

HAYCOCK HISTORICAL NEWS

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HISTORY OF BEEKEEPING

By Heather Radick



Beekeeping was an important industry in early America and is rooted in the history of Pennsylvania. Honeybees are not native to the Western Hemisphere, but were introduced to the colonies by Europeans in the 1600s. The earliest record of honeybees in Pennsylvania was 1698. Honey was a common household

sweetener, which made it an important staple for early Americans.

Honeybees need and are typically found in dark and hollow environments such as rotted trees or rock crevices. Early man-made hives, or apiaries, were constructed of logs, straw skeps or pottery. Removing the comb from hives meant dealing with an angry swarm and many bees would also be destroyed from comb removal. Philadelphia born L.L. Langstroth patented the first beehive with a removable frame in 1852. This frame keeps the comb separate from within the hive, allowing for easy removal without upsetting or killing the swarm. The wooden boxes are stacked 3 or 4 high, allowing the queen to stay in the bottom chamber, while the workers stay above with the comb. The Langstroth hive is the most common hive used today. His book, *The Hive and the Honeybee*, written in 1863, is still a popular beekeeping reference. In the apiary community, Langstroth is known as the "Father of American Beekeeping."

Pennsylvanian John Harbison can be attributed to making the U.S. honey industry what it is today. Traveling from Pennsylvania to California and seeing firsthand the pollination problems there, he began to deliver live beehives from Pennsylvania to California fruit growers, establishing beekeeping as a permanent industry in that state. In 1859, Harbison also received a patent for a beehive he invented. He was known to Californians as the "Bee King from Pennsylvania."

In the early 1900s, honeybees were being consumed by an epidemic of American Foul Brood (AFB), a bacterial disease that can wipe out colonies. This strain of bacteria

is heat resistant and can remain active for up to 60 years. Realizing the seriousness of the situation, beekeepers turned to the state government for help. The Bee Law was passed in 1921 and is still in effect today. The Bee Law requires beekeepers to notify the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) when they obtain new bees, and calls for apiary inspections to prevent the spread of communicable diseases between colonies. Because of cutbacks in the 1970s, the PDA realized that only about 20% of all hives in Pennsylvania were being inspected. This led to a revision of the Bee Law that requires beekeepers to register with the state every other year at the cost of \$10. PDA studies have shown that regular apiary inspections lead to a decrease in AFB. PDA representatives also assist in solving other common colony problems, such as mites. Recently, bees have not been returning to the hive, leaving the queen and the brood behind to die. This has been identified as Colony Collapse Disorder, and has been affecting bees from Pennsylvania to Florida. Pollinators such as bees affect a third of the world's crop production, and the importance of their role in the food chain is being recognized once again.



An example of a removable frame beehive

STOVER FAMILY MILL

by Jane Nase

The Stover family of Upper Bucks County operated 29 grist and saw mills during the late 1700s to 1900s, which made them the dominant milling family in the region.

In Haycock, a Stover gristmill was located in the village of Tohickon, which is now under the waters of Lake Nockamixon. The mill was built in 1743 and operated by four generations of the family for 123 years. The village was situated near what is now the northern end of Lake Nockamixon and was torn down for construction of the lake.

The family then moved the mill to Quakertown and then to Barto under the name of Great Valley Mills.

The township was host to five mills located along Tohickon Creek. So many mills in a concentrated area had advantages and disadvantages.

One advantage was that highly skilled craftsmen such as millwrights, carpenters and mill dressers established themselves in the area. The disadvantages were that multiple dams on one creek could create a catastrophic flood if a dam upstream collapsed. Floodwater from such a col-

lapse would allow debris and the rush of water to wipe out the dams and mills downstream.

The village of Tohickon was originally called Stovertown, but was renamed Tohickon when a post office was built. The town was very prosperous because of the Stover's mill, which was called the Tohickon Valley Mill. People from all around Bucks and Lehigh counties would travel to the mill have their wheat ground into flour.

Tohickon also boasted a creamery, blacksmith, post office and a store that sold all types of items. Tohickon Valley Mills was a stone-ground grain mill that had a mail-order business, shipping their goods all over the U.S.

This area was also valued for its roads in the late 18th century since they allowed critical connections to the cities north and south of

the region. Roads such as Easton, Durham, and Old Bethlehem were primary routes for the millers' goods because they would be able to transport their products to different areas. The right configuration of water and roads allowed the Haycock area to prosper during these times.



An early 20th century photo of Stover Mill on Tohickon Creek

DID YOU KNOW?

Years ago in Haycock, when someone from Applebachsville died, St. Paul's Church would toll its bell the number of years that the person had lived.

NICHOLAS BUCK:

AN EARLY SETTLER OF HAYCOCK

by Pat DeWald

As one of Haycock's original European settlers, Nicholas Buck played an important, but perhaps understated role in the settlement of the area as a translator.

Although not his sole job, Buck came to the country speaking fluent English, German, French and Flemish. Through his language skills, it is likely he helped the new mix of Americans understand one another and build a community.

Nicholas Buck came from the vicinity of Thoinville, Lorraine, a former province in what is today northeast France. In the 18th century, it was a region sometimes ruled by the Germans and other times by the French, which is why in historical documents Buck is listed as being French and other times German.

He immigrated to the U.S. in either 1748 or 1752. One ship's record lists a "Nicolas Buch" while another had "John Nickel Buch." He arrived at the port of Philadelphia and probably spent some time in the Reading area before coming to the Springfield-Haycock area.

The next record is of his marriage on April 21, 1761, to Mary Abigail, daughter of George and Barbara Kohl, of Nockamixon Township. George Kohl owned property on the east side of Haycock Run in the vicinity of what is today Park Drive.

The Bucks had two sons, Leonard, born in 1763 and Joseph, born in 1764. His wife died on January 7, 1765, at about age 22. In May 1766, he married his second wife, Elizabeth Hartman, the daughter of Michael and Margaret Hartman of Haycock. The couple had eight children who were Nicholas, Jacob, John, Catherine, Barbara, Elizabeth, Magdalena, and Mary Ann.

In 1768, he bought more than 46-acres that was in both Springfield and Haycock townships from Ludwig Nuspickle. Five years later, on Dec. 2, 1773, he bought 171 acres east of his farmhouse, which he called Buckhill and was located at the intersection of Pullen Station and Old Bethlehem roads.

In 1775, he became a member of the American Revolutionary Army by joining the Springfield Company that was headed by Captain Josiah Bryan and Colonel John Keller. In addition to Buck, the military company included others from the area such as Adam Frankenfield, Henry Afflerbach, Adam Bidleman, Andrew Sigafos, and Michael Fackenthal.

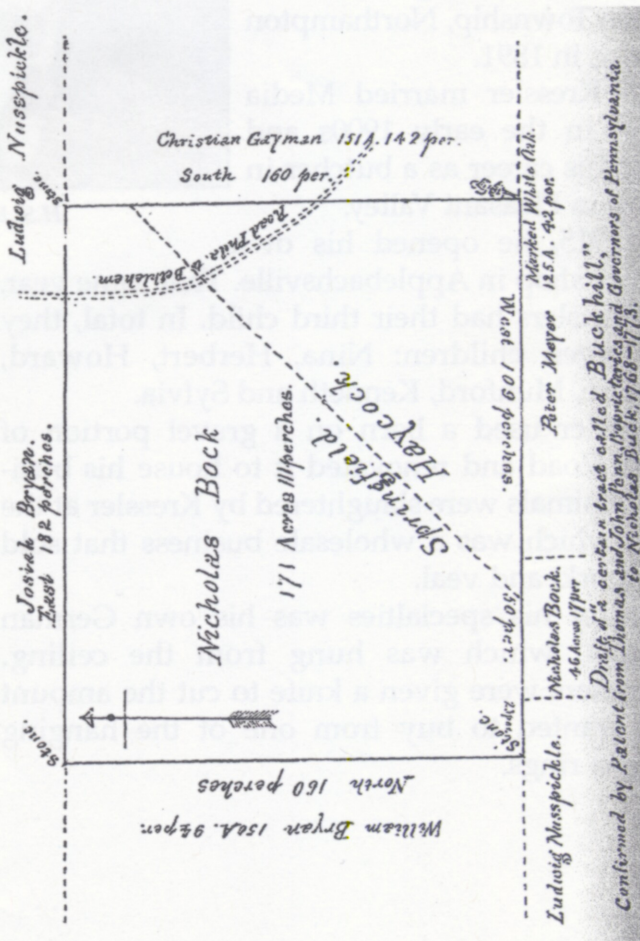
The records do not show how long their company drilled or what war-time duties they performed. As required under the newly formed federal government, Buck maintained his support at a June 10, 1778, ceremony before attorney William McHenry of Bedminster Township.

Nicholas died in 1786 after a year-long illness. In his will he gave his personal property and real estate to his first two

sons, Leonard and Jacob. To his remaining children he gave each 100 English pounds and to his wife, he left the house and made provisions for her to have enough beef, pork and other necessary items for the remainder of her life.

Some of the personal property listed at the time of his death included: 6 horses, 11 cattle, 7 sheep, 16 swine, 9 hives with 7 containing bees, 2 wagons, 1 pair wheels, 2 wagon covers, 2 plows, a harrow, sled, one woman's and 3 men's saddles, 2 sets wagon-gears, 2 set plow gears, wheelbarrow, 3 hopples, winnowing mill, cuttingbox and knife, 3 oats cradles, 11 sickles, apple mill and trough, 2 flails, 2 spinning-wheels, wool or big wheel, reel, musket, cabbagecutter, blow-horn, pigeon net, books and 6-tons of hay. At the time of the settlement, the estate was estimated to be worth about \$2,900 dollars in 1893 dollars.

Reference: "Account of the Buck Family of Bucks County, Pennsylvania and of The Bucksville Centennial Celebration held June 11, 1892: Including the Proceedings of the Buckwampun Literary Association on Said Occasion." Edited by William J. Buck 1893.



Map of Nicholas Buck's land, courtesy of Pat DeWald.

HAYCOCK PROFILES:

H.S. KRESSLER

by Sue Kleiner-Grew

Earlier this year, I got a call from one of our members, Dawn Kressler. She said her mother, Ferne, read about other people in the newsletter and did not want her father-in-law to be overlooked.

The day I met Ferne Kressler, she was resplendent in a red pants suit, pearl earrings and necklace. She was full of life and good spirits. She deserves a story all her own, but first she wanted to speak about her father-in-law, H.S. Kressler.

She spoke fondly of him and recalled that the whole family called him Dad. Herbert Samuel Kressler was born in Leithsville, a village in Lower Saucon Township, Northampton County, in 1891.

H.S. Kressler married Media Balliet in the early 1900s and began his career as a butcher in a shop in Pleasant Valley.

In 1915, he opened his own butcher shop in Applebachsville. That same year, the Kresslers had their third child. In total, they had seven children: Nina, Herbert, Howard, Florence, Munford, Kenneth and Sylvia.

Kressler used a barn on a gravel portion of Apple Road and renovated it to house his business. Animals were slaughtered by Kressler at the shop, which was a wholesale business that sold beef, pork, and veal.

One of his specialties was his own German bologna, which was hung from the ceiling. Customers were given a knife to cut the amount they wanted to buy from one of the hanging bologna rings.

In addition to the butcher shop, Kressler owned the Applebachsville Hotel, now known as Whitehall apartments, at the intersection of Old Bethlehem and Apple roads. He also owned the building next door, which became the family homestead for 61 years.



H.S. Kressler

Kressler's sons played baseball, soccer, and tennis and he would transport them to their games in the same truck he used to haul cattle. The family had a tennis court built in the back yard of their home and they all played that sport.

Kressler was a devout Christian and belonged to the Evangelical United Brethren Church in Springtown.

Ferne described him as, "Stern but generous."

She recalled that he always wore a flower in his lapel to church on Sunday and that he and his children would perform

music during the church service.

The family sang, but also played a host of instruments including the mandolin, trombone and piano.

Besides his business, church and family, Kressler was also a member of the local school board and the township road board, which was responsible for maintaining township roads.

Kressler died at age 39 from a cut on his hand that became infected. He was buried in the Springfield Cemetery.

His wife never remarried and remained living in the family home until 1947 when her son, Howard, purchased the home. He and Ferne resided there for 29 years.

SOCIETY NEWS

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The social committee and our members have had a very busy summer.

We began by purchasing a tent for use at future activities.

On June 30, H.H.S sponsored its annual Marketplace fundraising event where members and others sold items at rented tables. Many thanks to Trudi Rosencrans for organizing the event. We are grateful for the generosity of Cathi Gelwicks who made a donation to the firehouse for the use of their space.

We want to express our appreciation to those who helped manage various activities the day of the event: Gail Silveira, Diane Vosburgh, Nancy DePue, Paula Laughlin.

Thanks to Nancy and Henry DePue for donating the food sold at Marketplace. We also wish to acknowledge musicians: Steve Applegate, Gordon Allem, Jonni Handschin, Rich Laughlin and Ron Kaisen for providing musical entertainment. We appreciate that the Haycock fire company took time to get the space at the firehouse ready for the event.

On May 19, we participated in the Haycock Elementary School Frontier Days. Joe and Pat Fite presented their collection of artifacts and Heather Radick and Sue Kleiner-Grew presented photos of Haycock's one room school houses.

On May 20 several of our members got together to take a tour of Steven Snyder's art show in Point Pleasant, PA.

On June 10 H.H.S co-hosted a tour of St. John's Church and cemetery along with Rosanne McCarty (member of both St. John's and H.H.S). A great job was done by Pat DeWald, Chris Handschin, Nancy Janyszeski, and Heather Radick.

On June 23 a tour of St. Paul's Church and cemetery was led by Pat DeWald, Henry DePue, Nancy Janyszeski and Heather Radick. Each of the guides presented information about persons buried at St. Paul's based on research they gathered.

In June 2007, H.H.S purchased a laptop computer with monies donated to the Beth Kerdock Memorial fund. The laptop made its debut at Marketplace. Paula Applegate and Henry DePue collaborated in finding a carrying case for the laptop at Marketplace for less than a dollar.

This year's Kringle Shoppe is set for December 7-9 at Bucks County Latvian Church on Apple Road. The event will again highlight crafts of more than 30 local artists, musical performances by local artists, and homemade holiday treats. Gift certificates and items from local businesses will be offered in a raffle to help raise money for the society.

Social Committee meeting is scheduled for September 13 at 7 p.m. at the home of Nancy DePue. Members are welcome

to join us as we plan Kringle IV. Please contact Chris at chandschin@verizon.net or (215) 536-0364.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

The research committee will meet September 29, October 25, and November 29 at 7 p.m. at Pat DeWald's home. Ancestry.com will be available as well as discussion on research topics to be presented at the May society meeting. Anyone interested in joining the group should contact Pat DeWald at 215-804-0216.

COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE

Denise Wilz was commissioned to create the 2007 commemorative plate which will feature the Latvian Baptist Church in Applebachsville.

OFFICERS COMMITTEE

At the May 10 public meeting, an officer's election was held. Dick Landgreen was re-elected treasurer, Sue Kleiner-Grew was elected secretary and Heather Radick named ad hoc officer.

NOTES OF THANKS

Thanks to Dave Long for compiling a list of registrants on the Haycock Township Militia role of 1863 which may be used for future newsletter articles.

The newsletter committee thanks Jane Nase for creating a table of contents of all articles written for the newsletter thus far. It is a valuable tool for us and great reference for the data base.

SOCIETY MEETINGS

The first public meeting of the fall 2007 season will take place on September 20, 7 p.m. at St. Paul's Church in Applebachsville. We will present the laptop and provide info on how to use it.

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