

HAYCOCK HISTORICAL NEWS

The Newsletter of The Haycock Historical Society • Summer 2013

JOHN E. AHLUM AND THE AHLUM FARM

By Marjorie Goldthorp Fulp

John E. Ahlum was born in 1933 in the attractive old stone farmhouse in which he grew up, on the over one-hundred acre Ahlum farm on Thatcher Road in Haycock Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Except for the four years of his childhood when his family resided in the adjoining Springfield Township, John has lived almost all of his life, 79 years, in Haycock.

The beginning of the farm probably goes back to the 1700's, and the first settler chose a perfect location to build his homestead. The farm lies in a peaceful, idyllic setting. It is a beautiful property, surrounded by far reaching green fields, some still being used for crops, and some which are now being reclaimed by the land, and becoming wooded. It is a good habitat for Eastern bluebirds, which make their homes in the area. The old farmhouse and farm buildings are on the west side of Thatcher Road, which cuts through the farm's lands. John E. Ahlum and his son Jeffrey live across Thatcher Road from the farm, and John rents out the original old farmhouse. From his home, John has wonderful views for miles

d.1842), purchased the farm from Joseph Heffert, who had purchased the farm one year before, in 1805, from Israel Penrose. The farm at that time consisted of 137 acres. After George Landis, the farm was owned by three more generations of the Landis family: John M. Landis (b.1801 d.1882), Aaron D. Landis (b.1829 d.1906), and John H. Landis (b.1863 d.1944). Following the Landis families on the farm were four generations of the Ahlum family: Edgar Ahlum (b.1885 d.1953) (who married Ada K. Landis, daughter of John H. Landis), John L. Ahlum (b.1911 d.1967), and John E. Ahlum, whose children, Jeffrey and Diane, were the fourth generation of Ahlums to live on the farm. In the 1930 census, Edgar's widowed father-in-law, John H. Landis, who was the great-grandfather of John E., lived with the Ahlums.

John E. had earlier Ahlum ancestors who also lived in Haycock. They were his great-grandfather Josiah Daniel Ahlum (b.1862 d.1942) married to Rebecca Bleam Ahlum (b.1856 d.1924), great-great-grandfather David C. Ahlum (b.1840 d.1903) married to Mary Nicholas Ahlum (b.1836 d.1921) and great-great-great-grandfather Jesse Allam (Ahlum) (b.1814 d.1885) married to Mary Ann Fulmer Allam (Ahlum) (b.1817 d.1874).

In first grade John attended the nearby Mt. Airy one-room school in Haycock Township, and next spent second, third and fourth grades in a one-room school in Springfield Township when his family moved to Springfield, and lived there for four years. After the family came back to the Ahlum farm, John again attended the Mt. Airy School for fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades until his eighth-grade graduation, which took place at St. Paul's Church in Applebachsville. He then went on to Quakertown High School.

John remembers that his grandfather, Edgar Ahlum, used horses and mules for farming, and John's father, John L. Ahlum, used some horses and then tractors. They mostly used Allis-Chalmers tractors: the WC with the square grill, and the WD with the rounded grill. They also used a few Ford tractors: the NAA and the 3000. The Allis Chalmers were bought from H.E. Bishop in Dublin, and the Fords were bought from Keller in Richlandtown.

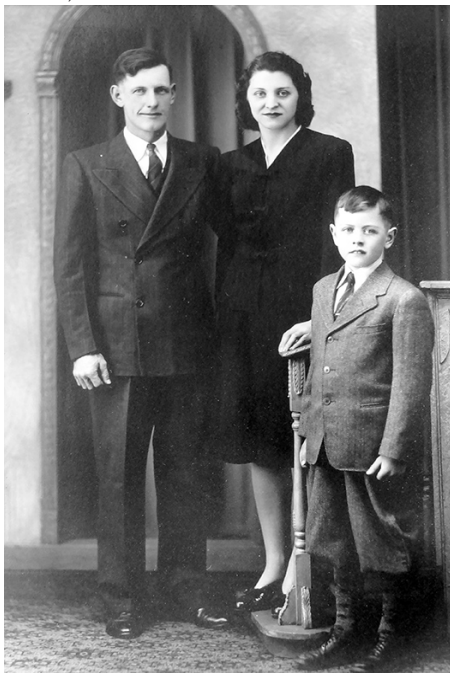
In earlier days there were long white fences along both sides of the road in front of the farm. The stone and stucco house has a porch across the whole front of the house. A large colorful clump of orange daylilies blooms in the front yard,



Evelyn and John E. Ahlum

in several directions. The faraway view to the western horizon provides spectacular sunsets, which passers-by stop to watch and photograph. An artist set up his easel to capture the sunset in a painting.

Four generations of the Landis family and four generations of the Ahlum family have lived and worked on the land of this outstanding farm. In 1806, John E. Ahlum's fourth-great-grandfather, George Landis (b.1762



John L., Anna (Giese), and John E. Ahlum



Ahlum Farm House 2013

with attractive shrubs. There were and still are many buildings, which included the big barn, a wagon shed which was mainly used for repair work and lumber storage, corn cribs (one of which was round), a carriage shed, chicken house and pig pen. Edgar Ahlum smoked hams and did butchering in a small stone building next to the house. This might be the structure which was built in the 1800's by George Landis, as an addition to his "dwelling house." George Landis was a turner (a person who turns wood on a lathe to make spindles), and had a turner shop at his home. The 1842 will of George Landis mentions a spring house on the property. John E. doesn't remember ever seeing the spring house, for it was gone by his time. A few years ago I met a woman who related that when she was 5 years-old, around 1950, she fell into the pig pen, and John Ahlum saved her from the jaws of an attacking hog. John E. does not remember this, so the rescuer must have been his father, John L. Ahlum. It surely made an impression on the little girl who was saved.

The Ahlums had a dairy herd of about fifty Holstein cows. They also raised hogs and chickens and had cats and dogs and other pets on the farm. One dog John especially remembers



**Edgar and Ada (Landis) Ahlum Family
John L. is in the middle**

is Pete, a German shepherd which the family had for a long time. The pond on the farm was dug by Ben Surket with his bulldozer. Back in those days, the Ahlums could herd their cows across the road to the pond without fear of traffic tie-ups. Only one or two cars might come by.

The Ahlums grew hay, which they baled, corn, oats, soybeans, and wheat, and made silage in the silo. The Richland Mill would send a grinder to the farm to grind corn, oats and barley for the animals' feed. Any extra feed that the Ahlums did not need for their animals,

was sold. The house had hot water heat, supplied by a wood burning furnace, and so there was the chore of cutting lots of firewood. This furnace was later replaced with an oil burner. The Ahlums had a large farming operation, and in addition to their property, they worked other farms in the Tohickon Valley. These were the farms of Robert Pope (on Thatcher Road), Ben Surket (on Church View Drive), Frank Reichenbach (on Stover Mill Road), and the farms of Mae Detweiler, the Emichs, and Clyde Feist (founder and owner of the Tohickon Quarry), on Old Bethlehem Road. One day John was working on the Reichenbach farm, which sat high up on a hill overlooking the



Old Photo of Farm with the White Fence

Tohickon valley. While he was resting and eating his lunch, John looked out over the valley, and mused that if the Tohickon Creek flowing through the bottom of the valley was dammed, the water would fill the valley and make a huge lake. He never dreamed that this would actually happen, which it did, in the early 1970's, when the Tohickon Creek, Haycock Run, and Three Mile Run Creek were dammed to make the seven mile-long Lake Nockamixon, part of the Nockamixon State Park of Pennsylvania. This took away five of the properties farmed by the Ahlums.

In addition to cutting firewood, John's main memories are of farm work...milking cows, plowing, planting, reaping and baling. He also did trapping, as did many of the youths in Haycock. He went skunking at night with neighbor friend Bill Cramp. The teacher at their one-room school did not appreciate it when the boys showed up smelling of skunk. They

also trapped muskrats and opossums. The pelts were sold to Milton Bleam in Quakertown. John, Bill Cramp, and the Grim brothers Harry, Barry and Larry, went swimming and fishing in the Tohickon Creek. In winter, the area kids had good sledding on the hill by the Mt. Airy School, and in the field across the road from the Ahlum home.

The family started their work days with big breakfasts of bacon, eggs, beef and gravy. Dinner was at noon, and it was again a large serving of hearty food. John's mother did a lot of baking, and made many pies. They worked hard, burning off all that food, and no one was overweight. The family had good Christmases at home. John's mother and grandmother baked plenty of cookies and other treats, and they had a big Christmas dinner, with lots of company stopping by. There was always a Christmas tree at their one-room school.

John married Evelyn Black in 1962, and they built a ranch house across the road from the farm. John and Evelyn raised their children in this house, and have been married for 51 years. Around 1990 John stopped farming other properties, and went to work at the roofing plant in Quakertown for 19 years. He still farmed his own land for a time, before retiring.

Now three generations of the Stoneback family farm the land around John's home and other area properties, using big, modern machines, such as a huge 12-row planter, and a massive combine. A tractor transports the over-size combine along the roads, with the combine's extra sections towed behind on a trailer. Farming activities continue to hum around the Ahlum Farm. Fields of corn and other crops line the roadsides. The corn really is "as high as an elephant's eye."

Landis and Ahlum owners of the farm:

George Landis (1762-1842) and wife Anna Meyer Landis (1769-1837)

John M. Landis (1801-1882) and wife Susanna Detweiler Landis (1802-1873)

Aaron D. Landis (1829-1906) and wife Sarah Hager Landis (1828-1903)

John H. Landis (1863-1944) and wife Carolina "Carrie" Knechel Landis (1888-1922)

Edgar B. Ahlum (1885-1953) and wife Ada K. Landis Ahlum (1891-1944), daughter of John H. Landis

John L. Ahlum (1911-1967) and wife Anna Giese Ahlum (1915-2009)

John E. Ahlum and wife Evelyn Black Ahlum are the present owners of the farm.

A "Thank You" to Eva Beidler for providing information on the lineage of the Landis and Ahlum families.

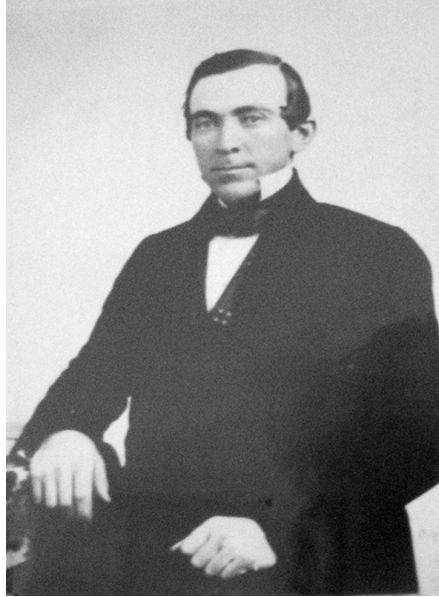


The Ahlum Farm 2013

THE JONAS STOVER FAMILY OF TOHICKON

By Margaret T. Eberz- Granddaughter of Maggie Stover Nicholas

In 1857 Jonas Stover married Emeline Derr at Kellers Church in Bedminster Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Jonas was the son of Jacob Stover, who built the Stover Mill on Tohickon Creek in what was to become the village called "Stovertown," or "Tohickon Village." Jacob was known as "Miller Jake." Jonas was the great-grandson of Heinrich Stauffer, a Mennonite, who emigrated here from the Alsace Lorraine region of Germany in 1749 with his wife Barbara Hockman on the ship "Saint Andrew." When Heinrich and Barbara arrived they began to search the area for land suitable for making pottery and fine china. Heinrich and his brothers had manufactured fine china in Germany and he wished to continue to do that here in America. Unfortunately, Pennsylvania soil was not suitable for fine china. The Stauffers settled in Bedminster Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and built a farm there. Heinrich became a farmer. The original farm is still in operation. It is owned and farmed by the Labs family.



for the men when they came in from milking the cows.

During the 1920's my mother spent her summers at her grandparents' home at Tohickon Village. She and her niece had a canoe that they paddled on Tohickon Creek near the dam.

In the late 1930's (1937, 1938, 1939), my mother and I spent summers with my grandmother's sister (Emma Trauger) and her family at their farm at Kellers Church Granite Works. The post office was also located at this place. Here are a few things I remember:

This was the first time I saw a chicken get its head cut off and then run around like crazy. I remember a large wood stove in the kitchen. Andy the cat lay under the stove and I wanted to pull him out by the tail but was told to get away from the stove. Andy usually left when he saw me. I tried to catch and ride the animals. I usually stood too close to the water pump when it was being pumped for water and so I would get black eyes from the pump handle. In the house there was a big player piano that fascinated me when it was wound up and played music.

Today the only living relatives directly descended from Jonas are ones from Alice Stover Snyder and from Maggie Stover Nicholas families.

Jonas and Emeline (Derr) Stover



Jonas continued the family tradition of running the farm, mill, and creamery established by his father, Jacob Stover, on the Haycock property in Tohickon Village. There was always something being built or repaired. Upon the death of Jonas, the farm was taken over and continued by his son Howard. After Howard died the Swartleys (Vernon and wife Dorothy) owned the farm until it was condemned by the state for Lake Nockamixon.

Jonas and Emeline had 7 children: Elizabeth (Lizzie), Alice, Jacob (Jake), Emma, Maggie, Howard and Clara. Elizabeth died while giving birth to her daughter. All the rest reached adulthood. My grandmother was Maggie Stover Nicholas. Below are a few things she told the family about life on the farm as well as some of my mother's and my recollections of that area.

In the village of Tohickon other relatives had homes as well as some of the workers. At Christmas one of the men in the village would dress up as the Belsnickel and go around from house to house with a switch and oranges. Parents were asked about each child's behavior. If they were good they got an orange. If they were naughty they got the switch. Children tried to figure out who was portraying the Belsnickel each year.

Maggie remembered her mother Emeline one day telling Jonas she did not want any more projects being started or any more men hired. She was tired of all the pies she was making for breakfast. She rose at 4:00 A.M. to make pies and breakfast



The Author Margaret Thomas (Eberz) in 1937



Wedding Petticoat worn by Emeline Derr in 1857



Stover Family Carpet Bag



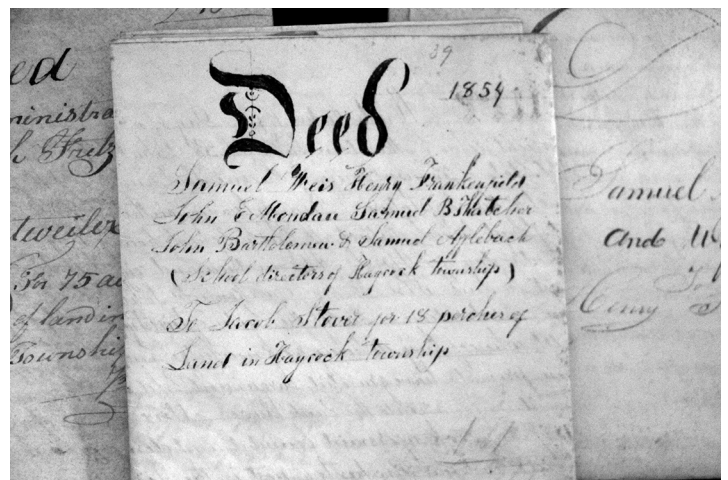
Wedding Gloves and Reticule used by Emeline Derr Stover



Woolen Shawl used by Emeline Derr Stover

THANK YOU

We thank Margaret Eberz for her donation of these items, and her history of the Jonas Stover Family, which includes a well documented photo album which will be available at the HHS Headquarters.



Eleven Deeds from 1768 to 1869, Several in the Name of Jacob Stover.

Our New Sign in Front of the Stokes House Headquarters of Haycock Historical Society



Our table has a new glass top, covering an 1851 map of Haycock. Our new sign is waiting to be placed along the driveway.

**HHS Summer Picnic
July 2013**



KRINGLE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

In 2013 Kringle Christmas Shoppe will operate for the tenth year! Once again it will be held at the Bucks County Latvian Baptist Church Annex in Applebachsville. This year's show dates are: Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, December 6, 7, and 8.

Our "Volunteer Commitment Form" was new last year and worked really well!!! The event ran smoother than ever, so we are sending it again! You'll find it as a colored mailer/insert in this newsletter. Please review the choices and find something you can commit to doing. Circle your choice and send the form directly to me this year. I will follow up, contacting you in November if you are not already actively involved in our Social Events Committee.

Please remember, this event is our primary fundraiser which will allow us to accomplish the goals in our charter. We are starting to see the results of our labor in a big way at our Stokes House Headquarters.

Please help? This is a chance for everyone to pitch in and do a little to make a big difference.

Thanks! Chris Handschin

STOKES UPDATE

After many long years, I figure maybe 40, the trim and doors at Stokes are being painted and the old house is looking pretty good. The stone was washed, all the algae and dirt is gone. I believe by the time you receive the newsletter the painting will be finished. The lawn is looking good thanks to Bob Badger. The middle of July, we were notified that the county would not cut the grass any more. Fortunately, Bob volunteered to maintain the grounds for the remainder of the season. Presently we are trying to get back on the county's list for grass cutting but as of now that has not happened. Hopefully during the winter we will be able to get the situation resolved but if not, we will be looking for volunteers and ideas for ground maintenance for next year. We really have a beautiful setting in the park and when the grass is maintained it really shows off the beautiful old house.

Stokes will be open for coffee on Friday mornings, 10 a.m. to 12 noon, September thru October. Come and relax.

After the house painting is completed, we will be focusing on putting in the parking area. This is one of the projects that our grant money is helping to pay for.

Thanks everyone, for your interest and help. I think we have come a long way, and going forward should be better than ever.

Pat DeWald

WANTED

We are in need of a three-drawer filing cabinet in good condition. Please contact Pat DeWald if you can help.

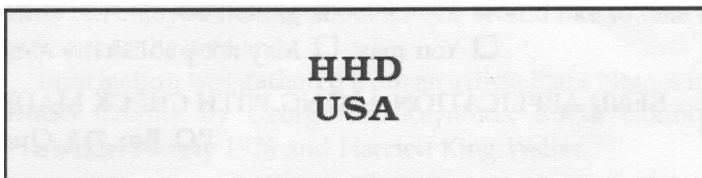
THANK YOU

The Haycock Historical Society thanks the Lapetina family for their generous donation in memory of their mother, Maggie Lapetina.

Haycock Civil War Enlistments

You can link directly to this web data from the HHS website. It contains the Civil War enlistment information for our township.

http://haycockhistoricalsociety.org/history/1863_CivilWar-Enlistments.pdf



ACTIVITIES

November 16 - Fall Yard and House Cleanup - 9 a.m. to noon Lunch and snacks will be provided. Every time I schedule a yard cleanup, I hope we will find something interesting from the past, but so far that has not happened, but maybe this time.

December 6 , 7 , 8 - Kringle Christmas Shoppe

December 22 - Victorian Tea/Christmas Party at STOKES HOUSE - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Put down that shopping list and come and join us for some holiday cheer. See Stokes, freshly painted, welcoming the holidays.

On display will be the new items from the Stover Collection donated by Margaret T. Eberz, granddaughter of Maggie Stover Nicholas.

MEETINGS

Sept 19 - Jack H. Schick, "Quakers in the 1700's in Upper Bucks County." He is the historian for Richland Meeting in Quakertown. Included in their cemetery are some Stokes.

Oct 17 - Betty Krauss as "Alice," a homeless woman born in 1870 and well-known in the area.

Nov 14 - TBA

March 20 - Margaret T. Eberz, "History of the Stover family in Bucks County"

Meetings are held at the Bucks County Latvian Baptist Church in Applebachsville and begin at 7 p.m.

OFFICERS

President: Pat DeWald wdewald@verizon.net

V. President: Margie Fulp m_fulp@hotmail.com

Secretary: Nancy Janyszeski ncj@epix.net

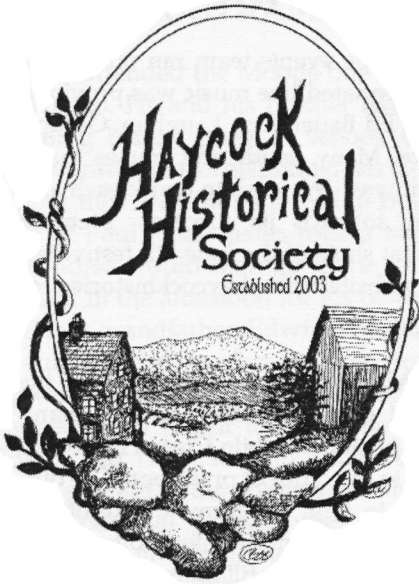
Treasurer: Paula Laughlin pmlreader@yahoo.com

Ad Hoc: Chris Handschin chandschin@verizon.net

Ad Hoc: Diane Vosburgh dmvosburgh@gmail.com

Ad Hoc: Joe Rumsey joelovesbarb@verizon.net

Please submit material for the newsletter or suggestions for interviews to Margie Fulp. (215-257-7472) or m_fulp@hotmail.com



P.O. Box 715
Quakertown, PA 18951

www.haycockhistoricalsociety.org

AN INVITATION TO MEMBERSHIP

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I WANT TO BE PART OF RECLAIMING OUR HISTORY AND PRESERVING IT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

- Individual Membership - \$20/year**
Receive quarterly newsletter and attend all special functions this year – Jan. thru Dec.
- Family Membership (Parents & Children in household) - \$30/year**
Receive quarterly newsletter and attend all special functions this year – Jan. thru Dec.
- Corporate Sponsor - \$100/year**
Gain advertisement in our newsletter by yearly sponsorship (ad size smaller than business card)
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Receive honorary lifetime status, receive quarterly newsletters and attend all special functions
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For just \$50 more, join as a household and enjoy all the benefits of lifetime membership

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SEND APPLICATION ALONG WITH CHECK MADE PAYABLE TO HAYCOCK HISTORICAL SOCIETY TO:
P.O. Box 715, Quakertown, PA 18951