

## East Falls Past--Mifflin Mansion

*The Fallser*, October 2011, by Wendy Moody

As Halloween approaches, let's relive East Falls' own ghost story – the ghost of Mifflin Mansion.

A 1914 article recounts: “On the upper side of the hollow was the Mifflin Mansion, which we boys used to dread to pass after sundown because of its being haunted. In the little springhouse by the run, the ghost was frequently seen and would come out dripping with milk.

Earlier, in 1893, just before the mansion was demolished, a writer lamented:

“This famous mansion, which once stood prominently on a hill overlooking Ridge Avenue (at Frederick and Stanton) was the residence of Governor Thomas Mifflin. Breakfast guests included Washington and Franklin. Now this colonial mansion has been sold for \$35,000 and will be destroyed. “Things won't seem natural here when the mansion's gone” said an old gentleman. “How that old house takes me back to my youth! One winter night a party of us came through a thicket near the mansion. The moon was passing behind clouds like a boat sailing through white waves. As we watched it, we felt something pass before us and blow a warm breath in our faces. We could feel the breath and then we heard a sound like crinkling tissue paper. We were so frightened we could not stir. I never experienced such a sensation in my life. The perspiration, as cold as ice-water and as large as pie cherries, came out on my forehead. Coming down from above the trees was a bluish-white object. The thing had a head like a lion, crooked horns, thick legs, turtle feet, gigantic bat-like wings, and claws like a lobster. As the monster descended, it whined like a whipped dog. Just as it was about to pounce upon us, one of the boys cried “Murder! Bloody murder!” That put life into us and we cut up the hill through the briars.”

“There was another night I'll never forget. I was returning home after midnight from a visit to my best girl on Indian Queen, after making an apology for keeping the lady up so late. Suddenly a summer thunderstorm broke in great fury over the Falls. The lightning nearly blinded me! I heard a noise that sounded like a heavy iron chain dragging. I was directly in front of the entrance to Mifflin Mansion, and glancing towards the stone steps, I saw what I'll always believe was the devil himself...he was fully 12 feet high and wore a red cloak. He came down the steps three at a jump and was soon brushing me on the face with the end of his tail. I do not know if he said anything or not, for I did not wait; I was in a hurry to get home. How I got there, I don't know. All I can remember is the next morning my mother found me lying on the floor in a dead faint near the open door, which I had probably run against so hard that I broke it open,



tearing the bolt straps clean out of the oak door frame. That was the first and last time I ever stayed at a girl's house till midnight.

Happy Halloween from the ghost of East Falls....