



Welcome to a Walk Through Time.....

GRANDPA'S STORE

My great grandfather, David West, operated a country store at Loag's corner. From all comments by older generations, he must have been a busy, shrewd business man, active in community and church affairs. He built the three-story building and owned considerable acreage which he sold off in lots.

By trade, he was a tailor and made men's suits. Dr. Woodward lived nearby and his son asked Grandpa West to make him a suit and have it finished to wear by so-and-so, but time slipped around and the suit was not near done. Then his daughter, Anna, had to get right to it and sew up the fine seams (tailoring requires hand sewing to get the collar to lay perfectly). She worked very patiently and finally the garments were completed. Up to that time, she had an interest in young Woodward, but after that the relationship cooled considerably.

Grandpa West's was a typical country store with the front door open to the northern winds in winter time— and still does. It contained long side counters with countless shelves filled with merchandise that extended to the ceiling. A big cast iron stove stood in the center of the store, round-bellied and on its zinc mat, coal bucket and shovel nearby. Seemed it was the most important object in the place. Cheery-hot on cold days, in winter it was the main attraction—so all warmed their hands as soon as they entered. Around it congregated the salons and wits of the neighborhood, who discussed everything from farming and potatoes to religion and scandal.

Shelves were filled with all kinds of merchandise, wearing apparel, hats, caps with ear flaps, and big, wide-brimmed straw hats that harvesters wore, canned goods, coffee, tea and spices. Then there were notions, trinkets, toys, celluloid collars, collar buttons, old fashioned straight razors stick shaving soap, school slates, pencils and pens. Steel kegs of nails supported a plank or two for the seating convenience of those who wanted to tarry to hear or spread the news. Wheat flour, buckwheat flour in all its rich flavor cornmeal and oatmeal cereal—all were kept in bulk in handy bins or large cans. Sometimes one had to pick out the bugs.

There was a space on the counter allowed for wrapping packages. A roll of manilla paper and sheets of dark ochre butcher paper occupied the end of the counter. Interestingly, a ball of twine or cord dangled from a small wire basket that hung from the ceiling. There was also a "bee-hive" of string on the counter. Grandpa hurried back and forth his aisles to grant the customers their desires and fill their lists of wanted articles. Scales, a kerosene lamp dangling from the ceiling, glass cased with candy in large topped candy jars, and cigars. Nearby was the pickle barrel with large juicy pickles and the cracker barrel with resealing, removable lid.

Grandpa West traveled to Philadelphia on horseback to order his supplies. In his Ledger, he wrote down the items bought [from neighbors] and what he sold to them. A receipt [for the transactions] was written on a very small piece of paper. Paper was scarce. Grandpa's Store also served as a post-office for Loag's Corner.

Ada Fleming Ford [1915–1978]

Tidbits (answers on second page)

1. Oliver W. Barnes had received \$10,000.00 in P.R.R. railroad stock for laying out the miles of track between Downingtown and Honey Brook. The railroad was completed in 1869 and called the D&L. What do the letters of the railroad stand for?
2. How much land was designated for the town of Barneston?

Biography of Ada Fleming Ford

Ada Fleming Ford, daughter of William Henderson Fleming and Anna Keenan Fleming, was the wife of Walter Earl Ford. Anna Keenan Fleming and my mother, Myra Kennan McLaughlin were sisters. All are now deceased. Ada was known as Wallace Township's historian. She lived her entire life in Glenmoore, Wallace Township, Pennsylvania, on the farm that had belonged to the Flemings since the late 1800's.

Mrs. Ford was eager to share her knowledge of the history of the area and its inhabitants and wrote many articles on the subject. The short story, "Grandpa's Store," was found among newspaper clippings and articles written on scraps of paper, napkins, etc. "Grandpa" was David Lockhart [Lockheart] West, our great grandfather. He was a most prominent citizen of Loag's Corner and highly regarded by the community. The three-story building Mrs. Ford mentions in the story housed the store and post office and was built in the early-to-mid-1800's.

After serving Loag's corner for many years, "Grandpa West" moved to Honey brook in 1881 and lived in the house next to the Honey Brook Methodist Church where he continued his tailoring assisted by his daughter, Anna. She never married but devoted her life to caring for her father.

David West died on March 2, 1902, and was buried in the Forks of the Brandywine Presbyterian Cemetery on Route 322 in West Brandywine Township, Glenmoore, Pennsylvania.

Jane (McLaughlin) McConaghy
2/2005




D & L RAILROAD

The East Brandywine Railroad was formed in 1854 by a special legislature act to allow a 28-mile rail line to be built between New Holland and Downingtown where it would connect to the Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad. In 1860 it was renamed the East Brandywine and Waynesburg (now Honey Brook) Railroad and the 18-mile route from Downingtown to Waynesburg was completed. By 1876 the line was extended another 10 miles to New Holland, Lancaster County.

Changing hands many times, the name went from East Brandywine and Waynesburg Railroad to the Downingtown-Lancaster (D & L) and finally called the New Holland Branch, when it was taken over by the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) in 1903. Service began to decline when the automobile started making its presence with passenger service being stopped in 1930 and freight service in the 1960's. By 1949, an 8.1-mile section from Glenmoore to just west of Honey Brook was officially out of service. The three stops in West Nantmeal Township were Barneston, Wyebrook, and Lewis Mills.

The railroad provided an economic system stimulating the development of the community. It enabled the community to broaden whether shipping pig iron from Isabella Furnace to Baldwin Locomotive Works in Lima, PA or ice from Isabella Lake was shipped to Knickerbocker Ice Company in Philadelphia and New York. It also serviced the agricultural community enabling them to get their produce to Philadelphia or Lancaster.

The railroad played a big part in establishing our community. Once the railroads were established, post offices, stores, creamery's, and wheelwright businesses were created which made this area a viable place to live.



The West Nantmeal Historical Commission was founded in 1998 by local residents who wanted a way to preserve the township's past. The mission of the commission is to gather and maintain historical records for the township; identify historical structures and encourage their preservation and restoration; and promote community awareness and appreciation for the historic nature of West Nantmeal. Over the years, the Commission has undertaken several projects to document the history of the township structures and properties, as well as historic events in the township. Our monthly meetings are open for all to attend. We are always looking for new members and anyone is welcome to join. Our group is small but POWERFUL!

Oliver Barnes and Barneston: The Town That Was Not To Be



Barneston Bridge
1849—1950
Length—84 feet
Construction Cost—\$1473.00

Oliver Weldon Barnes was born in Connecticut in 1823. He engineered the construction of the D&L Railroad between Downingtown and Lancaster.

Along with payment of \$105,000 in railroad stock, he was given 78 ½ acres and had the town of Barneston laid out into small building lots and in 1861, advertised them for sale in the West Chester Village Record.

A large country store was built at about that time, occupied and operated by Union Capt. Levi Feters. The building still stands today, though no longer a store. David Longacre was appointed first postmaster in 1869.

Barnes had no reason to doubt the community would grow much the same as Latrobe, PA which he had established as a borough in 1854. Latrobe has a current population of 8,338 as of 2010. Apparently there was very little interest in the building lots and Barneston never thrived.

Barnes moved on to bigger and better things. He was drawn into the Credit Mobilier bank scandal of 1875 of which he was secretary/treasurer.

In 1882, he helped design and build the Kinzer Viaduct in northwestern PA, which was at the time the highest and longest bridge in the world.

Barnes went on to co-design the Hell Gate Bridge across the East River in New York City. He did not live to see its completion, dying in Manhattan in 1908.

Tidbits answers	
1. Downingtown and Lancaster	2. 78 1/2 acres

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WEST NANTMEAL TOWNSHIP
HISTORIC COMMISSION
P.O. Box 234
Elverson, Pennsylvania 19520
www.westnantmealhc.org
Phone: 610-286-9722 ext 17

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5