

JEFFERSON COUNTY
HISTORY CENTER



THE
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JOURNAL

VOLUME 8, 2021

Jefferson County Historical Society

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Mission Statement

Our purpose is to engage people of all ages in the history of Jefferson County. We collect and care for relevant objects, images, and documents, and we invite county residents and visitors to research our materials, interact with our exhibits, take part in our programs, and read our publications in order to encourage an understanding of our past and present and afford a vision for our future.

The Jeffersonian Journal is published once a year. Subscription is by membership in the Jefferson County Historical Society. *The Jeffersonian Journal* welcomes manuscript submissions on a variety of topics involving the history of Jefferson County. Manuscripts should be submitted to the editor in accordance with the Submission Guidelines listed on the inside back cover of this volume.

Visit our website at www.jchconline.org to learn more about the Jefferson County History Center, our mission, and our county's history.

The Jeffersonian Journal

A Publication of the Jefferson County Historical Society

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President's Message

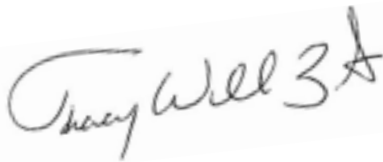
Welcome to the eighth edition of *The Jeffersonian Journal*, continuing our annual collection of articles about the history of Jefferson County and its people. We wish you all a Happy New Year with our 2021 Journal. It has been a second challenging year for staff and Board in continuing to “operate as usual,” and play catch-up, but at least we have been open to the public this year by instituting precautions.

This year, we again present a very diverse and interesting selection of articles. Eric Armstrong gives us a glimpse into the gory story of Brookville’s “Twice Hung Man;” Michael Benigni recounts the days of Brookville’s Sports Hall of Fame; Carole Briggs recounts the celebrations, trials and tribulations of Reynoldsville’s turn of the century Silk Mill; Ken Burkett tells a riveting post-Civil War tale of Brookville’s own Captain Sam Craig; and David Taylor takes us on a tour of some of Brookville’s Historic Churches.

Please settle in for a winter’s night to enjoy a read of this year’s Journal !

We welcome new authors for future *Jeffersonian Journal* editions, especially from throughout the county’s townships and villages, We can all help to preserve and communicate our local history and traditions by contributing articles and continuing our memberships in the Jefferson County Historical Society.

We thank ALL of our members for your continuing support, through your memberships and Annual Giving, without which we could not produce our exhibits, educational programs, fundraising events and publications, including this Journal. YOU make it all possible.

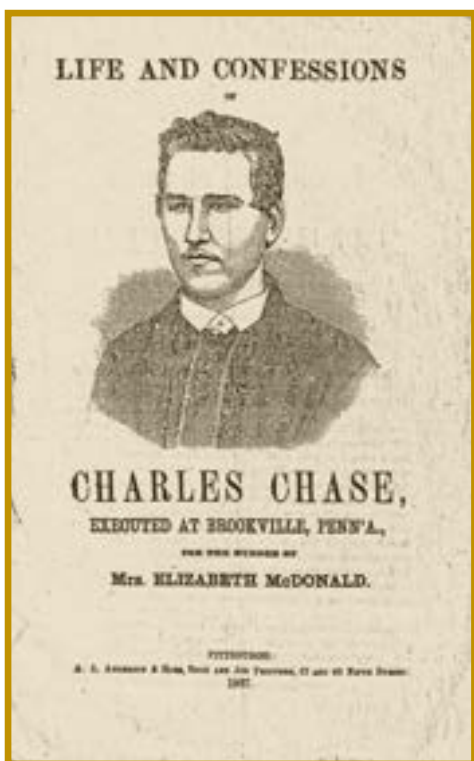
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tracy Zents". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Tracy Zents, President

—KL December 2021

The Story of Charles Chase

Eric Armstrong



“Life and Confessions of Charles Chase” by James Onslow, 1867.

In “This is Hard,”¹ I explored the life of Charles Chase and his confederates. Chase, as many know, was called the “Twice Hung Man”, referring to the gruesome botching of his 1867 execution. But why was he standing on the scaffold in the first place? What string of evidence proved him to be a murderer beyond a reasonable doubt? This was the original intent of my story, which grew in scope when another murder, that of John Doyle, committed the previous year at Titusville, PA, was linked to Chase—also with flimsy evidence.

Twenty-six-year-old Charles Chase was tried and convicted for the February 1867 murder of an elderly widow, Elizabeth McDonald, in her cabin at Rockdale (Beechwoods) in Jefferson County, PA. Chase and his cohort, Warren Graves were both accused of the crime. Graves escaped for a time but Chase was caught the next day and placed in the Jefferson County jail to await trial.²

Chase was a ne’er-do-well—there’s no doubt about that. In his “Confessions,”³ which he supposedly dictated to a Pittsburgh reporter shortly before his hanging, he freely admitted to such activities as passing counterfeit money, bigamy, desertion, cattle stealing and, even murder. But he never confessed to the crime that resulted in his execution. He denied it repeatedly—even on the scaffold. He also denied having any involvement in the 1866 Doyle murder, providing an alibi as to where he was at the time.

Charles Chase was born in 1841 and grew up in Crawford County. He was the son of Luther Chase and Matilda (Graves) Chase.⁴ (Charles and Warren Graves were cousins). Chase, apparently, started his criminal activities at age fourteen, being given counterfeit money to pass by one Zebulon Burdick, who appears continually throughout the story. Chase traveled throughout Western Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, the mid-west and, even into Canada passing his bogus notes. It was not an uncommon practice in the 1850s, one historian claiming that, at that time, there seemed to be more counterfeit money in circulation than genuine.⁵

The Doyle Mystery



John Doyle grave, Oil Creek Township, Crawford County, PA (findagrave.com).

On a Sunday morning in June 1866, John Doyle left his home in Titusville, PA driving north to take a woman friend, Harriet Matteson, to church. They had planned the meeting several weeks before and Doyle decided to cap the visit with a marriage proposal. About three miles from the town Doyle was ambushed and killed. An inquest was held the same day and it was noted that the body showed an oblong hole under the left shoulder and two exit holes on his right side. The assassin was quite close to Doyle as the wad from the gun was found on the road near where he was shot.

The evidence that was available was collected and recorded but nothing seems to have been done to solve the murder until almost a year later when Zebulon Burdick had William Eldred arrested and

charged with “guilty knowledge” of the incident. Burdick, a local saloon keeper, had appointed himself to the position of detective and had, according to his own testimony, spent the past year tracking Doyle's murderer.

William Eldred was twenty-nine at the time of Doyle's murder. He lived on his parents' farm near the Matteson farm. He had known Harriet for about fifteen years and was considered a rival for her hand. [They were later married in 1869].⁶ Because of this he was considered—by Burdick—as a suspect in the crime. Eldred's hearing was held at Titusville in April, 1867. Burdick promised evidence to link Eldred to the crime but had nothing to present.

Eldred was released and, a week later, Burdick was, himself, accused of the crime. He was also dismissed when there was no evidence presented to link him to the murder. At this point Burdick shifted the guilt to Charles Chase, claiming that he was paid to murder Doyle. He had been following Chase for the past year. He had obtained a warrant for his arrest for cattle stealing. He nearly captured Chase on a couple of occasions but Chase remained free until arrested for the McDonald murder.

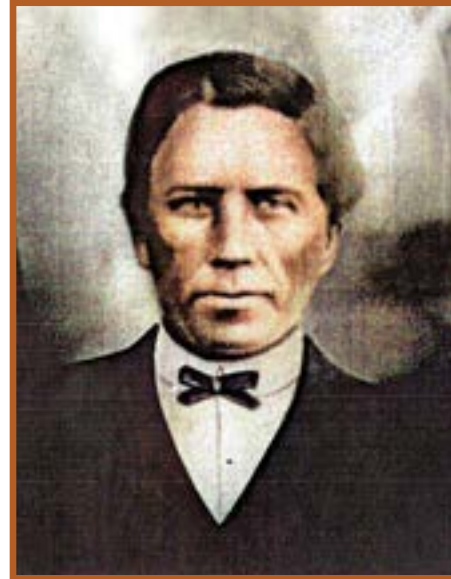


Harriet Matteson, (1845-1930), date unknown. Courtesy of Laurie Foley, Whitefield, NH.

In Chase's "Confessions" he accused Burdick of heading a gang of thieves called the "black leg gang," who engaged in robbing and passing counterfeit money. "Black Leg" was a fatal disease affecting cattle. It's an interesting coincidence that, at the Eldred hearing, a reporter described Burdick as "a little dried up old man ...with army pants on and, with one leg tied up in a blanket he hobbles around on crutches."

The Chase Trial

Chase and his confederate, Warren Graves were moving from place to place in Western New York and Pennsylvania until November, 1866 when Graves was hired by Roderick McDonald (Betty's nephew) to work on his farm and shingle factory at Rockdale. By this time Graves had acquired a Fourteen-year-old wife, a baby daughter and a mother-in-law. McDonald agreed to lodge them all at his house. Chase showed up the next day and McDonald added him to the household. Within a short time, Chase and Graves learned that Seventy-seven-year-old Betty lived alone and was known to keep a large amount of money in her house.



Roderick McDonald, (1822-1913), date unknown.

According to the testimony recorded at Chase's trial, he and Graves broke into Betty's cabin on the evening of February 19 as she was preparing to retire for the night. One person held her and the other struck her with a wooden maul, hard enough to cause instant death. They broke into her chest and took her money (the amount varies from a couple hundred to a couple thousand dollars). Snow was starting to fall and any footprints or other evidence near the cabin were soon covered. Chase and Graves apparently went back to Roderick's farm where Graves stole his best horse and started on a 30 mile ride toward Ridgway. He was seen by several people passing a school house around 9 pm. The snowfall was getting heavier and Roderick's horse gave out about four miles south of Ridgway. Graves walked the rest of the way and arrived in time to catch a 3:50 a.m. westward train. He, eventually made it to Lower Michigan where he had relatives living near Grand Rapids.

Chase, meanwhile, slept in Roderick's barn that night. Some accounts claim that he and Graves were both drunk, Chase, being the worse, was unable to make his escape that evening. He started on foot the next morning, also heading toward Ridgway, but the authorities had learned of Betty's murder and Chase was captured and sent to the (Jefferson) county jail to await trial.

Chase's trial began on May 15, 1867 and lasted four days. It was exhaustively covered in the local paper, which provided a lot of the background for the story. As was popular in the mid-19th century, details of Betty's murder and postmortem examination were

reported in gruesome detail. On top of this, the physician who conducted the original examination was unavailable for the trial so poor Betty had to be exhumed and re-examined. Fortunately—if, indeed, that’s a proper expression—Betty was buried in February when the ground was frozen. Her remains were well preserved when the grave was opened in May. It was reiterated that her death was caused by a single blow to the back of the head.

Chase’s trial in Brookville started four days after Zebulon Burdick’s Titusville hearing concerning the John Doyle murder had ended. It was stated that the authorities in



**Zebulon Burdick, (1818-1889)
unknown date. Ancestry.com.**

Crawford County were very interested in the results of the Jefferson County trial as, by that time, Chase was suspected of killing Doyle and, if he would have been found innocent of the McDonald murder he would have been promptly arrested for trial in the Doyle case, even though the only “evidence” was Burdick’s accusations.

Chase’s trial lasted four days and was held at the new Presbyterian Church on the corner of Main and White Streets. In Brookville—the same location as the present church. The new court house was still under construction and wouldn’t be completed until two years later. Chase was found guilty of first degree murder and sentenced to hang. The verdict was based on purely circumstantial evidence as the only possible witness was Warren Graves who had evaded capture. The most damning evidence was testimony from Graves’s mother-in-law who stated that she overheard Chase and

Graves plotting the crime and that Chase had told her that “he had come to the county without money but would leave it with stamps [sic.] even if there was blood for it.”

Warren Graves had escaped to western Michigan where he was staying with an uncle in Newago County. His whereabouts must have been known at the time of Chase’s trial since his wife arrived there soon after her release at the end of the Chase trial. Graves was arrested in Michigan by a Crawford county man—probably seeking the reward—in mid-September,⁷ but it appears that the Pennsylvania governor did not requisition his return and he was released.

After his trial and conviction, Chase was held in the Jefferson County Jail until his execution date of August 28. Extra guards were hired as the jail was not considered secure and Chase had a reputation for escapes. Chase was stoic and spent his time playing his violin and sleeping. All efforts by clergy to visit Chase were rebuffed until a young lady, Margery Devine, who was educated at the Catholic Academy at St. Marys decided to visit him and get him to repent. She was initially met with a “cold and uncouth reception,” but persisted, and finally got him to agree to embrace the Catholic faith. Chase’s baptism occurred at night in the jail hall two days before his execution. A priest, Father John Koch, was brought from Clarion and the hall of the jail was illuminated by candles, representing

a Catholic altar. The judges, lawyers and principal citizens from Brookville were all present.⁸

Chase reportedly told Miss Devine that he was not guilty of the McDonald murder—that “the real murderer” [*italics mine*] took the money and swore against him to protect his own life. He stated that he had an amount of money hidden and he was going to tell his mother where to find it when they met for the final time.⁹

On the day of his execution Chase rose early. A mass was said by Father Koch. During the morning he took leave of his father and brothers. He dressed in a new suit cap and shoes provided by the county. The town was filled with people who wished to be there even though they were barred from viewing the proceedings. Guards were placed around the jail yard and in windows of buildings that had a view of the gallows.

At 1 pm, Chase was led out the back door of the jail directly onto the scaffold. The floor was carpeted as if that would reduce the grim business that was to occur. The trap was at the far end and Chase was seated while giving a short speech—again reiterating his innocence of the crime. He walked to the scaffold where he was pinioned, the hood was placed over his head and the rope was adjusted. Sheriff Nathan Carrier, who was in charge of the execution, sprung the trap. Chase fell—to the ground. The rope had either been improperly tied and slipped, or broke—depending on the accounts. Carrier and others rushed down and found that Chase had not been seriously injured. They brought him back to the scaffold and seated him in a chair until the rope could be properly adjusted.



Harper's Weekly illustration..

“This is hard” is all Chase was heard to have said. he was, again, placed on the trap and, this time the rope held. His neck was not broken but it was believed that he died quickly. Sheriff Carrier sank into a chair, totally drained. Chase's body was placed in a cherry coffin, described in detail in newspaper accounts, and sent to either Titusville, or Phillipsburg, depending on the newspaper source.¹⁰

Graves is Captured

Warren Graves certainly had heard of Chase's botched execution and knew that the same thing was in store for him—if caught. After his capture and release in September he started living in the nearby woods, staying in an old school house. His wife was in the area, but remained at his uncle's farm, having just given birth to their second child. It's unclear whether the young daughter was with her or had stayed in Pennsylvania with her grandmother.

Late in the evening, on October 24, Sheriff Hiram Walker of Newyago County, Sheriff Bailey of Grand Rapids and two deputies started for the school house where Graves was supposed to be hiding. They left their horses a distance away and surrounded the school. Upon opening a window they found a stove burning but no one there. The group split up, two going back to the house where Graves's wife was living, and Sheriff Walker and Deputy Howe hid in bushes near the school. It was nearly dawn before two men approached. Howe and the Sheriff jumped up and Graves started running. He turned and pointed his rifle at the lawmen but the gun misfired. Howe fired his revolver and Graves staggered. He turned, ran towards them and tried to fire his rifle but it misfired again. The officers soon caught up with him and after a fierce struggle were able to subdue him with several hard blows with a club. Graves asked if they would shoot him right there rather than take him back to Pennsylvania, where he was sure what his fate would be.

Warren Graves went on trial for the murder of Betty McDonald, which started on December 10. He was tried for the same crime, in the same court, with the same judge and attorneys and the same witnesses (except Graves's wife) as was Charles Chase. The outcome seemed predictable. Crawford County was also interested in his trial as Graves was also suspected to have been involved in the Doyle murder.

There was an amount of outrage after Chase's execution. The fact that he continued to declare his innocence—even on the scaffold—led to some question as to his sentence based on the evidence presented. There was also the matter of the botched hanging and the considerable expense to the county for incarcerating and guarding Chase, as well as the costs to build the gallows. These considerable expenses were recorded on a ledger sheet.¹¹ Perhaps the County just didn't want to repeat this spectacle. In any case Graves's jury was given an option not offered during the Chase trial.

There are contemporary accounts that state that Chase and Graves were both highly intoxicated that evening.¹² Chase was so drunk that he couldn't escape after the crime and fell asleep in Roderick's barn. Graves was able to steal a horse and get away. It's not recorded whether their sobriety (or lack thereof) was brought out during Chase's trial but, if so, it didn't affect the outcome. However, at the end of Graves's trial, when Judge Campbell gave his instructions to the jury explaining the definitions for a first or second degree murder conviction, he added an additional point. He stated that if the defendant was proven to be so drunk at the time of the crime that he didn't know what he was doing, the jury could find him guilty of second degree murder, or less. The jury promptly did just that, even though there were no witnesses to testify as to Graves's or Chase's condition at the time of the murder.

On Christmas Eve, 1867 Warren Graves was admitted to Western State Penitentiary at Allegheny, PA (now Pittsburgh's North Side). His sentence was eleven years and eight months in solitary confinement. After nine years and four months Graves's sentence was commuted by the Pennsylvania governor. He moved to Michigan where he was shown to own a farm in the 1900 Federal Census. He died on February 9, 1908 and is buried in Roscommon Township cemetery.¹³

John Doyle’s murder was never solved and the facts of Betty McDonald’s murder were never clarified by witnesses. It’s hard to conclude anything after 150 years, when the only records are newspaper accounts and a hastily written biography. What is interesting—and why I started this research—is the way the justice system worked in those days. Today, with the appeal process, Chase would never have been executed three months after his conviction. He would have been around to testify at Graves’s trial.

It is interesting what the outcome would have been.

¹ Eric Armstrong, *“This is Hard” The Story of Charles Chase, his crimes and accomplices.* Brookville, PA, 2021. Jefferson County History Center.

² “Trial of Charles Chase,” *The Brookville Republican*, May 29, 1867, p.1.

³ James Onslow, *Life and Confessions of Charles Chase*, (Pittsburgh, A. A. Anderson & Sons, 1867). Annotated and reprinted by Eric Armstrong, Brookville, PA, 2021.

⁴ 1850 United States Federal Census, *Ancestry.com* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA; Ancestry.com Operations, Inc.

⁵ Bill Kemp, “Counterfeit money was a major problem in the 1850's,” <https://www.pantagraph.com/news/local/counterfeit-money-was-a-major-problem-in-the-1850s>

⁶ Marriage License of William Eldred and Harriet Matteson, August 18, 1869. *Ancestry.com* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA; Ancestry.com Operations, Inc.

⁷ “State Items,” *Pittsburgh Daily Commercial*, Sept. 21, 1867, p.2.

⁸ “Execution of a Murderer - His “Eleventh Hour” Repentance, *Pittsburgh Weekly Post*, Sept. 7, 1867, p. 6.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 6.

¹⁰ “Execution of Charles Chase—His Last Moments,” *Titusville Herald*, August 30, 1867, p. 1.; “Execution of Chas. Chase,” *Brookville Republican*, Aug. 28, 1867, p. 2.; “Execution of Chase,” *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, Sept. 2, 1867, p.4.

¹¹ Jefferson County Historical Society Archives. (The original document is shown in “*This is Hard*,” pp.34-35.

¹² James Sterrett, *A History of Beechwoods, a Farming and Mining Community in Western Pennsylvania*, (Dissertation, Kent State University, OH, 1970), p.173.
-and-
<http://paoddities.blogspot.com/2016/03/the-hanging-of-charles-chase>

¹³ Warren Dean Graves, Death Records. Michigan Department of Community Health, Division for Vital Records and Health Statistics, Lansing, Michigan.

Ed. Note; “*This is Hard*”, *The Story of Charles Chase, his crimes and accomplices*,” is available from the Jefferson County History Center Gift Shop, and online at jchconline.org.

The Brookville Area Sports Hall of Fame

Mike Benigni

Two articles in the *Jeffersonian Democrat* describe the creation and demise of the Brookville Area Sports Hall of Fame. The first, published on December 22, 1969, describes the group of local sports enthusiasts who met to discuss the possibility of establishing a Brookville Area Sports Hall of Fame, to recognize former great area athletes and others who contributed to sports in general, in managerial, promotional, and other influential capacities. From the beginning, it was decided that the awards would be presented at an annual banquet. The group would begin by soliciting members who had great knowledge and memory of local sports and who were especially enthusiastic about Brookville sports history. Those members would then nominate candidates in late January or early February and vote people into the Hall-of-Fame the following month.¹

In addition to honoring past sports figures, the Hall of Fame would recognize a Sportsman-of-the-Year, and various outstanding historical local teams, as well as presenting various Outstanding Service Awards. In addition, all senior members of major sports teams at Brookville Area High School (BAHS) would be honored. All sports, both high school and independent, would be represented and various other trophies would be awarded.²

The following month, plans were finalized and the organization began soliciting members. Lon Sebring served as the president of the board of directors, Tom “Wizard” White as secretary, and Jerry Matthews as treasurer. Other directors included Charles Cummings, Cud Mumford, Al Lefevre, Bob Means, Dick Pitts, Dr. Fred Philp, and Harry Sowers.³

The first Hall of Fame induction ceremony was held on Tuesday, May 12, 1970 at the Brookville Area High School cafeteria. It was a sellout. Al Lefevre, banquet committee chairman, acted as the master of ceremonies. Lon Sebring, the association president, presented the plaques. Five outstanding former athletes were enshrined: Bob Shawkey, Chuck Taylor, Viola Pollum, Andy Hastings, and Dave Lindermuth. Taylor and Pollum were present at the ceremony, while representatives stood in for the others.⁴

1970: Shawkey, Pollum, Taylor, Hastings, Lindermuth, Grays Dream Team

Bob Shawkey, a native of Sigel, was recognized for his high achievements in baseball. He began his major league baseball career in 1912, pitching for the Philadelphia Athletics for three years. In 1915 he was traded to the New York Yankees, where he remained until 1931. Shawkey was the Yankee’s manager for the 1930 season, the team including baseball legends Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig. Shawkey was starting pitcher for the first game ever played in Yankee Stadium in 1923. Shawkey won 195 games during his career and set the franchise record for 15 strikeouts in a single game, which stood for over 50 years.⁵



Yankees Manager Bob Shawkey with Yankee legends Lou Gehrig (L) and Babe Ruth (R).

Shawkey was unable to appear at the ceremony that first year to accept his award personally, but he did attend the following year, making the trip with his wife from his home in Syracuse, New York. When Shawkey was announced to the crowd, he received a long-standing ovation. When he stood up to speak, the audience grew silent. He recalled many stories of his time playing and managing the Yankees. As he was finishing his speech, Shawkey held up his left hand and showed the crowd a World Series ring. “But this isn’t my ring, Joe DiMaggio gave it to me. It’s one of his and he wanted me to have it.” Shawkey acknowledged he and DiMaggio had become great friends over the years. “Joe DiMaggio is one of the finest persons I have ever met,” Shawkey told the crowd.

“I cherish this ring.” Before leaving the stage, Shawkey turned to the Brookville Little League All-Star Team and smiled. It was reported to be a heartwarming moment.⁶

A lengthy article by local sports writer, Rich Rhoades, appeared in the July 22, 2021, edition of *The Jeffersonian Democrat*, covering additional information on the career of Shawkey, focusing primarily on his year managing the Yankees in 1930.

Viola Pollum, co-owner of the Viesta Ladies Shoppe of Brookville,⁷ won the National Women’s Small-bore rifle championship in 1953. In 1955 she shook more than a few local male egos when she became the first woman to win the NRA Open Small-bore Rifle Prone Championship where she competed against 488 (predominantly male) shooters.⁸



**Viola Pollum in the prone position.
Courtesy JCHS Archives .**

She also won the Remington prize in 1955 and 1956.⁹ In 1962, she won the Women’s Open trophy in the annual Goodyear–Zeppelin small-bore rifle tournament, which she won six times previously.¹⁰ She won many other shooting awards during her career, both at the local and national levels. It was reported that Viola was extremely emotional upon receiving her award.¹¹

Chuck Taylor was an outstanding performer in national and worldwide track and field events. He was a gold medal winner in the World-Wide AAU Championships in 1921. Andy Hastings graduated from Brookville High School in 1912, having earned letters in baseball and basketball, the only sports offered at Brookville at the time. After graduating, Hastings attended the University of Pittsburgh to play football under the legendary “Pop” Warner. He became a blocking back for the undefeated 1916 Panther team. Hastings was an extremely versatile athlete. He became one of only three players to have lettered in four varsity sports in each of his four years at Pitt. Dave Lindermuth was the founder of the Brookville Grays baseball team, which he went on to manage for ten years. He was also a primary force behind Brookville’s night softball project.¹²

During that first annual ceremony, the Brookville Grays “Dream Team” received an award. Members of “The Dream Team” included: Dick Lindermuth, catcher; Glenn “Bogie” Lindermuth, first base; George Chitester, second base; Duane Myers, shortstop; Craig Webster, third base; Walter Simpson, leftfield; Gordon Carlson, centerfield; Bill Nosker, right field; Chet Marshall, right-hand pitcher; Glenn Lindermuth, left-hand pitcher; and Glenn Lindermuth, All-Time Player. Dick Fenstermaker, Brookville Area High School basketball star, was named “Sportsman-Of-The-Year. James Bruno, Charles Phillips, and Albert Zufall received Distinguished Service Awards.¹³

1971: Lindermuth, Morrison, Bressler, Barnett, Lefevre, McKinley, 1933 Football

The 1971 awards ceremony was also held at the BAHS cafeteria and was sold out weeks in advance. Jerry Matthews, Brookville Telephone Company manager, acted as Master-of-Ceremonies. The inductees included: Glenn “Bogie” Lindermuth, Emmet Morrison, Rube Bressler, and Joe Barnett. Lindermuth was elected for his baseball credentials, both in the Minor Leagues and in independent circles in the Brookville area.

Morrison was elected to the shrine for his basketball and baseball career at Brookville High School and the University of Pittsburgh. Bressler was awarded for his “fine career in Major League Baseball,” particularly with the Cincinnati Reds. Barnett, often referred to by the sobriquet “the father of Brookville football,” was elected for his coaching accomplishments at Brookville High School from 1929-1936. He was also a top independent athlete in baseball and basketball during that time. Head high school football coach Al Lefevre was named Sportsman-of-the-Year. Dr. Wayne McKinley was presented the “Distinguished Service” Award at the ceremony.

Also honored was the 1933 Brookville High School Football Team for being the first undefeated team in Brookville history and winning the Jefferson County Championship. The 1971 ceremony may have been the high point of the organization in popularity and enthusiasm. Moreover, the recipients’ speeches were reported to be extremely emotional, and each praised the organization for the attention and recognition given to the younger athletes. There were an extraordinary number of independent awards presented during the evening, representing a wide spectrum of different sports and demographics. It was noted Shawkey was swamped by autograph seekers before and after the banquet.¹⁴

1972: Lucas, Mori, Philips, 1927 Basketball Team

BAHS again hosted the 1972 awards, with Charles Erhard of radio station WPME acting as Master-of-Ceremonies. Carl “Beany” Lucas, Wade Mori, and Charles Philips were inducted into the Hall that May evening.

Lucas was honored for his many organizational and promotional activities in local baseball. Mori, locally famous as a football player, graduated from Brookville High School in 1937. For three years he was an Honorable Mention All-American football star at Penn State where he played as a guard. He was voted to the All-East team his senior year at Penn State. Philips was recognized for his many activities surrounding a wide variety of Brookville High School sports for 32 years, including coaching football, basketball, track, cross-country, and softball teams. The 1927 Brookville Area Basketball Team was honored in the team category, with local sportswriter Tom White presenting the award.¹⁵



**The 1927 Brookville Area High School Basketball Team.
BAHS Echo Yearbook 1927.**

1973: Malacarne, Chilcott, Steele, Turner

Guido Malacarne and John Chilcott were the honorees at the 1973 ceremony, with Lon Sebring, President of the Association, presenting the awards. Both men were greeted with standing ovations and were humble in their acceptance speeches. Malacarne was a former All-Time Clarion State College football player and also starred in baseball at Clarion.

Chilcott was a legendary Brookville High School Basketball coach. In addition to his coaching accomplishments, Chilcott played on the Penn State basketball team in 1940 and 1941. He also played basketball and baseball when in the military from 1942 to 1945, in addition to being active with the Brookville Grays from 1946 to 1954.

Vance Steele, a native of Sigel, was named the recipient of the 1973 “Distinguished Service” Award for his lifelong contribution to Sigel baseball and other sporting activities.

Les Turner, Head Wrestling Coach at Brookville Area High School, was announced as the recipient of the “Sportsman-of-the-Year” Award. Turner had coached the wrestlers to the best season in Brookville history that year with a 13-1 record. The 1940 BAHS Basketball Team was presented with framed certificates as the year's "Honored Team of the Past.”¹⁶

1974: Albert E. Zufall, Dr. Walter Dick, Silvis, McManigle 1951 Football Team

Albert E. Zufall and Dr. Walter Dick were enshrined at the 1974 ceremony with President Lon Sebring presiding. Zufall was honored for his contributions to a wide variety of Brookville sports, including establishing Brookville Little League baseball, the JC Basketball League, and The Northwestern Pennsylvania Independent Basketball Tournament (NWPIBT). The present Little League park is named after him, “Zufall Field.” He retired as Chairman of the NWPIBT in 1974, after having served in that position for twelve years.

Dr. Dick was extremely active in sports his entire life. He conceived the idea of the swimming and recreational area that became “The Walter Dick Memorial Park.” It was noted that Dr. Dick was one of Brookville’s most ardent scholastic sports boosters. Dr. Dick was also extremely active in the local basketball scene, coaching several YMCA teams, the high school team, and acting as team physician. He also served on the NWPIBT Committee, and the annual tournament was held in his memory.¹⁷

Neil Silvis and Larry McManigle received the “Distinguished Service” Awards in 1974 and Tom White received the “Sportsman-of-the-Year” Award. Silvis was honored for the work he’d done for the Brookville Area Little League and the VFW Teener League. McManigle had just retired as head basketball coach at Brookville Area High School, a position he had held for 15 years. White had been a local sportswriter for many years and was extremely active in promoting local sports and athletic organizations. The 1951 Brookville High School Football Team was recognized as the “Honored Team of the Past.” Al Lefevre and Tom White served as Masters of Ceremonies for the event.¹⁸



Plaque presented to Albert Zufall in 1974. Courtesy JCHS Archives,

1975: Steele, Clark, Davis, Cummings, Elder, 1948 Sigel H.S. Basketball Team

The names of Vance Steele and Richard “Dick” Clark were enshrined at the 6th annual Awards Dinner in 1975. Steele was a native of Sigel and was recognized for his many managerial promotional activities, primarily in baseball and basketball. Clark spent fifteen years playing professional baseball, starting in 1906, for many teams in a wide variety of Minor League organizations. Following his years in the Minor Leagues,

Clark returned to Brookville where he played on the only professional team in Brookville's history.

Scott Davis, junior wrestler for Brookville Area High School, was the recipient of the 1975 "Sportsman-of-the-Year" Award. Charles Cummings and Bill Elder received "Distinguished Service" Awards. Davis won that year's District 9 155-Pound Wrestling Championship and also the Northwest-Central Regional 155-Pound Championship. Cummings was instrumental in establishing the Brookville Area Little League and was involved in numerous area sporting activities. Elder was the assistant football coach at BAHS and also the junior high wrestling coach and assistant track coach. The 1948 Sigel High School Basketball Team was that year's "Honored Team of the Past."¹⁹

1976: Carlson, Deemer

The final year for which we have archival records is the 1976 ceremony when Gordon "Fuzzy" Carlson and Alexander D. Deemer II were elected. Carlson was recognized primarily for his many years playing baseball for the Brookville Grays. His baseball career began at the age of fifteen when he played for Albion of the Shawmut League. He was voted to the centerfield position on the Brookville Gray's "Dream Team" by readers of *The Brookville American*.

Alex Deemer was celebrated for his life-long participation in sports. He was a star in basketball and track at BAHS. He held the Jefferson County Pole Vault record for many years. He was a member of the Duke University track and swimming teams. Deemer won a place as an alternate on the 1932 United States Olympic Team in the high hurdles. In swimming, he held the Southern Conference records in the 50 and 100-yard freestyle events. Perhaps his most impressive accomplishments though were in the field of speed boat racing, for which he won many national awards and set numerous records.²⁰

"Tom White Remembers"

While searching through the History Center archives while researching this article, I came across a column by the venerable sports writer Tom White. In the column he reminisces about the time he spent serving on the board of directors of the Brookville Area Sports Hall-of-Fame in the 1970s. White was also curious about the possibility of reestablishing the organization if sufficient interest were shown in the local community. He mentioned how hard those involved with the organization worked, and mused that the directors were a victim of their own zealotry. White mentioned that their biggest mistake was having done "too much too quickly, and we simply ran out of qualified nominees." Because of this, White noted, interest waned and finally the organization came to an end. He ends his column on a hopeful note: "Enough time has passed and there are now many qualified people who deserve distinction." It is interesting to speculate, almost a half century later, what names may be included if the organization were to be reestablished.²¹

¹ "Hall-Of-Fame Association Being Organized: Membership Is Sought." *Jeffersonian Democrat*, Dec. 22, 1969.

- ² “Plans Made to Establish Brookville Hall-of-Fame,” *Newspaper unknown*, Nov. 24, 1969,
- ³ Tom White. “Tom White Remembers the Brookville Sports Hall of Fame,” *Jeffersonian Democrat*, January 13, 2000.
- ⁴ “Five Inducted into Hall-of-Fame Shrine,” *Jefferson Democrat*, May 14, 1970, and “Five Individuals To Be Inducted Into ‘Hall of Fame ‘ Tuesday Night,” *Newspaper unknown*, May 11, 1970.
- ⁵ Stephen V. Rice. “Bob Shawkey,” *Society For American Baseball Research*. <http://www.sabr.org/bioproj/person/bob-shawkey.html>
- ⁶ Tom White. “Local Baseball Legend Pitched Historic Days at Yankee Stadium.” *Jeffersonian County Neighbors*, Sept. 28, 1996 and “Fame Electees Inducted Into Shrine.” May, 13, 1979.
- ⁷ “Viola E. Pllum,” *Newspaper Unknown*, September 21, 1995.
- ⁸ “Archives: Women Can Shoot!” <https://nrawomen.com/content/archives-women-can-shoot>
- ⁹ “Remington Trophy.” *NRAExplore, National Rifle Association*. <https://competitions.nra.org/media/8163/tro-047-remington.pdf>.
- ¹⁰ Annotated photograph, *The Brookville American*, July 23, 1962.
- ¹¹ “Five Inducted...”
- ¹² “Five Inducted...” and “David Lindermuth Dies at 53 Years,” *Newspaper and date unknown*; and Bartley, Randy. “Greatest Athlete, Andy Hastings, Nearly Forgotten” *Brookville American*, Jan. 19, 1988.
- ¹³ “Five Inducted...” and “Five Individuals...”
- ¹⁴ “Fame Electees Inducted Into Shrine,” *Jeffersonian Democrat*, May 13, 1971.
- ¹⁵ “Mori, Phillips, And Lucas Are Elected to Hall-of-Fame” *Jeffersonian Democrat*, May 24, 1972.
- ¹⁶ “John Chilcott And Guido Malacarne Elected To Sports Hall-Of-Fame,” *Jeffersonian Democrat*, May 10, 1973, and “Malacarne and Chilcott Inducted Into ‘Fame.’” *Newspaper and date unknown*.
- ¹⁷ “Al Zufall, Dr. Dick Hall -of-Fame Dinner Held Monday Night at BAHS Cafeteria,” *Newspaper Unknown*, May 16, 1974, and “Albert Zufall, Dr. Dick Elected to ‘Fame’.” *The American* April 15, 1974.
- ¹⁸ “Al Zufall, Dr. Dick Hall-of-Fame Dinner Held Monday Night at BAHS Cafeteria,” *Newspaper Unknown*, May 16, 1974,
- ¹⁹ “Many Awards Presented At Hall-Of-Fame Dinner,” *Newspaper Unknown*, May 8, 1975, and “Richard ‘Dick’ Clark, Vance Steele Elected to Hall-of-Fame,” *Newspaper Unknown*, April 15, 1975.
- ²⁰ “Carlson and Deemer Elected To Hall-Of-Fame,” *Brookville American*, May 3, 1976.
- ²¹ “Tom White Remembers The Brookville Sports Hall of Fame.” *Jeffersonian Democrat*, January 13, 2000.

Editors' Note: Citations modified per editors.

The Brookville Area High School Hall of Fame was established in 2018 via promotion of school board director John Pozza to recognize and celebrate the positive accomplishments and contributions of Brookville Area High School alumni, employees, coaches or volunteers for outstanding achievement in their chosen field, leadership, the arts, athletics, and community service. Honorees are selected from a field of nominees by the Hall of Fame Selection Committee comprised of anonymous members.

Some 42 years after the Brookville Sports Hall of Fame ended, it is encouraging to see that several distinguished women have now been recognized by the new BAHS Hall of Fame, whereas Viola Pollum apparently was the lone woman ever to receive the Brookville Sports Hall of Fame award during its 6 year stint, to our knowledge.

-Eds.

Smooth as Silk! No!

Carole A. Briggs

One Christmas I enlisted a granddaughter to play a Reynoldsville silk mill worker in a vignette I wrote for a walking tour. The setting was Amelia Henderson’s millinery shop in Brookville, December 1901. Two young girls entered the shop and asked for ribbon to trim an old hat of their mother’s. Soon Mrs. Henderson was asking them about the silk mill.

AH: You work for the Enterprise Silk Company in Reynoldsville? I get some of my trimmings from them.

Maggie: I did work there until those three folks from Paterson came and my union called the strike last Labor Day. When they told us what they were making in Paterson—and about their working conditions—why, I’m strong and a hard worker but I says to myself—Maggie Goss, why shouldn’t you be working only 55 hours a week like the girls in Paterson?

Many young women and girls, and young boys, too, had looked forward to working for the Enterprise Silk Company. A job at the mill offered these young people a paycheck, new skills, and when workers struck in 1901, the knowledge that in union there is strength. Would this new venture succeed? Would it change their lives?



Postcard, Silk Mill, Reynoldsville, Pa. Courtesy JCHS Archives.

Prosperity Has Come!

On a mild October day in 1888, Louis Teweles and Adolf, Emil, Joseph, and William Openhym filed papers in Paterson, New Jersey, to build a mill. Each man put up \$4,000, and soon the Enterprise Silk Mill was in operation.¹

It flourished, and ten years later, when mills began to appear in Pennsylvania, the five men decided to open a mill in Reynoldsville. *The Star* announced, “Prosperity Has Come!”²

Within days of the announcement, a civil engineer from Punxsutawney surveyed the ten acre plot of land south of town which the Reynoldsville Land Improvement Company had purchased from the Central Land and Mining Company and given to the company.³ Plans were posted at a local drug store and citizens raised \$50,000 for the company.⁴ The two-story brick building would be 330 x 46 feet and house 200 looms. An annex would contain offices, the boiler house, and stock room, and two 70-foot smokestacks would rise nearby. Sometimes referred to as the American Silk Company (the parent company), the building would cost \$100,000 and provide an annual payroll of \$200,000. The expected completion date—August first.⁵

That spring workers laid the foundation and began work on a new railroad siding, with the expectation that twenty-five carloads of machinery would arrive via the new siding by the end of August.⁶ People could see progress, and when the local editor began a column headlined “Silk Mill Notes,” they could read about it, too.⁷ As completion neared, workmen unloaded and installed thirty carloads of looms, and unloaded a shipment of silk.⁸ They installed one-hundred-sixty green-painted looms and one-thousand electric lights. It was time to train the workers.⁹

The company had received more than 900 applications, sometimes more than thirty-five applications a day, and hired “200 girls and 100 men.”¹⁰ They would be trained as loom-fixers, weavers, Swiss warpers, winders, quillers, pickers, and twisters. Mrs. Charles Cooper and Miss May Munsheimer arrived and began training young women and girls as weavers and warpers.¹¹ Catherine, Margaret, and Annie Williams were in their twenties when they became warpers and learned to stretch the warp threads back and forth so that weaving can begin. Elise Deemer and another, Annie Williams, were in their teens when they became weavers, as were six girls from Rathmel. Fourteen-year-old Mary McCarthy learned to operate a machine that wound thread onto a small spool and became a quiller, as did Frances Ruth, who by January had been promoted to head that department.¹² Others were trained as winders, pickers who removed threads and lint from the finished cloth, and twisters who operated machines that twisted threads together.

“Black John Ex-Loom Fixer” was the pseudonym of a person who wrote columns in *The Star* during 1898 and 1899. He revealed only that he’d become a sweeper in a mill somewhere when he was ten, then a quiller, and by fourteen was a weaver. Shortly after the mill opened, he commented at length about the importance of a profession for females:

Since I have been working in silk mills I never saw so much eagerness on the part of young girls to learn the complicated art of weaving....Nowadays, in the time of hard competition and daily struggle for life, it is good that everybody, and girls, should have a trade to insure them in case of hard necessity. How many times have I seen young operatives, after a stay of some four or five years at the mill, leaving same for some other calling, or better to fill the position of a happy housewife, all at once meet with some unexpected and undeserved reverses or affliction and had to return to the mill in order to keep the wolf from the door....

Work at the mill affords the young operative more freedom and security than any other calling...

The learning of a trade for a young girl nowadays has become as imperative as a life insurance to the far-seeing saving man and it is when she is young that she should learn....¹³



**Interior of Reynoldsville Silk Mill, showing looms and workers, c. 19xx.
Courtesy Reynoldsville Historical Society.**

Men and boys were trained as loom fixers, workers who could look at the finished fabric and determine what adjustments or repairs were required on the loom. They would set up, adjust, and eventually repair the 200 looms in the factory.

Nearly all of the new employees were American-born. Timber had enticed the first settlers to the Reynoldsville area, and seams of bituminous coal in the Lower Freeport Coal Bed and the completion of the railroad kept them there and attracted others.¹⁴ Reynoldsville's 1880 population of 1,410 had more than doubled by 1898.¹⁵ Most men worked in the mines, farmed, or were day laborers, and most had been born in Pennsylvania but some had arrived from Wales, Scotland, England, Ireland, Germany, and Italy, and they were foreigners—foreigners who caused trouble.

“No class of people make so much expense for the state and local governments as the foreigners who work for the mines and big plants of various kinds where unskilled labor is a prominent factor. They get into the police courts, into jail, into all sorts of scrapes that entail costs, they have to be taken care of when times are hard, their children must be sent to school, and in one way or another they add more than a fair proportion to the public burden.”¹⁶ There would be no foreigners among the “200 girls and 100 men” hired to work in the new silk mill.¹⁷

The silk mill formally opened on October 17, 1898, when thousands toured the building and listened to speeches by dignitaries. Prosperity had indeed come to Reynoldsville.¹⁸ “The mill is a monument to local enterprise and push, and no town ever felt prouder of an institution than does Reynoldsville of her silk manufactory.”¹⁹

By mid-November, eighty-five women and girls were operating 107 looms, by mid-December, 130 looms.²⁰ Some operated two looms at one time.

The new weavers have become quite familiarized with their looms and are no longer afraid of them, as is generally the case with all new hands. Some who could hardly turn out two or three yards at the beginning do not now think much now about weaving eleven to twelve yards, and well woven at that. Running a loom is more familiar for them than running a sewing machine. Many of the best weavers will be entrusted with a second loom.²¹

New looms continued to be unloaded from the adjacent railroad siding, and May Munsheimer continued to train young women and girls to operate them.

Winter arrived along with sickness. January and February issues of the *Reynoldsville Star* were filled with comments about the grip or gripe, the common term for influenza. Loom fixer Thomas Mulvina died shortly after Christmas, and May Munsheimer was home for a week.²²

New employees arrived and production increased. Then strong winds on a Saturday in mid-January “totally destroyed 90 feet of the second story, leveling the walls even to the second floor, and tore out the southwest corner of the building down to the foundation.”²³ More than 200 people were in the building, but none were seriously injured. “W. C. Blankenship, a one-legged twister, who was working near the west side of the second floor, had the narrowest escape of any. He was caught between the frame of the machine he had been working on and the brick wall. When he extricated himself he went to the back stairs in his excitement and finding the stairs obstructed, he jumped down to the first floor.”²⁴ By Monday, the plant was operating while repairs were underway.

Inclement weather delayed repairs to the building, but weaving continued and orders were shipped out. “Black John” wrote in March that 275 persons were now working the 285 looms, then stopped writing his *Silk Mill Notes*.

Life went on, but out of view, things were happening. Families of miners and families of silk mill workers often lived side-by-side. In some instances, like the Huffmans and Winfreds, fathers worked in the mines and daughters worked at the silk mill, so conversations about wages and strikes would not have been uncommon.

In Union There Is Strength

The Saturday before the Fourth of July, miners had held a mass meeting in Prescottville.

The first recorded strike in the United States occurred in 1786 in Philadelphia when printers opposed a wage cut, and then in 1835, there was a general strike to limit the workday to ten hours.²⁵ Employers agreed to a minimum wage of \$6 per week. Philadelphia newsboys struck in 1844.²⁶ Members of forty trades, from bluestone cutters and flaggers to tin and slate workers, conducted forty strikes for higher wages in 1866.²⁷ About half succeeded. Workers continued to organize and look out for themselves, and by 1881, Samuel Gompers had organized the American Federation of Labor (AFL), bringing trade unions together under one umbrella.²⁸

Clarence Stephenson had moved to Reynoldsville as a young boy, learned the newspaper business from the bottom up, and published the first edition of *The Star* on May 11, 1892. The masthead described his paper as “an independent local paper.... Non-political, will treat all with fairness, and will be especially friendly with the laboring class.”²⁹ The community thought highly of him.³⁰

In late September of 1897, *The Star* reported that Reynoldsville and Rathmel miners had met again in Prescottville.³¹ A committee of miners had been sent to Pittsburgh to check wages in the area and reported that “prices that have been paid in the Pittsburgh* region, so far as the past is concerned, have been less than we have been receiving...” Thomas Haggerty was one of thirteen committee members who signed the report as did Lucius Robinson, a representative of the Rochester and Pittsburgh Coal Company. Haggerty, a Scotsman and miner in Eleanora, a community south of Reynoldsville, had become a labor organizer for the United Mine Workers in 1895. Two years later, he was elected president of the Checkweighman Association.³² [*Pittsburgh was spelled “Pittsburg” between 1891 and 1911].

When the windstorm had destroyed ninety feet of the silk mill’s second floor in mid-January of 1899, Stephenson headlined the article, “Destructive Gale!” Injuries were minimal but some workers were temporarily out of work.³³ He had also printed the letter to the editor from the Press Committee of the silk mill workers thanking community members in Reynoldsville and Dubois and several unions in the area for contributions totaling \$141.20 (\$4,380 today).³⁴ A sense of community was growing among workers in the area.

Stephenson continued to report on strikes—strikes by railroad workers, steelworkers, miners, and even newsboys.

On March 22, 1899, “Black John” wrote that new working hours would begin after Easter—6:45 am to 6:30 pm five days a week with one hour for dinner and 6:45 am to 1 pm on Saturday—a workweek of sixty hours. Workers objected and walked out at 6 pm on April 3rd.³⁵ Work hours reverted to 7 am to 6 pm six days a week—a workweek of sixty hours.

Less than a month later, workers struck again. Fifty walked off the job on May 1st, claiming that a one cent per yard payment had been removed. The company maintained that the

one cent per yard payment had been a training incentive. Workers also claimed they were not being paid what other silk workers in the state were being paid. The strike did not last long, but when workers returned to work, they began to talk about organizing a Textile Workers Union.³⁶

Early in 1900, United Mine Workers (UMW) organizer Thomas Haggerty had purchased a home in Winslow Township and moved into it with his wife, five daughters, and two sons.³⁷ That summer, he visited Stephenson's office with a copy of the resolutions passed at the United Mine Workers meeting in Clearfield. One resolution assessed miners fifty cents each month to aid striking Maryland miners.³⁸ Stephenson printed the letter on page four and on page five described the many meetings Haggerty and fellow organizer Daniel Young were leading throughout the area.

In March of 1901, six local workers accompanied Haggerty to the United Mine Workers convention in Altoona.³⁹ Two months later in May of 1901, an anonymous "Francis" wrote a letter to the editor that listed the many unions that existed in the area. "A number of local unions had been organized in Reynoldsville. The silk workers were the first to organize. They formed a local of the Textile Workers of America."⁴⁰ Francis went on to list barbers, bartenders, trainmen, glass workers, retail clerks, and members of the United Mine Workers and added his hope that "they would all be as one."

A mass meeting of miners occurred at the end of June.⁴¹ Interest grew when Haggerty announced that labor leader "Mother Jones" would speak at Reynoldsville's Frank Park on July 5. A large group of tradespeople came but Mother Jones did not appear. Instead, Haggerty, who was now not only a national organizer for the AFL but also a National Organizer for the Federation of Labor, spoke to the group.⁴²

With the silk mill workers, now formally organized as the Textile Workers Union Local No. 250, and both Haggerty and Young working on behalf of the trade union, arrangements were made for three silk mill workers from Paterson to arrive in August "to get employees of the silk mill at this place out on a strike for higher prices on work."⁴³ *The Star* reported they "were not successful," however, probably unknown to Stephenson, the silk mill workers had sent their demands to the company on August 27th, requesting a response by August 31st. The company refused their request for a twenty-percent increase in wages and a workweek of fifty-five hours.

Strike !

Labor Day arrived along with inclement weather, so the usual parade and other activities were somewhat diminished, nevertheless, the Keystone Band led a large parade of tradespeople to Centennial Hall, where they listened to speeches delivered by labor leaders, including Thomas Haggerty. A dance ended the day.

There was no formal declaration of a strike but many workers did not show up for work on the morning after Labor Day.⁴⁴ On Wednesday, when they reduced their demand to ten

percent, it was refused. The company responded that wages were comparable to those paid at other mills.⁴⁵

Editor Stephenson reported each side's story. Workers demanded a 20% increase in wages and a 55-hour workweek, claiming they were paid one-half of what workers in Patterson were paid. The company claimed that wages were comparable to wages elsewhere and that the workers' demands were "enormous."⁴⁶

Summer turned into fall and the strike went on. Days were warm, evenings cooler, and the silk mill continued to function with forty-eight non-union employees. When thirty-four-year-old J. B. Storms left the mill, Shelby Shaffer, "one of the boys out on strike," spelled out S-C-A-B, and a scuffle ensued. Storms waived a hearing and Shaffer and Thomas Burns, a fourteen-year-old weaver, were each fined \$3 (nearly \$100 today) for making insulting remarks. Three other boys, two of them age sixteen, were also charged.⁴⁷ Storms supported a household of six. A month later, seventeen strikers were arrested and charged with disturbing the peace.⁴⁸

Tempers continued to rise. Company officials came and went. Strikers had meetings, and Sheriff Chesnutt assigned nine deputies to Reynoldsville. Organizer George Tucker spoke to union members, "Each decade of our history shows greater production of wealth, and the men who produce it have less to show for it."⁴⁹

Cold weather arrived, and Enterprise's president, Albert Stern from New York, coerced a dozen company stockholders to have citizens distribute handbills inviting people to a public meeting December ninth. The meeting's purpose—to appoint a committee to find out the scale of wages paid to silk workers in other silk mills—which was not appointed.⁵⁰

Two days later as the morning brightened, Thomas Haggerty and George Thomas led the Reynoldsville and Sykesville brass bands, miners, and trade unionists down Main Street to Fifth Street where they turned and went to the silk mill with flags and banners flying. They marched to Centennial Hall, filled it to overflowing, with others outside. Resolutions passed and leaders accepted offers of support. Passions rose to a high pitch and a riot ensued. The sheriff's men arrested over fifteen men, including Thomas Haggerty, George Thomas, John Mulligan, and John Friel, who were all arraigned and charged with assault and battery before a Brookville squire. Bail was set at \$3000 (\$93,000 today) and a trial was set for January.⁵¹

The following week, the editor declared that the two sides were "farther apart now than they were when the strike started.... We believe arbitration is a fair way of settling disputes...."⁵²

Between Christmas and New Year's, Enterprise's vice-president, S. Silverman, met with union leaders to work out terms for arbitration. The company asked that work resume, that workers be reinstated, that each side would appoint an arbitrator, and that wages in other companies be explored. The union asked that wages of mills outside Pennsylvania be

included, a ten percent advance, and that twenty employees who continued to work be fired. The company refused, Silverman returned to New York City, the strike continued, and editor Stephenson included an article that described wage increases of 12 -15% for silk mill workers in Patterson, New Jersey.⁵³

Stephenson chose to repeat each side's demands in *The Star* the following week, making sure the public was well aware of the issues at stake. He also reported that "three young ladies" had chosen to go to jail for six days rather than pay the fine when charged with "spelling and pronouncing the word *scab* in front of non-union workers who continued to work at the mill."⁵⁴

The next Wednesday at the train station, an improvised quartet entertained a large crowd with "Break the News to Mother," as they waited for the 6:15 p.m. train from Brookville. When the three jailbirds—Maggie Bolger, Mary Ross, and Mary Kerr appeared, they were "hustled into a two-seated sleigh" and escorted up Main Street amidst the glare of red lights, the brass band playing "See the Conquering Heroes Come," and the cheers of the crowd that marched along.⁵⁵

Two days later, "Mother Jones" arrived. Known as the "Queen of the mines," Mary Harris Jones was born in Ireland in 1803. The family left the country during the Potato Famine, settling first in Canada, then Chicago. She married ironworker and strong union advocate, George Jones, in 1861. George and their children died during an outbreak of yellow fever in 1867. She found work as a dressmaker, then tragedy struck again when she lost her home in the great fire of 1871.

Traveling to the sites of numerous strikes, she helped Pennsylvania coal miners in 1873 and railroad workers in 1877 and soon gained the nickname "Mother." An active campaigner for the United Mine Workers, Mother Jones founded the Social Democratic Party and was involved with the Industrial Workers of the World.⁵⁶

Scheduled to speak in Reynoldsville in December, she had been called to Virginia for labor problems there, but she came in January and spoke for two hours to an overflow crowd in Centennial Hall. It is more than likely that she mentioned solidarity and ended by saying, "My friends, it is solidarity of labor we want. We do not want to find fault with each other, but to solidify our forces and say to each other: 'We must be together; our masters are joined together and we must do the same thing.'"⁵⁷

Unlike most of her usual audiences, miners of the UMW, the audience at Centennial Hall included the young women and girls of the silk mill. Did they perhaps see her as a new role model? Writer Eliot J. Gorn had this to say: "Most American women of that era led quiet, homebound lives devoted to their families. Women, especially elderly ones, were not supposed to have opinions; if they had them, they were not to voice them publicly—and certainly not in the fiery tones of a street orator."⁵⁸ What kind of impression did Mother Jones leave in the minds of the silk mill young women and girls?

Later that month, Judge John W. Reed presided over the week-long trial of the men arrested following the December riot and charged with rioting and assault and battery at the Enterprise Silk Mill. The jury of twelve included six farmers, three laborers, and three merchants. They found the defendants not guilty, and they were fined \$470 (\$14,400 today), seven-eighths of the cost of the trial.⁵⁹

Silk Strike Ended !

The trial was over, and soon, so was the strike. In late December, the two parties had come together to discuss arbitration but failed to agree. A writer for the *Falls Creek Herald* found the people of Reynoldsville "...badly mixed. Each man's hand seems to be against his fellowmen..."⁶⁰ Then in early February, Thomas Flynn, an AFL organizer, and Albert Sterns, Enterprise's treasurer, met and finally worked out an agreement that was quickly signed by both parties. More than five months after the strike began, it ended, and workers began returning to work. Both sides agreed to the appointment of arbitrators to determine new levels of wages, and editor Stephenson wrote, "Everything seems to be running nicely."⁶¹

In May, he published the arbitrators' decision. The rate for weavers and warpers would remain the same—winders, pickers, and quillers would advance to \$3.75 each week—and twisters would advance to \$12 each week (\$19,100 annually in 2021 when \$26,500 is the poverty level for a family of 4).⁶²

Headlines had claimed "Prosperity Has Come!" with the news that men would build a silk mill in Reynoldsville, yet within a decade, the mill was no more. News about the silk mill became somewhat limited until 1906 when there was "dullness in the silk market." Workers' hours were cut by one-third.⁶³

That fall, editor Stephenson wrote that "two capitalists" were considering purchasing the mill, along with the news that "Enterprise will suspend operation in a couple of weeks."⁶⁴ Workers were dismissed and the "couple of weeks" went on and on. Headlines teased that the "Silk Mill Will Be Operational Again," that there was a "Favorable Prospect of Early Resumption," "Silk Mill to Resume Work," and "More Favorable Prospect of Early Resumption..." but the mill stood idle.⁶⁵ On January 6, 1911, the silk mill was sold at a sheriff's sale never to be mentioned again.⁶⁶

The young people who worked at the silk mills had gone to rallies, marched in parades, held office in Local 250, and even gone to jail for their beliefs. What they did not do is leave us with memoirs, diaries, or letters. Instead, we learned from census records and old newspapers that, Maggie Bolger married; Lizzie Bolger, once secretary of Local 250, remained single working as a saleswomen; Annie O'Conner, once financial secretary for Local 250, hoped for the mill to resume, then faded from history when it did not.

The nearly twenty men who went to trial in 1902?⁶⁷ According to available census records, labor organizer Thomas Haggerty remained in Winslow Township, farmed, and

raised a family. Others able to be followed were: William Blanchard, who married and became a street car conductor; Oran Chitester who moved to Washington, PA, and worked in a glass factory; Charles Deter who died of typhoid. The others disappeared.

To the best of our knowledge, their experiences at the silk mill had neither a positive nor negative effect upon their lives. And the town itself? With the coming of the silk mill, did prosperity arrive in Reynoldsville—did life become smooth as silk? Most certainly, it did not.

¹ “Certificates Filed,” *The Morning Call*, October 18, 1888.

² “Prosperity Has Come,” *The Star*, February 2, 1898

³ “Land Surveyed Yesterday,” *The Star*, February 9, 1898.

⁴ “Ready for Bids” and “A Plain Matter,” *The Star*, February 16, 1898.

⁵ “Prosperity Has Come,” *The Star*, February 2, 1898.

⁶ “Contract for Power House Let,” *The Star*, July 13, 1898.

⁷ “Silk Mill Notes,” *The Star*, August 3, 1898.

⁸ “Silk Mill Notes,” *The Star*, September 21, 1898.

⁹ “Silk Mill Notes,” *The Star*, August 24, 1898.

¹⁰ “Silk Mill Notes,” *The Star*, August 17 and 31, 1898.

¹¹ “Silk Mill Notes,” *The Star*, September 21, 1898.

¹² “Silk Mill Notes,” *The Star*, January 11, 1899.

¹³ “Silk Mill Notes,” *The Star*, December 14, 1898.

¹⁴ Kate M. Scott, *History of Jefferson County, Pennsylvania*, Syracuse, New York, D. Mason & Sons, 1888, p411, 613.

¹⁵ “U.S. Census website”. [United States Census Bureau](#). Retrieved January 31, 2008.

¹⁶ No title, *The Star*, February 10, 1897

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- ³⁵ “Short Strike at Mill,” *The Star*, April 5, 1899.
- ³⁶ “Short Strike at Silk Mill,” *The Star*, April 5 and May 10, 1899.
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- ³⁹ “District Convention,” *The Star*, March 6, 1901.
- ⁴⁰ “Local Unions Organize,” *The Star*, May 22, 1901,
- ⁴¹ “Miners Mass Meeting,” *The Star*, July 3, 1901.
- ⁴² “A Little of Everything,” *The Star*, September 4, 1901.
- ⁴³ “A Little of Everything,” *The Star*, August 26, 1901.
- ⁴⁴ “Want Increase in Pay,” *The Star*, September 4, 1901.
- ⁴⁵ “Silk Mill Strike,” *The Star*, September 11, 1901.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid
- ⁴⁷ “Silk Mill Strike,” *The Star*, October 2, 1901.
- ⁴⁸ “A Little of Everything,” *The Star*, November 13, 1901.
- ⁴⁹ “An Address by George Tucker,” *The Star*, December 18, 1901.
- ⁵⁰ “Citizens’ Meeting Called,” and “Personal Paragraphs,” *The Star*, December 11, 1901.
- ⁵¹ “Mass Meeting Last Wednesday,” *The Star*, December 18, 1901.
- ⁵² “A Little of Everything,” *The Star*, December 18, 1901.
- ⁵³ “Silk Mill Strike Still On,” *The Star*, January 1, 1902.
- ⁵⁴ “Taken to Jail Friday,” *The Star*, January 8, 1902.
- ⁵⁵ “Given an Ovation,” *The Star*, January 15, 1902, and “Three Reynoldsville Girls,” *Jeffersonian Democrat*, January 16, 1902.
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- ⁵⁸ Eliot J. Gorn, *Mother Jones, The Woman*, <https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2001/05/mother-jones-woman>. (Accessed June 24, 2021)
- ⁵⁹ “Reynoldsville Riot Case,” *The Star*, January 22, 1902, and “Judge John W. Reed’s Charge to the Jury,” *The Star*, January 29, 1902.
- ⁶⁰ “Herald’s Man on Road,” *The Star*, January 22, 1902.
- ⁶¹ “Silk Strike Ended,” *The Star*, February 12, 1902, and “A Little of Everything,” *The Star*, February 19, 1902.

⁶²“Decision of the Arbitrator,” *The Star*, May 21, 1902

⁶³“Silk Mill on 2/3 Time,” *The Star*, July 11, 1906.

⁶⁴“Silk Mill Will Be Operated,” *The Star*, November 28, 1906.

⁶⁵ Headlines, *The Star*, July 29, 1908; 1909

⁶⁶“Silk Mill Will Be Sold By The Sheriff Friday January 6,” *The Star*, December 21, 1910.

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Brookville's "Boo-Ro Man"

Kenneth Burkett

In this new evolving era of social equity and equality, it is important to step back and take note of the extent of the difficult early struggles experienced by our forebears after a devastating four-year civil war. Everyone struggled to adjust to a formally enslaved society that suddenly gained newfound freedom and to engage in the monumental effort to restore normalcy and recovery in the defeated southern states. This is an abbreviated story of one of Brookville's young heroes and his efforts to help establish order from the chaos that existed in one small corner of this nation.

In 1930, Mark R. Craig, son of Samuel A. Craig, provided the Western Pennsylvania Historical Society with a typewritten copy of the memoir his father had typed in 1908, and it was published in the October issue of their journal. The Jefferson County Historical Society also has a copy, and much of what we know about the exploits of Samuel Craig is derived from it.¹

According to his journal and Scott's *History of the 105th Pennsylvania Volunteers*,² Samuel A. Craig served as Lieutenant of Company B in the 105th Pennsylvania Volunteers (Wildcat Regiment) which formed in Jefferson County in September 1861. He participated in the early battles of the war and was awarded the Kearny Medal which was bestowed on officers of the 1st division, 3rd corps, Army of the Potomac, who had performed acts of bravery in the face of the enemy.



Captain Samuel A. Craig

Lt. Craig was severely wounded on May 31st, 1862, at the battle of Fair Oaks when a ball ("bullet") entered his face below the right eye and passed through his palate and tongue before exiting a little above the shoulder on the left side of his neck. Another hit him in the left leg and ankle. After lying on the field among the dead and wounded for three days he was rescued and eventually transferred to a hospital in New Haven, Connecticut, by steamer. Amazingly he recovered from these devastating wounds in just three short months albeit with a new artificial gold palate that enabled him to eat and speak.

Sam arrived back at his company in Virginia on August 26, 1862, finding them near Bristoe Station, where they were assigned along with Company G & H to guard the railroad at various points. As luck would have it, this was just in time to face an overwhelming assault the very next day by Stonewall Jackson's troops who overran the Union emplacements. In the melee, he was again wounded by a gunshot to the right wrist and then taken prisoner along with the majority of his command. Left behind at a rebel field hospital several days later as the enemy withdrew ahead of the rapidly advancing Union forces, he once again found himself transported north to recover from a wound that now left him too disabled for active service.

In September 1863, he was formally transferred to the Veteran Reserve Corps. This branch of the military was formed to permit partially disabled or otherwise infirm soldiers to perform light duty assignments that freed able-bodied men to serve on the front lines. Sam was promoted to the rank of Captain with his commission personally signed by President Abraham Lincoln. In this capacity, according to his journal, he served several varied and responsible positions including command of Co. A. 17th Reg. Veteran Reserve Corps which was assigned to guard a confederate prison camp in Indiana and several other positions including Provost Marshall and Commandant of the Post of Indianapolis.

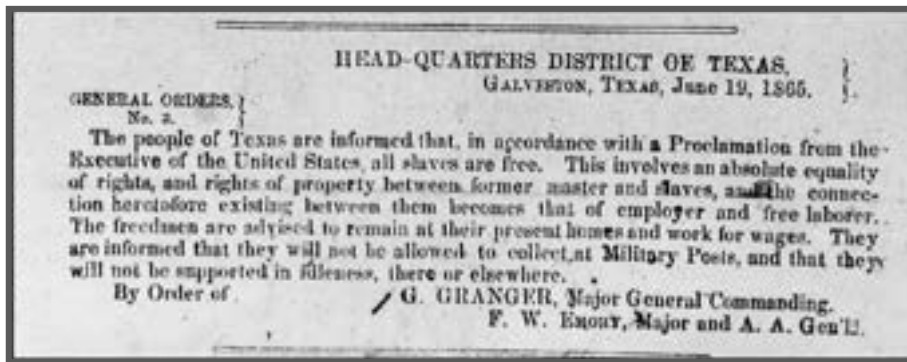
Earlier in March of that year, Congress had passed an act to establish a "Bureau for the Relief of Freedmen and Refugees."³ It was to operate "during the present war of rebellion, and for one year thereafter," to help provide food, shelter, clothing, medical services, and affect the distribution of confiscated or abandoned land to displaced Southerners, including the four million newly freed African Americans. It also established schools and supervised contracts between Freedmen and their former owners who were now their employers. After hostilities ended in 1865, Sam was assigned special duty as an agent of the Freedmen's Bureau and ordered to proceed to the city of Brenham in Washington county in Texas.



While many Texans served in the Confederacy, few battles actually occurred within the state. Hardships however, didn't avoid the population, as the Union Navy blockaded the major ports creating both shortages of imported goods and the inability to transport or sell the local commodities of horses, cattle, and cotton.⁴

The war officially ended here on June 19, 1865, when General Gordon Granger and Union forces landed in Galveston as occupation troops and immediately ordered the emancipation of all slaves in Texas. Reconstruction had begun and it required all residents to pledge loyalty to the United States, abolish slavery, and declare that secession from the Union was illegal.⁵

At the time of the Civil War, eastern Texas contained many large cotton plantations with their large graceful homes typical of the southern tradition. Cotton production at that time



Executive General Granger's Proclamation to Texas of Executive Order ending slavery in that state June 19, 1865.

required a large number of slaves to produce a marketable crop. Additionally, many slave owners from the eastern southern states had fled west with their holdings hoping Texas would remain a sanctuary.

As a result, Brenham, at the close of the war, had the highest population of all Texas counties with over 15,500 residents, of which slaves accounted for over half as the Washington County tax records for 1864 show 8,663 present.⁶

Reconstruction was not an easy time for Texans. Emancipation suddenly created an entirely new and quickly evolving social order. Most former slaves were illiterate and had no idea how to independently put themselves to work. Many were trapped in a servitude system known today as sharecropping, which kept them in poverty and under their former master's thumb with little opportunity for building new lives. Some however, refused to continue working the fields and as a result, a significant number of wealthy landowners lost their crops and their fortunes in 1865-1866. Much of the white population was intolerant of the "freeloading" Blacks and conflict was frequent.⁷

Oblivious to what lay ahead, Captain Craig noted in his journal:

I had a delightful trip by steamer down the Mississippi River to New Orleans, thence by rail to Opelousas Bay, thence by Gulf of Mexico to Galveston. From the snowy stormy blasts of March in Brookville, by gradual steps milder and milder, I descended to the peach blossoms of Louisiana and landed amid beautiful warm and sunny days at Galveston. I was assigned to headquarters at Brenham the county seat having the scarcely understandable and imposing title of Sub-Assistant Commissioner of the Bureau of Freedman and Abandoned Lands.

The twenty-four-year-old however soon found himself in his new situation with a new name to his northern ears from a local dialect for the word bureau:

The ex-slaves called me the "Boo-ro Man" for short. I boarded at first at the hotel and had an office in the Court House over which I raised the U.S. flag although knowing it was very distasteful to the citizens. Texas was as yet very much unreconstructed and its citizens seemed very bitter and hated even the sight of an officer, especially a "Boo-ro" whose duties pertained to the Negroes. The bureau had a school for negroes at this place and the instructor who was much despised by the inhabitants. I soon learned that my position was no better.

Helping him to complete his duties was Company E of the Seventeenth Cavalry under command of Major George W. Smith. These troopers were quartered a quarter-mile east of town in a large tented complex known as "Camptown." The company consisted of Black soldiers led by White officers typical of such units formed late during the Civil War. At this time, most Blacks could not read or write, and the officers were needed to communicate orders. Black troops in charge of keeping local order would have been a very constant bitter reminder that the South had lost the war .

From his memoirs we know that a lot of Sam's time was spent in duties as a justice of the peace, hearing complaints and trying to work out issues between the two groups. For the White landowner an entire way of life had been destroyed leaving deep hatred of both the Union and former slaves. Sam investigated several murders and by his own admission found it impossible to administer justice by the local court of any white person found responsible. He worked both sides of the fence advising the former slaves to now become good citizens, explaining what they could and ought to do, and of course what they should not do.

I touched upon their contracts, explaining to them what their employer's duties were and that they should be patient and kind. I told them that the government "Uncle Sam" was their friend and that I was their friend and that their employers would be their friends if they would do right. I warned them not to invent wrong purposes and that they would make more friends by becoming plain good citizens.

Of the employers he noted:

No doubt among the slaveholders here the rule had been fair and kind treatment, with exceptions of course, but the negro now changed to the position of a free ignorant man was different from the negro slave and there was great difficulty on the part of the former master to bear the negro with his ignorant foolish ideas of a free man's rights and privileges. I found many who tried to handle them by the contract system, very much like they did as slaves. Sometimes the Negro would disregard his contract and fool away his time when work was necessary for the saving of the crop which was hard for the former master to bear. Often if a Negro did not go to work on time or went away for a day, the employer would beat him into submission and work. I had a hard time convincing the white employers that even if the Negro did not work it was no cause for his beating and assaulting him. A fine of ten to twenty dollars would make them hot and feel that my judgment was prejudiced and outrageous.

In addition to this almost impossible job, Sam noted that within the community "I was utterly tabooed in social ways. At church no one would come into the seat with me and even at entertainments they avoided the place where I sat. My uniform seemed to be sufficient notice."

Not helping the situation was the local newspaper, *The Southern Banner*, and its owner editor Daniel McGary, a Confederate sergeant who had served with the 2nd Regiment Confederate States Calvary. The newspaper continued to proudly print the Confederate flag

and a rebel soldier as its logo and the published subscription rates were "\$3 per year to loyal Southern whites and \$6 to Yankees, carpetbaggers, scalawags and such ilk."⁸

McGary was popular for his vigorous editorials openly critical of the unpopular federal occupation of Texas. Of him, Sam said, "A weekly came out with misrepresentations of my official acts calling me names and trying in every way to take popular side against me."

With General Sheridan's permission and Smith's help, Craig had him arrested on August 8, 1866, for his "false accusations and persistent abuse" of the Freedmen's Bureau. He was fined and released. About this Sam noted:



Daniel L. McGary c. 1863

Brenham published that "Captain Craig, the Boo-ro man hath an itching palm. He refuses to take the greenbacks, but demands gold coin in payment of fines and looks like a halfway cross between a peacock and jaybird," along with other attempts at abusive epithets. I care very little or nothing for his cheap scribbles personal to myself, but when he began his abusive language about Mrs. Whan, the government School teacher insinuating low and degrading things of her, invented to bring her into disgrace, I sent a copy to the General Commissioner at Galveston and in reply was notified to have McGary cease publication that his course was interfering with operating the government schools. He continued however with abusive stuff, altogether untruthful, so I sent a soldier after him. I explained it to him and he said "Well, what are you going to do about it." Twice he did this and my only recourse was to fine him which I did.

The sympathetic *Galveston Daily News* however printed a slightly different version on August 18, 1866:

Arrested – Mr. McGary, editor of the *Banner* at Brenham has been arrested and confined by Capt. S. A. Craig of the Freedmen's Bureau, on account of editorials reflecting on the Bureau and its employees. The Captain had previously fined the editor \$200 which he refused to pay.

It is, to say the least very annoying to have officers all over the state snatching up, fining and confining people under no other authority than the prompting of their own feelings and we think the time has nearly come for the annoyance to be stopped. This case, we are informed has been reported to the President by Governor Throckmorton and we sincerely hope that the answer received may have the effect of reducing the number of such exploits by Capt. Craig and other Captains, Lieutenants and Corporals scattered throughout the state.

Sam returned from a Houston trip on August 29th to find that he had been vacated from his county courthouse office. The Freedmen's sign was torn down, and all of his possessions were in the street. Craig blamed McGary and his unrelenting articles for inciting public hostilities and again had him arrested. Sam wrote, "As he refused to pay his fine, I

had him jailed. Of course, McGary expected to make a hero of himself as he viewed his Liberty of the Press views and also had a large part of the press of Texas to support him and to make damaging references to 'that irresponsible Craig.'" The community's mood continued to decline, and Sam couldn't be in a worse position.

Such were the feelings against me that even some of my enemies warned my roommate, that I should be very careful and cautious as they were afraid I would be killed. One of the lawyers, not supposed to be friendly, warned me against going to my room in the hotel where a large group of men had gathered in order to make way with me. Were they trying to frighten me? I think not, for a few days later two men stopped me and accused me of ill-treating McGary. They would not let me pass and finally we walked to the stairway leading to my room, when one pretending he saw my hand go to my hip pocket which it did not, jumped back before me, baring his chest saying "Shoot; damn you shoot if you want to. I saw you reaching for your gun." Again I urged that I wanted no quarrel, and stepped quickly around them and went about my business. I felt they were silly drunk, or else they were looking for trouble.

Another night a crowd howled near our double porch acting like rowdies calling us names, "Boo-ro Man", etc. My friend Allen was afraid that they would try to come up the back stairs so we got our 16 shot rifle and two revolvers ready. They certainly would have had a warm reception, but they did not venture up.

McGary remained in jail for 14 days until Texas governor James Throckmorton protested to President Andrew Johnson, who ordered his release on September 3rd.⁹

According to Brass' account, on Friday, September 7, 1866, things came to a disastrous head. Two special charity balls were being held that evening. One was sponsored by Harry Foster, a Black barber and community leader who was raising funds for a new Black school to replace one burnt down during violence, and the other a few blocks away for Whites only.

First, a group of drunken Black Union soldiers entered the Negro ball and disrupted it to the point of being halted and disbanded. After a few altercations, the growing group of soldiers then moved on to the second event and also proceeded to break up that dance. Here the confrontation accelerated until a barrage of gunfire ensued, leaving two soldiers seriously wounded. The account states that Captain Craig came running up the street with revolver drawn and quickly summoned several doctors, who dressed the wounds and supervised the delivery of the wounded back to Camptown. Of the event, Sam writes:

On Friday, September 7th the young bloods of the town were having a dance just across from our rooms. Allen and I were sitting on our porch enjoying the music and evening breeze when several shots rang out and the lights at the dance disappeared. We learned that two of Captain Smith's soldiers had been shot and found them on the road leading towards camp.

Major Smith wasted no time informing his troopers and marching them into town to arrest those involved. Unable to find the responsible individuals, the soldiers settled on

ransacking the saloon, hotel, and several businesses including the newspaper office. Of this event, Sam noted:

I reported to Captain Smith who was very angry, and rode at the head of the Company with him as we marched down the Main Street of town. I stayed with Smith, but heard that the soldiers while trying to arrest a saloon keeper who had done the shooting let him escape. Instead they gutted his saloon and emptied his stock of liquor. They then went after another and broke into his store where he slept, but he had also gone.

After this the company broke into two groups, one returning to camp and the other marching to the center of Brenham. Sam returned to camp.

I then marched to camp with them deeming this more prudent than returning to my room. Late that night there was a great uproar in town, and we could see there was a big fire. Freedman came telling us it was the block containing the liquor dealers place, the store of the merchant and McGary's place of business were burning and that the citizens claimed that the soldiers had fired them and were arming themselves.

Local history tells a vastly different story noting that the looting continued until smoke enveloped the general store and the soldiers and officers stood by until flames had spread through the entire city block. That night, the looting and fire by Union soldiers was undoubtedly the worst in Brenham's history.¹⁰

The next morning Sam related that the sheriff came with warrants for two of the soldiers. Captain Smith remained firm that he would not allow a soldier of the US Government to be tried outside of a government tribunal. The citizens then telegraphed around for men to come to the aid of Brenham, and the soldiers prepared by entrenching the camp and sending men to gather cattle and food. Later a compromise was reached and agreed upon that the governor would appoint a commission to convene at Brenham to investigate the soldiers in question. Sam noted that upon being called to testify:



Brenham Texas 1873. Augustis Koch. Brenham Central Square with location of burned block.

Captain Smith and I told what he did and we saw, denying any claims as to it having been any of his company that started the fire. I did not see their findings, but it was shown that they filed against one or two of the soldiers, but could not tell who.

The local court found the Federal soldiers guilty and documented property losses by the Brenham business owners which was widely published throughout Texas and the major U.S. Newspapers. As details emerged, General Phil Sheridan, who was in command of the Fifth Military District (Texas and Louisiana), with headquarters in New Orleans, immediately

travelled to Brenham and convened a Court Martial composed of officers from different parts of the Army. They sat in the courthouse and again Smith and Craig gave testimony and noted that:

Their final was that the evidence showed that the fire had been started that night by one or two men, partly dressed in U. S. soldiers' clothing, but it was unknown who they were.

Sam later wrote, "I never knew what became of editor McGary. He continued to fill his paper with scree against me before I left and brought suit for \$50,000 against us which I afterward learned that his attorney took a judgment by default in favor of McGary." Because of the military occupation, this judgment was unservable to either Sam or the military. It is interesting to note that in 1915 an unsuccessful war damages claim was unsuccessfully presented to Congress for the amount of \$131,026 (\$3,588,154 today) as reparation for the burning of Brenham.¹¹ Mr. McGary later established a newspaper in Galveston and was for many years editor and proprietor of the *Houston Age*, a paper of national reputation. Sam wrote on:

After that fire and consequent excitement, I received a letter from Major General Kiddoo, stating that with feelings and excitement so high that he believed my life in danger and that perhaps a change of location would be best for me, but if I preferred to remain, that they would stand by me. I replied that I was willing to remain, but would do as he thought best for the service.

Captain Craig soon received orders to transfer to duty at Seguin in Guadeloupe County, about twenty-five miles from San Antonio. "I went by boat to Houston and thence by railroad to Columbus and then by stage relay 175 miles overland to Seguin. At Columbia, standing on the platform in civilian dress, I overheard a man reading on my trunk say, "Captain S. A. Craig, why that's the name of the Brenham burner."

However, that wasn't his final chapter. According to Jefferson County historian McKnight¹² we have the following information: Soon after returning home, he married Nancy R. Rodgers, daughter of Dr. Mark Rodgers, an honored community physician. They had two children Anna and Mark.

He began reading law under Gregory A. Jenks and in 1876 was admitted to the bar. In 1879 he was elected as district attorney for one term and afterward worked with a growing clientele becoming well-known as an advocate for Civil War veterans. In 1888 he was elected representative to the Fifty-first Congress which, with his term as district attorney, was the sum of his ventures into public office. A member of the Jefferson County and Pennsylvania State Bar Association, he authored a *History of the Bench and Bar of Jefferson County*.

Captain Craig maintained close ties with his old army comrades as a member of the E. R. Brady GAR post in Brookville and the Hobah Lodge 276 of the Free & Accepted Masons. Both he and his wife were active members of the Presbyterian Church where he



Sam Craig about 1917

served as an elder and historian. He was a popular orator, particularly on topics of patriotism, his services in constant demand.

The *Jeffersonian Democrat* on March 25, 1920, reported that Captain Samuel Craig was found dead in a patch of woods just west of Brookville Borough on Thursday afternoon, March 18, 1920. Leaving his home on Wednesday morning, he didn't return that day. As that happened often, nothing was thought of it until dark when inquiries were made but no trace of him could be found.

On Thursday morning search parties found footprints and then the body which indicated Sam had become bewildered in the woods and wandered until overcome by hypothermia and the elements. Funeral services were conducted by the Reverend J. B. Hill at the home. Captain Craig was interred in the Brookville Cemetery.

¹ Samuel A. Craig, *Living My Camp Life Over Again: A Glimpse thru my Diary, Home Letters and Memory*. 1908. Jefferson County Historical Society Archives.

² Kate M. Scott, *History of the One Hundred and Fifth Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers*, (Philadelphia New World Publishing, Philadelphia, PA, 1877). pp 190-192

³ U. S. Statutes at Large, *Treaties and Proclamations of the United States of America*, Vol. 13, Boston.1866, pp 73-39.

⁴ Amanda Pennington, *The History of Brenham and Washington County* (Standard Printing and Lithographing Company, Houston, TX 1915).p 35

⁵ Sharon Brass, *The Burning of Brenham - Second Edition*, (Brenham, Texas , Main Street Brenham, 2012) p 18.

⁶ <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/washington-county>

⁷ Brass, p 20.

⁸ Brass, p 28.

⁹ Brass, p 40.

¹⁰ Brass, pp 30-31.

¹¹ U.S. House of Representatives, *First Session, Forty-Third Congress Executive Documents* Printed by order of the House of Representatives 1873-74 (Washington Government Printing Office, 1874).

¹² William James McKnight, M. D. *Jefferson County Pennsylvania, Her Pioneers and People Volume II.*(J. H. Beers & Company, Chicago, IL. 1917) pp 84-85.

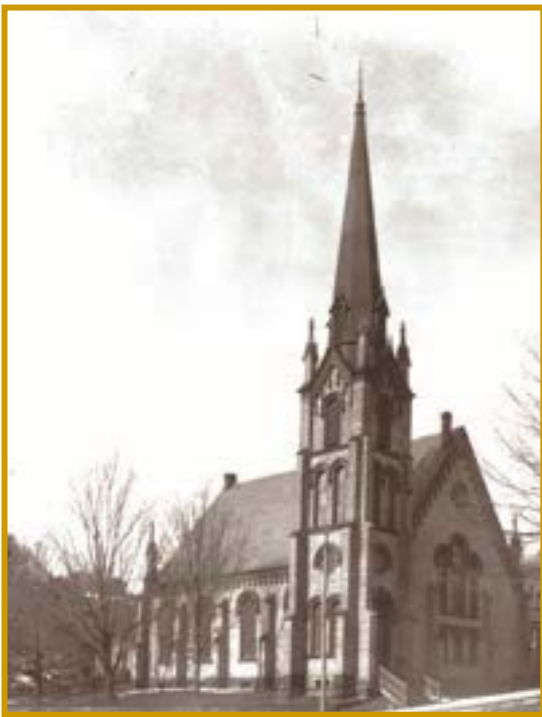
Historic Churches of Brookville

David L. Taylor

Brookville is known far and wide for the far-reaching repertoire of its historic architecture throughout the downtown and in the various residential neighborhoods surrounding it. Not as well known, perhaps, are the community's historic religious buildings, substantial landmarks on their own that date from the pre-Civil War years into the mid-1950s.

Brookville Presbyterian Church Main & White Streets

This is the third Presbyterian church on this site. A Richardsonian Romanesque-style



This early image shows the Romanesque Revival-style church that served this congregation from 1867 to 1905.

building, it is finished in Hummelstown brownstone, and with its adjacent Manse (the pastor's home), was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. The interior design is an Akron Plan that originated in Akron, Ohio in the late 1860s, incorporating a multi-sided sanctuary and an adjacent Sunday School area incorporating a partition that can be raised.

Originally a slate roof was planned. However, in December 1904 the congregation voted to install a tile roof. The tile was manufactured by the Ludowici-Celadon Company of New Lexington, Ohio, a company that continues to this day. This distinctive historic green tile roof remains and is zealously guarded by the leadership of the congregation. The art glass windows, installed at a cost of \$1,114.53, were produced by the studios of George Hardy Paine of Paterson, New Jersey, and the pews were crafted by the American School Furniture Company of Chicago.

The church is the work of Pittsburgh architects Robinson and Winkler. Initially the contract was awarded to Charles B. Hastings, but ultimately it was awarded to Brookville contractor John H. Carr, who at the same time was also building Brookville's New Jefferson House Hotel (later the front section of the Columbia Theater). Carr's bid was \$31,998. Carr's descendants still worship in this church built by their ancestor.

At the time of the 1905 dedication of the new church, the *Jeffersonian Democrat* was lavish in its praise of Contractor Car: “In our account of the dedication of the Brookville Presbyterian Church we spoke very briefly of Mr. Car. the contractor. He deserves fuller mention, and a large measure of credit for the successful erection and present fine appearance of the church in all its details. Although his bid for the erection and completion of the building was low in price, he completed the work in all its details in the most substantial manner, and best style of workmanship. Mr. Car is a first-class mechanic, competent and reliable.”



This tinted post card likely dates from c. 1910.

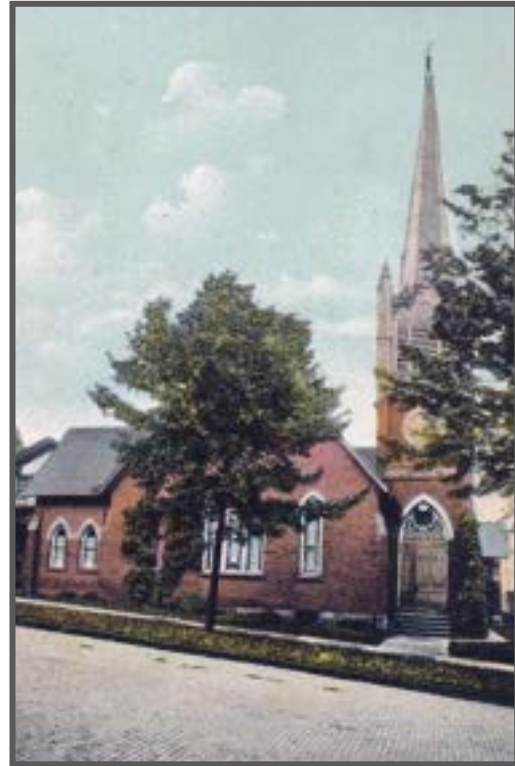


The 1884 Manse is French Second Empire-style with a Mansard roof. It was funded by lumberman/philanthropist Paul Darling, who is memorialized in the art glass windows.

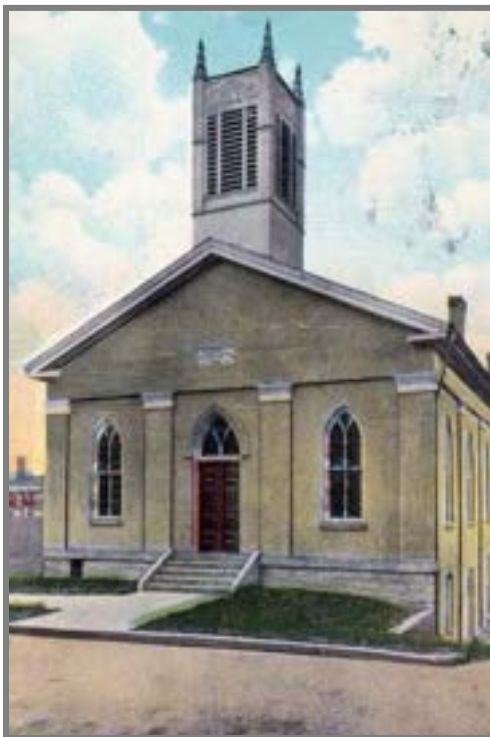
First United Methodist Church 205 Jefferson Street

This Late Gothic Revival-style church is finished in Indiana limestone and was designed by Oil City architect Emmett Bailey, who also designed the original Brookville Hospital and the 1927 addition to the Court House. Clearfield contractors Kenyon & Hart were the builders. It replaced an 1886 church across Pickering Street and was built on a corner lot on Jefferson Street donated by parishioner F. X. Kreitler. In 1921, a disastrous fire struck the building but it was rebuilt using essentially the original walls.

The Methodists had owned an older parsonage at the corner of Pickering and Jefferson Streets. The need for a new parsonage was recognized by the congregation's leaders, and in January 1903 this notice appeared in the local paper:



This c. 1900 tinted post card view shows the 1886 Methodist Church across Pickering Street from the present church, which now houses professional offices.



In 1856, this brick Methodist church was built at the corner of Jefferson Street and Diamond Alley. It served until the mid-1880s and later became the home of the local United Presbyterian.

“At an official meeting one day last week the M. E. congregation of Brookville resolved to build a parsonage the coming summer, that will cost about \$3,500. The present parsonage building will be moved to the rear of the lot, and the new one will occupy the place thus vacated. It will be of brick, and will be a fine house.”

The former parsonage that was relocated to the rear of the lot was eventually replaced by a brick garage accessed from Coal Alley.

In February 1903, the quarterly conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was held and the newspaper reported that A. D. Deemer, George L. Reed, Richard. M. Matson, A. C. White and S. H. Whitehill had been selected as a building committee to erect a new parsonage in Brookville.



**This c. 1912 photo shows the church still under construction;
the former U. P. Church appears in the background**

Initially the construction contract was awarded to J. H. Groves of Kane for \$4,125. However, a conflict arose between Groves and the building committee and in July the project was awarded to Brookville's John H. Carr, for \$4,398. That same season, Carr was building a new bank in Summerville, a substantial new barn behind the New Commercial Hotel, and Gil Reitz's Pickering Street house on "Shanghai," and D. F. Hibbard's house opposite the Brookville House hotel on Pickering Street.

In October, construction was delayed as the stone for the water tables (the course of stone between the foundation and the brick walls) had been delayed. The newspaper reported, "Contractor Carr has been pushing the Brookville M. E. parsonage along rapidly during this fine weather, to get it under roof and get the walls up." In November, the *Jeffersonian Democrat* remarked, "When the new M. E. Parsonage in Brookville is done, we think the town will contain the two best parsonages in the county, the Presbyterian and Methodist. The former cost nearly \$6,000 and the latter between \$4,000 and \$5,000." Its design suggests the Colonial Revival style, with a hipped roof and hipped dormer, below which is an oval art glass window centered on the facade. The wrap-around porch originally was enclosed with a railing of turned wood spindles, now enclosed within a solid wood railing. The Parsonage has served the local congregation continually since its construction.



Grace Lutheran Church 160 Franklin Avenue



This tinted post card from c. 1910 shows the church as it was originally built in 1852.

commented that it was “one of the best in the county and, though old, still rings forth its brazen tones in a clear and pleasant manner. It will greatly add to the convenience of the church and will also add materially to its value.” The bell has hung in the Grace steeple since that time and, having pealed to announce the assassination of President Lincoln in 1865, still calls Brookville Lutherans to worship.

In September 1921, with construction of the new basement, the newspaper reported: "Grace Lutheran church is 'on stilts' at the present time to permit the excavation of a cellar and erection of a wall in order to provide room for holding Sunday school, church suppers and banquets.”

Lutheranism in the Brookville area dates to the earliest years of settlement here, having begun in 1838. The Grace Parish was established in 1850 and this Gothic Revival-style church, with lancet-arched windows, was built in 1852, making it the oldest church building in town. As shown in this historic post card view, the church was originally built at grade with a steeple, but the steeple was badly damaged in a 1918 storm and was removed. In 1921 the building was raised, and a rock-faced concrete block foundation was built. This undertaking resulted in the church being accessed from a straight-run stair.

The building originally had a wood shingle roof, but by 1909 it leaked and was replaced by a slate roof that itself was eventually replaced by a composition shingle roof.

The original bell in the 1830 Jefferson County Court House was sold to Grace Lutheran congregation for \$200 in 1868 when the present Court House was being built. The local newspaper



This pre-1913 photo shows a ladies' group posed across the across the street from Grace Lutheran.



Grace Lutheran as it appears today.

First Baptist Church 101 Main Street



Shown in a tinted post card from the early twentieth century. The church appears with its original spire.

When the church was completed, a memorial/dedicatory service was held and members of the E. R. Brady Post No, 242 of the Grand Army of the Republic (the Civil War Union veterans' organization) were ordered to attend in full uniform.

The Gothic Revival-style church had a gable-end-oriented facade with a square bell tower on the east front corner with an open belfry. Typical of the style, windows were lancet-arched including a gang of five narrow windows centered on the facade. Doors were on each end of the facade, one for men and another for women, a typical design feature of the day.

The Baptist faith in the Brookville area dates to as early as 1836. In 1883, under the pastorate of Rev. Thomas Henderson, a Gothic Revival-style church building was built at the corner of Main and Madison (originally Water) Streets. It was built on land donated by Dorcas Taylor. She was the widow of lumberman Philip Taylor and built her house immediately to the west of the church; that house still stands and now serves as the Baptist Parsonage. The 1883 church cost about \$6,000 and the ground that Mrs. Taylor donated was valued at around \$1,000, a total of \$168,000 in 2019 dollars.



The spire was removed at some point as shown in this post card view.



The old Baptist Church, circa 1940s-1950s with the two door façade, before remodeling.

**Source:
Brookville PA
Photo Project.**

Lightning struck the church in 1986, completely destroying the 103-year-old house of worship.

**Courtesy
JCHS
Archives**



The rebuilt First Baptist Church today. Source: <http://brookvillebaptist.com>

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church 62 Pickering St.

The Holy Trinity Episcopal Church was built on land donated by J. E. Long and was dedicated on April 30, 1888. Like other early Brookville churches, it is a Gothic Revival-style house of worship, with pointed lancet-arched windows. The interior is little altered from the original with naturally-finished wood trim and art glass windows memorializing many early members. George W. Heber (1872-1936) was the church choirmaster and organist for more than forty years. Mr. Heber also established the first Historical Society in Jefferson County, which he began forming in 1927, the Charter for this Society being recorded in 1929 as the George W. Heber Historical Society of Jefferson County. He was a collector of pipe organs, along other instruments.

A Guild Hall, since demolished, stood just east of the church. It was used for church gatherings, notably the chicken-and-waffle dinners for which the Holy Trinity congregation was known.



George Heber



Holy Trinity Episcopal c. 1910



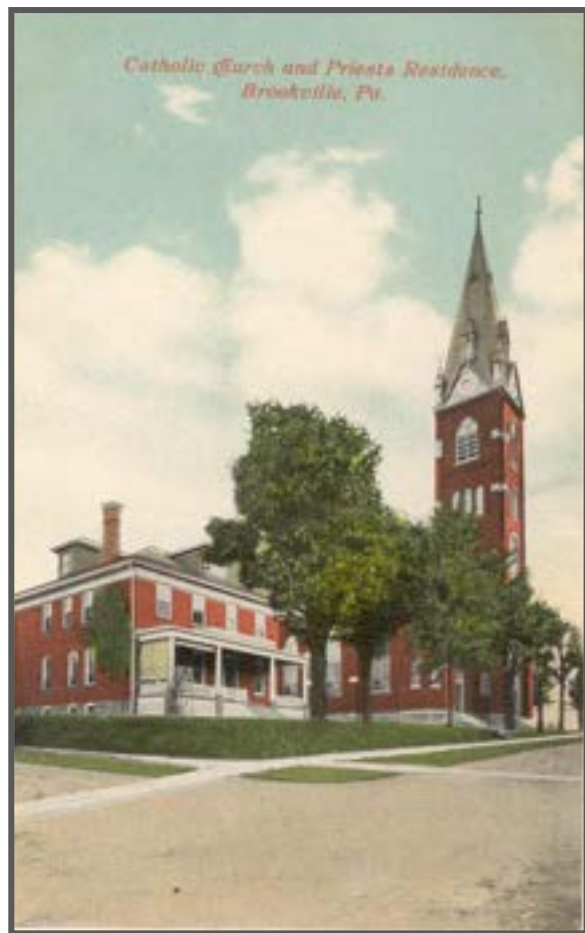
Holy Trinity Episcopal as it appears today.

Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Church 129 Graham Avenue

Roman Catholic settlement in Brookville dates to 1830 when John Dougherty purchased several lots in the new town. The first Roman Catholic church in Brookville was built in the early 1850s on Lot No. 1 of the original plat of the town, where the Evangelical Church, later the Assembly of God, stood on Madison Avenue east of White Street. Eventually, the congregation apparently outgrew the original church building, and the *Brookville Jeffersonian* reported that four lots on what was described as “Verstine and Jackson’s hill” were donated for the church. One of the donors was Bernard Verstine, the author’s great-great grandfather. Excavation began on July 8, 1872 and the cornerstone was laid on August 2 by Bishop Tobias Mullen of Erie.



An early 120th century view of the Roman Catholic church.

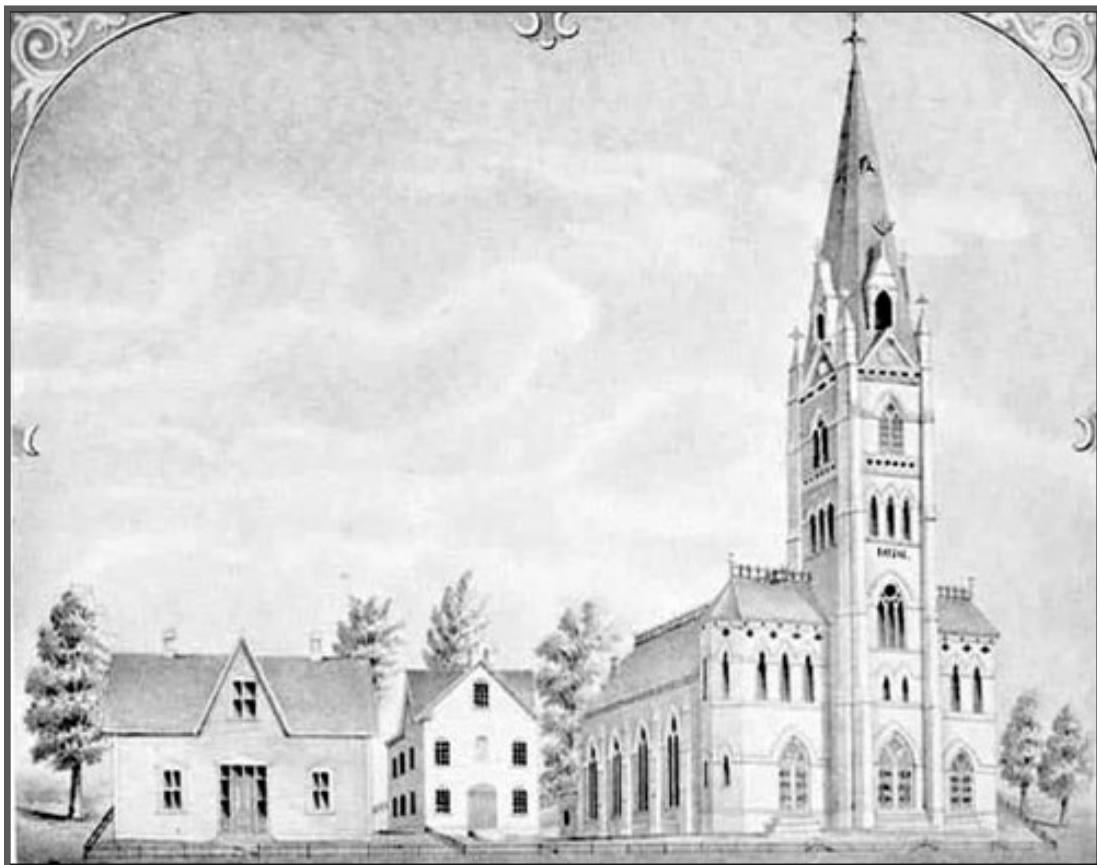


A tinted postcard portrays The Immaculate Conception Church, which has dominated the skyline of “Catholic Hill” for more than 150 years.

In 1917, Dr. W. J. McKnight's *History of Jefferson County* noted, "the present magnificent church structure, parsonage, and school buildings were due to the inception, constructive ability, courage, and energy of the Rev. Fr. Herman C. Weinker" who served the church from July 1872 until August 1890.

The church lacked a steeple until 1888, when Philip Crate completed the spire that rose 150 feet from the ground, 100 feet of brick and the remainder of wood clad in slate. On September 26, 1888, the *Jeffersonian Democrat* commented, "The tower of the Catholic church is about completed. The scaffolding has been taken down from the outside, and the church now presents a fine appearance. The contractor, Philip Crate, has done a most excellent job of work."

The interior finishes of the church are both old and new. The main altar was hand painted by one of the pioneer parishioners and the Stations of the Cross are oil paintings that were first hung on March 18, 1887.



This view is from Caldwell's 1878 Atlas of Jefferson County, although it was drawn with artistic license, since the steeple was not added until ten years later.

Evangelical United Methodist Church

30 South White Street

This congregation dates to 1872, when several members of the Evangelical faith organized and built a church on South Pickering Street; that early church is shown by the superimposed “X” on the panoramic view below. In 1922 a new church was built on Madison Avenue; it appears in the lower post card view when it was under the pastorate of the Rev. Perry E. Pyle. In 1946, the Evangelical Church merged with the United Brethren faith to form the Evangelical United Brethren Church; a later merger resulted in the present name.

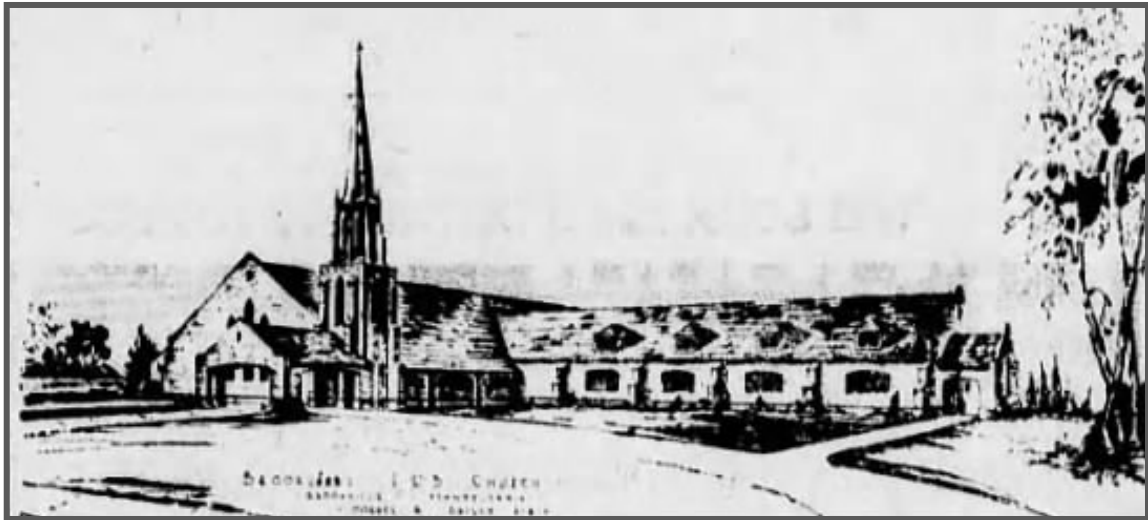


The original Evangelical Church on South Pickering is shown by the superimposed "X" in the above c. 1900 image.



The 1922 church on Madison Avenue is shown above in this 1950s post card view.

Johnstown architect Horace Bailey (1904-1960) designed the present building and on June 13, 1954 ground was broken for the new church. The building was built under the pastorate of the Rev. S. Clay Shaffer at a cost of \$125,000 by Brookville contractor Harry E. Snyder (grandfather of the late William L. Snyder, a noted Brookville architect).



**Architect Horace Bailey's rendering of the proposed new church.
Courtesy Jeffersonian Democrat, May 6, 1954, p6.**

When ground was broken for the new building, the *Jeffersonian Democrat* reported, "the exterior of the building will be of native multi-colored stone." The distinctive stone was cut and the stonework carefully overseen by master stonemason Aaron Smith (1881-1970). The most noteworthy work completed by "Smitty," by which name he was known, was the 1920s complex of substantial native stone buildings built in the woods on North Fork Creek by F. C. Deemer.



Evangelical United Methodist Church today sits above the bank of the Redbank Creek at South White St and Race Street.

- ¹ Carole A. Briggs, *The Presbyterian Church of Brookville, Pennsylvania: A History* (Brookville: 1999).
- ² David L. Taylor, "Brookville Presbyterian Church and Manse," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1982.
- ³ Chambers, Murphy & Burge, Restoration Architects, Ltd., "First Congregational Church, Akron, Ohio, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2003.
- ⁴ Taylor, Op. Cit.
- ⁵ Briggs, Op. Cit., p. 45
- ⁶ "To building Contractors," *Jeffersonian Democrat*, January 21, 1904, p. 7.
- ⁷ Ibid., March 3, 1904, p. 8.
- ⁸ "John H, Carr, Contractor," *Jeffersonian Democrat*, December 21, 1905, p. 8.
- ⁹ David L. Taylor, *The Way We Were: Brookville, Pennsylvania Through the Camera's Lens*, (Brookville: 2019).
- ¹⁰ "Things We Hear," *Jeffersonian Democrat*, January 22, 1903, p. 8.
- ¹¹ "Parsonage Contract Awarded." *Jeffersonian Democrat*, July 9, 1903, p. 8
- ¹² "The Contract Has Been Re-Let," *Jeffersonian Democrat*, July 23, 1903, p. 8.
- ¹³ "Things We Hear," *Jeffersonian Democrat*, October 1, 1903. p. 8.
- ¹⁴ "Things We Hear," *Jeffersonian Democrat*, November 12, 1903, p.8.
- ¹⁵ Taylor, *The Way We Were*, Op.Cit., p.150.
- ¹⁶ David L. Taylor, *The Jefferson County Court House: 100 Years of Jurisprudence*, Jefferson County Court House Sesquicentennial 1869-2019 (Brookville: Jefferson County Historical Society, 2019), p. 10.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., p. 40.
- ¹⁹ Ibid., p. 232.
- ²⁰ Ibid., p. 76.
- ²¹ William J. McKnight, M. D., *History of Jefferson County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: J. H. Beers, 1917), p. 320.
- ²² "Brief Local Mention," *Jeffersonian Democrat*, September 26, 1888, p. 5
- ²³ Taylor, *The Way We Were*, Op. Cit., p. 76.
- ²⁴ "Ground-Breaking is Observed Sunday," *Jeffersonian Democrat*, June 17, 1954, p. 1.
- ²⁵ Ibid. p.4
- ²⁶ Ibid.

Note: All images courtesy of collection of David Taylor, unless otherwise noted.

Jeffersonian Journal

Submission Guidelines

The *Jeffersonian Journal* welcomes manuscript submissions for publication. Please follow these guidelines when submitting material: Articles must be original and based on primary resources and/or original analysis or current or historical people(s), places, and events in Jefferson County.

JCHS has **First Right** of publication. The article must not have been published before in the form submitted to the Journal and not be in the public domain. Articles consisting primarily of book excerpts or genealogical research will not be considered. Previously published articles with a back story or expansion with new or supplemental material may be considered.

A thesis or statement of purpose should be evident early in your article. Thesis examples:

What impact did water access, the road, and the railroad have on three communities along the river?

With little opportunity for distraction, Civil War regiments adopted mascots provided a level of comfort and entertainment as a reminder of beloved pets left at home.

In building his replica of the Twyford, he helped preserve an important part of the history of Brookville.

Articles range between 3,000 - 4,000 words and should be sent as a Microsoft Word document (or OpenOffice or similar document if you don't have MSWord),. ***Single-spaced using 12-point Times New Roman font. Captions 11-point Times Roman Font, bold. No other spacing !***

All articles must include citations; either endnotes or footnotes. Use the *Chicago Manual of Style* (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation). Include publisher, city, date, and page.

Electronic images of photographs and illustrations, color or black and white, **must** be submitted separately via email or flash drive (USB) in JPG format at 300 dpi or higher. Please limit the number of images ensuring they are relevant to your article and non-repetitive. Images **must** be submitted with proper captions and credits. [Note: Images may also be embedded in your draft document to show placement within the article].

All articles are submitted to a plagiarism software checker and will be submitted to peer review and editing as deemed necessary. Authors will receive a final layout for approval prior to publication.

Authors may submit a biography of 100 words or less.

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