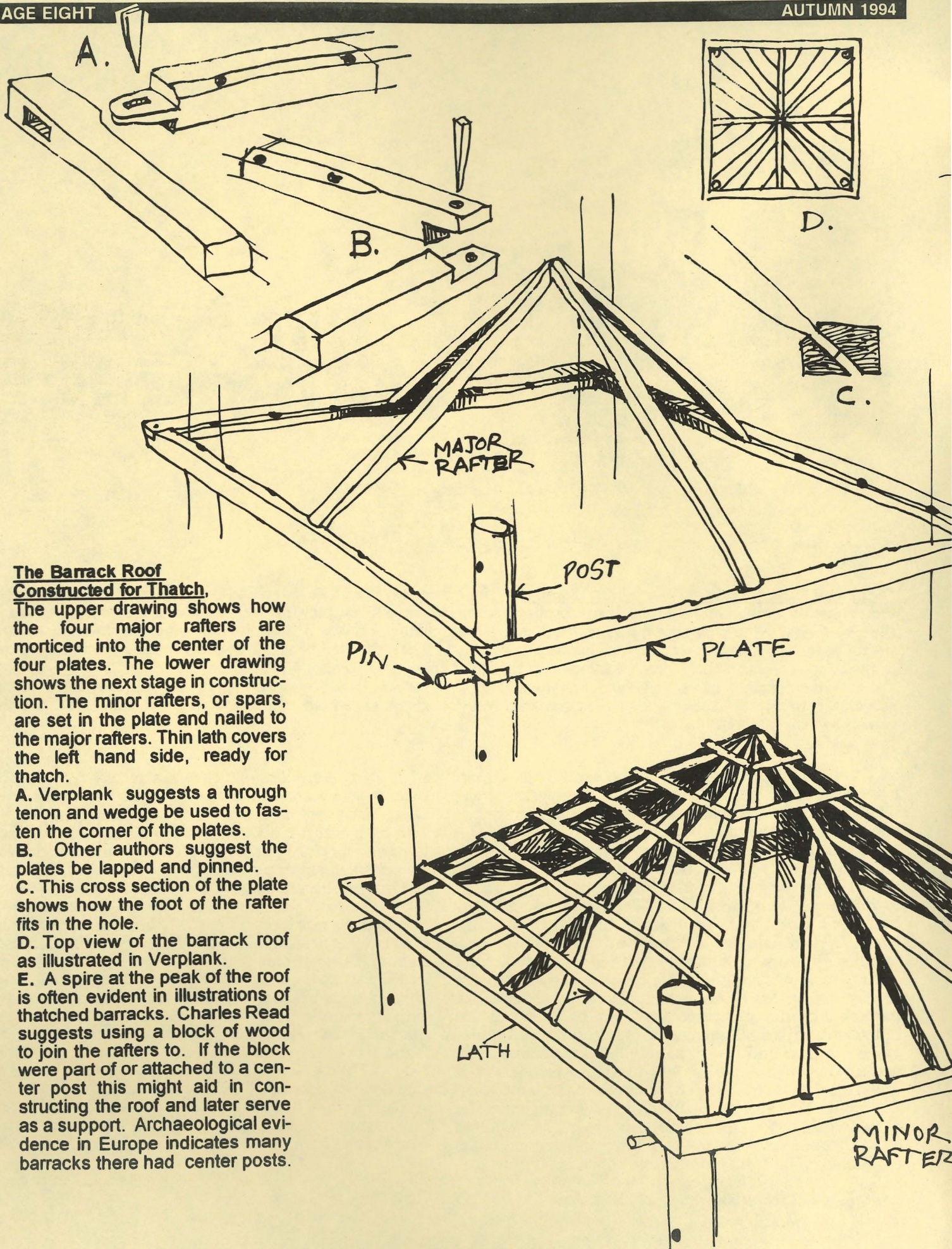
By 1664 and the end of Dutch colonization in the New World, the development of barracks followed separate paths in America and Europe. Early accounts and illustrations from both places indicate that most barracks had thatched hip-roofs and used wooden screws or winding-jacks for raising their roofs.

In America, in the nineteenth-century, the barrack-screw and jack were replaced by a long lever, called a "sweep" and a set of spacers, or "temples," of various lengths. No example of the American barrack-lever has survived but we are able to reinterpret this tool from a photograph published by Wacker and first-hand accounts, collected by McTernan and others.

In recent years several barracks have been built at living history sites as part of their interpretation of historical agriculture. Landis Valley Farm in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, built a four-post thatched barrack in 1970 to accompany a log barn and log house on its pioneer farm. The barrack is presently being re thatched with rye straw. Although written accounts say that thatched roofs last 10 to 15 years, Landis Valley has found five to six years to be a more realistic expectation.

Thatch was gradually abandoned in favor of wood, which was more costly, but also more permanent and less flammable. Still thatch, most often of rye straw, continued to be used for a long time by some Dutch-Americans because it added less weight to the movable roof and was readily available.

(continued on page 8)



The Barrack Roof Constructed for Thatch.

The upper drawing shows how the four major rafters are morticed into the center of the four plates. The lower drawing shows the next stage in construction. The minor rafters, or spars, are set in the plate and nailed to the major rafters. Thin lath covers the left hand side, ready for thatch.

A. Verplank suggests a through tenon and wedge be used to fasten the corner of the plates.

B. Other authors suggest the plates be lapped and pinned.

C. This cross section of the plate shows how the foot of the rafter fits in the hole.

D. Top view of the barrack roof as illustrated in Verplank.

E. A spire at the peak of the roof is often evident in illustrations of thatched barracks. Charles Read suggests using a block of wood to join the rafters to. If the block were part of or attached to a center post this might aid in constructing the roof and later serve as a support. Archaeological evidence in Europe indicates many barracks there had center posts.

(THE BARRACK continued from page 7)

The barrack had a short history in Pennsylvania since the large and familiar stone-end bank barns made them obsolete, but originally all barracks were thatched. Pennsylvania barn-thatching traditions, in which the head of the straw hangs down, have been well documented(7): it can be assumed that these same methods were used on barracks.

The Dutch-Americans may have followed a thatching tradition more like the English, in which the straw is placed with the heads up(8), but we must also look more closely at the barrack roof as it was documented by nineteenth century artists. Peter Kalm wrote in 1747 that the thatch on the barrack roofs of the Hudson Valley was six inches thick, indicating that it was kept light and simple.

Old Bethpage Village, a historic site on Long Island, has reconstructed a four-post barrack with a roof covering of thin verticle boards, a style that eventually replaced thatch on Dutch-American barracks. Bethpage is an outdoor museum of regional architecture that includes an eighteenth century Dutch-American frame house and barn.

The thin vertical planks that replaced thatch on American barracks, also changed the framing of the roof. Since no barrack roofs framed for thatch have survived, we must rely on written, illustrated, and fragmented archaeological evidence to understand how they were built.

Parts of eighteenth-century barrack posts and roof plates with their characteristic hole patterns have survived as reused timbers in nineteenth-century barns in New York and New Jersey. Many of the plate fragments indicate that the base of the rafters did not overlap the plate, as we see in photographs of some reconstructed early barracks in Dutch museums, but were set in angled holes, and that the hole, or mortise, for the center rafter was drilled double in each plate, indicating that on each side there was a major rafter in the center with three minor rafters on either side of it. The design of this rafter system is suggested in a diagram and text of an unpublished manuscript of 1794 by a member of the Verplanck family of Beacon, New York(8), which is now at The New-York Historical Society, a venerable institution, that like the barrack, has recently been threatened with extinction.

The Verplanck manuscript suggests that the farmer build his barrack with four or five corner-posts (9). It gives a list of materials needed, describes the application of thatch, and compares the durability of several grain straws for this purpose. With our newfound evidence of the early Dutch-American barrack, the time seems right for its reconstruction and interpretation.

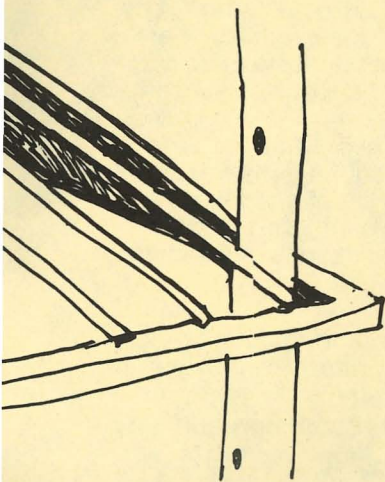
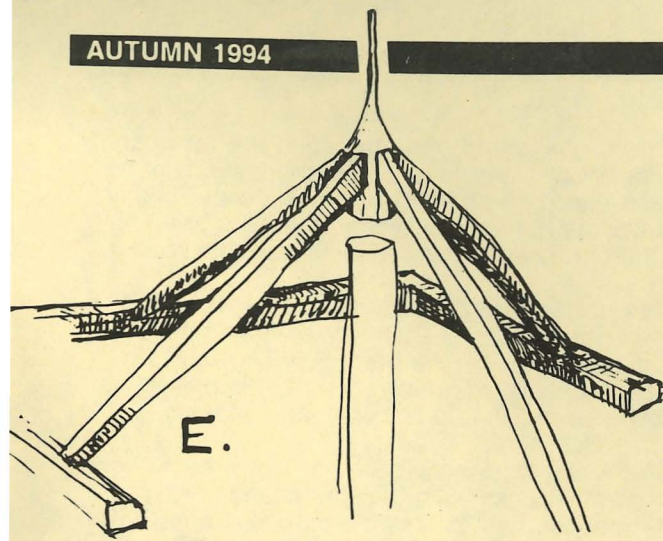


(NOTES on page 10)



Hay Barrack in Hackettstown, New Jersey, 1977. The gable roof became popular on later barracks, which were covered with thin vertical boards. Some had hay tracks like this one to facilitate unloading loose hay from a wagon.

Photograph by D. McTernan

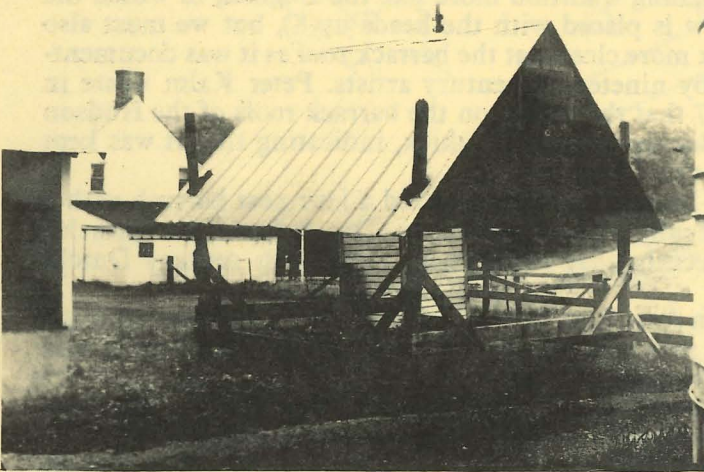


OR SPAR

BARRACK NOTES:

(1) Wood Brick and Stone: The North American Settlement Landscape, Volume 2, by Allen G. Noble, Univ of Mass Press, 1984. Noble indicates barracks have been reported in Iowa, Ohio, and Virginia.

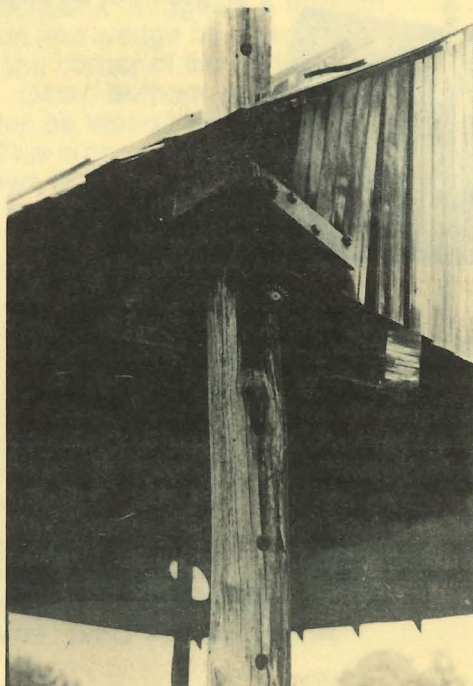
(2) "The 'Helm' in England, Wales, Scandinavia and North America," by W. Haio Zimmermann, Vernacular Architecture Volume 23, 1992



Hay Barrack in Morris County, New Jersey, 1977, (above) The posts of this old building have been considerably shortened by rot; what remains is preserved by being set on stones. The posts were originally set into the ground, which gave them stability. Removing them necessitated the horizontal ties and diagonal braces.

Barrack Post, Warren County, New Jersey, 1977 (below) A reused iron shaft with geared head is set in a hole in the post and through a board behind it on which the roof plates rest.

Photographs by D. McTernan



(3) According to Webster's Dictionary, *barrack*, for housing troops, originally referred to a temporary structure of branches and thatch and later became associated with permanent military housing. A second meaning given for *barrack* is the one used in this article, a movable roof on "four" posts.

The word *barrack* (*barrick*, *baraik*, *barak*, *bargh*, or *bergh*; as written in Ulster County wills) may derive from *berg*, meaning cover. The barrack is known by many names including *ruttenberg* (German) *hooi-berg* (Dutch), *helm* (Swedish and English), and *shot sheuer* (Pennsylvania German).

(4) The barrack is occasionally called a "Dutch barn" because of its association with the Netherlands, but a true Dutch-American barn is an aisle-barn with a nave and low side aisles. It often has a square plan. The frame of the New World Dutch barn is based on the H-bent, like that of the Dutch *Hallehuise*.

(5) "Folk Architecture as an Indicator of Cultural Areas and Cultural Diffusion; Dutch Barns and Barracks in New Jersey," by Peter O. Wacker, Pioneer America Volume 5, Number 2, July 1973

(6) "The Barrack, A Relict Feature on the North American Cultural Landscape," by Donald McTernan, Pioneer America Transactions, Volume 1, 1978.

(7) "Thatching in Pennsylvania," by Robert C. Bucher and Alan G. Keyser, Der Reggeboge, The Pennsylvania German Society, 1982.

(8) Verplanck Farm Book, SHR Transcription, 10, 76-78; The New-York Historical Association. The Verplanck Manuscript of 1794 describes a thatching method using twine and lath that sounds English but does not indicate the direction of the straw. In illustrations of Dutch-American thatched barracks, the covering often seems rough as in photographs of Pennsylvania thatched barns, rather than smooth as on an English thatched cottage. It has been suggested that traditions of Hudson Valley thatching might also have had African input, as The Dutch held slaves.

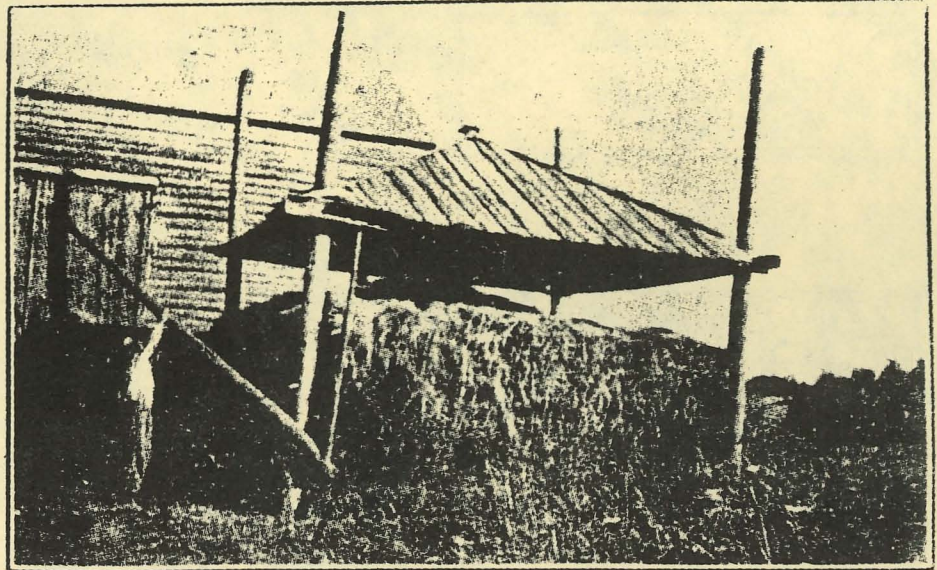
(9) Ploughs and Politicks, edited by Carl R. Woodward Porcupine Press, Philadelphia, 1941, (reprinted 1974), quotes Charles Read of New Jersey, who in 1756 made a case for the advantage of five poles over four. By adding one pole to his four-pole barrack, Read calculated, the farmer increases his storage area ratio from 10 to 16 1/2. Read does not suggest a six-pole barrack, and other than the Van Bergen overmantle painting, there is little evidence for them in America. Six-pole barracks may have been more a symbol of status or affluence than a practical solution.

Charles Read does not describe the rafter system as clearly as Verplanck did, but he does mention that "a block in the middle should be of good wood trimmed to a point & tarred or painted." This kind of center spire is often evident in illustrations of thatched barracks.

Other articles used in this research include, "Barracks," by Alfred L. Shoemaker, Pennsylvania Folklife, Spring 1958; and "The Hay Barrack: A Dutch Favorite," by Roderic H. Blackburn and Shirley Dunn, Dutch Barn Preservation Society Newsletter, Fall 1989.

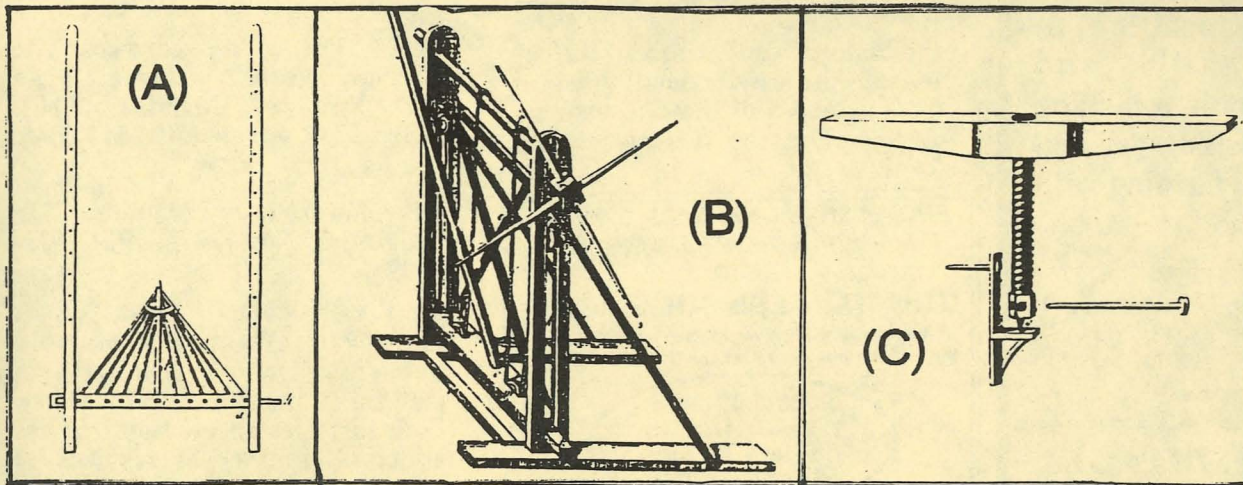
We also want to thank Greg Huber, John Kaufman, Claire Tholl, Steve Miller, David Cohen, Field Horn, among others, for their contributions.

Raising a Barrack Roof in North-western New Jersey, (right)
 From George W. Cummins, *History of Warren County, New Jersey* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1911)



Three Engravings of South Holland Hay Barracks and Parts, (below) From van Berkhey 1811, Volume 10.

(A) Diagram of posts, plate, and rafter. Does the rafter pattern in van Berkhey's illustrations indicate an error on his part, or is the major-minor rafter system an American development?
 (B) A winding jack.
 (C) A screw jack.



Two Four-Pole Hay Barracks, New Jersey, 1977, Barracks were often set as pairs between which a wagon could drive and unload. The exposed rafter system in the far barrack is quite different from that for thatch. Later examples used a number of rafter systems.

Photograph by D. McTernan

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This collection of 55 articles reprinted from back issues of The Chronicle of the Early American Industries Association, is an excellent selection of well researched information for the historian, collector, craftsman and student of material culture. From a short and useful article, "How to Check the Set of an Adze Blade," by Arthur E. Woodley, to longer pieces on the historic wood, tin, and leather trades. The articles detail the tools and processes of these industries, and explore the historic setting

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In 1990, Richard Frisbie bought Hope Farm Press, a 30-year-old publishing business that had specialized in books of local interest, both histories and fiction. He has added a number of reprints of important and hard-to-find books on Hudson Valley history to his catalogue. Among these is the His-

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tory of Indian Tribes of Hudson's River, by E.M. Ruttenber, two volumes of 200 pages each, \$12.95 per volume. First published in 1872 it was little known to people outside the academic world until this reprint.

Frisbie keeps discovering and reprinting gems from our local past, books that were becoming rare and expensive in the used book market and falling to dust on the shelves of public libraries, The Early History of Saugerties, 1660-1825, by Benjamin Myer Brink, published in 1902 and reprinted by Hope Farm in 1992, is one of my favorite local books because the writer is both a historian with a broad understanding of the past and a native who knew first hand the complex geography, simple architecture and ancient lore of his small Hudson Valley community of scattered farms and settlements.

Brink was a writer and genealogist, who at the beginning of our century was saddened to see the old stone farm houses and barns of Saugerties being altered for a new way of life, their traditional form and use forgotten. He preserved some of it in his description of the interior of a traditional house, its kitchen, fireplace and oven, and its cellar stocked with ferkins of butter and barrels of pork.

Hope Farm Press, which keeps the printed books of Ruttenber and Brink alive, is also

entering a new realm of electronic publishing and has made available, for \$5 and \$10, its first three floppy disk titles. One contains sample chapters and indexes of books it publishes. Another contains a large collection of indexes, some never published before, and a Civil War roster of Ulster County. The disks are available at bookstores and to subscribers of three computer services, Compu Serve, America Outline and GENie, which together reach millions of people. Subscribers to these services can purchase the disk or copy the information free. Since April the disks have been copied 500 times, and 35 books from the Hope Farm catalogue sold.

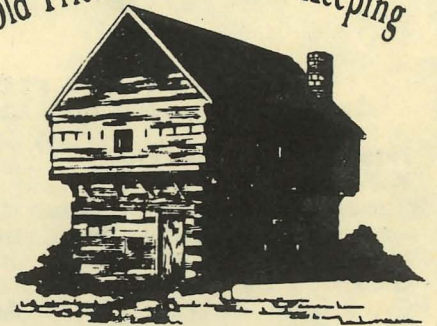
One of the new-age devices that Hope Farm press makes use of is an electronic scanner that can read the written page and translate it to the computer, thus eliminating the tedious work of typing information.

Scanners and floppy disks are technologies that can provide information more quickly and at less cost than conventional book publishing. They will be especially useful to the genealogist and person doing historical research in the future. It is a technology which is opening new opportunities for small market publishing and can eliminate some of our wasteful and unnecessary use of paper. Goodbye twenty pound telephone books.

Peter Sinclair

★★★

Old Friends Are Worth Keeping



Give the Blockhouse a Home

Historic Blockhouse to be Relocated


A group in Stillwater, N.Y. is working to save a blockhouse constructed in 1927 to coincide with the sesquicentennial celebration of the 1777 Battle of Saratoga. The 23 by 32 foot log building was built from parts of the original eighteenth-century fortifications found in the John Neilson barn which was built prior to the Revolution, as well as from planks and logs from other historic buildings then being razed on the battlefield.

In 1975, officials of Saratoga National Historical Park decided the structure was not relevant to the Battle of Saratoga and must be moved from the battlefield. Local citizens voiced protests, arguing that the blockhouse had been the focus of popular attention from the time of its construction. The National Park Service offered the town of Stillwater the blockhouse and moved it to a temporary resting place on a local farm, six miles from Stillwater.

Architecturally, the Stillwater Blockhouse is a composite of regional examples erected in colonial and revolutionary times. An early map of what today is Stillwater shows the outline of a 1758 blockhouse alongside the Hudson River, and it is there on South Hudson Avenue, where the citizens of Stillwater would like to see their blockhouse reerected as a symbol of Hudson River trade, settlement, and defense. They envision it in a park setting with the blockhouse used as a museum to display artifacts and interpret local history.

If you are interested in further information or wish to offer assistance or advise, contact:

The Blockhouse Committee
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**F. Carey Howlett
(804) 220-7076**

November 13, 1994

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Historic Rittenhouse Town, site of America's first paper mill, is holding "Family Papermaking" 1-3 PM. Contact:

**Andrew Zellers-Frederick
(215) 438-5711**

November 27, 1994

Superior, Wisconsin 54880

"History Sunday" The Ojibwa of Lake Superior, 1:00 PM. Call:

**Fairlawn Mansion and Museum
(715) 394-5712**

December 1 to 3, 1994

Lancaster, Pennsylvania

"Days of the Belsnickel," Pennsylvania-German country Christmas, tour and candlelight dinner. Call:

**Landis Valley Museum
(717) 560-0401**

December 1 - 4, 1994

Durango, Colorado

"Log Skidding Workshop" at Rapp's North Ranch. Advanced horse driving skills are required. Contact:

**Jerry Rapp
(303) 247-8923**

December 3, 1994

Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania

"Candlelight Christmas in Chadds Ford" Tour of historic sites and homes cosponsored by Historical Association and Brandywine Battlefield Park Association. Call:

**Susan Hauser
(610) 891-5211**

January 13-15, 1995

Leesburg, Virginia

"Hunt Country Antiques Show" to benefit Otlands Plantation, a property of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Contact:

**Melissa York
(703) 777-3174**

February 4, 1995

Tifton, Georgia

Winter Homecoming, festival of historic food traditions, Shape note and gospel singing; contributions of the African/American culture. Call:

**Agirama, Georgia's LH Museum
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February 26 to 28, 1995

Boston, Massachusetts

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**Andrew Burrell
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"National Agriculture Week Celebration"

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**National Ag Center
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June 17-21, 1995

Hiram, Ohio

"24th Annual Meeting of ALHFAM" The Association for Living Historical Farms and Agricultural Museums will meet at Hiram College and visit two living history sites in the area, Century Village and Hale Farm and Village. Both maintain steam powered sawmills and interpret 19th century rural life. For information about ALHFAM or the conference call:

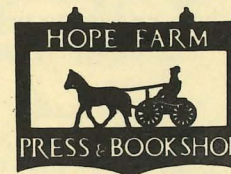
**Andy Baker
(216) 256-2122**

July 15-16, 1995

Avella, Pennsylvania

"The Western Pennsylvania Rural Heritage Festival" will be held in Washington County at Meadowcroft, a 200 acre open-air museum which includes pioneer farming as well as the archaeological interpretation of its rock shelter, an important and perhaps the earliest, 14,000 BC, sites in North America. For further information call:

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The Next Issue of Living History will include articles on historic gardening, corduroy fabric, and blackberries. It will visit Bethpage Village, an open air museum on Long Island, New York, and meet a man there who has been documenting regional architecture for many years.