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**“HOUSES FROM THE RESERVOIRS OF MEMORY”:
G. EDWIN BRUMBAUGH AND THE RESTORATION OF EARLY
PENNSYLVANIA ARCHITECTURE**

by

Amber Elizabeth Degn

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Early American
Culture

Spring 2000

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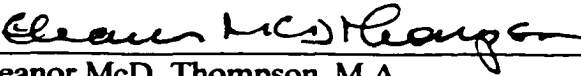
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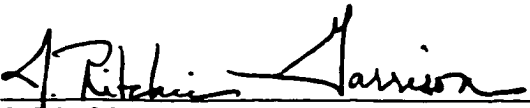
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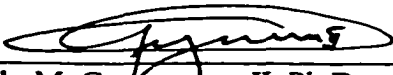
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Amber Elizabeth Degn

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ABSTRACT

The professional career of George Edwin Brumbaugh (1890-1983), one of the most important restoration architects in Pennsylvania in the twentieth century, has been only briefly addressed by scholars. Brumbaugh completed over one hundred restorations in the Delaware Valley between 1927 and 1983, many of which are now open as museums. This thesis explores Brumbaugh's motivations for preservation and analyzes the architectural and historical narratives he intended to tell in his museum restorations at Ephrata Cloister for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in Ephrata; the Gates House and Golden Plough Tavern for Historic York County in York, Pennsylvania; and Wright's Ferry Mansion for the Louise Steinman von Hess Foundation in Columbia, Pennsylvania. Brumbaugh's papers suggest that the public or private nature of each museum directed the sort of narrative Brumbaugh could create. The restorations at Ephrata represent the creation of formal, "official" state history. Those at York represent local history, with the purpose of renewing a neighborhood and increasing tourism. The Wright's Ferry Mansion project represents private history: the story the Louise Steinman von Hess Foundation wanted to tell. The comparison of these three restorations reveals important differences between the private client-architect and public client-architect relationship, as well as the effect these relationships had on the creation a particular type of history.

This thesis reveals Brumbaugh's professional growth as a restoration architect in the second half of the twentieth century. At Ephrata, Brumbaugh insisted on the revival of authentic eighteenth-century, Pennsylvania German craft traditions to complete the restoration, while at York he utilized funds from the Urban Renewal Administration. Increasingly, Brumbaugh mediated the past and the present and learned to balance the historical with the modern. Yet Brumbaugh never strayed from his ultimate educational goal: to inspire visitors with the drama and spirit of American history. By learning from and experiencing the ways of the past, Brumbaugh hoped visitors to his restored sites might leave imbued and fortified with a more noble spirit which they would then transfer to their own lives.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

"Architecture, always the best record of a people's inmost thoughts, tells the story."
-G. Edwin Brumbaugh

On March 18, 1957 the unlikely pairing of architects George Edwin Brumbaugh (1890-1983) and Louis Kahn (1901-1974) occurred at a meeting of the Contemporary Club of Philadelphia. The members of the club asked two of the most prominent Philadelphia architects of the day to speak on the designated topic, "'Penn's Greene Countrie Towne': The Future of Old Philadelphia," in order to gain insight into the city's architectural future.¹ The two architects, both graduates of Philadelphia's Central High School and the highly regarded School of Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, designed buildings of exceptionally different styles and types. By 1957 Brumbaugh's major projects were museum restorations of eighteenth-century residences significant in the history of southeastern Pennsylvania, intermixed with residential restorations and colonial revival commissions. Alternatively, Kahn was best known as an innovative architect of modern residences, institutional buildings, and art museums. These differences beg the question of what prompted G. Edwin Brumbaugh to look to the past

¹ Office Records, Box 102, George Edwin Brumbaugh Papers, Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library (hereafter cited as Brumbaugh Papers).

for inspiration in new construction and to focus on the restoration of historically significant properties, while his contemporary chose the route of modern design. Why did Brumbaugh try to (re)create history with architecture while Kahn and others were denying (and making) history with their inventive, modern designs? Which of these two architects created and controlled the past? Did one have more influence on the general American public than the other?

In fact, both architects contributed important designs to the American landscape. Brumbaugh and Kahn both created historically significant buildings, and in creating them gained power and control. Significantly, the answer to these questions—both modern and restored buildings are important in the creation of history—embodies Brumbaugh and his work. Those who knew him would place his heart firmly in the past, for his written and spoken words suggest a strict appreciation of things old. Yet his actions repeatedly belie his words, revealing his tendency and ability to mediate the past and the present. He used modern materials, accepted funding from agencies such as the Urban Renewal Administration, changed paint colors, and in an extreme case even tore down historic buildings to satisfy his clients. Brumbaugh managed to balance the historical with the modern in remarkable ways. Fortunately, Brumbaugh's motivations for restoring early architecture, rather than designing modern buildings, appear quite clearly in his writings. His firm rooting in the history of Pennsylvania, his proud German heritage, an intense American patriotism, and his early education shed considerable light on his architectural motivations and philosophies.

This thesis explores Brumbaugh's restoration motivations and analyzes the architectural and historical narratives he intended to tell. The aim of the thesis is to answer why he restored buildings and how his restorations fit into our understanding of our past. This thesis does not comprehensively address the specifics of Brumbaugh's restoration methods or building techniques. Instead it takes its cues from cultural history and delves into larger issues. Cultural history focuses on ideas, mental constructs, systems of meaning, and symbolic worlds. Thus, this thesis focuses on issues of history and memory. While many Americans connect important historical events to buildings and objects—Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, the Betsy Ross House, the Declaration of Independence, the “Star Spangled Banner,” the White House, the Alamo, to name a few—few consider the impact of those who have preserved, restored, and recreated these historical objects on their sense of history. As John Bodnar has pointed out, most “cultural leaders in the United States come from a broad group of middle-class professionals—government officials, editors, lawyers, clerics, teachers, military officers, and small businessmen. They are ‘self-conscious purveyors’ of loyalty to larger political structures and existing institutions. Their careers and social positions usually depend upon the survival of the very institutions that are celebrated in commemorative activities.”² The restoration architect and his clients, for example, have as much or more influence on the creation of our national memories as the original participants in the historical events. Therefore, the architect's professional and personal agenda and that of

² John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 15.

his clients must be unearthed in order to understand his design for history. Professional history makers such as Brumbaugh need to be studied to understand their own time, the time they recreated, and the effect the historian's lens has on our own perceptions of the past.

Brumbaugh was a man driven by memory. He practiced ancestor worship, wrote extensively about and restored what he called "memory houses," used elements from prior restorations in his projects, delved into the memories of others to resurrect "ancient" methods, and yearned to create new memories and evoke old ones for visitors who came to the sites he restored. Although his designs for new residences and his restorations seem mired in the idiom of the colonial revival, Brumbaugh was not.³ As Kenneth Ames

³ The term colonial revival refers to both a style and a movement which embraced and took its cues from the architecture and material culture of the colonial past in the United States (anything before 1840, in fact). The colonial revival became increasingly popular throughout the country during and following the centennial of American independence in 1876, and many scholars mark the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, with its display of a New England farmhouse and colonial kitchen, as the first flowering of the movement. Nostalgic celebrations and commemorations of the past occurred before the centennial, however, but became increasingly popular in the later nineteenth century as Americans began reacting to the chaos of the modern world. Manifestations of the colonial revival are often considered a reaction to the fear of moral decline resulting from rapid industrialization, mass immigration, and modernism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Middle and upper class Americans, in particular, hoped to regain the morals of an idealized, earlier time via colonial objects and architecture in order to remedy their disillusionment with the modern world. The colonial revival reached its height in the first three decades of the twentieth century, but never disappeared completely. The movement is most often associated with New England, but had national implications and regional manifestations in all states. Studies of these regional variations are few. For national studies of the colonial revival see Alan Axelrod, ed. *The Colonial Revival in America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company in association with the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1985); Karal Ann Marling, *George Washington Slept Here: Colonial Revivals and American Culture, 1876-1986* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988); and William B. Rhoads, *The Colonial Revival* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1977). For regional studies see

judged, “while a little colonial revival may be a good thing, a great deal of it is a sign of personal or group disorder.” Brumbaugh performed amazing balancing acts—between old and new, between “Americanization” and the glorification of the German presence in America, between urban renewal and preservation, and between his plans and his clients’ desires. He interpreted the lives of workers, women, slaves, and immigrants in order to convince the public of the noble virtues of the people who lived in the American past. Brumbaugh’s work to educate through architectural restoration contradicts Ames’ conclusion that “the colonial is more an instance of cultural retaliation than a positive statement of social outreach.”⁴ Indeed, Brumbaugh admitted to a rebellious streak, but also steadfastly asserted the educational intentions of his restorations. Cultural retaliation did not outweigh social outreach for Brumbaugh. Rather, he managed to balance the two.

Brumbaugh focused his career on his passion—the architecture and culture of his Pennsylvania German ancestors. Charles Peterson, the preeminent restoration architect who began the Historic American Building Survey in the 1930s and considered himself a close friend of Brumbaugh, fondly called him “Mr. Pennsylvania German.” Indeed, Peterson’s appellation suits Brumbaugh well.⁵ He ardently explored early German

Sarah L. Giffen and Kevin D. Murphy, *“A Noble and Dignified Stream”: The Piscataqua Region in the Colonial Revival, 1860-1930* (York, Maine: Old York Historical Society, 1992); and William H. Truettner and Roger B. Stein, *Picturing Old New England: Image and Memory* (New Haven: Yale University Press in association with the National Museum of American Art, 1999).

⁴ Kenneth Ames, introduction to *The Colonial Revival in America*, ed. Alan Axelrod (New York: W.W. Norton & Company in association with the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1985), 14.

⁵ Charles Peterson, interview by author, Philadelphia, Pa., 19 August 1999.

influences in Pennsylvania throughout his life. All three restorations examined in this thesis—Ephrata Cloister (built c. 1741, restored 1941-1961) in Ephrata, Pennsylvania; the Golden Plough Tavern and Gates House (built c. 1741 and c. 1751, respectively; restored 1961-1964) in York, Pennsylvania; and Wright’s Ferry Mansion (built 1738, restored 1974-1981) in Columbia, Pennsylvania—reflect, according to Brumbaugh, some elements of Germanic building traditions. All three are located in the heart of “Pennsylvania Dutch” country: Ephrata Cloister and Wright’s Ferry Mansion in Lancaster County, and York across the Susquehanna River in adjoining York County (Figure 1).

Despite this fascination with his German roots, Brumbaugh began a traditional architectural career in 1914 in Philadelphia (Figure 2). By 1916 he opened his own office in the city where he designed updated versions of the local Pennsylvania farmhouse for wealthy clients. Although Brumbaugh devoted the first ten years of his career to designing these colonial revival residences—what one of Brumbaugh’s draftsmen called the “bread and butter” for architects—nowhere in the manuscript he began writing late in his life, and rarely in correspondence, did he mention these works.⁶ In fact, his major restoration projects began with his state commissions at the Daniel Boone Homestead and Ephrata in the late 1930s and early 1940s. He was a middle-aged man at that time, and for the previous twenty years had focused exclusively on new construction. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s publications such as *The Architectural Forum* and the *Yearbook for*

⁶ Barry Stover, interview by author, Chadds Ford, Pa., 19 October 1999. Brumbaugh began writing his manuscript in 1971.

the annual architectural exhibition sponsored by the Philadelphia chapter of the American Institute of Architects (A.I.A.) and the University of Pennsylvania's School of Architecture alumni group, the T Square Club, regularly featured his designs.⁷ Whether these years of designing historically inspired Pennsylvania farmhouses had any affect on Brumbaugh's later restoration work remains a question. It is clear that the reverse occurred frequently: he often reproduced details and elements from his restorations in new residences.⁸ His restorations and impassioned study of historic architecture greatly influenced his new designs. He stated at the age of fifty-eight that he valued two things in his experience most: "the many years of delightful exploring of back roads all over southeastern Pennsylvania in search of old houses (with the best companion in the world [Frances Brumbaugh, his wife]), and the opportunities that have come to me to study and restore important historic landmarks . . ."⁹ One of his favorite and oft-repeated phrases explains his attraction to old houses and his passion for restoration: architecture is "graphic history." From the 1930s until his death in 1983, he reiterated the same

⁷ *Yearbook of the Twenty-Sixth Annual Architectural Exhibition* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Chapter American Institute of Architects and the T Square Club, 1923); *Yearbook of the Thirtieth Annual Architectural Exhibition* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Chapter American Institute of Architects and the T Square Club, 1927); *Yearbook of the Thirty-Third Annual Architectural Exhibition* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Chapter American Institute of Architects and the T Square Club, 1930); and "The Pennsylvania Farmhouse," *The Architectural Forum* Master Detail Series, *The Architectural Forum* 60 (May 1934): 369-384.

⁸ Brumbaugh's draftsman, Barry Stover, believes that the residential commissions had no effect on Brumbaugh's later restoration work. Stover, interview.

⁹ Brumbaugh to Tom Wynne (of the Welcome Society), 25 November 1948, Office Records, Box 103, Brumbaugh Papers.

sentiment: “[A]rchitecture, always the best record of a people’s inmost thoughts, tells the story.”¹⁰ Projects which could teach the American public the story of a proper, moral, and noble past while encouraging patriotism and virtue in the future held much more importance for Brumbaugh than the new farmhouses he designed.

In 1927 he undertook his first restoration, setting the stage for a long and admirable career as an architect known primarily for his restoration work and his focus on the Germanic influence in the eighteenth-century architecture of the Delaware Valley.¹¹ Brumbaugh restored hundreds of buildings, including many properties critical to our understanding of American history (see Appendix A). He was involved in such varied projects as recreating the log huts at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania; restoring Daniel Boone’s Homestead in Baumstown, Pennsylvania; Fort Mifflin, Gloria Dei (Old Swedes Church), Second Street Market and Head House Square, Washington Square, sections of Germantown Academy, and portions of Stenton, all in Philadelphia; Washington Crossing Park north of Philadelphia; Batsto in New Jersey’s Wharton Tract; Washington’s and Lafayette’s Headquarters at the Brandywine Battlefield in Chadds

¹⁰ G. Edwin Brumbaugh, “Continental Influence on Early American Architecture,” *German American Review* 9 (February 1943): 7.

¹¹ His first “restoration” was his neighbor’s house in Gwynedd Valley, PA. The terms restoration, preservation, conservation, recreation, and renovation can be confusing. Restoration implies the replacement of architectural fabric that dates to a later period than the period of restoration and interpretation with historically appropriate new or historic fabric. Preservation has come to be a sort of catchall term for all types of maintenance of historic properties. In its most literal sense, preservation has a very similar meaning to conservation. Conservation involves the preservation and stabilization of the existing historic fabric. Recreation indicates a complete reproduction of a historic building, built from the ground up. Renovation suggests updating a structure with little concern for preserving the historic fabric of the building.

Ford, Pennsylvania; the 1704 Brinton Family House in Dilworthtown, Pennsylvania; and Pottsgrove Manor in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. By 1981 Brumbaugh had restored 117 historic buildings open to the public, and “many others privately owned.”¹² He consistently focused on sites that were important for political, military, or religious reasons and which were intended to become museums open to the public.

While his first and only significant publication focused on Pennsylvania German architecture in colonial America, and indeed restoration of Pennsylvania German architecture was his forte (certainly in the opinion of his peers), Brumbaugh did not narrow his work to only this type.¹³ Wright’s Ferry Mansion, for example, reveals principally English influence, as does the Gates House in York. Brumbaugh considered any property in which he could catch “a glimpse, however slight, of the spirit back of the buildings” worthy of his restoration efforts.¹⁴ The restorations at York exemplify Brumbaugh’s faith in glimpses, for little of the original eighteenth-century buildings remained in 1960 when he first viewed them. With extensive restoration, though, he managed to bring them back to life.

In spite of his search for the “spirit” of a building, Brumbaugh must be understood as an architect and preservationist who strongly believed in the significance of buildings constructed before 1800 and the importance of returning buildings to their first period

¹² Notes for talk at residence of Mrs. Kathryn Stoler, 18 May 1981, Office Records, Box 111, Brumbaugh Papers.

¹³ G. Edwin Brumbaugh, *Pennsylvania German Colonial Architecture* (Norristown, PA: Pennsylvania German Society, 1933).

¹⁴ Brumbaugh, *Pennsylvania German Colonial Architecture*, 3.

appearance. In his letters and lecture notes he repeatedly explained that he had no appreciation for things Victorian or modern. In 1978 he wrote: "There are signs today that favor styles earlier than the excessive plate glass and steel columns of our day. America (you and I) will determine what suits us. We're beginning to do it effectively with our houses. Bankers are pretty keen analysts of public taste, and they do not seem to be financing many housing developments of bare plate glass and strained efforts at novelty. We may not be enthusiastic about the Colonial we are offered today, but nine-tenths of it follows early American precedent." In the same lecture he admitted "some Victorian buildings have real charm in spite of their handicaps, and earlier buildings say things to us which we had better not forget."¹⁵ With his narrow focus on a particular period in American history, we must ask what sort of spirit Brumbaugh saw and felt in these buildings, and how he used restoration architecture to enhance and draw out this spirit for the general public.

The client cannot be ignored when investigating the creation of history in these projects. Although he was self-employed, Brumbaugh was not independently wealthy and did not carry out projects for his own gratification. Therefore a distinction must be made between his restoration work and that of the generation of "gentleman and lady" preservationists before him. Brumbaugh belonged to the first generation of restoration

¹⁵ Lecture notes for talk given to Huntington County Historical Society, Huntington, PA, 19 April 1978, Office Records, Box 111, Brumbaugh Papers. Brumbaugh restored the Colonel Dewees Mansion at Valley Forge to its eighteenth-century appearance, removing all later renovations dating to about 1850. At Batsto, in the Wharton Tract of New Jersey, he attempted to "erase" Joseph Wharton's 1878 alterations. See "Historical Aspects of the Wharton Tract," 65, 67, Wharton Tract Accounts, Box 4, Brumbaugh Papers.

architects who relied on a preservation-minded clientele for his restoration projects and more importantly, his income. The history Brumbaugh hoped to tell always had to be mediated and negotiated by his clients. Significantly, Brumbaugh's papers suggest that the public or private nature of each museum directed the sort of narrative Brumbaugh could create. The restorations at Ephrata Cloister for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania represent the creation of formal, "official" state history. Those at York represent local history, with the purpose of renewing a neighborhood and increasing tourism. Finally, the Wright's Ferry Mansion project represents private history: the story the Louise Steinman von Hess Foundation wanted to tell. While Brumbaugh insisted that historical accuracy be of the utmost importance when working on projects for state government, he tended to modify his strong opinions when working for smaller institutions and individuals and often deferred to his private clients. Thus, the case studies of restoration at Ephrata Cloister, the Golden Plough Tavern and Gates House, and Wright's Ferry Mansion invite investigation of the differences between the private client-architect and public client-architect relationships, as well as the analysis of how these relationships create a particular type of history.¹⁶

¹⁶ Narrowing the thesis to three projects to understand and explain the architect's role in the construction of history was daunting. The Brumbaugh Papers provide a massive amount of detailed material concerning one man's architectural work. They include approximately 4,000 folders of plans, measured drawings, sketches, photos, specifications, historical reports, transcripts of talks, correspondence, business records, some personal records, and an unpublished manuscript. Brumbaugh's own words in this manuscript reveal the ten or eleven projects that stood out to him as the most significant in his career, and the thesis focuses on three of those projects. I have relied heavily on Brumbaugh's personal and business correspondence, restoration reports, statements of historical context, his unpublished manuscript, and personal interviews with his contemporaries in the restoration architecture field, employees, curators, clients and

Early influences

Born on August 27, 1890 to Martin Grove Brumbaugh and Anna (Konigmacher) Brumbaugh on the campus of Juniata College in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, George Edwin spent his childhood in a learned environment. Brumbaugh's immersion in education can be attributed to his father, who began his career as a schoolmaster in a one-room schoolhouse, became county superintendent of schools, earned a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, and became Professor of Pedagogy at Penn while simultaneously holding the presidency of Juniata College. M.G. Brumbaugh later served as Puerto Rico's first Commissioner of Education, Philadelphia's Superintendent of Schools, Pennsylvania's governor during World War I, and finally returned to the presidency at Juniata College for the last six years of his life.¹⁷ In addition to his impressive career as a professional educator, M.G. Brumbaugh dedicated much of his time to the pursuit and dissemination of Pennsylvania history. As governor, he was an integral force in the fledgling Pennsylvania Historical Commission (PHC), for which his son would later work. Brumbaugh, Sr. was also a prolific writer of histories for schoolchildren. In 1897 he jointly wrote *Stories of Pennsylvania or School Readings from Pennsylvania History* with Joseph F. Walton, a volume described as "sketches, taken from our unwritten history" intended to "arouse [in children] an intelligent and

friends. These personal interviews and Brumbaugh's correspondence have been most critical for making Brumbaugh's thoughts, beliefs, and values come alive.

¹⁷ Earl C. Kaylor Jr., *Martin Grove Brumbaugh, A Pennsylvanian's Odyssey from Sainted Schoolman to Bedeviled World War I Governor, 1862-1930* (London: Associated University Presses for Juniata College, 1996), 15-16.

abiding interest in the history of the grand old Keystone State.” According to the two authors,

Most of the sketches deal with colonial life, because the individual, the hero, for whom the young have most regard, grows less prominent in the increasingly complex social and institutional life of the state. The reader will prize all the more his own rich social, political, educational, and religious environment after becoming familiar with the struggles of an ancestry not so highly favored. The complex life of to-day will be more clearly comprehended from a view of the initial forces producing it.¹⁸

Significantly, G. Edwin Brumbaugh reiterated these very sentiments often over his sixty-seven years of architectural practice. The critical purpose of history for both Brumbaughs was to inform Americans of their past in order that they might improve their future. Yet the two diverged in their conceptions of the past: the elder Brumbaugh viewed the past as a time “not so highly favored” while Edwin tended to revere the presumably superior morals and values of an earlier time. This slightly modified repetition of his father’s views represents only a small part of the great paternal influence on Edwin. At the second Williamsburg Antiques and Decoration Forum in the winter of 1950, for example, Brumbaugh provided “An Introduction to American Architecture, with Special Reference to Pennsylvania” and retold one of his father’s anecdotal stories in order to explain the settlement patterns of ethnic groups and regional architecture in Pennsylvania.¹⁹ For both

¹⁸ Joseph S. Walton and Martin G. Brumbaugh, *Stories of Pennsylvania or School Readings from Pennsylvania History* (New York: American Book Company, 1897), 5.

¹⁹ “My father used to tell a story when he thought the Quakers were getting too much credit for Penn’s famous unbroken peace treaty with the Indians, a story which explains much of the surviving early architecture. If you could tie a string to William Penn’s hat atop Philadelphia’s City Hall tower, he would say, make the string eighteen miles long and swing it in a great arc from the Delaware River on the south to the Delaware on the north, you would include in the sweep most of the land originally settled

Brumbaughs, story telling and the creation of historical memories, either in words on paper or in wood, stone and brick, became a life-long passion. Education became the mission of the son, just as it had been the aim of his father. This didactic impulse even transcended Brumbaugh's five years of architectural training at the University of Pennsylvania, a program that included no coursework in pedagogy. The Penn architecture program aimed to create cultured and artistic young men who had the technical and design skills necessary to become successful architects.

Brumbaugh graduated from Central High School in Philadelphia and chose his father's graduate alma mater for the study of architecture. Formal architectural education at the college level was not established in the United States until after the Civil War, and remained underdeveloped until the 1890s when the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cornell, Columbia, and Penn all reformed their programs, and Harvard established an architecture school. In 1908, the year in which Brumbaugh began his studies, the School of Fine Arts at Penn achieved its first national recognition when Professor Warren Laird and *Atelier* Director Paul Cret wrote articles on architectural education for *The American Architect*. Both advocated the methods of the French *Ecole des Beaux Arts*: "to advance the student from mere renderer to a designer, balanced by an

by English Quakers. If you could then increase the string to 75 miles in length and swing it again, you would encompass most of the territory originally settled by Germans (the 'Pennsylvania Dutch' of popular journalism). Now, if you stretched the string to 125 miles, and swung it again across the state, you would take in the original Scotch-Irish front. Then he would observe slyly that of course the Quakers had no trouble with the Indians; the savages first had to break the intrepid Scotch Irish, and then pass all the Pennsylvania Dutch before they could reach the Quakers. The story was not intended to have architectural significance, but the distances are worth noting."· Office Records, Box 111, Brumbaugh Papers.

orderly series of courses taught by masters in their fields that would make the architect a cultured professional, capable of understanding the totality of his role in society.”²⁰ Increasingly architects were viewed as professionals as well as artists. Upon graduation and in his long career, Brumbaugh clearly imagined his professional role as architect, educator, and historian. At Penn, this new view required a broader education including coursework in English literature and composition, French language and literature, history, and art and architectural history. Other required coursework included professional training, physics and trigonometry, drawing, descriptive geometry, and a course in shades and shadows.²¹ In addition to taking classes, the young Penn architecture students spent much of their time in the *atelier*, or design studio, modeled after the French system. The younger students worked as assistants to the upperclassmen, while the upperclassmen often assisted the studio head in teaching and critiquing the work of the underclassmen. Brumbaugh, for example, taught watercolor rendering in his last year at Penn.²² His precise presentation drawings for new projects and restorations clearly prove his skill as an artist.

Laird and Cret brought the American Beaux Arts to Penn, and created an American architecture school with an international reputation. Yet the designs of the students were never purely in the Beaux Arts style. Cret wrote in 1930 that

²⁰ Ann L. Story and George E. Thomas, *The Book of the School 100 Years* (Philadelphia: The Graduate School of Fine Arts of the University of Pennsylvania, 1990), 26.

²¹ Thomas, “The Laird Years,” *The Book of the School 100 Years*, 29, 30.

²² Thomas, “George Edwin Brumbaugh,” *The Book of the School 100 Years*, 80.

“[A]rchitectural merit is not to be estimated merely upon the skillful employment of forms and decoration, but upon the evidences of the architect’s intelligent grasp of his problem and of his attainment of a solution that not only solves, but solves simply and directly without apparent effort of wasted motion.”²³ For Cret and for Brumbaugh, his student, architecture was a rational “expression of place and purpose.” Brumbaugh’s restorations all express a certain place and purpose, and although Cret and his disciples differed significantly from Brumbaugh in their stylistic choices, their precise methods and approach were identical. Brumbaugh was a star at Penn, serving as president of the Architecture Society, an organization traditionally led by the top student of the upper class. In addition, he won the second place Arthur Spayd Brooke Memorial Prize for Merit in Architectural Design in 1913.²⁴ Although Brumbaugh claimed he had a rebel streak, the training he received at Penn emphasizing skills, methods, and principles, rather than style, clearly shaped his career and aided him in his success.²⁵ He rebelled against classicism, Paul Cret, and the rise of modern design, but Penn continues to recognize him as one of their finest alumnae. In both the 1934 and 1990 histories of the School of Fine Arts, Brumbaugh is featured prominently—in 1934 for his residential designs, and in 1990 for his restorations.

²³ Paul Philippe Cret, *Masterpieces of Architecture of the United States*, ed. Hoak and Church, quoted in Thomas, “The Laird Years,” *The Book of the School 100 Years*, 75.

²⁴ Thomas, “The Laird Years,” 27, 31. The actual award is in Office Records, Box 107, Brumbaugh Papers.

²⁵ Howard Royer, “The Past Alive and Authentic,” *Messenger* (March 1976), 17.

Brumbaugh graduated from Penn in 1913 with a Bachelor of Science in Architecture, worked as a draftsman for Mellor and Meigs from 1912 to 1914, married Frances Hover Anderson in 1914, and in 1915 began working for Charles Barton Keen.²⁶ Both Mellor and Meigs and Keen were known for their residential designs in revival styles. Mellor and Meigs leaned toward European models, while Keen preferred the colonial. By 1916 Brumbaugh had opened an office in downtown Philadelphia, no doubt with assistance from his father, the governor.²⁷ Brumbaugh continued to work for Keen until 1923, despite establishing his office in the Real Estate Trust Building in downtown Philadelphia. In 1916 he also renovated a home that had passed down in his wife's family in Gwynedd Valley, Pennsylvania where he and Frances lived. He eventually opened his office there in the early 1940s and continued to reside in the house until his death in 1983.²⁸ He was active in architectural organizations as well, particularly in the

²⁶ Edwin and Frances were married February 11, 1914. Frances' interest in historic paint colors led to an active role conducting research for her husband's restorations. According to friends, clients, and employees, Frances and Edwin were a team—if a client hired his architectural services, she automatically researched and determined the appropriate paint colors for the project. They both had offices in the Gwynedd Valley office. Frances died in 1966.

²⁷ Martin Grove Brumbaugh served as Governor of Pennsylvania from 1915-1919. In 1916 he also sought the Republican presidential nomination.

²⁸ Brumbaugh and Frances lived at 29 East Stratford Avenue, Lansdowne, Pennsylvania until 1916, when they moved to 925 De Kalb Pike, Gwynedd Valley. Brumbaugh maintained his office in the Real Estate Trust Building (Land Title Building) at 100-118 South Broad Street until sometime after 1931, when he moved his office to the Girard Trust Building at 34-46 South Broad Street at South Penn Square. See Sandra L. Tatman and Roger Moss, *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co. in association with the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, 1985), 114; Ann L. Story and George E. Thomas, *The Book of the School 100 Years*, 80; and Office Records, Box 111, Brumbaugh Papers.

years following his graduation. He belonged to both the T Square Club and the Philadelphia chapter of the A.I.A., and served on numerous committees for both organizations over the years. His love of history manifested itself in these professional memberships, for he served on the Biography and History, and Entertainment and Public Information committees for the A.I.A. chapter.²⁹ His positions in these professional organizations, as well as the publishing of his designs in national periodicals clearly indicate that he was a well-respected architect by his peers and clients, and was extremely talented. In spite of his success in the traditional architectural world, he bucked the system—refusing to create the modern structures or classically inspired buildings his classmates did—and instead followed in the footsteps of his education-driven father, using his passion for history to his advantage.

Brumbaugh revealed great foresight with his interest in the significance of different ethnic groups in early American history, in his enthusiasm for restoring vernacular architecture, and his focus on material culture. He was also at the forefront of the burgeoning preservation field, and helped establish new preservation methods and standards. As Bernard Herman has suggested, Brumbaugh's methods were the precursors to today's historic structure reports.³⁰ Architectural historian George Thomas believed that Brumbaugh "changed the field, insisting on working on real artifacts and preserving

²⁹ Positions in Philadelphia A.I.A. chapter: 1923-25, Recorder; 1927, Vice Chairman of the Joint Exhibition Board and Entertainment and Public Information Committees; 1928-29, Chairman, Biography and History committee.

³⁰ Bernard Herman, conversation with author, University of Delaware, Newark, Del., 9 November 1999.

in place as much of the historic fabric as possible so that future historians would be able to understand the basis of restoration . . . [T]he fruits of Brumbaugh's work enhanced the public's awareness of the nation's heritage and shaped the historic preservation field."³¹ At the same time Brumbaugh was developing new preservation techniques and methods, he also was thinking as a museum curator and educator. His focus on architecture as a teaching tool suggests that he was contemplating alternative sorts of education when others were not. Brumbaugh felt strongly that proper architectural preservation and restoration, museums, and heritage tourism encouraged education for adults in an entertaining setting. Throughout his career, Brumbaugh's goals echoed William Sumner Appleton (1875-1947), who predicted in 1905 that the restoration of the Paul Revere House in Boston would serve as a "constant incentive to patriotic citizenship."³² He believed the same held true for children, who could learn just as easily outside of the classroom, as inside it. Many of these interests stem from a place like Ephrata Cloister—a place to which he always returned, physically, stylistically, and emotionally—where he had strong family, ethnic, religious, and professional ties. Thus, Ephrata is where we begin.

³¹ Thomas, "George Edwin Brumbaugh," 80.

³² James Lindgren, "'A Constant Incentive to Patriotic Citizenship': Historic Preservation in Progressive-Era Massachusetts," *New England Quarterly* 64 (December 1991): 594.



Figure 1. Map of Pennsylvania, 1850. Notice York and Columbia on either side of the Susquehanna River, west of Philadelphia. Ephrata is approximately 15 miles northwest of Lancaster. From W. Williams, *Appleton's Northern and Eastern Traveller's Guide* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1850). Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Printed Book and Periodical Collection.



Figure 2. G. Edwin Brumbaugh, c. 1913. Courtesy, Barry Stover.

Chapter 2

“OFFICIAL” HISTORY AND GERMAN HERITAGE AT EPHRATA CLOISTER

*“The usefulness of our historical properties consists almost exclusively of the faithfulness with which we strive to reproduce the living conditions of their day. The prime purpose is education, with the hope that it may inspire visitors with another reason for patriotism and appreciation of our wonderful country. A great many people, on the other hand, seem to think that entertainment and amusement are paramount. I seem to have to constantly resist the tendency to turn these properties into Disneylands!”*³³

– G. Edwin Brumbaugh, 1970

G. Edwin Brumbaugh’s often rocky twenty-year tenure as restoration architect at Ephrata Cloister for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania ended in 1961 with his resignation from the project and decided bitterness on both sides. Significantly, Brumbaugh agreed to work for the Commonwealth and other state governments numerous times in later years. As he continued restoration efforts at Washington Crossing Park in the next decade, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC)—the state agency for the preservation and maintenance of Pennsylvania history—resurrected the Ephrata controversy, second-guessing Brumbaugh’s method and the need for absolute historical accuracy.³⁴ Not surprisingly, Brumbaugh viewed these

³³ Brumbaugh also expressed disgust with the “egotistical factor which spoils many good restorations.” Brumbaugh to Ruth and Arthur Hyde, 7 August 1970, Miscellaneous, Box 2, Brumbaugh Papers.

³⁴ Brumbaugh worked on Washington Crossing at four different times in his career.

questions as an affront to his scholarly intellect and his sense of history, as well as to his art. When he worked for the state of New Jersey on the restoration of the Batsto site in the Wharton State Forest in the 1960s and 1970s, Brumbaugh encountered a government willing to spend large sums of money to “do it right,” but a state which also questioned many of his plans. Inadequate state funding and lackluster support resulted in unfinished restorations at Ephrata, Washington Crossing, and Batsto. Brumbaugh never overtly stated his desire to be the maker of correct, “official” state history, but his repeated acceptance of government commissions suggests that his drive to tell this sort of true, absolute history outweighed the difficulties of working for state governments. His participation in the restoration and interpretation at a site such as Ephrata Cloister permitted him to mold that official history to include elements of our national past traditionally excluded from history texts and museums—the important ethnic German influence in the development of eighteenth-century Pennsylvania and the centrality of religion in the lives of all colonial Americans.

Brumbaugh’s focus on German heritage in Pennsylvania as early as the 1920s is noteworthy, for he explored an authentic ethnicity rather than popular notions of Pennsylvania Dutch culture, years before new social historians took up the flag of the underrepresented—workers, immigrants, women, and members of non-Anglo ethnic cultures—in American history. Many museums tend to be sluggish in incorporating scholarly trends in their interpretation, yet Brumbaugh’s inclusive interpretive tendencies for the museums he restored anticipated later advancements in the field. The great wave of immigration from Eastern Europe in the early years of the twentieth century resulted in

a reactionary search for a true American identity, often manifesting itself in the worship of all things colonial, and by default, all things connected to America's British beginnings. Annette Stott noted in her recent study of the early twentieth-century Dutch craze in this country that this surge of immigrants also encouraged some Americans to search for a national identity based on the multicultural (yet still Euro-centric) roots of the country, rather than British foundations. Significantly, America's fascination with the Pennsylvania "Dutch," Brumbaugh's German-centered restorations, and his excitement for "melting-pot houses," like Stott's "Holland Mania," foreshadowed later twentieth-century multicultural trends. Stott states, "Participants in Holland Mania, especially historians, fought the ethnocentric view of American history and identity that was prevalent in their day—a strict adherence to English views and influences. For them, the solution was to recognize the individual claims of minority groups: Dutch, Irish, Scotch, German, and French. Today, all those ethnic groups have been consolidated in the terms Euro-American and white . . . This continuous negotiation of ethnic and racial cultures underscores the importance of the multicultural nature of the United States to American identity."³⁵ Brumbaugh's German heritage and his ancestral connections to Ephrata certainly inspired his rebellion against the exotic "sensation of the Pennsylvania German" and typical ethnocentric interpretations of the American past in his restoration at the Cloister.³⁶

³⁵ Annette Stott, *Holland Mania: The Unknown Dutch Period in American Art and Culture* (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 1998), 16-17.

³⁶ Brumbaugh, *Pennsylvania German Colonial Architecture*, 6; Brumbaugh to Walter Van Bammen, 28 March 1961, Office Records, Box 30, Brumbaugh Papers.

On July 5, 1929, Henry W. Shoemaker, the future State Folklorist for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, wrote a letter to former Governor Martin Grove Brumbaugh regarding the restoration of Ephrata Cloister in Ephrata, Lancaster County (Figure 3).³⁷ Shoemaker was responding to an earlier letter from M. G. Brumbaugh, and replied:

I feel for the present the buildings should be restored in keeping with funds at hand, but I feel that a plan for complete restoration to include rebuilding the Brother's Hall, pulled down in 1902 should be submitted by the architect . . . I know of no one as fitted as your son to undertake this important work for the state. Meanwhile Edwin can be thinking the matter over of a general plan of restoration, as while only very limited funds are available now the work ought not be commenced in a haphazard fashion. It is Pennsylvania's most important religious shrine.³⁸

This letter foreshadows what was to become Brumbaugh's most personally significant and career-defining restoration, as well as the major funding challenges he would face in government and private work. Brumbaugh did not actually begin work at Ephrata until 1941, but as early as 1929 the stage had been set and the players and roles established for an extensive, elaborate, "authentic," and often controversial restoration.

Governor Brumbaugh played a crucial role in the unfolding drama of his son's blossoming restoration architecture career, for his political connections and clout aided his son in his fledgling attempts at restoration. The 1929 communication between M.G. Brumbaugh and Shoemaker occurred just as Edwin began to dabble in the restoration of

³⁷ Shoemaker became the official State Folklorist in 1948, although many considered him the unofficial state folklorist as early as 1920. Simon Bronner, *Popularizing Pennsylvania: Henry W. Shoemaker and the Progressive Uses of Folklore and History* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 66, 119.

³⁸ Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

historic buildings, with his first restoration project (his neighbor's house) undertaken only two years prior in 1927. Governor Brumbaugh wrote to Edwin at the same time he was communicating with Shoemaker: "Write Col. S. and say you are ready & glad to help. That the final restoration can [] state funds but that if they employ you you will give it careful thought."³⁹ In 1929 the "Girard's Talk of the Day" column in a Philadelphia newspaper highlighted Brumbaugh's restoration talents, but neglected to identify him by name. Instead, his father's gubernatorial reputation carried Brumbaugh's architectural reputation: "Rehabilitation of ancient farmhouses in this vicinity is one of our modern architectural wonders. Ex-Governor Brumbaugh's son is one architect who has achieved notable distinction in that kind of work." In another column the same writer compared Brumbaugh's restorations to the restoration of Elfreth's Alley in Philadelphia and the Rockefeller-financed project at Williamsburg. This time the columnist included Edwin's name, although his identification still hung on his father's position: "G. Edwin Brumbaugh, son of Governor Brumbaugh, is our foremost authority on early German architecture in Pennsylvania."⁴⁰ In 1929 Brumbaugh had been out of school for sixteen years, and was thirty-nine years old. Clearly he had already established his niche as an architect concerned with historic architecture and knowledgeable of historic precedents, and numerous contemporary publications featuring his colonial revival residential designs

³⁹ Office Records, Box 87, Brumbaugh Papers.

⁴⁰ Neither clipping indicates from which newspaper it came, and the second clipping has no date. Office Records, Box 30, Brumbaugh Papers.

indicate his success and talent as a young architect.⁴¹ Winning a Commonwealth commission would clearly further the creation of a sound reputation, and as the son of a former governor, Brumbaugh had a competitive edge.

The restoration at Ephrata, beginning twelve years after Shoemaker's letter, was not Brumbaugh's first state commission. Legal problems and a family dispute arose, delaying the transfer of the property to the state. By the time the Commonwealth finally settled the affair and could begin restoration of the property, Brumbaugh had already worked for the state for two years restoring the Daniel Boone Homestead in Baumstown, Pennsylvania.⁴² Beginning in 1937 he also gained critical experience restoring Gloria Dei (Old Swedes Church) in Philadelphia and parts of Germantown Academy in Germantown. Even so, these and the Boone restoration did not begin until the late 1930s, indicating that Brumbaugh did not survive the Depression by undertaking restoration projects.⁴³ Instead, he continued carrying out commissions for new residential structures, mostly in the Pennsylvania farmhouse version of the colonial revival style. Beginning about 1940, though, the tide changed and for the next forty-three years Brumbaugh's

⁴¹ See note 7 above.

⁴² The Boone restoration began in 1939 and ran concurrently with Brumbaugh's restoration efforts at Ephrata. The Boone project proved to be quite controversial and remains a sore point with the PHMC, for the validity of the site as Boone's birthplace has come under fire and is now considered doubtful.

⁴³ I disagree with both George Thomas and Martin Hackett who claim that Brumbaugh began restorations during the Depression to augment the income of his firm due to declining residential commissions. Martin Hackett, "George Edwin Brumbaugh: Pioneer Restoration Architect and the Restoration of the Thompson-Neely House" (master's thesis, Pennsylvania State University, 1997), 19-20; Thomas, "George Edwin Brumbaugh," 80.

work consistently included major restoration projects mixed with residential commissions. Brumbaugh did not get heavily involved in restorations until he established a sound architectural reputation; when he began working on Ephrata, he was already fifty-one years old! Perhaps the shift to restoration work stemmed from a mid-life crisis. It is clear that restoration architecture had been a life-long dream of Edwin's and the necessary preservation-minded community and appropriate atmosphere for funding were simply underdeveloped and lying dormant in Pennsylvania until the early 1940s. Support and funding for preservation were absolutely critical to Brumbaugh's work, and until the preservation movement caught on, Brumbaugh and many others could not afford to carry out restorations. Thus, restorations fell to independently wealthy individuals such as John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (Colonial Williamsburg), Henry Ford (Greenfield Village) and William Sumner Appleton (Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities), or historically-minded groups such as the Mount Vernon Ladies Association, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Colonial Dames.⁴⁴ The preservation movement began to gain momentum with Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal efforts to relieve the economic woes of the Depression via the Works Progress Administration, but it did not pick up any great speed on the national or state level until the 1940s. World War II effectively stifled major preservation funding from 1941 to 1945. The National Trust for Historic Preservation, for example, did not come into being until 1949, and the Historic Preservation Act passed only in 1966. Thus Brumbaugh's

⁴⁴ Although William Sumner Appleton came from an extremely wealthy family, he had limited access to this money, as it was held in a trust.

decided shift to restoration architecture coincided with a growing cultural appreciation for historic properties in the United States.⁴⁵ All of his writings make it clear that his most personally satisfying projects were restorations, and Ephrata remained his favorite. His restoration and experience at Ephrata informed every other project he ever completed. Details from his restoration at the Cloister repeatedly crept into his later restorations and he justified their historical accuracy by confirming their existence at Ephrata. Whether these repeated details were original to Ephrata or restored by Brumbaugh himself remains unclear. In either case, Brumbaugh was actively involved in the preservation movement from its earliest days, and the much publicized, state-run restorations at Ephrata proved to be his testing ground in the new field.

Ephrata Cloister today stands as a small complex of light green hued, clapboarded buildings in a park-like setting (Figure 4). The massive and austere two-story Saal meeting house and Saron convent, with their tiny, square windows, hand-split clapboard siding, and multi-level shed dormers piercing their roofs, dominate the site. In 1941, when Brumbaugh began the restoration, the dozen or so buildings on the property were in poor condition after years of neglect, misuse, and according to Brumbaugh, originally substandard eighteenth-century foundation construction. As he wrote in his initial report to the Pennsylvania Historical Commission in 1941, the “two main buildings are unique examples of a little known architectural influence in colonial Pennsylvania, and even in their neglected and ruined state, breathe an atmosphere so medieval and austere, that visitors cannot fail to sense their unusual character.” This “unusual character” dates from

⁴⁵ Despite this increasing awareness and support for preservation, Brumbaugh

the mid-eighteenth century, for in 1750 the Cloister was at the height of its productivity with its population numbering approximately three hundred. One may safely assume that the buildings in the complex were in pristine condition at that time. Brumbaugh goes on in the report to note that in "colonial times Ephrata was regarded as so unusual that all travellers of importance visited the Kloster. Every effort should be made to restore the atmosphere which attracted visitors in early days. While the actors have vanished from the stage, the setting which they . . . created can be retained to suggest the drama once enacted there."⁴⁶ It was this pristine condition and the original character, atmosphere, and spirit dating to the mid-eighteenth century that Brumbaugh, in fact, sought to capture.

Brumbaugh's stage analogy is fascinating, for he did not realize his own critical role in the play. He longed for the importance of every historical site to be recognized, but he did not want to be personally credited for his restoration work at these sites. Early in his career he hoped that visitors would be unable to distinguish restored portions from original construction. At Ephrata, especially, Brumbaugh served as both director and actor. His role as architect permitted him to build the sets, direct and produce the scenes, and create and interpret a history of the buildings and happenings there. The connection between Brumbaugh and Ephrata runs even more deeply, for many generations of his maternal ancestors (the Konigmachers) lived and worked at Ephrata. When we move his role as restoration architect aside, Brumbaugh's family heritage, stories of his mother's attending school at the Academy at Ephrata, and his own memories of visiting the Cloister as a boy make him a principal player in the Cloister's story. He continues to play

continued to design new houses to support himself financially.

a lead role today because his physical actions have forever changed the appearance, the history, and the future of the Cloister. The Ephrata Cloister story cannot be told fully without including Brumbaugh's role in the restoration. Without the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Brumbaugh's intervention, the buildings at Ephrata would almost certainly have ended in ruin. The architect's role is perhaps the most powerful in the entire restoration "play."

Initially, the Commonwealth gave Brumbaugh free reign to complete the restoration. In fact, providing such freedom to Brumbaugh may have resulted in the collapse of the Commonwealth's relationship with the architect. He soon believed himself an expert who could not be challenged. With the ever-changing political climate in Harrisburg and a shift in administration at the Historical and Museum Commission, this situation eventually disintegrated. By the 1950s state officials began to challenge Brumbaugh and regularly question his work. Clearly Brumbaugh's role in the creation of the Ephrata story is a complex one. He is intimately connected to the Cloister both by his extremely precise restoration efforts and by his family history. Ultimately these very intimate and personal connections to his work led to serious problems with the Commonwealth, and likely forced his resignation from the project.

The drama at Ephrata begins in 1732, when Conrad Beissel, a German Pietist, and his followers separated from the Dunkard Church in Germantown and established a communal society in the frontier of what is now Lancaster County. The celibate community eschewed worldly goods, believing in spiritual rather than material goals, and

⁴⁶ Report, 2 October 1941, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

therefore lived in a plain, uncomplicated, and austere manner. The residents themselves made up three orders: the brotherhood and the sisterhood, both of which practiced celibacy, and the married order of householders. In fact, most of the householders lived locally and worked as farmers or craftsmen, but supported the communal economy at Ephrata and came to the Cloister's Saal to worship. The sisters and brothers, on the other hand, lived and worked on the Cloister property. Despite the apparent hardship of sleeping on wooden beds with wooden blocks for pillows, a strict and Spartan diet, nightly prayers between midnight and two a.m. (for they believed the second coming might happen at any time), and an almost complete lack of privacy, the community flourished until after the American Revolution. When not attending services or praying, Cloister residents worked assiduously—baking, weaving, working the land, and supporting their community. Ephrata is perhaps best known for its printing press; beginning in 1743 the community printed numerous books, broadsides and tracts, including the *Martyrs Mirror*, the largest book printed in the colonies. In addition to the printed word, the celibate orders also produced spectacular *fraktur* and hand-illuminated books.⁴⁷ After the revolution the brotherhood, sisterhood, and householder populations

⁴⁷ "Fraktur" has become the popular name for all decorated manuscripts of the Pennsylvania Germans. See Scott T. Swank et al., *Arts of the Pennsylvania Germans* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company in association with the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1983).

declined significantly, and in 1814 the few householders left incorporated the Seventh Day German Baptist Church. This church continued to use the buildings until 1934.⁴⁸

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania exhibited interest in acquiring the Ephrata property while these remaining householders still used the buildings, as Shoemaker's aforementioned 1929 letter to Martin Grove Brumbaugh proves. The same letter also indicates the bureaucratic red tape surrounding any government action. The Pennsylvania Historical Commission was first established in 1913 as an independent agency. Beginning in 1923, the PHC came under the auspices and fiscal control of the Department of Public Instruction, as did the State Museum and Library. In 1945 the Historical Commission merged with the State Museum and the Archives Division of the State Library to form the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC)—an independent agency reporting directly to the Governor. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the PHC was beset with problems. At its inception the agency needed to establish an identity and purpose in order to function effectively. Because Pennsylvania's governor is elected for a four-year term and cannot be reelected, state political business tends to occur in three to four year cycles, with a natural period of transition between governors. In the 1920s and 1930s in particular, Pennsylvanians alternately voted for Democratic and Republican leaders, resulting in a decided lack of continuity for state agencies. The

⁴⁸ Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Ephrata Cloister brochure, n.d.; Michael Showalter, Educator, interview by author, Ephrata Cloister, Ephrata, Pa., 23 November 1999.

young Historical Commission was especially susceptible to these interruptions since each governor selected Commissioners to serve for four-year terms.⁴⁹

The Commissioners initially expressed little interest in historic properties, which could only be acquired through an act of legislature. Until the mid 1930s their main thrusts were archaeology, research, and publications. In the late 1920s the Commission hired Donald Cadzow, who soon became a great champion of Brumbaugh, as an anthropologist. He stayed on for thirty years, eventually becoming the State Anthropologist and Executive Director. In 1937, Professor S. K. Stevens of the history department at Pennsylvania State University joined the Commission and shortly thereafter became State Historian. He followed Cadzow as Executive Director in 1956. Stevens and the then chairman of the Commission, Frank Melvin, believed in the importance of historic buildings, publicity, and tourism—not Cadzow’s archaeology—and beginning in 1936 the focus of the Commission shifted toward the restoration of historic properties. The start of restorations in 1941 at Ephrata and the whole-hearted support for Brumbaugh’s restoration plan exemplify this shift in the Commission’s focus.

Despite the new emphasis on restoration and historic properties, politics and preservation often created strange bedfellows, and the Ephrata restoration proved no exception. As Charles Hosmer points out, early in World War II Commissioner Ross Wright suggested that if properly interpreted, Ephrata could function to build pride in the

⁴⁹ Roy F. Nichols, *The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission: A History* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1967), 11; Charles Hosmer, *Preservation Comes of Age: From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949*, vol. 1 (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia in association with the Preservation Press, 1981), 439.

“German-American contribution to the growth of America at a time when anti-German sentiment might surface.”⁵⁰ Despite Brumbaugh’s desire to recognize this German contribution, he certainly did not intend it only to buffer wartime anti-German sentiment. His vision for the restored Cloister was “something comparable to Williamsburg in drawing power . . . This is because the Kloster can display in its purest form, the medieval art of the Pennsylvania Germans, which is attracting national attention to-day [1941] . . . Its unique [*sic*] atmosphere should be supported at every turn, so that visitors will realize at once that they have entered a spot apart from the rest of the world, as, indeed, the Settlement on the Cocalico [River] impressed visitors two hundred years ago. Pennsylvania will then have made a contribution of real educational value.”⁵¹ Brumbaugh considered the Cloister buildings “outstanding examples of a style of building vernacular completely natural to these [Pennsylvania German] people . . . which [are part of a group which] have been completely overlooked.”⁵² His goal was to continue educating the public by recognizing the early German contributions to the settlement of the country for years to come after the conclusion of the war.

As Charles Hosmer stated and the state of Pennsylvania itself admitted, state policy and action regarding historic properties was haphazard, at best, until the mid 1940s. Shoemaker’s 1929 epistle indeed highlights what was to become Brumbaugh’s

⁵⁰ Hosmer, *Preservation Comes of Age*, 455.

⁵¹ “Ephrata Kloster Preliminary Report,” 2 October 1941, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

⁵² Brumbaugh, *Pennsylvania German Colonial Architecture*, 6-7.

nemesis concerning the restoration at Ephrata: state funding and political maneuvering. One of Brumbaugh's greatest challenges was working for state government, and although he felt a civic duty concerning these projects, state support was certainly less than ideal for the restoration architect. Although Stevens recognized the merits of state supported historic sites, his promotion to Executive Director of the PHMC resulted in significant problems for Brumbaugh. The professional camaraderie that existed between Brumbaugh and Cadzow did not continue with Stevens. The mutual esteem between Brumbaugh and Cadzow becomes clear in a comment Brumbaugh made in 1945. He wrote to Cadzow in response to gubernatorial criticisms of his work: "A final word is in order as to the method of doing the work. The Ephrata project might be described as archeological architecture. It involves the skillful appraisal of every bit of material and construction, gradual removal of extraneous features, and an unhurried study of data so obtained."⁵³ Thus, Cadzow's own background in archaeology explains his complete support for Brumbaugh's work, for their methods for studying the past were remarkably similar. From the start Cadzow treated Brumbaugh with respect and addressed him as an expert: "This is your field as far as architecture is concerned. I still maintain that position and will continue to do so."⁵⁴

By 1960, almost twenty years after Brumbaugh started work at Ephrata, his relationship with the PHMC had broken down. The signs of this developing professional

⁵³ Brumbaugh to Cadzow, 21 April 1945, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

⁵⁴ Cadzow to Brumbaugh, 14 April 1941, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

chasm appeared early on. Only four years after the restoration began, Governor Edward Martin wrote to Francis Haas, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and head of the PHC, expressing concerns regarding Ephrata. The Governor believed that the work should have been under contract and claimed that “an investigation discloses that repairs are entirely too extensive . . . Personally, I want buildings of that character to remain as they originally were, as near as possible . . . I have always thought we made a terrible mistake at Williamsburg, Virginia, when we reconstructed a lot of buildings that had been destroyed years ago . . . I think we should say ‘repairs’ rather than ‘restoration.’”⁵⁵

Donald Cadzow forwarded a copy to Brumbaugh and confidentially asked for his opinion. Martin’s complaints forced Brumbaugh to explain his restoration policy and address the Governor’s issues. Brumbaugh prefaced his explanation by agreeing with Martin: “I am in complete accord with those who oppose reconstruction of historically important buildings where only scant information and proof is available as to their original appearance and character.” At Ephrata, Brumbaugh stated that he established a restoration policy before any work was done and determined that all original construction worthy of preservation was to be retained. Unfortunately, no written policy exists in his papers. This policy seems to have been a verbal understanding between architect and builder, rather than a written contract between architect and client. He continued defending his actions by explaining and soundly denouncing the nineteenth-century alterations to the property, as well as reporting that “[e]very nail hole and mark has been studied and analysed. Doors and bits of finish, torn from their proper positions and used

⁵⁵ Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

otherwise, have been identified, and will be returned to their correct locations. I can support my conclusions with credible proof at every point. There is a vast difference between restoration documented by physical evidence, and reconstruction supported only by conjecture and analogy.”⁵⁶

Brumbaugh defended his refusal to work with a contract by describing his methods of restoration, including what he called “exploratory demolition.” By carefully taking a building apart piece by piece and examining such clues as nail holes and mortises, Brumbaugh could “read” the changes that occurred in a building over time and uncover the original form (Figure 5). He then completed his restoration based on these structural clues and other more traditional research, including interviews, oral histories, and library and archival research. Although he and his colleague, Albert Ruthrauff, used traditional primary and secondary source research for their projects, Brumbaugh often hired young historians to carry out library and archival research. In 1941 he hired “young” Eugene Doll from the Historical Society of Pennsylvania to conduct primary source research for the Ephrata restoration, and John Snyder, a 1970 Winterthur graduate, conducted similar research for the Wright’s Ferry Mansion restoration in 1974.⁵⁷ Before any exploratory demolition occurred at Ephrata, Brumbaugh requested Julius Sachse’s

⁵⁶ Brumbaugh to Cadzow, 21 April 1945, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

⁵⁷ Although Albert Ruthrauff (d. July 22, 1980) was never legally his partner, Brumbaugh referred to him as his partner, and included his name on such items as letterhead. Ruthrauff began working for Brumbaugh in the early 1940s as a draftsman, and moved up to “partner” after attending night school and eventually becoming accredited by the A.I.A. Stover, interview; Irvin and Anita Schorsch, Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Del., interview by author, 19 November 1999.

1886 *German Sectarians of Pennsylvania*, Historic American Buildings Survey drawings, and a map of Ephrata from Cadzow. He informed Cadzow regarding the three valuable Sachse volumes, "I intend to read them through and have made a good start . . . At Ephrata, I have interviewed Dr. Mentzer again, have been to see Nora Connell, and have taken young Doll to them. He is now established at Ephrata, interviewing a chain of residents."⁵⁸ Brumbaugh also carefully read the 1786 *Chronicon Ephratense*. He frequently wrote that most of his knowledge came from a good deal of looking as an "explorer" and his drives into the countryside in search of old buildings rather than traditional historical methods. In *Pennsylvania German Colonial Architecture* he repeatedly instructs the potential explorer to get outside and look, suggesting for example, that "[a]fter you have served your 'apprenticeship,' and are a full fledged and seasoned explorer in your own right, one of your ambitions will probably be to discover a complete farm group with well preserved Germanic flavor."⁵⁹ Brumbaugh's most important research came from actually looking, sketching, photographing, and touching the buildings. He truly was a connoisseur of architecture.

Exploratory demolition was part and parcel of his connoisseurship. Brumbaugh conducted exploratory demolition in every restoration project, making the building look a bit like a war zone. But, as he pointed out, he needed to complete this physical research before drawing plans and creating specifications for repairs. He believed in a wage

⁵⁸ Brumbaugh to Cadzow, 23 July 1941; Cadzow to Brumbaugh, 29 July 1941; Brumbaugh to Cadzow, 7 August 1941; Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

⁵⁹ Brumbaugh, *Pennsylvania German Colonial Architecture*, 44.

system, for contracts could not be prepared without plans and specifications. Contracts, he believed, led to “profit motive” rather than an educational one, and any contract with an allowance for extra work as necessary would cost the Commonwealth more than his method. Brumbaugh claimed fiscal conservatism, but ultimately the lasting educational effect of restoration—not cost—was his priority. Nothing could be more disgraceful to the client and demeaning to the public than an incorrect, inauthentic restoration: “I hope sincerely that the responsible officials will remember that we are preserving important monuments for posterity. Pennsylvania has committed too many historical frauds upon the public in the past, some of which still remain as an offence [*sic*] to informed students . . . We must decide whether we wish to continue to deceive future Pennsylvanians by incorporating ‘just as good’ imitations in our historic shrines, or whether we intend to hand down authentic examples of materials and workmanship. In my opinion this latter course is just as important as preserving historical written documents.”⁶⁰ Cadzow clearly agreed with Brumbaugh’s self-defense, as he wrote Brumbaugh that he used the response “as an official memorandum that went directly to the Governor. Let us hope that this ghost will be laid for sometime to come.”⁶¹

Despite Cadzow’s wish, the restoration continued to hit rough spots throughout the 1940s and 1950s. Much of the correspondence from Cadzow includes exhortations to move more quickly and feeble explanations for inauthentic buildings materials purchased

⁶⁰ Brumbaugh to Cadzow, 21 April 1945, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

⁶¹ Cadzow to Brumbaugh, 2 May 1945, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

by the state, including synthetic linseed oil. Brumbaugh, of course, insisted on the real thing, despite its unavailability, and replied to the request for speed by stating, "There is one thing I will not do, namely, hurry or slight this."⁶² Throughout the years of restoration at Ephrata, Brumbaugh exuded an incredible self-confidence regarding his work. By June of 1945 he could claim, "I know exactly how this building [the Saal] looked originally." Indeed, he could not know exactly how the building looked, for he did not live in 1741 to see it in its original state. His research and careful study of the building, though, convinced him of his conclusions. Brumbaugh's correspondence and writings reveal the same self-assurance. As his friends, clients, and employees have confirmed, he did not consider himself a scholar, but he did radiate an aura of expertise. Only a brave soul doubted or questioned Brumbaugh.

By 1956, S. K. Stevens had replaced Brumbaugh's comrade Cadzow and the same issues raised by Governor Martin in 1945 began to reappear. On August 10, 1960 Brumbaugh wrote to Stevens, stating "[I have a] conviction that preservation is an educational activity in which falsification or carelessness is culpable . . . To attempt restoration by contract is as bad as to attempt it by committees, groups or teams. All, by their very nature, must be compromise efforts . . . contracts for restorations, especially complex restorations, are impractical and unworkable . . . I will not be party to anything less than authentic restoration." S. K. Stevens wrote a lengthy reply to Brumbaugh about the length of time the Cloister restoration was taking, Brumbaugh's refusal to use contract

⁶² Cadzow to Brumbaugh, 16 October 1945; Brumbaugh to Cadzow, 10 February 1946; Cadzow to Brumbaugh, 19 March 1946; Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

employees, and the amount of money that had been spent over twenty years. Stevens saw no end in sight at Brumbaugh's rate of restoration, and demanded that the Cloister be opened to the public as soon as possible, claiming that the visitors would not care, nor would they notice whether the restoration was done to Brumbaugh's exacting standards. Stevens may not have realized the effect such a letter would have on Brumbaugh, but virtually every complaint directly contradicted Brumbaugh's personal restoration convictions and philosophies. For an unknown reason, Brumbaugh went back to examine this correspondence in 1977, and even then harbored such a strong grudge against Stevens that he pencilled scathing comments in the margin of Stevens' letter, responding, once again to Stevens' complaints.⁶³ It was this animosity between Stevens and Brumbaugh and the lack of support from the Commonwealth and the Commission that eventually forced Brumbaugh to resign from the Ephrata project.

The criticisms to which Brumbaugh was still reacting seventeen years after the fact were legitimate. Without a written plan and supportive board or commission, twenty years for a museum restoration, with no end in sight, is too long. None of the other hundred plus restorations that Brumbaugh completed took as long as the Ephrata restoration, and it appears that the Ephrata restoration is the only one from which he resigned.⁶⁴ It may be that the Ephrata project was simply too large and there was too

⁶³ Brumbaugh to Stevens, 10 August 1960; Stevens to Brumbaugh, 16 August 1960; Office Records, Box 87, Brumbaugh Papers.

⁶⁴ Brumbaugh never devoted himself completely to one project. He balanced his twenty years of work at Ephrata with other restorations for the state, including the Boone Homestead; Pottsgrove Manor; the Thompson-Neely House in Washington Crossing Park, Pennsylvania; Washington's and Lafayette's Headquarters at the Brandywine

much work to be done. Or, as Michael Showalter, Educator at Ephrata Cloister suggested, Stevens and Brumbaugh butted heads in part because Stevens felt Brumbaugh was too intimately connected to the property.⁶⁵ Almost seven generations of the Konigmacher family are buried in the Cloister cemetery, and Brumbaugh traced his maternal line back to Adam Konigmacher, a one-time member of the Cloister who is also buried there.⁶⁶ The intertwining of his family history and his role as restorer resulted in Brumbaugh's adamant insistence on a hyper-accurate and authentic restoration using eighteenth-century building materials and techniques. Certainly Brumbaugh was exacting in everything he did—from designing and building colonial revival Pennsylvania farmhouses modeled after originals, to making intricately detailed and measured survey sketches of buildings to be restored, to discovering the eighteenth-century method of splitting logs into clapboards, to keeping track of his expenses—but the restoration at Ephrata represents his careful nature at its extreme (Figure 6). As Charles Hummel, Curator Emeritus at the Winterthur Museum recalled, Brumbaugh “loved detail,” was a “more careful researcher than anyone doing the colonial revival style” and was “as careful an architect as you could hope for.” Even today, potential homebuyers looking for a

Battlefield in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania; and the thirty log huts and Colonel Dewees Mansion at Valley Forge. In addition to these state commissions, he carried out numerous commissions for new houses, churches, and other structures, and also began the restoration of Fort Mifflin for the city of Philadelphia; the 1704 Brinton Family House in Dilworthtown, Pennsylvania; Batsto and Atsion for the state of New Jersey; and the Gates House and the Golden Plough Tavern in York.

⁶⁵ Showalter, interview.

⁶⁶ “Restoration of Cloisters is Three-fourths Complete,” *The Lancaster New Era*, 4 September 1950, clipping, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

colonial revival house search specifically for Brumbaugh houses because of their outstanding quality.⁶⁷ Yet no other project, including the Gates House and Plough Tavern in York and Wright's Ferry Mansion in Columbia where he was also given relatively free reign, consumed Brumbaugh in the same manner as Ephrata. It seems Stevens was correct in his assessment of Brumbaugh's problem.

The quest for authenticity and his desire to educate the masses drove Brumbaugh in every restoration. The extent to which he attempted to achieve authenticity in the restoration at Ephrata was remarkably extensive and elaborate. Only appropriate eighteenth-century methods of construction and materials were to be used, which meant that nails needed to be hand wrought and shingles hand split. His first task involved structural repairs for all the buildings on the site, which he completed rather quickly. And despite Brumbaugh's insistence on authenticity, much structural work benefited from twentieth-century materials, such as steel and cement, which Brumbaugh permitted for the sake of visitor safety. The "only portions being removed from the buildings are those unrelated to the original character, or parts temporarily removed for essential repairs. Every stub and every piece of new timber which we add is being colored on at least one face with green copper naphthanate, so that it may be identified positively a century hence. All original timbers are being treated similarly for preservation, but with a colorless formula which becomes invisible in time."⁶⁸ Even in jacking up the Saal to repair the

⁶⁷ Charles Hummel, Curator Emeritus, interview by author, Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Del., 8 November 1999.

⁶⁸ This green copper naphthanate treatment became a standard procedure in preservation organizations such as the Society for the Preservation of New England

foundation, his first attempt utilized a large, twelve-by-fourteen-inch white oak timber and jacks, which failed when the entire contraption split without moving the building. Brumbaugh resorted to using steel beams to raise the walls enough to repair the foundation (Figures 7, 8).⁶⁹

The half-timbered Saal is the largest and heaviest building at the Cloister and had been built about 1740 with a stone and clay foundation on a sloping stone ledge with a timber sill on top. By the time Brumbaugh got to the site two hundred years later, this foundation had slipped down the hill, the sill had rotted away, and repairs consisted of stones wedged into the foundation periodically to halt the slippage and spreading of the building. According to Brumbaugh, to “a large extent, the structure was being held together by the wooden pins at the mortise and tenon joints.” Major foundation work was in order. Thus the first task involved “needle-shoring” the Saal with the aforementioned steel beams—effectively suspending the building into the air—so that rotted portions of the old timbers could be cut out and replaced and new sills installed. In order to repair the rotted timbers, Brumbaugh ordered that the buckled stone and clay fill between the timbers, and therefore the interior plaster, be removed and replaced. In June of 1942 when the north gable of the Saal was undergoing restoration, Brumbaugh reported to Cadzow that the repair of the north wall “is a bit of a problem, but a very interesting one. If you should happen into the Saal now you would find floors and walls opened to expose

Antiquities in the 1950s. See, for example, the Gedney House in Salem, Massachusetts. Brumbaugh to Cadzow, 21 April 1945, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

⁶⁹ Unpublished manuscript, 266, Office Records, Box 108, Brumbaugh Papers.

the timbers, and quite a bit of old structure taken apart. We have begun at the bottom and intend to replace all rotted sections of timbers, stone and clay fill, etc. after the wall has been raised nearer its correct line and made near plumb.” This statement succinctly describes Brumbaugh’s famous exploratory demolition. Because the foundation of the Saal needed work, the walls were necessarily opened up, making this exploratory demolition seem less drastic at Ephrata than at other sites, and simultaneously providing Brumbaugh an appropriate situation for studying the building. The foundation was then rebuilt, set in cement mortar, and laid on the same sloping ledge-rock, which workers chiseled out by hand for stability. While this new foundation was not “authentic” because cement footings were used, Brumbaugh raked them back so they could not be seen and admitted “that this was the only possible course to pursue from the standpoint of preservation and safety.”⁷⁰ Even at his beloved Ephrata, Brumbaugh could not deny the superiority of twentieth-century materials and techniques, and willingly blended modern and “ancient” methods when necessary.

Once the buildings were structurally sound, Brumbaugh began to restore their exteriors to the 1741 period. The motley assortment of siding materials used to patch the buildings over the years came down for many of the structural repairs, and “no intelligent person would have advocated the replacement of such material, which was completely unlike the original character” (Figure 9). The replacement of this assortment of siding with “replicas” of hand-split and shaved red oak clapboards preserved the 1741 character

⁷⁰ Brumbaugh to Cadzow, April 21, 1945, Brumbaugh Papers, Office Records, Box 88.

of the Saal, and three original sections of siding were left “as proof of the authenticity of our repairs. As ninety-five per cent of the surface consists of these new clapboards . . . a casual observer might conclude that the entire building had been reconstructed [when in fact, it wasn’t].”⁷¹ The splitting rack Brumbaugh finally devised to replicate these boards receives ample attention in his manuscript, lectures, and letters (Figure 10). Notes for a lecture given almost forty years after the Ephrata restoration began recount the story of discovering the splitting rack: the carpenters had been “splitting logs to one-eighth size . . . I told Elam [Martin, the head carpenter at Ephrata,] they were costing us \$2.75 each. We needed many thousands. The State would never pay. Some skill had been forgotten. I’d been talking to old men in my back-woods travels. He should do the same.” Thus, “Elam Martin found a ‘holz-hecker’ sitting on a stump. [The man told Martin,] ‘You need a splitting rack.’ He was Harry Eberle.”⁷² Discovering “ancient” methods like this thrilled him, for in recreating the proper, eighteenth-century Pennsylvania German splitting technique, he recreated eighteenth-century building materials, and in the process relived and began to understand the experiences of eighteenth-century Pennsylvania craftsmen (Figures 11-14). Although visitors to Ephrata might not experience these craft traditions first-hand, Brumbaugh felt certain that by being in the presence of these authentically restored buildings visitors would experience the lives of the eighteenth-

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² See Appendix B for Brumbaugh’s complete description of discovering and building the splitting rack. Notes for lecture about Edgewood Village, 23 April 1981, Office Records, Box 111, Brumbaugh Papers.

century Cloister residents vicariously, and thus transfer that pious, honest, moral, and hard-working Cloister spirit to their own modern lives.

Brumbaugh's use of authentic craft techniques reflects an affinity with the Arts and Crafts movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The movement in America emphasized "the art value of everyday objects; hand-craftsmanship; quality construction; solid, straightforward materials; design dedicated to function and environmental harmony; ornament derived from nature and subordinated to form and function; and the therapeutic influence of beauty and creativity in society."⁷³ The historian Jackson Lears has located the Arts and Crafts movement and the related attempts to "recover the hard but satisfying life of the medieval craftsman" within antimodern sentiments at the turn of the century. Lears' assessment that antimodernism was not simply a form of escapism, but rather a "complex blend of accommodation and protest" exemplifies Brumbaugh's own tendencies to mediate between the "ancient" and the new. In the early twentieth century a split occurred between medievalists who valued "primitive" architecture and those preservationists who preferred accomplished, urban buildings. Like architect Norman Isham and antiquarian William Sumner Appleton in New England, Brumbaugh worked to preserve Pennsylvania's medieval architecture and the traditional hand-craftsmanship associated with these structures.⁷⁴ Regarding the

⁷³ Leslie Greene Bowman, introduction to *American Arts and Crafts: Virtue in Design* (Boston: Los Angeles County Museum of Art in association with Bullfinch Press/Little, Brown and Company, 1990).

⁷⁴ T.J. Jackson Lears, preface to *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), xv; Michael Holleran, *Boston's "Changeful Times": Origins of Preservation and*

Cloister, he wrote that “the architecture of Ephrata was quite pure, memory-inspired, German medieval in style . . . In fact, this writer considers them to be the purest examples of continental medievalism in America.”⁷⁵

The same precision and research that went into creating appropriate hand-split siding also went into the replication of the Cloister windows, plaster, and hand-wrought nails and hardware. As Brumbaugh wrote in his 1941 preliminary report, the roof “shakes will . . . have to be applied with hand-wrought, exposed, nails. Thousands of these nails will be necessary, and, for durability, they must be forged from Swedish iron. The Saal is a building 40'-0" x 37'-0", and Saron is 72'-0" x 30'-0". Their combined roof area is about 6,300 square feet. This means that 44,000 shakes will be required for these two buildings alone, and about 35,000 hand-wrought nails.”⁷⁶ But by the time Brumbaugh needed these hand-wrought nails, World War II had already begun. On April 9, 1942 the Division of Industry Operations of the War Production Board (WPB) called a halt to non-essential construction, due to a shortage of materials for war production and construction. A WPB press release stated, “It is in the national interest . . . that all construction which is not essential, directly or indirectly, to the successful prosecution of the war, and which involves the use of labor, material or equipment urgently needed in

Planning in America (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 234; and James Lindgren, *Preserving Historic New England: Preservation, Progressivism, and the Remaking of Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 72.

⁷⁵ Unpublished manuscript, 262, Office Records, Box 108, Brumbaugh Papers; Brumbaugh, “Continental Influence on Early American Architecture,” *German American Review* 9 (February 1943): 8.

⁷⁶ Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

the war effort, be deferred for the duration of the emergency.”⁷⁷ Remarkably, Brumbaugh’s staunch American patriotism did not directly correlate to support for the war effort. His restoration projects took precedence. He wrote Cadzow in June of 1942 in response to the WPB restrictions:

The Cloister buildings are in much worse condition than we thought before the structural members were exposed to view. If the old buildings are to be saved, repairs must continue. I feel almost certain that the WPB will refuse permission to construct toilet rooms, bathrooms, water and sewer facilities. Therefore, I think we should make our own logical interpretation of the announcements, and not ask for permission. Instead, we should spend these funds before next June in repair and restoration work. . . .

Now that masons are on our payroll, I’d like to keep the Saal reconstruction going as fast as possible; I am preparing a shop for winter work on the threshing floor of the barn, where we can split and shave clapboards and shingles. We have acquired a small second-hand forge and an anvil, and I am getting ready to make our own nails. If the Highway Department gives us a wall along the Cemetery, I want to use the old iron fence as raw material. It seems to be soft iron, which is almost unattainable.⁷⁸

While Brumbaugh hoped to use recycled materials for his nails, his motivation did not stem from a sense of duty or obligation to support the war. Rather, he desired the iron from the old fence because new iron would not retain the characteristics necessary for accurate, eighteenth-century, hand-wrought nails.

The restoration continued in spite of the world war, but a year later Brumbaugh revealed his personal support for the war effort, remarking to Cadzow that “[m]oney is

⁷⁷ War Production Board press release, 9 April 1942, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

⁷⁸ Brumbaugh to Cadzow, 26 June 1942, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

always welcome, and I appreciate it. Now if I could get some sunlight for my Victory Garden, I could laugh at the old wolf for a while.” The heart of the letter remains his restoration report: “By careful breaking down of specimens of the original plaster from the Saal walls, we found unmistakable heads of rye and even a few seeds, among the straw. So we have made arrangements to get rye straw for our clay plaster this summer. For over a month I have had a bed of lime slaking. We have even made a number of nails (by reworking clinch cut nails).”⁷⁹ Although the war concerned Brumbaugh, his first priority remained the accurate restoration at Ephrata. Three days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Brumbaugh wrote to Cadzow about “break[ing] the inertia at Ephrata. . .[and] working on the buildings all of this good weather, to check deterioration over the winter.” At the end of his letter he stated, “So many things have happened in the world since I last saw you that it seems like years. I only wish I could help in some concrete way, now that the fife and drum are sounding; but for the present, at least, my job is right here.”⁸⁰ His light-hearted allusion to the “fife and drum” of the Revolutionary War denies the gravity of the situation, but he considered his “job” as restoration architect crucial in times of national stress. Clearly the metal shortage and curtailed building during the war forced Brumbaugh to face twentieth-century issues, although he actively ignored the pleas to ration materials such as iron. Despite his affinity for all things old, he could not live completely in the past. He recognized the importance of remembering the past, especially

⁷⁹ Brumbaugh to Cadzow, 31 May 1943, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

⁸⁰ Brumbaugh to Cadzow, 10 December 1941, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

in times of national trauma such as World War II. By creating a place devoted to the traditional values of early America, and the religious and cultural freedoms upon which the country was founded and for which it was fighting, Brumbaugh believed the restoration at Ephrata fostered American patriotism and supported the war effort.

Restoration Architect as Museum Registrar and Curator

Brumbaugh completed exterior structural repairs throughout the complex, but resigned before much interior work began. Most buildings on the property, other than the Saron and parts of the Saal, were “gutted, and radically changed inside, during the 19th. century. Practically all partitions belong to the period of slovenly management, when the buildings were ruthlessly mutilated in order to provide cheap apartments for multi-family use.”⁸¹ Exploratory demolition allowed Brumbaugh to establish the original plans of all the Cloister buildings (Figures 15-17). Plans drawn in 1957 indicate the interior structural reinforcement throughout the first and second floors of the Saal. Modern steel beams were installed over the existing poplar posts and Brumbaugh ordered three-eighths inch poplar veneer strips to cover the steel plates at the top of the posts. On the third floor six new eight-inch-by-eight-inch posts and four on the fourth floor were installed in their original locations.⁸² Even these structural elements received Brumbaugh’s careful

⁸¹ Brumbaugh to Cadzow, 21 April 1945, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

⁸² Sheet 55, “Saal, Structural Reinforcement, 1st and 2nd Floors,” 18 June 1957; Sheet 56, “Saal, Structural Reinforcement, 3rd and 4th Floors,” 18 June 1957; Drawings, Box E-10, Brumbaugh Papers.

touch, for the upper corners of the new posts were shaped into a baroque cyma curve identical to the originals. The only interiors completely restored by Brumbaugh remain on the east end of the first floor of the Saron.

Despite his inability to complete much interior work, Brumbaugh thought in long-range terms and expressed an appreciation for the material culture of the Cloister and the valuable historical information objects could provide visitors. He took on the role of a museum professional, constantly searching out Cloister related furniture and objects and worrying about their care. In 1942 Brumbaugh made sure the Cloister's two original wooden block pillows were placed "for safekeeping in the bank vault" and in 1944 he informed Cadzow that a copy of the *Martyrs Mirror*, printed at Ephrata, was for sale. Cadzow advised him to buy the book for thirty dollars, regardless of budget limitations. On February 21, 1944 Brumbaugh estimated the post-war budget for the continuing restoration at the Cloister. The estimated total for the restoration of buildings came to \$120,500. The cost of constructing roads, a parking area, paths, fences, restrooms, garages, a caretaker's cottage, and grading, planting, drainage, electric lines, water and fire mains was \$63,000. Brumbaugh estimated his fees at \$13,920. Remarkably, Brumbaugh devoted \$35,000, approximately fifteen percent of the total estimated budget of \$232,420, "[f]or purchase of furniture, furnishings, etc." for the museum rooms at the Cloister.⁸³ Brumbaugh clearly played an important role in the acquisition of objects for the museum collection. In 1945 he wrote to Cadzow of a reputed Ephrata cupboard and

⁸³ "Estimated post-war budget, Ephrata Cloisters," 21 February 1944, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

table which had been brought to his attention. He and Frances took a trip to examine the objects, and according to Brumbaugh, the “door of the cupboard was added, all pieces had been refinished by scraping and varnish, one had been stained dark, and much of the wood and workmanship looked dubious. We passed them up.”⁸⁴ In 1949, however, Brumbaugh and the Commonwealth did not pass up the opportunity to accept objects from the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, some of which were associated with the Cloister. These objects, including a pair of scissors, a nutmeg grater, a wooden “headrest” (presumably a wooden pillow), an iron candlestick, an Ephrata communion cup, wooden communion boards, a communion plate and trencher, a leather case with forks, a pewter tankard, a pewter basin, and a metal candle snuffer, were transferred to the State via Brumbaugh.⁸⁵

Brumbaugh played many roles as a restoration architect—in these instances acting as museum curator, registrar, and courier. Early on in the restoration Cadzow asked Brumbaugh’s opinion regarding methods for numbering museum objects after Brumbaugh suggested a new inventory of objects owned by the Commonwealth. Cadzow and Brumbaugh agreed that using India ink, with skill and neatness, was the best solution. Brumbaugh also expressed concern for the Cloister *fraktur schriften*, for which squirrels seemed to have a predilection. Cadzow believed that “there is little chance for damage from the squirrels at the Cloisters than there is from mice and rats at the State Museum in

⁸⁴ Brumbaugh to Cadzow, 20 February 1942; Cadzow to Brumbaugh, 13 October 1944, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

⁸⁵ Office Records, Box 88. Brumbaugh Papers.

Harrisburg and it is the only place that we would have to store them.”⁸⁶ This statement indicates that standards for the storage of museum objects were poor in 1941, and Brumbaugh revealed great forethought in expressing concern about the fate of these paper objects. In this instance, as in many others throughout his restoration career, Brumbaugh simultaneously served his client as both restoration architect and museum curator.

From the beginning of his involvement in the restoration, Brumbaugh kept the future visitor in mind. In his 1941 preliminary report Brumbaugh made recommendations for restoration and suggestions for parking and restroom facilities, as well as ideas for the interpretation of the entire museum site. He never mentions working with a curator or museum professional, so one must assume that part of his role as restoration architect included curatorial duties. He suggested that informational brochures be available for visitors at each building, and that all buildings be “furnished as museums, with controlled inspection, permitting access to certain portions of rooms.” In addition, he recommended that the Brother’s House and another building be reconstructed and that these along with the other ten buildings, “communal garden, woodland, [and] meadow” would “convey the peculiar atmosphere of this unique [*sic*] spot.” Brumbaugh anticipated that the Cloister’s religious and historical significance would draw scholars and experts to the site who could recognize a fraudulent restoration. “It will be necessary to strive for the utmost fidelity in the smallest details. Above all, this must not in any way present the appearance

⁸⁶ Cadzow to Brumbaugh, 18 November 1941, Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

of a public park.”⁸⁷ In addition, he suggested and devised a complex tour route through the Saal and Saron, proposed the use of audio recordings instead of guides, and investigated the cost and viability of museum dioramas.

After Brumbaugh’s resignation from the project, the site sat dormant for a number of years until the PHMC hired architect John Heyl to finish the restoration, which he completed about 1970. As Michael Showalter stated, Heyl was “not a good researcher.” Comparing the restoration work Heyl completed to that of Brumbaugh reveals clear differences in knowledge and technique. At a number of places in the interior plaster their two “hands” are visible side by side—Brumbaugh’s work clearly surpasses Heyl’s in quality, detail, and fidelity to the original method. Ironically, between 1970 and 1980 the Commission had to rework much of Heyl’s restoration due to shoddy or incorrect workmanship. In hindsight, retaining Brumbaugh would have produced a superior finished product with little or no need to immediately rework the restoration, but the project might have dragged on until his death in 1983. In the twenty years that Brumbaugh worked at the Cloister he restored the exteriors of all the buildings and made them structurally sound. It has been estimated that he replaced eighty percent of the exteriors of all the Cloister buildings with new siding, new roofs, and new casement windows. Until 1998, none of his siding needed replacement. His concern with the permanence of his own restoration work remains unclear, for fifty years after he made his mark at Ephrata those changes, too, are in need of repair. Architecture is not permanent. With so much time passing since Brumbaugh’s work, it is unlikely that the state of

⁸⁷ Office Records, Box 88, Brumbaugh Papers.

Pennsylvania would carry out repairs according to his exacting standards. But by the time he completed the restoration of Wright's Ferry Mansion near the end of his career, he seemed more concerned with future repairs to his own work. There he created a roof with multiple layers of shingles so that a layer could be removed and a new one, constructed to his standards, would be lying just below (Figure 18). At Ephrata he did not think about his own mortality or his role in the life the buildings in the same way. As his close friends and clients, Irvin and Anita Schorsch, revealed, Brumbaugh thought he would live forever.⁸⁸

Because of Brumbaugh's resignation, the hiring of Heyl, and the Commonwealth's insistence on a rapid opening of the property to the public, only about twenty percent of the interiors were restored with new floors, new plaster walls and built-in furniture.⁸⁹ Today, with special permission, one can still see parts of the Saal, Saron, and other buildings as Brumbaugh and as the brothers and sisters of the Cloister saw them. In this respect, the State's insistence on finishing the project quickly permits the scholar incredible access to the original construction which would be unattainable had Brumbaugh's services been retained through the completion of the project. In 1951, Helen Comstock of the magazine *Antiques* wrote to Brumbaugh and mentioned her visits to both the Boone site and Ephrata: "I also saw the Cloisters and it is a truly moving experience. I hope you can pick up the work there again soon and the state funds will be

⁸⁸ Irvin and Anita Schorsch, interview.

⁸⁹ Michael Showalter, interview.

forthcoming.”⁹⁰ Although it was not Brumbaugh’s intent, the magic of the place he so desperately desired has been preserved in these unrestored portions of the Cloister. Ephrata Cloister remains a truly moving place.

As historians Dona Brown and Stephen Nissenbaum have recently stated, the end of World War II “generated an explosion of interest in making American history more widely available to the public.” In the years directly following the war a “number of ‘history theme parks’ sprang up to meet both the demand for vacation entertainment and burgeoning public interest in historical New England [and America].” Museum villages such as Old Sturbridge Village, Historic Deerfield, Inc., and Plimoth Plantation (all in Massachusetts), Shelburne Museum (Vermont), and Strawberry Banke (New Hampshire) opening at mid-century and museums such as Henry Francis du Pont’s Winterthur (Delaware) with its period rooms, period architecture and recreated interior “outdoor” courtyard and “shop lane,” all have their interpretative roots in the nineteenth century. The initial interpretations at these institutions emphasized a glorified homogenous and pre-industrial America. Brown and Nissenbaum suggest that in New England, these old ideas “seemed more central than ever in the postwar years. With the rise of Hitler and the gradual alignment of American politics to resist Nazism, the outspoken racial theories of the Immigration Restriction League and the eugenics movement had become untenable . . . If aliens and immigrants no longer seemed so threatening, they were replaced in the postwar period by another foreign enemy hovering over Europe and threatening to sap the

⁹⁰ Office Records, Box 104, Brumbaugh Papers.

loyalties of Americans: the specter of Communism.”⁹¹ In his 1950 address to the participants at Colonial Williamsburg’s Antiques and Decoration Forum, Brumbaugh echoed these fears:

Remember this: that architecture, down through the ages, has performed this historical function of reflecting the character of society with remarkable fidelity, and it is doing it today. ‘Architecture never lies.’ We can only have a completely standardized architecture when our people are completely regimented and effectively insulated from the outside world. That would be communistic totalitarian nationalism. I pray that our architecture may continue to express the healthy and varied individualism of a free America. Do not let the over-zealous, but none too profound, disciples of change deceive you.⁹²

Indeed, Brumbaugh’s moral agenda had him reacting first against industrialization in his early career, then Communism after World War II, and eventually technology in the 1960s and 1970s. Throughout his career he continued to propose architecture, restorations, and education as the perfect panacea for all the nation’s woes.

⁹¹ Dona Brown and Stephen Nissenbaum, “Changing New England: 1865-1945” in *Picturing Old New England: Image and Memory*, ed. William Truettner and Roger Stein (New Haven: Yale University Press in association with the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1999), 12.

⁹² Office Records, Box 111, Brumbaugh Papers.



Figure 3. Nineteenth-century view of Ephrata Cloister, before restoration. The Almonry is on the left, the Saal is in the center, and the Saron is on the right. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 4. Exterior of the Saron and the Saal today. The Saron is on the left and the Saal is on the right.



Figure 5. Exploratory demolition in the Almonry, Ephrata Cloister. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.

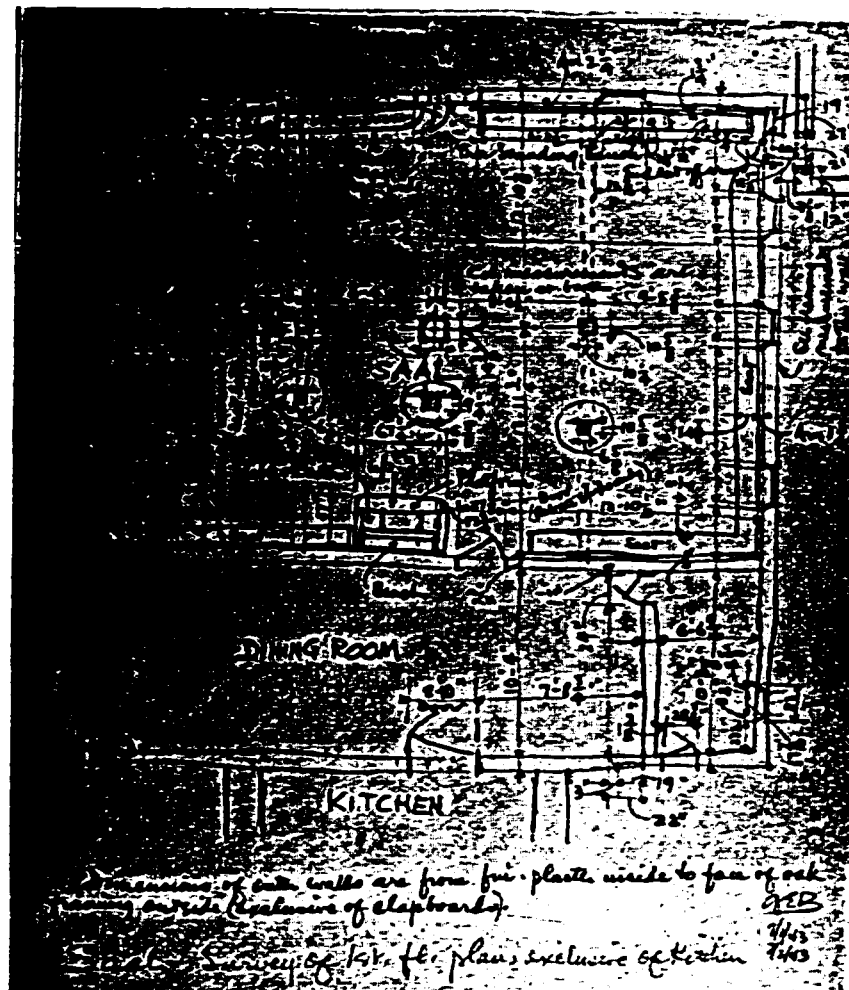


Figure 6. Survey drawing of the Saal, July 1943. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 7. Needle shoring under the south gable of the Saal. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 8. Reconstruction of one corner of the Saal and new stone foundations. Notice the combination of "ancient" and modern methods. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 9. Assortment of siding materials on the Saron and the Saal, before restoration. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.

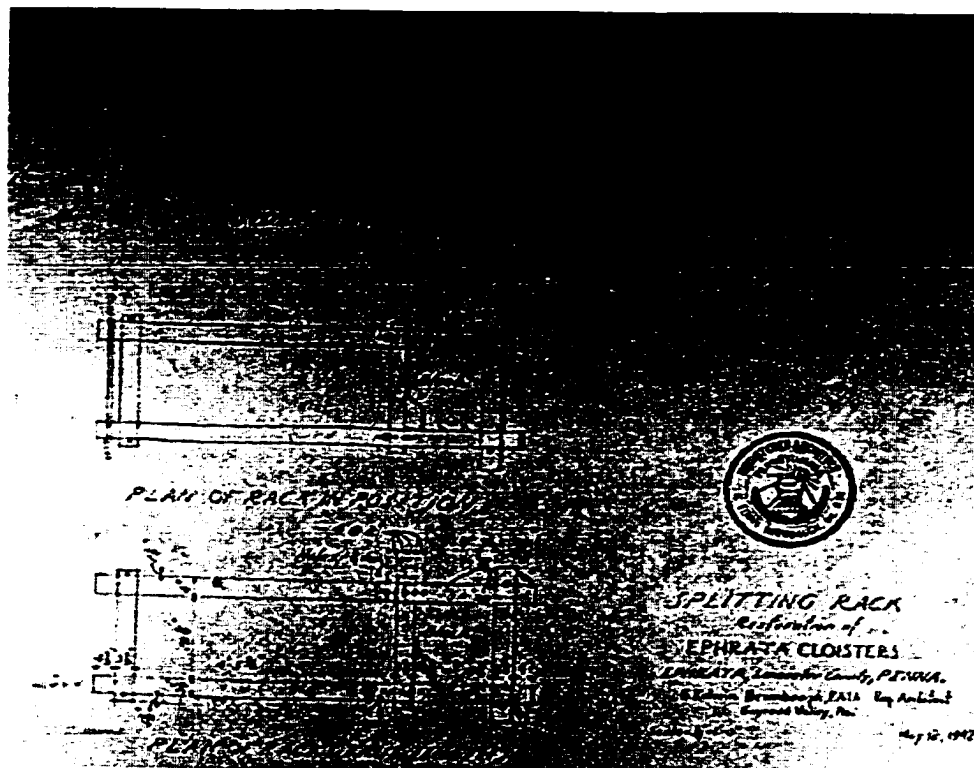


Figure 10. Plan of the splitting rack. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 11. The first step in making clapboards: splitting the log. Ephrata, mid-1940s. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 12. Starting the splitting rack, Ephrata mid-1940s. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 13. Splitting the log with the splitting rack, Ephrata mid-1940s. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.

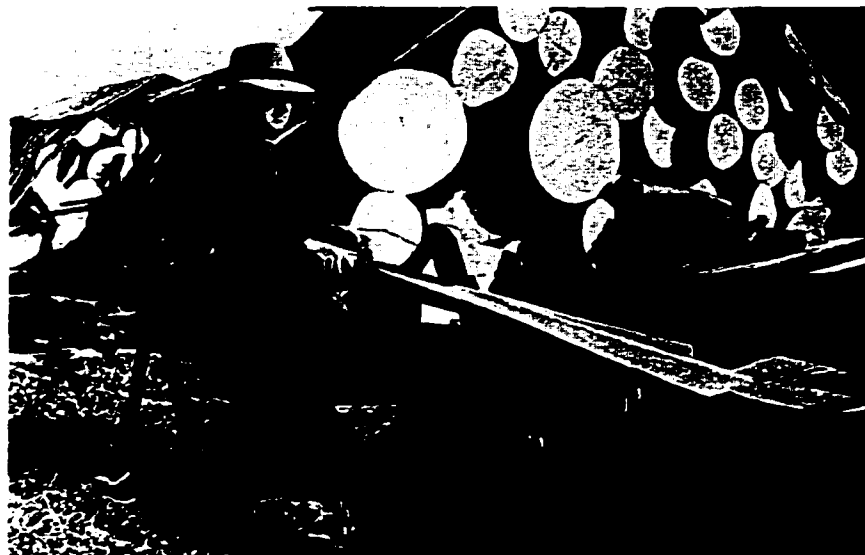


Figure 14. Shaving a clapboard at the draw bench, Ephrata mid-1940s. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.

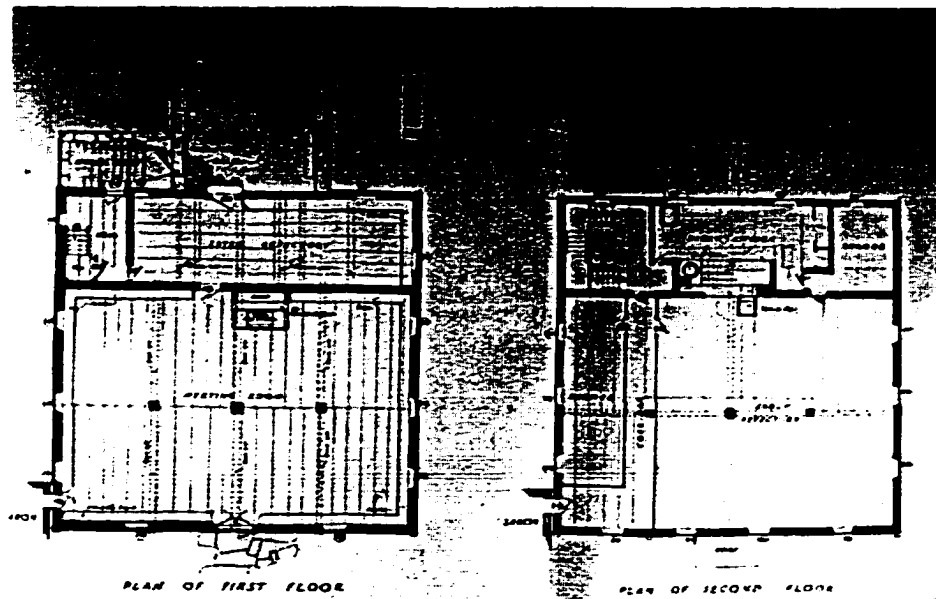


Figure 15. Plans of first and second floors of the Saal. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.

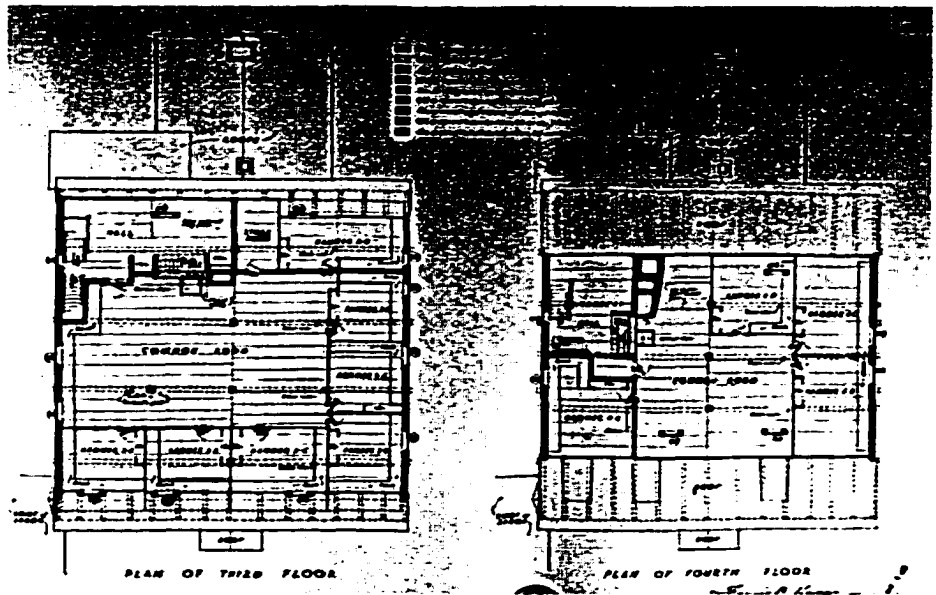


Figure 16. Plans of third and fourth floors of the Saal. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.

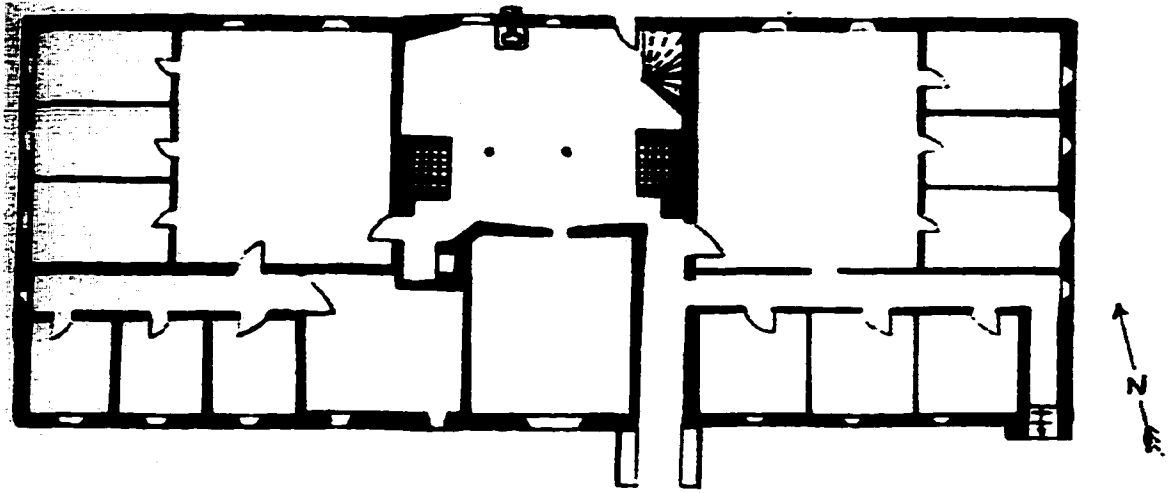


Figure 17. Plan of first floor of the Saron. Courtesy, Ann Kirschner.

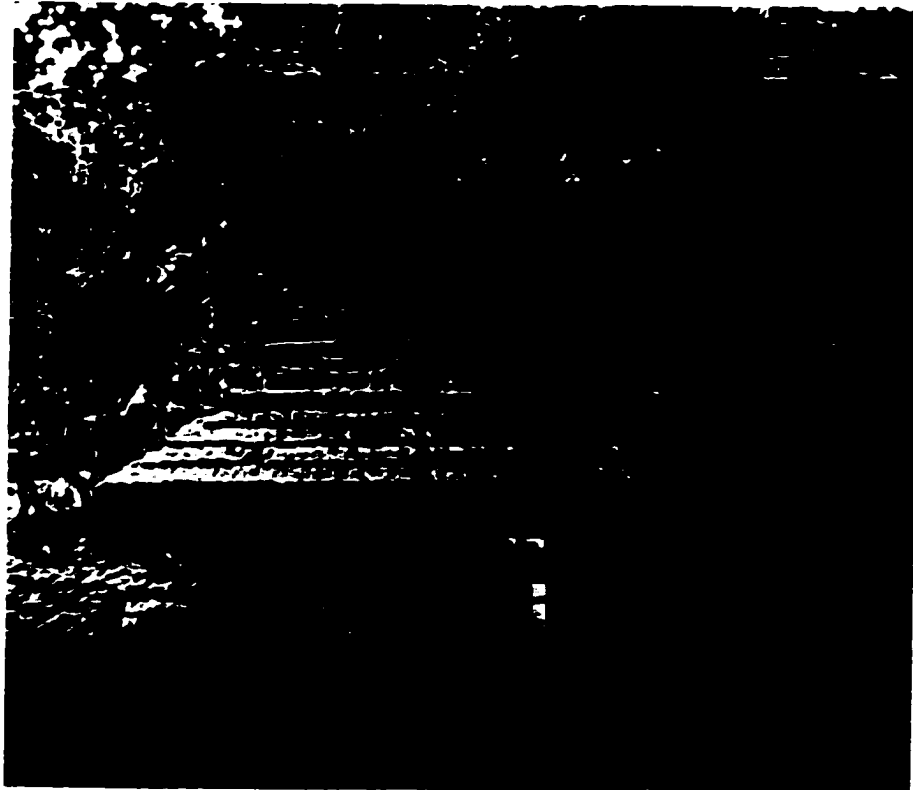


Figure 18. Pent roof, Wright's Ferry Mansion. Notice the layers of roof shingles on the left.

Chapter 3

URBAN RENEWAL AND RESTORATION:

THE GOLDEN PLOUGH TAVERN AND THE GATES HOUSE

*"It cannot be stressed too strongly that historical restorations are the most highly specialized task in architecture, requiring wide study and experience. Complete authenticity must be the sole aim, and improvisation and sentimentality have no place in aims or procedures."*⁹³ -G. Edwin Brumbaugh, 1960

"When urban renewer meets historic preserver, the old and the new join up. It's a happy combination." -The Journal of Housing, August 1962

One of the ultimate ironies of G. Edwin Brumbaugh's career occurred in his restoration of the Golden Plough Tavern and adjacent Gates House in York, Pennsylvania in the early 1960s (Figures 19, 20). These restorations at York differ significantly from Brumbaugh's efforts at Ephrata, for the York restorations represent one of the earliest historic preservation projects funded, in part, by the Redevelopment Authority of York and approved by the federal Urban Renewal Administration. With the support of the Urban Renewal Administration, the primary goals of restoration became urban revitalization and increased tourism rather than the official glorification of colonial religious and ethnic freedom at a site such as Ephrata. The telling of a proper and moral American history remained important to Brumbaugh but became a secondary goal due to the source of funding. Although federal funding suggests the need for an "official"

history at York, the Urban Renewal Administration held no responsibility for the preservation of American heritage. Instead, its main concern was city improvement. Because of this factor and the extreme alterations to the original fabric of both buildings, Brumbaugh completed a much less stringent restoration at York, while continuing to insist on authenticity in materials and methods. The result can be considered “unofficial” history, for Brumbaugh specifically followed the desires and budget of his client and did not push for the same degree of authenticity or expense that he did in his restorations for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Brumbaugh’s role at York serves as one of the best examples of his chameleon-like restoration personality. When he felt it necessary or prudent, he did not hesitate to take advantage of products and sources of revenue that seemingly contradicted his declarations of noble and authentic restorations. Although urban renewal continues to be blamed for destroying historic city centers and replacing those historic buildings with high-rise “projects,” Brumbaugh recognized the important and positive role an agency such as the Urban Renewal Administration could play in his work with the gutted and barely recognizable eighteenth-century buildings at York.

Brumbaugh’s own role in the restoration of the Gates House and Plough Tavern in York began with citizens agitating for the preservation of the buildings. With the support of the city and civic organizations such as the Junior League, a non-profit organization was established to carry out the project. Brumbaugh was involved from the start, and although money remained tight and fundraising played a key role throughout the

⁹³ “Here’s What Experts Say About York’s Plow Tavern,” *The Gazette and Daily* (York, Pa.), 5 December 1960, clipping in Photos and Negatives, Box 10, Brumbaugh Papers.

restoration, Brumbaugh faced none of the problems he encountered when completing state commissions. The newly formed, non-profit organization enthusiastically supported Brumbaugh in everything he did and did not hesitate to raise large sums of money for the project. With the excited involvement of the York community, the restoration of the two buildings proceeded rapidly, in spite of the burden of raising \$225,000. The York restoration proved much less irksome than the restoration at Ephrata and took a mere three years to complete: work began in 1961 and the buildings opened to the public in June of 1964.

Brumbaugh tells the story of the York restorations in his unpublished manuscript, informing the reader that in 1960 York resident Joe Kindig III, son and partner of antiques dealer Joe Kindig, Jr., discovered the half-timbered construction of the Tavern and called the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission to investigate. When he received their "somewhat vague report," likely due to the much-altered character of the buildings, Kindig invited Brumbaugh in for a second opinion. Clearly the PHMC did not consider the Plough Tavern as significant to state identity as a site such as Ephrata, and indicated no interest in funding or supporting a restoration in York. Brumbaugh, though, recognized the importance of the vernacular architectural form: the Golden Plough Tavern is a rare example of early log and timber-framed construction in Pennsylvania. Based on the unusual construction of the Tavern and the Commonwealth historical marker on the Gates House revealing that General Lafayette uncovered the "Conway Cabal" against George Washington inside, Brumbaugh recommended that the citizens of York develop a restoration plan. A concerned group, including members of the York

Junior Service League, the Redevelopment Authority of York, the City Planning Office, the Tourist Bureau and other civic organizations (six total), secured an option on both houses, established a non-profit corporation, and gained financial support from the city of York.

Today the c. 1741, two-story, log and half-timbered Golden Plough Tavern and the c. 1751, two-and-one half story, stone Gates House stand side-by-side in the middle of busy downtown York, only two blocks from the courthouse square. The log and timber-framed building was built for Martin Eichelberger, a second generation German-American. Brumbaugh uses Charles Peterson's terminology, "*poteaux en cannellé*" to describe the log construction at the first level. *Poteaux en cannellé* denotes a type of log construction in which the ends of horizontal logs are tenoned into mortises cut into posts at each corner of the building. The second level consists of half-timbered construction filled with brick nogging. When Brumbaugh came onto the scene, nineteenth-century alterations including clapboard siding and plate glass windows completely masked the original exterior. In addition, both structures were virtually gutted on the first floor due to their later nineteenth- and twentieth-century commercial incarnations. Brumbaugh removed "[e]very bit of later plaster [in the tavern] . . . as well as all later floor boards. The skeleton of original material thus exposed to view was studied minutely for tell-tale marks and indications."⁹⁴ Brumbaugh determined that the original floor plan "had the same basic arrangement as other Pennsylvania German pioneer houses familiar to us": a long narrow *kuche* (kitchen) running the length of the house from front to rear, with doors

⁹⁴ Unpublished manuscript, 87, Office Records, Box 108, Brumbaugh Papers.

to the exterior on either end and a large fireplace centered on the interior wall; a *stube* (stove room) on the other side of the interior wall, with a *kammer* (chamber) behind and more chambers upstairs. The central fireplace permitted a stove on the other side, in the *stube*. The floor in this first floor *kammer* is the only original floor in the tavern. The Plough Tavern also has a large cellar under the *kammer* and *stube*, a feature typical of German homes. The nature of the tavern, though, resulted in original adjustments to this traditional floor plan. Brumbaugh asserted that the rear third of the *kuche* was partitioned off to form a storeroom for the tavern (where he found evidence of the original door adjoining the Gates House), and the *stube* actually functioned as the tavern, with its requisite bar (Figure 21). Thus, the tavern keeper's personal *stube* was on the second floor. The second floor plan mirrors the first, with the stairs ascending from the *kuche*, opposite the fireplace to a large room upstairs (directly above the *kuche* and storeroom), which Brumbaugh calls a banquet room. On the other side of the fireplace is another *stube* and *kammer*. The original floor plan remains a bit mysterious to the current staff at the York County Heritage Trust. Educator Barbara Brundidge still questions why some mortises in beams and patches in the floor remain visible. Brumbaugh clearly considered those walls to be later additions to the tavern. Unfortunately his notes and files are not as complete as a modern historic structure report. He did not indicate why he ignored or discounted apparent evidence visible today, leaving the staff at the sites unsure of his reasoning. Importantly, his reports begin to look more like formal historic structure reports near the end of his career.

His unpublished manuscript and the notes of Nancy McFall, the Junior League member who spearheaded that organization's commitment to the restoration and served as co-chair of the Building Committee, detail many of his restoration methods at the Plough Tavern and Gates House. Brumbaugh's first step in the York restoration (after completing initial primary and secondary source research, detailed survey sketches, and exploratory demolition), as at Ephrata, involved foundation work.⁹⁵ According to McFall's notes, the initial actions at the Plough Tavern included putting in new footers and a new east wall in the foundation; "rebuilding" the logs on the east, south and west walls; correcting the timbers on the second floor; filling in brick on the second floor; filling in logs on the first floor; installing steel beams for strength; covering the windows and putting down floors [presumably in preparation for interior work].⁹⁶ Brumbaugh wrote that all the windows in the tavern had been altered, but "some of the old openings, filled with brick, survived back of clapboards and plaster, and there were abandoned mortises, timber cuts, even hinge-pintle holes, to guide us. The exact size and position of every original window was thus determined. All had been casements. The next task was library research concerning windows in published works on modest medieval architecture in southern Germany." Brumbaugh uncovered a small fragment of the "double-dog ear" shaped trim in his exploratory demolition, as well as faint marks in the plaster that

⁹⁵ In October of 1960 Brumbaugh estimated approximately three months for exploratory demolition and four months of external restoration for the Tavern, and two months exploratory demolition and another four months of exterior restoration for the Gates House.

⁹⁶ Notebook of Nancy McFall, York County Heritage Trust, York, Pa. (hereafter cited as McFall Notebook).

confirmed his library research (Figure 22). The windows he reproduced directly mimic those from his recently concluded Ephrata restoration, where he had uncovered an original sash. The muntins of this sash “were simply square strips of wood, set diagonally, with grooves cut in two opposite corner to receive the glass. The other two corners were given a narrow flat cut . . . If ever a pane of glass is broken, the sash must be taken apart by driving out the corner wooden pins, resetting a pane, and pinning the corners again. This, of course, is a practical defect . . . but we followed the ancient model.”⁹⁷ The recent Ephrata restoration also permitted Brumbaugh to reuse his reproduction splitting rack. The side-lapped, butt-nailed shingles on the roof of the tavern were split using Harry Eberle’s method, and were to last seventy to one hundred years. Brumbaugh also detailed the restoration of the exterior cornice, the creation of a “typical Pennsylvania German garden,” interior plastering, the use of wattle and daub, and his method for recreating the fireplaces and chimneys (Figures 23, 24).

Throughout the York chapter, Brumbaugh hints at the lack of original fabric for both buildings, revealing that most of his restoration depended on evidence from other properties in the area, such as Ephrata and Pottsgrove Manor (which he also restored for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania), and in Europe. He wrote that the “Plough Tavern [exterior] cornice probably would have been restored by us with shaped rafter ends, but for a very faint bit of evidence.” A sawed-off tenon forced him to turn “again to the books for study. The result is the completely logical, but very simple, solid molded cornice. It has historical European precedent.” While the result is “logical,” it may or

⁹⁷ Unpublished manuscript, Office Records, Box 108, Brumbaugh Papers.

may not be historically accurate. This restoration according to logic differs significantly from his meticulous approach at Ephrata. In addition, he felt no compunction about blending old materials and authentic methods with newer materials at York. He “changed the clay lining of the upper chimney to cement lining (to lengthen its life)” and used steel beams throughout both buildings (and cinder blocks in the Gates House) to shore them up (Figure 25).⁹⁸ Some precedents for his restoration remain muddy as well. For example, no evidence for the bar in the tavern, with its wooden screen which lifts up and hooks to the ceiling and can be brought down to lock the bar, exists. Significantly, Brumbaugh recreated a virtually identical bar for the “keeping room” of one of his private clients in the 1970s.⁹⁹ Is this simply a design feature he included because he felt it was appropriate? Brumbaugh does not answer this question in his correspondence, reports, or manuscript.

Another problematic part of the York restoration included adding “stoops” with benches at the front entrances to both buildings (which have since been removed) because early nineteenth century watercolors indicated their existence. He admitted that these renderings also indicated that the door positions in the two buildings had changed since their dates of construction.¹⁰⁰ While it is possible that these stoops existed originally in the 1770s (the period to which Brumbaugh restored the Gates House), or even in the

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Tour outline, May 1965, York County Heritage Trust. Anita Schorsch, interview by author, 1 December 1999.

¹⁰⁰ William Wagner painted a number of watercolors of York street scenes, c. 1820-1835.

1740s and 1750s, there is no eighteenth-century documentary evidence, and apparently no structural evidence, to support these additions. How could Brumbaugh ignore the possibility that these changes occurred after the period of his restoration, at the same time the door locations changed? Why did he feel the 1820-1835 watercolors reflected the 1770 or 1741 edifices? Unfortunately, he left no clues to solve these mysteries. For a man who considered the interpretation of more than one period in a building sacrilege, the stoops at York remain difficult to reconcile. Regarding the York restoration, he wrote: "We are terribly in earnest about this subject of authenticity. Without it, restorations cannot qualify as graphic parts of a nation's story."¹⁰¹ In addition, a 1976 feature article on Brumbaugh in the Church of the Brethren's *Messenger* quoted him: "Restoration is not design. It is reproduction, whether I like it or not." In the same article Brumbaugh recalled the Daniel Boone restoration where he desired windows where none had originally existed. After completing the restoration, however, he concluded that his decision to stick to the structural evidence and research had been correct.¹⁰² The Boone project, once again, reflected "official" state history. The non-state commission at York, on the other hand, provided Brumbaugh some latitude in his own personal restoration principles and permitted him to design architectural elements when he felt it necessary.

While many questions still remain regarding the Golden Plough Tavern, Brumbaugh felt that "[r]estoring the exterior of the Gates House was not too difficult."

¹⁰¹ Unpublished manuscript, 94, Office Records, Box 108, Brumbaugh Papers.

¹⁰² Howard E. Royer, "The Past Alive and Authentic," *Messenger*, March 1976, 17.

Brumbaugh's tone when addressing this restoration in his manuscript, in fact, indicates that he found the entire Gates House project commonplace and uninspiring. The Plough Tavern, with its early Germanic tradition, enticed Brumbaugh more than the Anglo-influenced townhouse. He devoted thirty-five pages to the restoration of the Tavern in his manuscript, and only six to the Gates House. The Gates House, built for Joseph Chambers approximately ten years after the Tavern, is of stone construction and exhibits a typically symmetrical, Georgian plan (Figure 26). It sits adjacent to the Golden Plough and joins it with two doors (one on the first floor and one on the second), but the two buildings do not share a wall. Visitors standing in the doorways connecting the two buildings can actually see the half-timbered architecture of the Tavern in the narrow space between the two exterior walls of the buildings (Figure 27). The townhouse is a two-and-one-half-story, double-pile, center-passage dwelling, although when Brumbaugh first encountered the building the first floor had been converted into one large room. He wrote that when he removed the modern flooring, the original floorboards came to light, complete with nail holes, mortises, and patches that coincided with evidence in the ceiling joists and plaster, indicating the original floor plan.¹⁰³ The second and attic floors mirror the plan of the first level, although the hall stops short of the front rooms, permitting larger front spaces on the upper floors.

The exterior restorations to the Gates House included tearing down the brick wall in the front, with its plate glass windows at the first floor level and five window openings above, and replacing it with a stone front, pent roof, and three openings on each level.

¹⁰³ Unpublished manuscript, Office Records, Box 108, Brumbaugh Papers.

Nancy McFall noted that the foundation on the north side of the house was rebuilt, a new foundation on the west side was installed to “take out the sag,” cinder blocks were used in the “back and front,” the brick west wall was removed, the first floor was rebuilt and reinforced with steel, the chimney on the second floor was raised, the second floor was reinforced with steel, and the pent roof was added.¹⁰⁴ Much of the original stone rear elevation remained beneath “a hodge-podge of closed walkways and narrow outside stairways” and Brumbaugh followed what he called “the English tradition” in duplicating the details of the rear of the house on the street side. Brumbaugh discovered a section of the original plaster-covered cornice, a projecting stone belt course, and joists to support a pent roof all on the rear of the building. He also found paneled shutters on both the first and second floor windows in the rear. He wrote, “[w]e could continue citing houses in any part of the Colonial seaboard, which contradict one another in the use or non-use of shutters and blinds. Suffice it to say that the original paneled Gates shutters on two floors are a bit unusual.” In spite of his questions concerning the shutters, Brumbaugh faithfully modeled the new façade after evidence on the rear elevation.¹⁰⁵

In their many years as commercial establishments, the interiors of the Plough Tavern and the Gates House underwent substantial alterations from their original states. The framing of the Tavern remained, but the interior partitions and openings were much changed. Virtually all interior detail was lost in the Gates House, except for a small section of stair banisters and stairs leading to the attic, some attic partitions and doors,

¹⁰⁴ McFall Notebook.

¹⁰⁵ Unpublished manuscript, Office Records, Box 108, Brumbaugh Papers.

and small bits of woodwork (Figures 28-30). The restoration of the Gates House required Brumbaugh to design new woodwork and new fireplace surrounds, acquire new hardware (made by Donald Streeter), and apply new plaster (Figure 31). Frances Brumbaugh determined appropriate paint colors for the interiors and exteriors of both buildings, “even proving that no color had been applied to the woodwork inside the tavern.” A lack of substantive evidence at the Gates House apparently forced Frances Brumbaugh to take the paint scheme from that at Pottsgrove Manor (Figure 32). A May 1965 tour outline reveals that the paint in the parlor of the Gates House is “a guess” due to the lack of original trim, and is similar to the blue paint used at Pottsgrove. McFall also noted that the “mahogany red” in the “dining room,” and the yellow, red, and blue in other rooms were all “like [the] colors at Pottsgrove.” Yet Brumbaugh downplayed the lack of evidence, writing in his manuscript that the “bits of evidence [left in the Gates House] provided a good clue to the character of the interior finish that had been there originally. We studied contemporary detail in the neighborhood, and believe the sturdy but simple theme we adopted is at least entirely appropriate.”¹⁰⁶ The “contemporary detail in the neighborhood” evidently stemmed from his own restorations at Ephrata and Pottsgrove where authenticity and official history for the state remained Brumbaugh’s top priority. The smaller scale restorations at York thus benefited from the rigorous research and effort spent at these other sites.

When Joe Kindig and Brumbaugh examined the structures, prior to urban renewal and restoration, there were twelve uninhabited residential structures on the site, in

¹⁰⁶ McFall Notebook; Office Records, Box 108, Brumbaugh Papers.

addition to the Gates and Plough, which were used for commercial purposes. The urban renewal project was approved in July 1960 and the first task was the demolition of these twelve non-historic buildings. Once the land was cleared, the redevelopment authority sold the land to the City of York, which leased it to the newly organized, non-profit Historic York County organization. Historic York County then purchased the two buildings from the redevelopment authority and began restoration. In a 1962 article, Brumbaugh explained the benefits of urban renewal for restoration work. At York, the urban renewal funding resolved the initial financial hurdle for purchasing the buildings, liberal repayment terms allowed the buildings to pay for themselves, and time was saved by starting the restoration as quickly as possible, all via urban renewal. The net cost for preparing the site for restoration was \$62,000, and the state of Pennsylvania and the city of York split the required local portion of \$15,573.¹⁰⁷ Local citizens and Historic York County then raised the full amount of money necessary for the restoration.

In theory, urban renewal and preservation do not mix. The destruction caused by urban renewal measures in cities across the country in the late 1950s and 1960s served as a critical catalyst for the historic preservation movement. As James Glass has outlined in his history of the federal role in historic preservation from 1957 to 1969, the postwar boom resulted in the rapid and substantial growth of suburban areas skirting cities. With the influx of new residents to the suburbs, downtown business districts and older residential neighborhoods experienced significant decline. At the same time, the

¹⁰⁷ "Historic Preservation via Urban Renewal," *Journal of Housing* 19 (August 10, 1962): 297, 311.

increasing reliance on automobiles changed the way Americans traveled both in and out of cities and resulted in demands for better and faster roads. Two federal acts in particular resulted in the destruction of vast areas of historic significance in the nation's urban areas. The construction of thousands of miles of new highways destroyed huge swaths of cities after President Eisenhower requested the 1956 Federal-Aid Highway Act. In the same year the 1956 Housing Act passed, providing monies for the Housing and Home Finance Agency to distribute to local redevelopment authorities for cleaning up municipal slums, often resulting in considerable demolition of historic neighborhoods. Preservation advocates soon began lobbying Congress to end this irreversible damage to the historic fabric of the country. The Historic Preservation Act of 1966 represents one result of preservationists' agitation.¹⁰⁸ Remarkably, Brumbaugh willingly accepted the support from the Urban Renewal Administration for the York restoration, and York became the "poster child" for the Administration's "responsible" renewal efforts.

In 1962 the *Journal of Housing* (published by the federal government) featured the restoration at York as an urban renewal project. The first sentence of the article declared, "When urban renewer meets historic preserver, the old and the new join up. It's a happy combination. The treasures of a city's past, through renewal, can be put into a setting that is suitable and harmonious: not lost in a surrounding sea of slums, skid row squalor, or traffic-choked obscurity."¹⁰⁹ The same article emphasized the similarities in

¹⁰⁸ James Glass, *The Beginnings of a New National Historic Preservation Program, 1957-1969* (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1990), xiii, 3.

¹⁰⁹ "Historic Preservation via Urban Renewal," 297.

preservation and urban renewal fundamentals: “recognition of the importance of good design and urban aesthetics; strong reliance on citizen initiative and participation; insistence on the retention of local autonomy.” The combination of urban renewal and historic preservation in York required capitalizing on the “pride and affection” for old York and informing citizens critical of the programs of the benefits of renewal.

Brumbaugh recognized the important role of the city residents, for in his report of inspection of the property, he suggested the establishment of the non-profit organization to direct fundraising, restoration, and administration. In addition, he stated that the city and local industry needed to be sources of primary funds and an intensive fundraising campaign targeting York residents needed to occur. According to Brumbaugh’s initial report, “capital outlay for acquisition, restoration and furnishing of historic properties must be regarded as a public service of philanthropic outlay, not subject to amortization.”¹¹⁰ Amazingly, the non-profit organization followed Brumbaugh’s proposals and suggestions, virtually to the letter. The active role of the citizenry and their willingness to combine the two contradicting concepts resulted in urban renewal and preservation working harmoniously in York.

Throughout the restoration process the city and citizenry of York provided remarkable support. The women of the Junior Service League of York played an important role in the restoration, for in 1959 they established a Historic Landmark Committee (headed by Nancy McFall) to establish their presence in the preservation of

¹¹⁰“Here’s What Experts Say About York’s Plow Tavern,” *The Gazette and Daily* (York, PA), 5 December 1960, clipping in Photos and Negatives, Box 10, Brumbaugh Papers.

historic York buildings. In 1960 they paid Brumbaugh \$100 to report on the Gates House and Plough Tavern. Not surprisingly, his recommendations included advice not to seek state help.¹¹¹ Clearly his vast experience with the Commonwealth and his concurrent difficulties at Ephrata magnified his negative opinion of the state's role in restorations. He much preferred working with an organization such as Historic York County that did not argue with him about restoration funds or methods. In 1963, the organization began its second fund drive (they raised \$75,000 in 1961) to raise \$150,000 for the interior restoration, furnishings, and gardens at Gates and Plough. The committees were divided by gender; seventy-five women made up the Women's Division and about fifty men served on the Men's Division.¹¹² These two campaigns raised all of the funds necessary for the restoration.

The efforts Brumbaugh made in his restorations at York stand as a testament to his balancing-act abilities. On the surface, Brumbaugh's relationship with the old and the new seemed an uneasy one. In every restoration he adamantly demanded the use of materials and methods dating to the time of the original building (at York, as at Ephrata, workmen hand-split the roof shingles and made the nails), but used twentieth-century advances when necessary for safety and speed. Clearly he recognized the reality of budget restrictions and could not denounce substantial funding for the York restoration, in spite of its origin in an agency that was the nemesis of many preservationists.

¹¹¹Office Records, Box 30, Brumbaugh Papers.

¹¹²Memo to fundraising committee members, 4 March 1963, York County Heritage Trust.

Brumbaugh's acceptance of urban renewal funding is only one aspect of a much larger mixing of the "ancient" with the modern at the Golden Plough Tavern and Gates House. Throughout the two properties, old elements contrast vividly with new materials. A visitor's first impression of the two buildings from the exterior is likely one of surprise and wonder. These eighteenth-century buildings stand on a corner of one of York's busiest main streets, surrounded by asphalt, parked cars, multi-storied buildings, parking meters, and traffic lights that buzz at pedestrians. This dichotomy between old and new does not exist only on the exterior of the tavern. When a visitor looks at the two hues of the same beam in the Golden Plough Tavern it is abundantly clear that a restoration occurred in that space. Sections of beams are dark and discolored from over two hundred years of use, while replacement sections are bright and light, having been in place for only forty years (Figure 33). Brumbaugh felt it better not to attempt to stain the new wood, as natural discoloration would occur on its own (although at a very slow pace) and the stain would likely not match the old wood. In addition, the contrast between the original, heavily worn floor in the rear *kammer* contrasts markedly with the new floors throughout the rest of the building. This repeated visual juxtaposition of old and new did not seem to concern Brumbaugh. From an interpretative standpoint, the new materials allow the visitor to actually see and understand what the building would have looked like upon completion of construction in 1741. Interestingly, Brumbaugh did not maintain this same philosophy in his restoration at Ephrata or later at Wright's Ferry Mansion. Although he wrote of dyeing the new materials at Ephrata with green naphthanate, the new and old materials blend together so well at the Cloister that it is difficult to tell them

apart. Because the York restoration did not tell official state history and because Brumbaugh had no personal connection to the site, he felt comfortable with this interplay between the old and the new.

Perhaps because of the unexpected, yet successful blend of modernity and heritage in the York project, Brumbaugh included it in his manuscript. This inclusion suggests he considered the restoration one of his best and most significant. Just as at Ephrata, Brumbaugh felt a civic duty to restore so that the public could be enlightened. In a talk given at the opening campaign for the restoration, Brumbaugh called the project “an important public service, not only to the people—the city—of our time, but to future Americans, whose genuine interest in their country must not be permitted to lapse . . . These two buildings . . . are the last remaining symbols of York’s beginning, and of York’s most distinguished hour . . . But unless the deep significance of that appearance [of the two houses] is conveyed to visitors, the great public service potential of our restoration will not be achieved. For we are not striving merely to entertain. We must inspire and educate while we entertain.”¹¹³ Historian Michael Kammen has traced the waxing and waning of nostalgia throughout the twentieth century, and claims that in times of anxiety or cultural stress, people turn to history for solace. Kammen dubs this turn toward history since 1950 the “heritage syndrome.” The anxious mood of the 1950s, which resulted from concerns about national security and threats to freedom as well as rapid social and technological change, spurred many to search for a “timelessness that

¹¹³ “Talk at York, PA,” 1960-1961, Office Records, Box 30, Brumbaugh Papers.

would counterbalance the perplexities of change.”¹¹⁴ The past became popularized and more inclusive in this era, and it also became commercialized. History, indeed, turned toward entertainment. At the same time, education became the postwar mission of heritage-based institutions. These institutions harbored the desire to “preserve oases of the pastoral, pre-industrial past at a time of startling technological and urban change.”¹¹⁵

Brumbaugh’s restoration principles and motivations certainly exemplify Kammen’s points: “The first of these [profits]. . .is the educational value to our people, particularly in the area of basic Americanism. Even if viewed as entertainment alone, a fine historic exhibit is something of an improvement over much of the entertainment offered us today.” When Brumbaugh spoke about the German immigrants coming to York and building structures such as the Golden Plough Tavern, his tone became reverential:

A great number of these seekers after religious liberty and release from the horrors and uncertainties of war arrived in Pennsylvania with scant or no resources, only to find the nearby land preempted by purchase . . . There is a certain pathos in the fact that these people reproduced in the remote and forested valleys of Pennsylvania, from memory, the sort of houses they had known in the homeland. The Golden Plough is a typical and picturesque survivor . . . its very architecture can tell the story of settlers who knew the meaning of courage, industry and hard work, of sacrifice and dedication to new ideals of religious and personal liberty.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), 537.

¹¹⁵ Kammen, *Mystic Chords*, 538.

¹¹⁶ “Talk at York, PA,” 1960-1961, Office Records, Box 30, Brumbaugh Papers.

Ultimately, Brumbaugh wanted these qualities of courage, industry, hard work, sacrifice and dedication to come through to all the visitors who came through the restored buildings, so they might leave York, or Ephrata, or Wright's Ferry Mansion with a new dedication to these values. Nancy McFall echoed Brumbaugh's hopes. She represents the client's voice in her many notes for talks about the Gates House and Plough Tavern, and wrote: "[It is] tragic if no opportunities [exist] for children, history students, sociologists, and art majors to go through and see an actual house—to bring history alive . . . [it is] one thing to go through a museum—[it is] another thing to see a whole house completely furnished." Notes for another lecture reveal an important motivation behind the restoration: "In these troubled and confusing times, [it is] important to reflect on the past to stabilize our thoughts and keep our sanity."¹¹⁷ Brumbaugh would have agreed. History, for McFall and Brumbaugh, kept Americans stable and sane. Indeed, the restoration at York succeeded because the client and architect were in complete agreement.

¹¹⁷ McFall Notebook.



Figure 19. The Golden Plough Tavern and the Gates House, before restoration.
 Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed
 Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 20. The Golden Plough Tavern and the Gates House exteriors today.

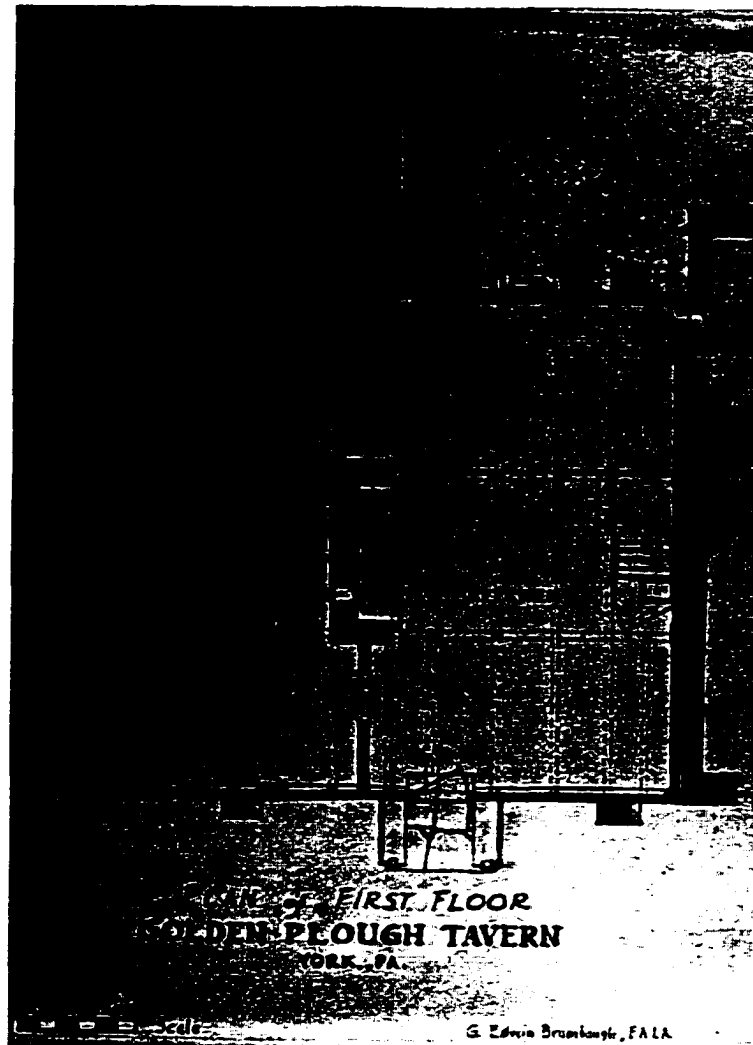


Figure 21. Plan of first floor of the Golden Plough Tavern. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 22. Restored “double-dog ear” window, inside the Golden Plough Tavern. The brick wall is the exterior wall of the Gates House. Courtesy, The York County Heritage Trust, PA.



Figure 23. Restoring wattle and daub in the Golden Plough Tavern, 1961-1964.
 Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed
 Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 24. Old wattle and daub, visible during exploratory demolition of the Golden
 Plough Tavern, c. 1961. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of
 Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 25. Restoration of a Gates House fireplace surround, c. 1961-1964. Notice the cinderblocks on the left. Courtesy, The York County Heritage Trust, PA.

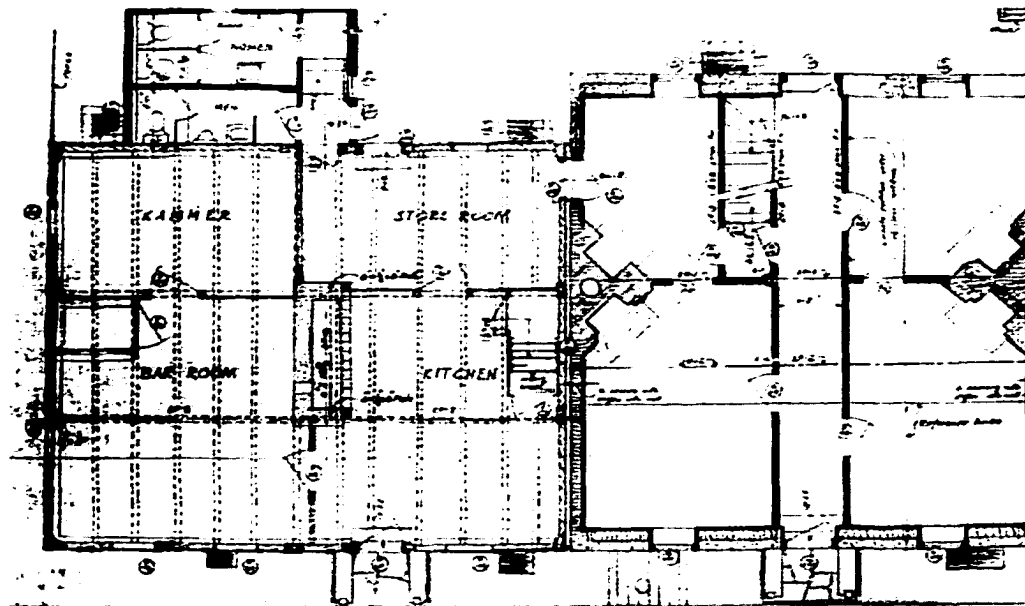


Figure 26. Plan of first floor of the Gates House and the Golden Plough Tavern. The Tavern is on the left, and the Gates House on the right. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 27. Space between the interior wall of the Gates House and the exterior wall of the Golden Plough Tavern. The plaster wall is the Gates House and the log wall is the Plough Tavern. Courtesy, The York County Heritage Trust, PA.



Figure 28. Exploratory demolition at the Gates House, c. 1961. Courtesy, The York County Heritage Trust, PA.



Figure 29. Original trim fragments with traces of blue paint from the Gates House. These fragments and other objects found during the restoration are now on display in basement of the Golden Plough Tavern. Courtesy, The York County Heritage Trust, PA.



Figure 30. Restoration of stairs in the Gates House, c. 1961-1964. Courtesy, The York County Heritage Trust, PA.

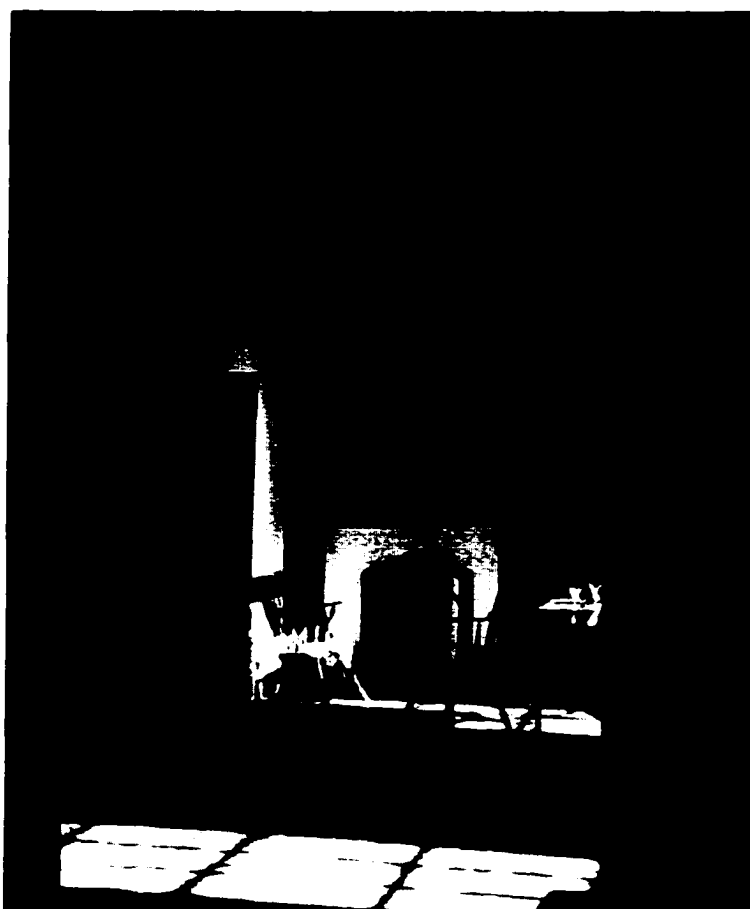


Figure 31. Restored interior, second floor of the Gates House. Courtesy, The York County Heritage Trust, PA.



Figure 32. Frances Brumbaugh scraping paint at the Gates House, c. 1961-1964. Left to right: Nancy McFall, G. Edwin Brumbaugh, Frances Brumbaugh. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera.



Figure 33. Restored ceiling in the Golden Plough Tavern. Compare the difference in color between the restored beam in the center and the second floor floorboards, to the original beams on the right. Courtesy, The York County Heritage Trust, PA.

Chapter 4

EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT FOR DECORATIVE ARTS SCHOLARS:

RESTORING WRIGHT'S FERRY MANSION

*"The good things about that history are courage, hard work and industry, helpfulness to neighbors, faith in God, justice to others, and self-discipline. These are things we could well remember today."*¹¹⁸ – G. Edwin Brumbaugh, c. 1970

In one of his last restoration projects before his death in 1983, Brumbaugh restored an eighteenth-century "melting pot" house in Lancaster County and in essence, returned to his professional roots. He restored a small residence, known today as Wright's Ferry Mansion, and built another on the same property for one owner, rather than completing a complex project for state government or a restoration for a civic group (Figures 34, 35).¹¹⁹ This project exemplifies the critically important role the client played in Brumbaugh's restorations to a greater degree than the restorations at Ephrata or York. Examining the power dynamics between Brumbaugh and his clients, Louise and Richard von Hess, helps clarify and highlight the significance of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania at Ephrata and Historic York County and the Housing Authority at York.

¹¹⁸ "Talk at North Penn Historical Society," Office Records, Box 111, Brumbaugh Papers.

¹¹⁹ The origin of the name Wright's Ferry Mansion remains unclear. When Brumbaugh and the von Hesses first met in 1974, they referred to the building as the Wright House. Brumbaugh also referred to it as John Wright's House and the Wright Mansion in his manuscript and in correspondence.

Personal interaction with Louise herself and more importantly, her husband Richard, both at the helm of the Louise Steinman von Hess Foundation, often resulted in relaxed restoration principles. Aesthetics versus authenticity became a major concern, but unlike the Ephrata restoration where Brumbaugh felt a personal obligation to restore with the utmost historical accuracy and precision, or York, where his client agreed with everything he proposed, the Wright's Ferry Mansion restoration forced Brumbaugh and his partner, Albert Ruthrauff, to constantly appease a vocal client. Correspondence, restoration reports, and an interview with the current curator suggest that Brumbaugh battled for his methods and in a number of instances reluctantly bowed to the wishes of the von Hesses. Once again, details of his work at Wright's Ferry Mansion reveal the unexpectedly flexible nature of Brumbaugh's restoration character.

The Wright House project began as a residential restoration, but soon evolved into a museum project. In November of 1973 Richard von Hess contacted Brumbaugh about restoring the Wright House in Columbia and requested that he begin working as soon as possible, since he and his wife, Louise Steinman von Hess, were to be away for the winter. The von Hesses must have been a daunting couple: Richard was a well-respected designer and Louise was part-owner of Lancaster newspapers, television and radio stations. Both "loved gardens, architecture and interiors" and proved to be active participants in the restoration process.¹²⁰ They were a creative pair and, according to

¹²⁰ Meg Schaefer, Curator, interview by author, Wright's Ferry Mansion, Columbia, Pa., 6 October 1999.

curator Meg Schaefer, “aesthetics were very important to the von Hesses.”¹²¹ Brumbaugh held a conference with the couple on December 13 and proposed to start work on the project on January 10, 1974. When compared to the time frame at a restoration such as Ephrata, when Brumbaugh was first notified in 1929 and did not begin work until 1941, the speed with which the Wright’s Ferry Mansion restoration got under way becomes abundantly clear.

As expected, the initial December conference brought out the von Hesses’ goals and wishes for the property. They envisioned a complete restoration with the Louise Steinman von Hess Foundation providing the necessary trusteeship and funds. At the outset, they planned to restore the building partially and to occupy it as a residence. Therefore, they asked Brumbaugh to design “necessary interim facilities” for the period of restoration. What the von Hesses had in mind for these interim facilities remains unclear. They either intended to live in the house under construction or have Brumbaugh design and build another house. In the end, Brumbaugh completed the restoration and built one of his classic colonial revival farmhouses—which easily could pass as one he designed in the 1920s—for the von Hesses, behind the restored house (Figures 36, 37). This new “Cottage” served as office space, and although the von Hesses intended that a caretaker live there, that use never occurred.¹²²

The 1738 house reveals predominately English building traditions, although Brumbaugh felt certain that Germanic craftsman contributed to the building process. It is a single pile, two-story limestone structure built on a long horizontal axis. Today one

¹²¹ Schaefer, interview.

enters into a central hall with a stair on the left; a door opposite opens toward the river; and parlors flank either side of this hall. Beyond the south parlor (referred to in the 1775 inventory as the clock room, called the dining room by Brumbaugh) lies the kitchen (Figure 38). The plan of the second floor is similar, although the turn of the stair permits a small central room over the main hall looking out onto the Susquehanna River and a hall running the width of the lower central hall. Two chambers open off this stair hall, and two small rooms over the kitchen (what Brumbaugh believed were slave quarters), originally accessible only through a stair from the kitchen, share a wall with the south chamber.

On the exterior, an enclosed pent roof completely encircles the house and distinguishes the first floor from the second (see Figure 18). The upper cove cornice is plastered and wraps around the entire building as well. The gable ends, therefore, give the appearance of having two pent roofs. The roof consists of three layers of hand-split, red oak shingles and three internal chimneys pierce the roof—one at each gable end, and one between the kitchen and the clock room. Although today the main entrance is on the east side of the house, the front of the house was originally oriented towards the river. With the decline of the river-based society, the introduction of the railroad, and the major growth of the town on the east side of the river, the front entrance was eventually switched. Brumbaugh was unable to restore the original orientation due to unsightly development between the house and the river. Today one enters the building from the east entrance, rather than the west. There are doors to the exterior on all four sides of the

¹²² Completed Work, Box 13, Brumbaugh Papers.

building, but no windows on the gable ends. Five windows on the second floor and two on either side of the first floor door pierce the east elevation. The same arrangement occurs on the west side, although the windows are larger on this original front elevation. A restored squirrel-tail oven (modeled after those Brumbaugh restored at Ephrata) with its limestone foundation and small, protective gabled roof protrudes from the south elevation, east of the door leading out from the kitchen (Figures 39, 40).

The construction of Wright's Ferry Mansion, so named for the influential Wright family, began in 1738 and was completed in 1741. John Wright, an English Quaker from Manchester, Lancashire, England arrived in Pennsylvania in 1714 and settled in Chester. Wright soon ventured west of Chester into the frontier of the Susquehanna Valley. In 1726 he purchased one hundred fifty acres along the Susquehanna River, and his daughter Susanna purchased one hundred acres adjoining his property. Apparently he continued to live in Chester, but moved to his wilderness property sometime in the late 1720s or 1730s. Susanna's land ran down to the river where her father established a ferry that served as a critical opening for westward expansion in Pennsylvania. Her brother James operated a gristmill on the eastern side of the river (on Susanna's land) while John established Wrightsville on the western bank of the river. One of the Wrights had the house built, but whether the house was built for Susanna, her father, or one of her brothers is unclear. It appears that Susanna at least lived in it for a short time.¹²³

¹²³ Meg Schaefer asserts that Susanna lived in the house "until 1755 or so." The Wright history remains unclear, as Brumbaugh, Schaefer, and Blecki and Wulf all suggest slightly different interpretations. See Catherine La Courreye Blecki and Karin A. Wulf, eds., *Milcah Martha Moore's Book: A Commonplace Book from Revolutionary America*

Susanna Wright, the first owner of the house, led a fascinating and remarkable life. Born in England in 1697, she lived until 1785, never married, and apparently joined her widowed father and brother in Lancaster County in the late 1720s. The Wrights maintained important roles in the Quaker meeting and local politics (her father is credited with naming Lancaster County), and established long-lasting relationships with important Philadelphia residents, including Benjamin Franklin and the Logan and Norris families. Susanna, in particular, corresponded frequently with these friends and family, and often exchanged books and poetry with them. She was fluent in a number of foreign languages and some of the local Native American dialects, and was known for her medicinal skills and interests in literature, botany, and law. She acted as secretary or deputy prothonotary for Lancaster magistrate Samuel Blunston, and actively campaigned for political candidates since she could not run for office herself. Wright never married, but when Blunston died in the 1740s, he left his estate to her, and she lived there until her death. Her precise length of residence in Wright's Ferry Mansion remains unclear. Despite Susanna Wright's questionable period of residence in the house, the interpretation at the museum highlights Susanna's fascinating life and emphasizes the outstanding collection of decorative arts from the first half of the eighteenth century.¹²⁴

Although the person behind the house remains intriguing to many, the architecture itself, rather than Susanna and her remarkable life, inspired Brumbaugh. The house

(University Park: Penn State University Press, 1997), xvi; Unpublished manuscript, Office Records, Box 108, Brumbaugh Papers.

¹²⁴ Schaefer, interview.

captivated him, for it represented both what he considered a “document house” and a “melting pot house.” According to Brumbaugh, “‘melting pot houses’ incorporate features traceable to various ethnic groups. The important thing about them is the obvious fact that an Englishman would not incorporate typical German ideas into his house if he hated Germans. Nor would a Scotsman change the roof of his house to a Swedish gambrel roof, as Governor Keith did, if he hated Swedes. Such buildings tell us that Penn’s prayer for righteousness and tolerance was answered.”¹²⁵ In addition, descendents of the Wright family resided in the house until 1921, and only one other family, the Rasbridges, lived in the house (until restoration began in 1974) before the von Hesses purchased it. According to Meg Schaefer, the Rasbridges lacked the necessary funds to carry out improvements to the house, much to the delight of both the von Hesses and Brumbaugh. They had discovered a “document house”—a building with a large percentage of its original features in existence. Thus, Wright’s Ferry Mansion contrasts sharply with the restoration efforts at York, where both buildings had been gutted in the nineteenth century, forcing Brumbaugh to use more guesswork in his restoration there. Because of the prevalence of original elements at the Wright House, Brumbaugh stated in his restoration report that when “restorations had to be made, they were based on evidence found at the building.” For the most part, his statement holds true. He asserts that “[c]onclusive evidence enabled us to restore to the 1738 period with no uncertainties.” Yet, there are numerous places in the restoration where Brumbaugh freely

¹²⁵ Brumbaugh to Alfred Wensley, 4 December 1972, on back of scratch paper, Completed Work, Box 10, Brumbaugh Papers.

admits he had to use his design skills to create elements without benefit of existing models as guides. Restoration can never be completely certain, but Brumbaugh believed so strongly in his research and abilities that he often stated the contrary.¹²⁶

While most of the original architectural fabric remained when the von Hesses bought the house, members of the Wright family made numerous alterations to their home in the early 1790s. Brumbaugh and the von Hesses decided to restore the house to the time of its construction, so they removed these later eighteenth-century changes, replacing them with new materials. As Brumbaugh wrote in his restoration report, the “house, as we found it, had no boxwood or evergreen planting. The pent roof at second floor level was gone; cornice changed; two similar, but later, porches added (one on each long side); and a shed-roofed garage covered the south end of the house. Inside, the kitchen and dining area was [*sic*] changed. The rear stairs were not original, and some minor alterations had occurred in the second floor, but a gratifying amount of original material remained.”¹²⁷ This restoration report, completed by Brumbaugh and Ruthrauff for the von Hesses in 1976, marks a significant shift in Brumbaugh’s recording of his restoration methods. They created a new type of document in 1976, divided into two sections. The first, written by Brumbaugh and titled “The Architecture of the Wright Mansion,” maintains the same general information regarding European precedents, local history, and the ethical justification for restoration that Brumbaugh had included in every

¹²⁶ “Report upon the Restoration of Wright’s Ferry Mansion Columbia, PA for the Louise Steinman von Hess Foundation, G. Edwin Brumbaugh, F.A.I.A., Albert F. Ruthrauff, A.I.A., Registered Architects, September 15, 1976,” Completed Work, Box 13, Brumbaugh Papers.

restoration report up until that time. However, the second section of the report is more noteworthy. Written by Ruthrauff, who by the late 1970s worked closely with Brumbaugh on restoration projects due to Brumbaugh's advanced age, this section more closely resembles a modern historic structure report. Ruthrauff detailed the actions taken during the restoration in an organized, linear fashion. He wrote first about the demolition and exploratory demolition, and then discussed materials, the fabric of the house, and actions taken in specific rooms. This additional documentation, not included until the end of Brumbaugh's long restoration career, clearly represents the evolution of the preservation field from Brumbaugh's first restoration in 1927 to the increasingly standardized practices at the end of the twentieth century.

Ruthrauff began his report with archaeological evidence indicating the presence of an earlier house on the site prior to the 1738 construction of the Wright House. Evidence of early foundation walls under the original level of the kitchen floor found in demolition of the garage and exploratory demolition led Brumbaugh and Ruthrauff to this conclusion. Unfortunately, the construction of the 1738 Wright House cellar masks how far to the north these walls extended. The foundation of the clock room fireplace is actually part of this earlier foundation. Ruthrauff suggested that the "structure that was built on top of these foundations was probably not a stone house, otherwise it no doubt would have been incorporated into part of the present structure. There is not much doubt that it was either a German log house or an English framed house." Brumbaugh was surer of its ethnic origins:

¹²⁷ Ibid.

It might even have been built by John Wright as soon as he and Susannah acquired the land in 1726. It was a German type of plan, and it never had any cellar. Both of these factors support the thesis of a possible log house, built by German pioneers then on the frontier, and employed by the new English land owner. The English knew nothing about log construction. Germans and Scandinavians did, and the survival of no earlier upper structure could indicate use of logs. German pioneer houses seldom had a cellar under their kitchens, English ones did.¹²⁸

Additional archaeological evidence lies beneath the street in front of the house, but the development of the city has hindered the potential for delving into this sort of research. In addition, the original well lies just south of the house, beneath the parking pad installed by the von Hesses. As Meg Schaefer noted, no archaeology was done when Brumbaugh directed the exploratory demolition. Today, evidence of such an earlier structure most certainly would have prompted more thorough archaeological investigation so that such information as the ethnic influences on the first house and the early history of the Wright family in Lancaster County might be determined.

While the archaeological evidence is lacking, Ruthrauff did report extensively on the exterior and interior restorations. He noted that they found the Lancaster County limestone exterior in good condition, with much of the original pointing in place. When repointing, though, they “had to use the modern day hydrated lime in all of the masonry work” because the early type was unattainable. In the 1940s when Brumbaugh was working at Ephrata, he insisted on the use of the early type of lime, despite the fact that it was difficult to attain then as well. By the 1970s he clearly had resigned himself to using modern materials when necessary. Most of the doors and windows throughout the house were original, although many required repairs. The dormers on the house were added at

¹²⁸ Ibid.

the time of the “Early Federal period” renovations and were therefore removed. The pent roof was restored, for the “stone flashing course just below the second floor window sills was still intact . . . we found no original pointing on the wall from the bottom of the outlookers to the flashing course,” indicating a closed hood. Ruthrauff remarked that they restored the pent roof using evidence from the house itself and “photographs showing types of early roofs.” Similar evidence convinced them of the plastered cove cornice: a fragment of bargeboard remained on the south gable, and no pointing existed above the second floor windows. Fragments of original roofing shingles turned up in the exploratory demolition, revealing that they “were side lapped, German shingles, and split of red oak, tapered both ways, and were butt nailed. Original nail holes in the tops of the rafters revealed the first spacing to be 11”. We made our shingles to work out for this spacing.” Although in the eighteenth century builders used two layers of shingles, Brumbaugh and Ruthrauff used three to avoid water and snow sifting into the attic. The chimneys were original, but Brumbaugh and Ruthrauff added modern flashing at the juncture of the roof and chimneys and placed dampers at the top of each flue: “In the interest of saving energy it was thought dampers to be essential.”¹²⁹

Brumbaugh pointed out in his section of the report that the original pent roof encircling the house and the eighteenth-century roofing method reveal German influence in the construction of the house. He noted that English pent roofs usually occurred on the long side of the house, not the gable ends, and terminated with “finish covering the projecting and [*sic*] of the last inside joist. In American-German examples, also in

¹²⁹ Ibid.

Switzerland and in Germany, the pent roofs were carried all around the house (across gable ends). The building evidence was clear; a German pent roof encircled the house.” As for the roof, he found “actual weathered examples of the German side-lapped and butt-nailed red oak shingles used on the 1738 roof surface. On other restoration projects, we had learned how to reproduce similar roofs, and this is a perfect replica . . . This is another German contribution to design decisions (the ‘melting pot’).”¹³⁰ One of the “other restoration projects” was Ephrata, and the lasting effect of his work there revealed itself again at Wright’s Ferry Mansion where he used the techniques he learned at the Cloister, thirty years prior to completing this restoration.

In the interior, masonry stains and joists seven to eight inches lower in the central cellar (under the stair hall) than in the flanking cellars indicated to Brumbaugh and Ruthrauff that the original entry hall floor was brick rather than wood, and that the central cellar served as a “cold cellar.” Brumbaugh thus restored the stair hall floor in brick. The kitchen, according to Ruthrauff, “proved to be most interesting and had a bearing on the whole restoration approach to the project. . .[I]t was realized that the finish, including most of the plaster, would have to be removed in order to understand the sequence of changes that the building endured.” Brumbaugh discovered that the kitchen was originally stepped down from the clock room, and restored it to its original appearance. The raising of the floor in the late eighteenth century resulted in a section of the lintel supporting the fireplace being cut away to maintain an opening large enough for cooking. Brumbaugh restored the lintel to its 1740s appearance by inserting another old beam into

¹³⁰ Ibid.

the cutout section and facing the entire amalgamation with another board. He also removed the late eighteenth-century stairs to the cellar (stairs to the cellar were originally in the stair hall, and were restored there) and restored the stairs to the second floor. The restored kitchen floor consists of bricks set in a mortar that has the appearance of tamped sand. For maintenance purposes, Brumbaugh agreed to simulate sand, rather than recreate the actual floor. This brick floor represents one of the numerous instances when Brumbaugh clearly eased his strict requirements regarding historical accuracy for the von Hesses' project.¹³¹ At Ephrata and York, Brumbaugh ignored practicality and installed window sashes that needed to be completely dismantled in order to replace a pane of glass, because he adamantly believed in replicating the eighteenth-century construction so his restoration would not "lie" to the visitor. Evidently, Brumbaugh relaxed his convictions about misleading restorations, and the appearance of bricks set in tamped sand satisfied the von Hesses' desire to prevent visitors from tracking sand throughout the house.

When Brumbaugh and Ruthrauff restored the cellar stair in the southwest corner of the central hall, they also recreated a "credenza" in the northeast corner of the clock room. This cabinet provides headroom for the stairs to the cellar. Plaster marks evident on both walls in the corner of the clock room indicated the original size of the cabinet, but not the design. Although he does not mention it, Brumbaugh clearly had to find the design from other sources. Much of the chair rail was original, but the floor had been altered with the rest of the early Federal changes. Therefore, Brumbaugh replaced the

¹³¹ Ibid.

narrow floorboards with boards matching the other rooms. Despite the lax approach to the brick floor in the kitchen, Brumbaugh “restored a most unusual and very impractical piece of millwork” in the parlor to its eighteenth-century appearance. The paneled fireplace wall included round top doors on either side of the fireplace, framed with molding and key blocks. The door surrounds force the doors to open inward. The doors on the left lead to a vestibule and the exterior, while those on the right hide a closet. The inward-opening doors therefore make the closet useless. The impractical design created symmetry in the room, yet later generations in the house desired practicality. Thus, they cut the bottom of the key block off to make the closet functional and Brumbaugh restored it to its original, impractical state.¹³²

Much original woodwork remained on the second floor, with paneled fireplace walls in both large chambers. The painting of all the woodwork in the house led to great discussion and difficulty in the restoration. According to Ruthrauff’s report, “we must go back to the very first finish . . . We believe the original finish on the woodwork was stain.” He defended this conclusion by listing five reasons, ending with “Winterthur representatives agree with the wax stain method . . . In fact, the painting contractor was recommended by them.”¹³³ An office memo reported: “Louise caustic about stain color

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ The other four reasons are as follows: “1. The four paneled chimney breasts, two on the first floor and two on the second floor are made up of poplar wood. During restoration they were taken down, repaired and reset. We had an opportunity to inspect these very carefully and noticed a great variation occurred in the wood. They were not made of selective pieces of wood with matching grain. Therefore, the woodwork had to be covered by some kind of staining process or paint. Evidence is conclusive that a stain and wax finish was used. 2. The second floor room above the dining room did not have a

on woodwork, wants red paint.” Brumbaugh had approved the stain and wax method after confirming his conclusions with the “Winterthur people,” but Louise still desired red paint.¹³⁴ He finally managed to convince Louise of the historical significance of the stain and wax treatment, for today the trim is covered with a red stain and wax. As Schaefer pointed out, this treatment has proved to be particularly unstable and problematic. She also suggested that all of Brumbaugh’s paint analysis remains “open to challenge.” Current methods and twenty-five years of research would likely provide a much more accurate recording of the different layers of paint in the house. Schaefer recalled the paint dilemma in the south chamber, where half of the paneling was old and half was new. The von Hesses demanded that the new paneling seamlessly match the old in color. Great debate resulted, for the new stain and wax looked “horrible” when it went up next to the original stain and wax with its two-hundred-and-thirty-year-old patina. Thus, they repeatedly reworked the color to achieve continuity with the old paneling. Unlike the restoration of the Plough Tavern, where Brumbaugh left the contrast of the new unstained wood next to oxidized wood, the von Hesses demanded a beautiful space. Schaefer

baseboard when the house was first built. The paneled chimney breast was stained from floor to ceiling. When a baseboard was added, it was painted black, no stain underneath it. The fireplace wall paneling was stained under the black base. 3. On top of the stain, in the same room, was a coat of white paint. The third and last coat was yellow. In 1738 interiors were not painted white. They would not have left the poplar paneling, that has great variations of color, unfinished. Stain was under the white paint, and was, therefore, the first finish. 4. There was not any finish on the vestibule side of the pair of doors, in the parlor, that leads to the exterior door. If paint was used in the house, chances are these doors would not have been overlooked and would have been painted.” (“Report Upon the Restoration of Wright’s Ferry Mansion,” Completed Work, Box 13, Brumbaugh Papers).

¹³⁴ Completed Work, Box 13, Brumbaugh Papers.

stated that “Mr. Von Hess wouldn’t want something ugly or jarring,” for as a designer he was trained in the use of color, and color was critical to him.¹³⁵ The next restoration the von Hesses and Brumbaugh undertook involved similar paint issues, although the Sehner-Ellicott-von Hess House in Lancaster, Pennsylvania was restored as a private home with the possibility for limited visitation in the future.¹³⁶ Even so, Brumbaugh wrote, “[t]he only item in which we varied from a strict restoration was on the colors of interior paint . . . Inside all the woodwork was one color throughout—a mustard yellow with dark red on the top member chair rails, window sills, baseboards, and the top of the stair railing . . . The von Hesses did not particularly like this color and preferred different colors in different rooms . . . We applied good eighteenth-century colors, and at the same time placed samples of the correct colors in the attic. Even if they become mislaid, the original colors are still there, under a good many coats. A competent painter could restore if it ever is desired.”¹³⁷ These situations clearly reveal the von Hesses’ devotion to a particular aesthetic rather than historical accuracy or an educational mission.

Working for private clients created greater ethical dilemmas for Brumbaugh as a restoration architect than working for the state at Ephrata or on a municipally sanctioned project such as the Plough Tavern and Gates House in York. The clients at Ephrata and York both felt an obligation to educate and inform the general public. All of

¹³⁵ Schaefer, interview.

¹³⁶ The Sehner-Ellicott-von Hess House is currently a museum.

¹³⁷ Unpublished manuscript, 246, Office Records, Box 108, Brumbaugh Papers.

Brumbaugh's clients did not feel this same motivation.¹³⁸ The von Hesses were demanding, detail-oriented clients, just as Brumbaugh was a meticulous and exacting architect. They expressed concern about such details as the care of stones that received the fireplace equipment after their removal during exploratory demolition. As Brumbaugh stated in his report, Wright's Ferry Mansion was the first restoration for them, and they instructed Brumbaugh "to spare no pains and no time or study to achieve authenticity." They "wanted the Wright House restored correctly. This was the common goal."¹³⁹ This common goal led to a lively exchange of ideas between architect and client, and compromise on both sides. When queried about the architect-client relationship, architect Charles Peterson revealed that "part of an architect's job is

¹³⁸ In 1957, in fact, Brumbaugh took part in a great controversy when he facilitated the demolition of two historic townhouses on Washington Square in Philadelphia at the request of then Mayor Dilworth. The mayor and his wife had hired Brumbaugh to design a new townhouse for that very spot and claimed that the dilapidated condition of the two existing buildings required an exorbitantly expensive restoration. Yet, as Charles Peterson pointed out, there was nothing wrong with the houses, other than the intentional opening of windows resulting in "pigeon mess." According to Peterson, "those houses didn't have to come down" (Peterson, interview). Ironically, most passers-by today would assume the current structure built by Brumbaugh in 1957 dates the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Upon careful inspection, however, plate glass windows at the rear of the house become visible, revealing its mid-century construction. Nothing in his files indicates that Brumbaugh expressed any compunction or remorse concerning the loss of these historic structures, and one must question his principles as a restoration architect in a situation such as this. Why he felt justified in tearing down two historic buildings to build a colonial revival version of a similar townhouse remains a mystery, although it is clear that he followed his client's wishes. In his museum restorations Brumbaugh demanded accurate restorations and moral, proper history. When working for private clients such as Mayor Dilworth and his wife, or Louise Steinman and Richard von Hess, he regularly adjusted his ideas about educating the public in order to please those who paid his bills.

¹³⁹ "Report Upon the Restoration of Wright's Ferry Mansion," Completed Work, Box 13, Brumbaugh Papers.

educating his client. And it has to be done gently, so the client's got to be flattered, and educated subtly, so all the ideas are *his* ideas."¹⁴⁰ In 1976 Ruthrauff sent an office memo regarding interactions with the von Hesses which reveals the power dynamics in the relationship between the architects and the von Hesses: "This is the method that I tried to have the owners accept, they made no decision [regarding a curb in the parking area] . . . Madam in particular is getting quite concerned with costs. She believes there has been too much waste in doing things over for the second and third time. We tried to thwart that idea because in our opinion, the items with which she is finding fault, are, for the most part, modern pieces of equipment, such as temporary or contemporary lighting and landscaping which are truly judgment decisions and are not necessarily incompetence on the part of the architects." However, Ruthrauff's handwritten notes reveal restoration mistakes: there was "no finish of any kind in vestibule side of Parlor pair of doors to exterior. Our painter put stain and wax on the inside of this door which was a mistake. Lack of all finish certainly leads credence to the fact that the house was not painted originally, otherwise they would have painted these doors."¹⁴¹ The von Hesses were extraordinarily wealthy but, like the PHMC, had little patience with the restoration when they felt Brumbaugh was wasting their money.

The history Brumbaugh could design at Wright's Ferry Mansion differs significantly from the sorts of narratives he promoted at Ephrata and York because of the active and personal role his clients played in the restoration. Although Brumbaugh

¹⁴⁰ Peterson, interview.

¹⁴¹ Completed Work, Box 13, Brumbaugh Papers.

completed the restoration at Wright's Ferry Mansion for a private foundation, he answered only to Louise Steinman von Hess and Richard von Hess. He interacted with the two individuals at the helm of this foundation as if they were residential clients. The lawyer for the Foundation requested on numerous occasions that Brumbaugh address his correspondence to the Foundation, rather than to Louise or Richard, in order that it would not appear that the von Hesses were making personal decisions at the house. Brumbaugh never stopped addressing his letters to Louise and "Dick," and the correspondence and records clearly indicate that on a number of occasions Brumbaugh had to actively thwart the von Hesses' personal desires. Because the restoration began as a residential project, the relationship between the client and Brumbaugh changed completely with the shift to a museum focus. At that point the motivation needed to change to one of education, but the von Hesses remained dedicated to their aesthetic goals. When Louise disliked the wax and stain finish on the woodwork, she informed Brumbaugh in no uncertain terms. Brumbaugh then had to convince her of the importance of historically accurate restorations in a museum. Therefore, the house tells two contrasting stories: that of Susanna Wright and the frontier of Lancaster County in the 1740s, as well as the role of the von Hesses in the restoration and collecting of the decorative arts in the house. Brumbaugh could not dictate the historical narrative for Wright's Ferry Mansion, for his role in this restoration only involved the architecture. The architecture played a supporting role, while the von Hess collection and aesthetic principles guided the museum interpretation.

The museum, as the curator is quick to point out, is simultaneously a museum and a study collection of William and Mary and Queen Anne decorative arts, mostly from Philadelphia. The room settings depict what Susanna Wright might have had in her own home, or what she would have been familiar with coming from England. Although Schaefer praised Brumbaugh highly in his efforts to recreate what life was really like in the 1740s, with no curtains on the windows, and no electricity in the house (the first and second floor, at least), the furnishings belie the historically accurate architecture. The furnishings are numerous and high style and are set as period rooms, not as they necessarily would have been used. And although the Wrights were a leading family in the area, many of the objects in the house and their arrangement reveal Richard von Hess' taste to a greater extent than that of the Quaker Wright family. Schaefer described a 1626 painting in the parlor that Richard von Hess found on a trip to England, for example, as "evocative" of the Wright family's English roots. Rugs decorate the parlor floor, although few colonists possessed such expensive objects. The kitchen overflows with cooking paraphernalia on display, and the room settings include fresh fruits and flowers (which would not have been in the house, according to Schaefer) to give the house a "fresh feeling." Richard and Louise von Hess wanted natural light and "plump cushions" so the "subtleties of the experience" of the 1740s would come through to visitors. They did not want a shop associated with the museum, nor did they ever want costumed interpretation.¹⁴² It is clear that the von Hesses hoped to achieve a particular look and

¹⁴² The initial tours at the Plough Tavern and Gates House, on the other hand, were by costumed interpreters.

feel with their old house and antique furniture. Brumbaugh and Joe Kindig III made that happen. The room settings certainly testify to Kindig's antiques consulting talents as well as Richard von Hess' design skills. Both von Hesses played an integral part in establishing the museum interiors and Richard von Hess remained Director of the Mansion until his death in 1997. This study collection/museum, like so many museums, reveals as much about the founders as it does about Susanna Wright.

Brumbaugh's educational objective at Wright's Ferry Mansion did not stray from the mission he held throughout his life: to prove, through authentic restorations, that early Americans such as William Penn and John Wright were "moral, unselfish, and courageous" and should serve as worthy models for all Americans in the twentieth century.¹⁴³ Brumbaugh wrote that restoration "is educational and if there is nothing there worth preserving to remind us of some past virtues, preservation may not be worth the cost in effort and cash . . . This speaker has no enthusiasm for the preservation of things which represent unworthy thinking. America has some of that too. We'd better forget it. But the simple virtues we'd better not forget. That's the real reason for preservation."¹⁴⁴ The von Hesses' mission differed significantly from Brumbaugh's desire to teach "simple virtues" to all Americans. When queried about the Wright's Ferry Mansion attendance in a predominately blue collar, working class town, Schaefer quickly pointed out that Wright's Ferry Mansion is a study collection for scholars and collectors, as well as a

¹⁴³ Restoration Report, Completed Work, Box 13, Brumbaugh Papers.

¹⁴⁴ Talk to Huntingdon County Historical Society, 19 April 1978, Office Records, Box 111, Brumbaugh Papers.

museum. School children do not come to the house, there are no school programs, and they are most certainly not the focus. The education which occurs at Wright's Ferry Mansion as a study collection, at least one and a half to two hours from a major city, is enrichment for the educated and economic elite. The objects represent the lives of a small percentage of wealthy colonists of the eighteenth century, and take on the role of art objects important to a small percentage of people today. This audience is completely antithetical to Brumbaugh's own audience aims. His excitement for the house revolved around its great percentage of original architectural fabric, its melding of German and English characteristics, and the possibility of slave quarters. History of those traditionally underrepresented and history revealing good American morals inspired him: "If we except slavery, abolished now well over a century ago, and injustice to Indian owners, which Penn tried to avert by paying an acceptable sum to them (entirely contrary to the practice and advice of King Charles), there has been much of good in our history, and in the story of John Wright's house, which are one and the same."¹⁴⁵

The most intriguing interpretation Brumbaugh proposed involves the rooms above the kitchen—the "slave quarters." According to Brumbaugh, "[i]n John Wright's day, slavery was the American pattern, following European customs. In the second floor of the Mansion House are two small rooms, reached by very narrow stairs. One has a fireplace, with no mantel, trim or shelf. Neither room has any baseboard or ornamental finish, and no door led from either into the master's bedroom area. These were slave quarters. We cut a door from this space to the master's bedroom beyond to facilitate the

¹⁴⁵ Restoration Report, Completed Work, Box 13, Brumbaugh Papers.

processing of visitors, without 'up and down' two flights."¹⁴⁶ He completely ignored the possibility that these were simply servants' rooms, instead adding intrigue to his story by suggesting slavery existed at Wright's Ferry Mansion. As Schaefer pointed out, Brumbaugh's interpretation remains highly questionable, since the Quaker culture in Pennsylvania did not believe in owning slaves. With multi-culturalism on the rise in the 1960s and 1970s, Brumbaugh managed to fit his interpretation into current national trends. Throughout his career, Brumbaugh consistently focused on the historical role of groups other than the English in American history. In his explanation of the melting pot phenomenon in the architecture of Wright's Ferry Mansion, Brumbaugh asserts:

[A]t least one German was on the staff, and his suggestions were accepted and carried out . . . John Wright . . . was purely English. The plan arrangement of his Mansion is typically English. Yet he listened to suggestions which were typically German, and adopted them. Why? Because the land in which he lived was not designed to foster hostilities. It was planned by Penn to foster understanding and brotherhood, and his plans and vision succeeded. If an Englishman hated a German, and his political education taught him war and hostility, he would not have incorporated into his dwelling German features. He would have had to look at them always, and live with them. Some of our political leaders today might think about the results of this. Pennsylvania started three centuries ago, in a world of contest and hostility. Today it is the greatest state in the union, by general consensus. Brotherhood and generosity paid off.¹⁴⁷

As the new social history was just beginning, Brumbaugh had already spent more than thirty years investigating the ethnic contributions to colonial American and its architecture.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

In theory, most of Brumbaugh's private clients wanted to complete their projects correctly, but in practice desired elements not necessarily historic. The fact that the project at Wright's Ferry Mansion began as a residential restoration and then shifted to a museum restoration made the situation even more challenging for the von Hesses and Brumbaugh. The relationship initially established must have taken a different tone when the museum concept was confirmed. The controversy over paint colors and the brick floor in the kitchen are only two examples of the lack of concern on the client's part regarding the creation of accurate history. The Louise Steinman von Hess Foundation carried substantial weight with Brumbaugh, and because he was not designing an official history at Wright's Ferry Mansion, he relinquished some of his history-making power to his clients. As one of his last restorations, the museum and study collection that resulted signifies Brumbaugh's professional growth in the forty years after Ephrata. Today Wright's Ferry Mansion remains a mixture of aesthetic design and historical accuracy, and stands as proof of Brumbaugh's ability to maintain his restoration standards and please his clients at the same time.

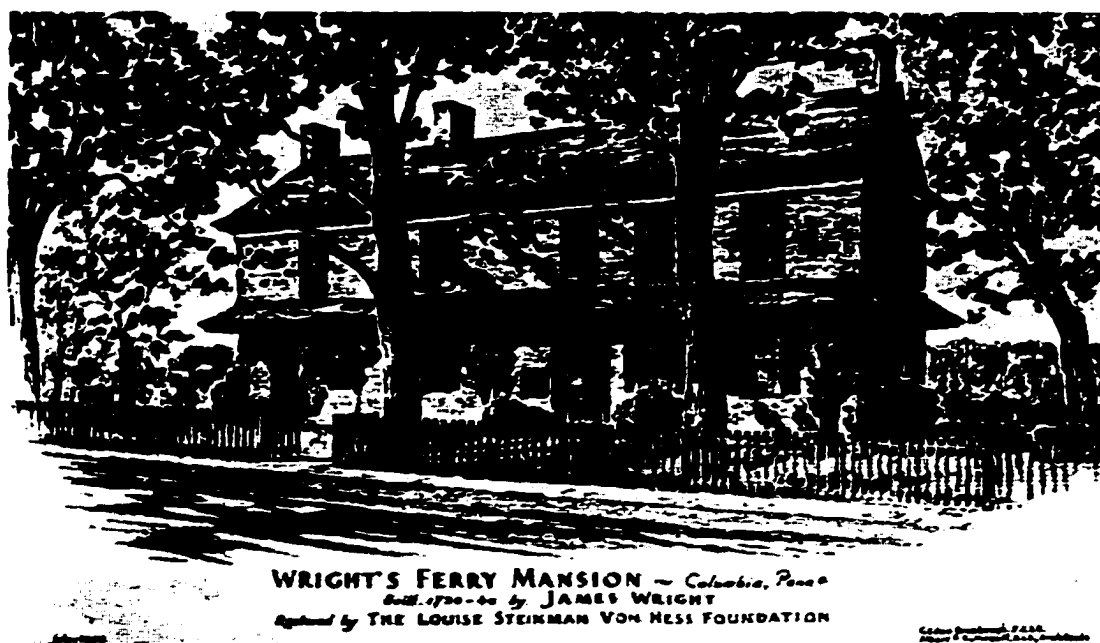


Figure 34. Presentation drawing, Wright's Ferry Mansion, July 1974. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 35. Wright's Ferry Mansion exterior, today. East elevation.

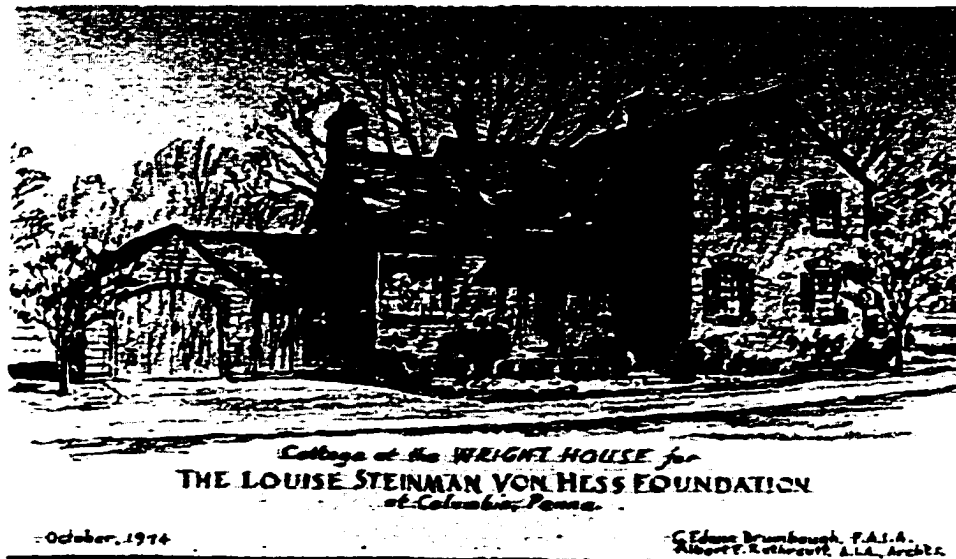


Figure 36. Presentation drawing, Wright House Cottage, October 1974. Notice the Ephrata-inspired shed dormer. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 37. Exterior of Wright House Cottage today.



Figure 38. Site plan for Wright's Ferry Mansion. The plan for the cottage is on the left and the plan of the house is on the right. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.



Figure 39. Restored squirrel-tail ovens outside the Almonry, Ephrata Cloister.



Figure 40. Restored squirrel-tail oven at Wright's Ferry Mansion, modeled after those at Ephrata.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

“Actually, we are beginning to remember, and my only hope is that we shall remember things worthwhile.”¹⁴⁸ -G. Edwin Brumbaugh, 1978

George Edwin Brumbaugh died in 1983 at the age of ninety-three after a remarkable seventy-year career. In spite of his lengthy professional life, Brumbaugh still does not fall neatly into one category. He exuded a daunting aura of authority and a devotion to meticulous restoration and moral history. Yet, underneath this surface of unyielding and persistent authenticity, he was a complex man full of contradictions. He adamantly insisted on historical accuracy in restorations, but used modern materials, “modern” funding, and completed projects according to his clients’ wishes. While he was devoted personally and emotionally to the past, his record of architectural accomplishment embodies the surprising combination of the modern and the “ancient.” Cultural historian Karal Ann Marling has written that “[b]y association and by ideology, nostalgia—a backward glance at the early days—became part of the great American push forward: an edenic past bolstered the drive toward a utopian future.” Art historians William Truettner and Roger Stein have likewise asserted that the colonial revival “is

¹⁴⁸ Talk to Huntingdon County Historical Society, 19 April 1978, Office Records, Box 111, Brumbaugh Papers.

usually drawn from images that carefully balance past and present.”¹⁴⁹ Brumbaugh and his architectural career exemplify the manipulation and production of the past for the purpose of improving the future, as well as the concomitant melding of past and present. Late in his life Brumbaugh spoke of the technological changes and advancements he experienced in his lifetime and his own devotion to the spirit of the past:

The first architecture job I ever had was with Mellor and Meigs in Philadelphia in 1912. They still wrote all letters long hand, and it was my job to copy them into a letter book by means of a large press. Typewriters soon changed that . . . We are living in a technological age. Invention is our life blood. And, having shovelled [*sic*] coal into heaters and removed ashes (up the stairs) I enjoy technology. But I have one big quarrel with it. The importance it assigns to material development has sharply reduced spiritual interest, and quality, in . . . the humanities . . . Church attendance is largely growing in the wrong direction. By “humanities” I mean . . . literature, poetry, music, art of every sort, and the constructive aspects of home life. This down-grading, and I do not hesitate to call it that, is a definite by-product of our machine age during the last century.¹⁵⁰

This statement succinctly summarizes the attitude and convictions Brumbaugh held throughout his life. He tenaciously revered and promoted the past so that the future might be richer than the modern, “machine-age.” Brumbaugh’s foremost goal in restoring old Pennsylvania buildings was to mediate the inventive, technological, and material world with the “spiritual interest and quality” of the humanities. By restoring eighteenth-century architecture and recreating the spirit of these places, Brumbaugh felt certain he could uplift and improve the modern American public.

¹⁴⁹ Karal Ann Marling, *George Washington Slept Here: Colonial Revivals and American Culture, 1876-1986* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 153; William Truettner and Roger Stein, preface to *Picturing Old New England*, xi.

¹⁵⁰ Talk to the Huntington County Historical Society, Huntington, PA, 19 April 1978, Office Records, Box 111, Brumbaugh Papers.

Brumbaugh felt the need to embrace and preserve the history and spirit embodied in early architecture of the Delaware Valley due to its rapid disappearance. As Brumbaugh's contemporary, the German social psychologist Maurice Halbwachs observed: "General history starts only when tradition ends and the social memory is fading or breaking up. So long as a remembrance continues to exist, it is useless to set it down in writing or otherwise fix it in memory."¹⁵¹ Historian Eric Hobsbawm has echoed the same thoughts: "Movements for the defense or revival of traditions . . . can never develop or even preserve a living past . . . but must become 'invented tradition.' Where the old ways are alive traditions need be neither revived nor invented."¹⁵² Ultimately, Brumbaugh's revival and preservation of such craft traditions as the eighteenth-century methods for forging nails and making clapboards using the "holz-hecker's" splitting rack were secondary to his goals of preserving and reviving the superior morals of an earlier time. He wrote, "With all our faults there's been a vast amount of good. And America had better not forget the power of right concepts . . . Moral issues are still the most potent influence in any nation's history. How to convey their message is the greatest challenge. Historic sites help, handled with understanding and dedication."¹⁵³ Brumbaugh remained

¹⁵¹ Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, trans. Francis J. Ditter Jr. and Vida Yazdi Ditter (1950; reprint, New York: Harper and Row, 1980), 78.

¹⁵² Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 8.

¹⁵³ "Historic Preservation" talk given to Pennsylvania German Society, 9 May 1970, Office Records, Box 111, Brumbaugh Papers.

idealistic throughout his life but enjoyed the conveniences of the modern world too greatly to ever propose a complete return to a pre-industrial past.

Brumbaugh's restorations serve as the physical representation and testament of his idealistic views. The 1941 commission at Ephrata Cloister for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania proved to be the initial testing ground for his moral agenda and his role in the new restoration field. His work there was his most important restoration and it remains the one restoration scholars associate with him. Ephrata represents his first significant entrance into the national restoration field and his actions there reveal the initial difficulties he experienced as he tried to come to terms with his own professional identity and restoration philosophy. Significantly, he did not pass this test with flying colors. The professional equilibrium he exhibited in later restorations, such as those at York and Wright's Ferry Mansion, had not yet developed in the 1940s and 1950s. His ancestral connections to Ephrata and his conviction that the state had a moral responsibility to promote and inform the public in an honest manner—at any expense—led to considerable disagreement with his client and his eventual resignation. When his client had the opportunity to create official history and a history that was personally significant to him, Brumbaugh felt that eighteenth-century authenticity was the only solution. His later projects at York and Wright's Ferry Mansion show that his devotion to authenticity became more flexible in his unofficial, non-governmental commissions. Correspondence from the 1970s indicates that his rebellious streak and hot-headedness never disappeared completely, but his later restorations suggest that the Ephrata fiasco helped him learn to control his emotions.

The architect-client relationship was critical in Brumbaugh's work, for this relationship determined the accuracy of the architectural restoration and the theme of the historical narrative. The three case studies of the restorations at Ephrata, York, and Wright's Ferry Mansion represent three significantly different client types. Brumbaugh played a paternal and protective role at the York restoration, and Historic York County served as a willing student to his mentoring. The restoration at Wright's Ferry Mansion, on the other hand, represents a much more equal, collegial relationship between architect and private client. A definite give-and-take occurred between Brumbaugh and the von Hesses. At Ephrata as at York, Donald Cadzow treated Brumbaugh as the expert, but the Commissioners, the Governor, and the new PHMC Director, S. K. Stevens, all eventually questioned his methods and motivations. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, as the arbiter of official state history, was not willing to be mentored. The early restoration at Ephrata reveals Brumbaugh's true restoration identity, perhaps more than any other project. Because he did not respond to his client's wishes and demands until the situation reached the point of explosion, the restoration at Ephrata provides insight into Brumbaugh's ideal restoration project. If he had no clients to please, he would have returned to the methods and materials of the eighteenth century, with no regard for cost or time. Unless an architect can design solely for himself, however, he must incorporate his client's wishes into his work. Despite his challenges with clients such as the PHMC and the von Hesses, all of his restorations stayed close to his heart. Restoration was his true love. He returned to the sites repeatedly to check their condition and gave advice about upkeep in person and in letters. Only seven years after completing

the restoration at the Gates House and Plough Tavern, he chastised Nancy McFall: “These buildings will constantly require watching and repairs, in kind, in order to preserve them.”¹⁵⁴ After his resignation from the Ephrata project in 1964, Brumbaugh did not return to the Cloister until 1976. This self-imposed distancing must have been agonizing for a man who devoted twenty years of his life to the restoration of those buildings (Figure 41).

The negotiation of memory played a leading role in the problems Brumbaugh faced with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, for he attempted to preserve his own ancestral connections, his personal memory, and the collective Pennsylvania German memory in his restoration at Ephrata. Halbwachs wrote that “[i]t would be paradoxical to claim that the memory preserves the past in the present or introduces the present into the past if they were not actually two zones of the same domain and if the group, insofar as it returns into itself and becomes self-conscious through remembering and isolation from others, does not tend to enclose itself in a relatively immobile form.”¹⁵⁵ Thus, memory embodies both the past and the present, for the act of remembering occurs in the present but evokes events out of the past. Memory defined and determined Brumbaugh’s life and work. “Memory houses,” with their European antecedents; memories of his ancestral, German past; and the creation of new memories for future visitors to his restored sites inspired Brumbaugh. His work at Ephrata became something of a memory itself, for it

¹⁵⁴ Brumbaugh to Nancy McFall, 7 December 1971, Miscellaneous, Box 2, Brumbaugh Papers.

¹⁵⁵ Halbwachs, *Collective Memory*, 87.

informed every project he later completed and residences and restorations benefited from the evidence he unearthed in his early work there. For shelf treatment above a door in the Wright Cottage, Brumbaugh “utilized the design which occurs over doors at the Ephrata Cloisters. The bracket is especially graceful and attractive.” It did not matter that the five-inch-wide shelf would not hold cookbooks, for he believed the historical model would bring grace to the house (Figure 42).¹⁵⁶ The gutters at Wright’s Ferry Mansion are also replicas of the “drive supports and metal gutters [at Ephrata]. This technique was employed at an early date to carry off the water at Saron.”¹⁵⁷ The window sash at the Plough Tavern are based on those at Ephrata, the shed dormer on the Wright Cottage replicates those at the Cloister, and a dormitory at Juniata College looks like a miniature Saron. He used the craft methods he resurrected at Ephrata for splitting shingles and clapboards, recreating wattle and daub, and forging nails over and over again in his restorations. Although the Ephrata restoration ended with distinct bitterness on both sides, Brumbaugh could not have completed any of his other restorations without his experience with the Commonwealth. The Ephrata project provided him with valuable time to learn how to restore, and forced him to learn how to work with his clients and compromise in the future.

Although Brumbaugh learned to include his clients’ desires in his restorations, his motivations never changed. In 1943 Brumbaugh declared that “[o]ur most important

¹⁵⁶ Brumbaugh to von Hesses, 27 January 1978, Completed Work, Box 15, Brumbaugh Papers.

¹⁵⁷ Ruthrauff to von Hesses, 20 December 1976, Completed Work, Box 15, Brumbaugh Papers.

destiny lies in demonstrating that radically divergent groups can live together under the banner of tolerance and freedom until they merge in splendid unity.”¹⁵⁸ Brumbaugh’s philosophy was one of “Americanization.” Michael Frisch defines the term as those “efforts that so dominated education and politics in the United States in the early years of the twentieth century, fueled by a terror of immigrant cultures and concerns for the future of Anglo-Saxon race and heritage.” Frisch remarked that “[i]t is fascinating how often, in the current litany, those educational efforts are taken to represent a kind of golden age to which we should return.”¹⁵⁹ Brumbaugh’s voice exemplifies this celebration of a better time, and he used the term “Americanism” to describe the good works he believed historic sites could perform for the American public. Significantly, his version of Americanization glorified the role of early immigrants in America to the same end as those intent on preserving their Anglo-Saxon heritage. Throughout his life Brumbaugh’s words indicate that he believed a crisis in the education of Americans was occurring and that they needed to discover and revere their own pasts and the collective national past in order make their presents and futures better. This sense of crisis pervaded the second half of the twentieth century—a time riddled with American fears of totalitarianism and communism. Frisch asserts that these fears manifested themselves in educational reform movements, and that in the 1980s the cold war fixation stressed that “the point of

¹⁵⁸ Brumbaugh, “Continental Influence on Early American Architecture,” *German American Review* 9 (February 1943): 8.

¹⁵⁹ Michael Frisch, “American History and the Structures of Collective Memory: A Modest Exercise in Empirical Iconography,” *Memory and History* ed. David Thelen (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 24.

education is not individual but national; the object of improvement in training in history is the production of obedient, patriotic citizens who share a set of presumptions about the United States, its people, economy, and relation to the other nations of the world.” He believes “the strength of myth and heroes, martyrs and mothers, is firmly in place” and echoes Brumbaugh in his call for students and teachers to move beyond heroes to examine and recognize the other players in American history. “Appreciating the powerful grip of the collective cultural memory becomes a necessary first step if we are to help our students to understand the real people and processes of history, to locate its reality in their lives, and to discover the power and uses of historical imagination in the present.”¹⁶⁰

This, in fact, is just what Brumbaugh proposed. He saw the crisis, but as early as the 1930s focused on the vastly different groups of people who made up American history. His restorations emphasized the ability and willingness of early Americans, such as William Penn and John and Susanna Wright, to embrace other cultures in the name of brotherhood and to live morally upright lives. Although he certainly restored his share of “Washington-slept-here,” he also hoped places like Ephrata, the Golden Plough Tavern and Gates House, and Wright’s Ferry Mansion would move beyond standard, hero-ridden, mythical history. Brumbaugh’s quest for Americanization emphasized the early multicultural nature of the United States at a time when most restorations glorified a heroic, Anglo past. He wanted his restorations to reveal the complex society of southeastern Pennsylvania to the public, thus fostering the creation of an inclusive national identity that recognized important, yet often neglected participants like the

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 24, 25, 26.

Pennsylvania Germans. However, Brumbaugh's focus on ethnicity did not mean that he ventured very deeply into the history of different racial groups in this country. He most wanted to tell the history of Germans in America, who were considered an acceptable immigrant group for most of the early twentieth century. At Wright's Ferry Mansion he included interpretation of the so-called slave quarters, but the bulk of his projects reveal a much more conservative focus on acceptable ethnicity in early America.

Brumbaugh was fascinated with his own roots and his focus on the German influence in his restorations certainly colors the historical narratives at these sites. While he passionately eschewed myth and invention in American history, in focusing on the German role and the multicultural nature of early America he may have neglected other important aspects of this history. Hobsbawm more recently addressed this subject:

Myth and invention are essential to the politics of identity by which groups of people today, defining themselves by ethnicity, religion or the past or present borders of states, try to find some certainty in an uncertain and shaking world . . . History is not ancestral memory or collective tradition. It is what people learned from priests, schoolmasters, the writers of history books and the compilers of magazine articles and television programmes. It is very important for historians to remember their responsibility, which is above all, to stand aside from the passion of identity politics – even if we feel them also.¹⁶¹

Brumbaugh did not “stand aside from the passion of identity politics,” but neither did he construct a history made of myths and invention. The history he portrayed in his restorations was as accurate as it could be at the time, but it was also selective. Brumbaugh's history was inclusive as long as it was moral, suitable, and good.

¹⁶¹ Eric Hobsbawm, *On History* (New York: The New Press, 1997), 7-8.

History, according to Kenneth Ames, “is an artificial, fragmented, and biased construction.”¹⁶² Indeed, Brumbaugh and his clients represent only a few creators of history. Brumbaugh told the good parts of the American historical narrative, and his version exemplifies the constancy and variety inherent in the colonial revival movement in the United States. Long before the “new preservation” of the 1960s emerged—with its interest in the local and an inclusive focus on architecture, design, and aesthetics, rather than worship of national shrines and inspirational values—Brumbaugh recognized the significance of what we now call vernacular architecture.¹⁶³ His study of Pennsylvania German colonial architecture in the 1930s had little to do with national heroes, yet it did involve a declaration of the inspirational values inherent in that architecture. Throughout his career Brumbaugh blended the old and new in preservation. Design, aesthetics and art did not drive Brumbaugh. The buildings he restored were typical, vernacular buildings with significant histories. Beauty was of secondary importance to him, and buildings did not have to be outstanding examples of a style or design to tell history. For Brumbaugh, the inspirational story he could tell—that drama and spirit of the past—signified a worthy and important restoration. By learning from and experiencing the ways of the past, Brumbaugh hoped visitors to his restored sites might leave imbued and fortified with a more noble spirit which they would then transfer to their own lives.

¹⁶² Ames, introduction to *The Colonial Revival*, 6.

¹⁶³ Glass, *The Beginnings of a New National Historic Preservation Program*, 29.



Figure 41. G. Edwin Brumbaugh, mid-1970s. Notice the before and after photos of Ephrata in the background. Courtesy, Barry Stover.



Figure 42. Narrow shelf above a door at Ephrata Cloister. Brumbaugh modeled shelves in the Wright House Cottage after this shelf. Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, No. 84x76.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF SELECTED COMMISSIONS, 1916-1983¹

Sehner-Ellicott-von Hess House, Lancaster, Pa.

An English brick townhouse built by Gottlieb Sehner, a German joiner circa 1790. Occupied by Andrew Ellicott 1801 to 1813, the first surveyor general of the U.S. Owned by the Louise Steinman von Hess Foundation.

Wharton Tract [including Batsto and Atsion], New Jersey

Includes report on historical aspects of 94,000 acre State property, with recommendations and program. This is a continuing restoration project. Eventually there will be thirty-five restored buildings and numerous reconstructions at Batsto, depicting the early bog furnace and glass house, as well as all details of life at this historic village. A secondary site is under way at Atsion, eighteen miles away, which includes the Ironmaster's mansion and Company Store. Revolutionary War activities will be memorialized at a supplemental display nearby along the Mullica River.

Batsto Glass House, [Wharton Tract, New Jersey]

A report which included drawings and techniques of early window glass manufacture by the cylinder method. Recommendations to the State of New Jersey include reconstruction of these buildings based upon archaeology.

Wright's Ferry Mansion at Columbia, Pa.

Built 1738-42 by James Wright, who maintained the first ferry crossing of the Susquehanna River. A large frontier stone house of English plan with many Germanic features. Restored for the Louise Steinman von Hess Foundation.

17th Century Log House at Fallsington, Pa. for Historic Fallsington, Inc.

An exceedingly important and very early log house, with distinct Swedish influence. A wing to the log house is a "framed" house with original lock-joint boarding on the exterior. This wing is believed to have been a pioneer Swedish or English house, built

¹ This list is compiled from two sources in Brumbaugh's papers, but maintains his text. There are a number of different project lists in his papers, but this compilation includes his latest projects and dates to c. 1980. Office Records, Box 111; Miscellaneous, Box 2; Brumbaugh Papers.

circa 1675, and probably abandoned due to attack by Indians. It was moved and added to the log house as a wing. These two elements are each an earliest type of construction employed by white settlers in the Delaware Valley.

Schoolmaster's House, Fallsington, Pa.

A small stone house built for Quaker schoolmaster in 1758. Consists of unfinished cellar and attic, with kitchen and bedroom only on first floor. Restored for Historic Fallsington, Inc.

Henry Antes House, near Frederick, Pa. for Antes House, Inc.

Home of early Moravian settler. Used as a boys' school circa 1745-55. Headquarters for General Washington September, 1777.

Liberty Hall, Quakertown, Pa. for Quakertown Historical Society, Inc.

Overnight stop while transporting the Liberty Bell from Philadelphia to Bethlehem.

1808 House, Friesburg, N.J.

Restored barns and original kitchen for Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woodruff.

Golden Plough Tavern and Gates House, York, Pa.

Tavern built between 1741 and 1744, rare example of medieval Germanic half-timber work of Black Forest type of poteau canale construction. Gates House rented by General Horatio Gates in 1777 when Continental Congress fled to York. Lafayette broke Conway Cabal against Washington as result of dinner to officers in this house. It is a stone English Renaissance type. York was laid out in 1741, this is one of its oldest buildings.

[Edward Morgan] Log House on Weikel Road, Towamencin Township, Pa.

One of the township's earliest homesteads. Home of Sarah Morgan Boone, mother of Daniel Boone. Owned by Towamencin Township, and administered by Towamencin Historical Society.

Pennsylvania Hall, Gettysburg College, Pa.

First building at the college, 1835—fine country version of Greek Revival. Restored and adapted as administrative building for all major offices of college.

Carpenter's Hall, south doorway, Philadelphia.

Involved extensive research and illustrated report.

Pottsgrove Mansion, Pottstown, Pa.

Built 1752 by John Potts, ironmaster, founder of the town. [Restored for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.]

Daniel Boone Homestead, Baumstown, Pa.

Where the frontiersman was born in 1734. Present house embodies foundations of log house (birthplace) and later section reputedly added by Daniel Boone's father, circa 1745. Also on this property are a log museum, administration and interpretation center, barn, a blacksmith shop of log construction, a log youth hostel with caretaker's residence in a wing, a dam and a lake. [Restored for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.]

"The Old School House," Brainard Street, Mount Holly, N.J.

Administered as a museum by the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of New Jersey. Built 1759, perhaps the oldest school house in the state.

"1704 House" (Brinton family homestead), Dilworthtown, Pa.

A Medieval stone house with some Renaissance influence; administered as a museum house by the Chester County Historical Society.

Egypt Farm, [Bucks County, Pa.]

A typical Bucks County stone house. Restorations and adaptations for Mr. and Mrs. Eldrow Reeve.

Large Stone House near Quakertown, Pa.

A fine Bucks County stone farm house. The early Federal and Greek Revival styles of architecture are predominant. Restorations and adaptations for Mr. and Mrs. Robert Pope.

Market Square, Germantown, Pa.

Typical eighteenth-century market place consisting of market shambles, fire house, stocks, etc. Restoration deferred due to lack of funds.

Morris House, 225 S. 8th Street, Philadelphia.

Restorations include landscaping at rear of house.

Thompson-Neely House, Bowman's Hill, Washington Crossing Park, Pa.

Quarters of officers of Washington's army, including Capt. William Washington, Lord Sterling, and Lt. James Monroe, prior to Battle of Trenton. Used as hospital after the battle. Oldest section built in 1701 by John Pidcock. [Restored for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.]

Ephrata Cloister, Ephrata, Pa.

Nine historic buildings, dating from 1734 to circa 1780 except the Academy, which was built 1837. Interior restorations by others. [Restored for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.]

Howe House, Burlington, N.J. (circa 1705)
Small Flemish bond brick residence. Restorations for Burlington County Historical Society.

Warrenpoint [Pa.]
Furnace manager's residence and garden at French Creek Iron Works. Restored for Mrs. Joseph N. Pew, Jr. (circa 1749).

Potter's Tavern, Bridgeton, N.J.
(Prominent in South Jersey patriot activities.) Being restored slowly for Bridgeton Historical Commission.

Owens Evans House, Gwynedd, Pa.
One of the first settler's homes, oldest part circa 1715. Restored and adapted as a residence for Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Van Reed.

"The New Market" in Second Street, south of Pine Street, Philadelphia.
1745-1804 (reputedly oldest surviving market structure in U.S.) Services included full documentary research and report to the Philadelphia Historical Commission. Restoration includes Head House and block-long shambles, paving, etc. [Restored for the City of Philadelphia.]

Fromberger House, Market Square, Germantown, Pa.
Germantown's first brick house, circa 1790. Restored and adapted as home office of Germantown Insurance Company.

Mark Reeve House, Greenwich, N.J.
Very early 18th century house. First unit (now demolished) date from 17th century. Restoration and alterations for Mrs. Newlin Watson.

Vauxhall Gardens, Greenwich, N.J.
One of the oldest houses in the region, portion dates back to 17th century. Restoration and additions for Mr. and Mrs. Jean Erbaugh.

Washington's Headquarters, Chadd's Ford, Pa.
Battle of Brandywine, [for Commonwealth of Pennsylvania].

Lafayette's Quarters, Chadd's Ford, Pa.
Battle of Brandywine, [for Commonwealth of Pennsylvania].

Thirty Log Huts, Valley Forge, Pa. [recreation]
Replicas, based upon extensive research, of those built by Washington's Army, 1777-78. [For the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.]

Fort Muhlenberg, Valley Forge, Pa.

Artillery redoubt; restoration involved archaeological site work and documentary research.

Warrior Run Presbyterian Church, in the Susquehanna watershed above Sunbury, Pa.
A country version of Greek Revival architecture, on the site of an earlier church. [For the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.]

Early Stone House, Gwynedd, Pa.

Restored and adapted as a residence for Mr. and Mrs. John D. Betz.

Dr. Samuel Ward House, Greenwich, N.J.

18th century clapboarded English framed house. Restored and adapted as a residence for Mr. and Mrs. Jay Moore.

The Woodlands, Philadelphia.

Hamilton Mansion, 1788; early Federal style; curving rooms; Robert Wellford ornamental plaster work.

Fort Mifflin, Philadelphia.

Begun 1772; completed in improvised form 1776-77 under the direction of Benjamin Franklin's Committee of Public Safety with help of Thomas Mifflin (general Washington's first aide-de-camp); endured punishing siege in October and November, 1777; evacuated after great destruction; rebuilding begun 1778 during the war; reconstructed 1798. Research and Report prepared for the Greater Philadelphia Movement. Program included extensive restoration of fort and seven buildings and reconstruction of two others. [Restored for the City of Philadelphia.]

Colonel Dewees Mansion, Valley Forge, Pa.

Ironmaster's mansion. Bakehouse and Officers' rendezvous during encampment 1777-78. [Restored for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.]

Street of Houses built 1814, Washington Crossing Village, Pa.

Restoration included sidewalk, fence and landscaping. [For the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.]

David James Dove House, on the grounds of Germantown Academy, Philadelphia.

Occupied for ten days by President George Washington.

Germantown Academy, Philadelphia.

Partial restoration of original building built 1759.

Gloria Dei (Old Swedes Church), Philadelphia.

Built 1699-1700 (Oldest orthodox church building in Pennsylvania). Such restorations and research as funds permitted.

Old Ferry Inn, Washington Crossing State Park, Pa.

Restored for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Evidence confirms tradition that General Washington ate his evening meal in this inn before crossing the Delaware to fight the Battle of Trenton, December 25, 1776.

William Green House, Trenton State College, N.J.

Restoration and adaptation as residence for President of College. Reputedly first brick house in township, circa 1717. Project deferred.

Gregory Klein Barn [Lititz, Pa.]

Considered the Moravian communal barn for the settlement of Lititz, Pa. 1745. Planned as project deferred.

RESIDENCES, INCLUDING:

Richardson Dilworth House, Society Hill, Philadelphia.

Joseph L. Eastwick House, Society Hill, Philadelphia.

G. Ruhland Rebmman, Jr., Esq. House, Haverford, Pa.

Robert Myers House, Hanover, Pa.

Phillip H. Glatfelter House, Spring Grove, Pa.

CHURCHES, INCLUDING:

First Presbyterian and Sunday School complex, Moorestown, N.J.

Marple Presbyterian Church, Broomall, Pa.

New Hanover Lutheran Church, New Hanover, Pa.

New structures "in the same architectural style"¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ Brumbaugh to Howard Royer, 6 December 1971, Miscellaneous, Box 2, Brumbaugh Papers.

APPENDIX B

DESCRIPTION OF EPHRATA SPLITTING RACK from G. Edwin Brumbaugh's unpublished manuscript¹

. . . In due course, we also found similar original clapboards still in place full height, where later additions were built against the old Saal walls. . . So we knew what we had to make.

These original clapboards (and the spacing of the nailing blocks on the frame) showed that the nailing of clapboards had been 5'-1 ¾" apart. This meant that the builder had been using a Rhenish or other German (not an English) rule. (Employing a complex series of tables as calculators, 5 Rhenish feet equals 5'-1 ¾" America measure.)

As just stated, we knew by this time exactly what our restoration problems were, but we did not know the answers. So we had red oak trees of the proper diameter cut and delivered. We then sawed them into lengths just short of 6 feet, and barked them. Next, with heavy iron wedges and a "beetle" (a long-handled hammer with an iron-ringed oaken head) we halved and quartered them, and then our real problems began.

We had read all authorities, and even wrote letters of inquiry. All correspondents agreed that a "frow" was next used for splitting. Henry Landis, antiquarian and founder of the State's Landis Valley Museum, kindly wrote a letter, with explanatory diagrams. He also said he would let us have an original frow, so the writer called later to take advantage of his generosity. His diagram showed the center cut halving the log, with subsequent cuts parallel to this in order to cut off thin clapboards. This, your writer doubted, but we tried it meticulously. The wood simply split into cords and ribbons. So we carefully examined once more the surviving Saal clapboards, still in place. They all showed quartering marks, indicating that the cuts were made at right angles to the center of the tree.

In order to split pieces end to end, which were nearly 6 feet long, we constructed an ingenious stepped wooden rig, to get on top of the piece to be split (which stood upright and was held in place with a hinged bar and a stout log chain, wrapped around it). The logs were first quartered successfully with iron wedges and the beetle. Then a barked quarter log was secured in our stepped rig and splitting with the frow started.

(For my readers who may not be carpenter-trained, a frow is a very heavy-bladed knife, about a foot long, with a curled "eye" at one end. This eye holds a short wooden handle also about a foot long, at one end of the knife blade. The cutting edge, of course, was on the side opposite the handle.) We read that a "frow club" was part of the

¹ Unpublished manuscript, 268-273, Office Records, Box 108, Brumbaugh Papers.

equipment, made with one end reduced as a handle, like a short cricket club. At last we were ready.

The frow was placed, blade down, handle up, in the center of the end of a quarter-log, and we hammered away on the very thick top of the metal blade. Our frow sunk in, flush with the top of our quarter log, and we continued to hammer on each projecting top end of the knife. As the resulting split went down, we inserted thin wooden wedges to hold our gain. The process literally wore out frow clubs, so we made them of dogwood (which helped a little); but generally, when less than halfway down, the split would run to one side or the other. Thus, a long, pointed piece would split off. Then we turned the log upside down and started a split on the other end. It usually ran off the opposite side. We were hardly ever able to split a piece in half for its full length. The resulting clapboard "candidate" was usually thick in the center and thin at both ends. It had to be put on a chopping block and hatchet-dressed to uniform thickness.

The above is terribly long and wordy, but it has to be, because it is a remarkable story.

The writer said to Elam Martin, our very loyal and intelligent foreman, that we had been watching the labors. "I figure," said I, "that it is costing \$2.75 to produce a clapboard. We have thousands of them to make, and the State will never give us the funds. We are wearing ourselves out, because some cunning has been forgotten. I'm going to ask every old farmer or mechanic that I meet in my (then) extensive back-roads travel, what primitive knowledge we now lack." Elam said he would do likewise.

On my next trip to Ephrata, he came to me smiling and said: "I think I have your man. I was up in the Furnace Mountains, ordering logs at an outdoor sawmill. There was a 'holz-hecker' (I hope that is spelled correctly; it is Pennsylvania Dutch for a 'Rube of the forest!') sitting on a log and he said we need a splitting rack." (The holz-hecker turned out to be the owner of the sawmill!).

"How far is he, Elam?" I asked. "About eight miles," he replied; and after discussion, Elam left to try to get him. In time, the door to our barn "shop" opened, and the two entered (the holz-hecker with a cane). I was introduced to him (Harry Eberle) and he looked over our equipment and labors, commenting briskly, in Pennsylvania Dutch. I asked if he spoke English, and his English reply did not even have a Dutch accent. He changed languages to say that we were plaguing ourselves (to which we agreed) and that we had to have a splitting rack. However, that was something we could not make at once because it would take heavy oak pieces. "Mr. Eberle," I replied, "you have our oak sawmill. You are hereby given the order to cut to size all the material we need; but can't we put a patched up replica together and try it out?" In due course, that's what we did. (Our illustration shows a working drawing of our final splitting rack. It is a plan rectangular frame with one cross piece. One end is tilted upward at an angle on two whittled legs.)

"Now," said Harry, "stand your quarter log, sloping upward toward you, in the rack, with its other end on the floor. Then put your frow horizontally on the center of the top of the sloping diagonal log, and tap with the frow club." We easily sunk the blade flush with the top and he signalled [sic] a stop. "Now," said he, "pull down on the handle of the frow." (We thought the handle's only use was to lift the tool.) The downward pull

pried the split and extended it. A wooden wedge was inserted, and the knife slid down to make another pry. Our friend Harry was watching the split on one side, and soon it began to turn upward, just as it had usually done for us. He signalled [sic] a stop, revolved the piece in the rack so that the split turned downward instead of upward. "Now," said he, "bear down on the frow handle as hard as you can." The split immediately turned upward from the center of the piece.

No frow-club hammering, except to start! – no great labor! and by watching the split and turning the piece, we were able to split in half a six foot tapered clapboard (1" greatest thickness) from end to end.

A year later, Harry Eberle passed away, and Elam has now joined him. The writer never heard of this memory-preserved cunning, or of such a rack, anywhere else, nor do the best writers, like Dr. Mercer, say anything about it.* We use it now to split clapboards, fence palings, and long shingles. If this book survives, it will not be lost again.

Not only on the Saal, but on other Ephrata buildings, where evidence indicated, our new outside clapboards are so like preserved originals, 230 years old, that you cannot tell the difference.

* [Brumbaugh's note 117] There is always a scientific explanation. We assume that bearing down on the frow handle strongly puts the wood above the split in tension, and the wood below in compression. Evidently, a split cannot enter wood in compression as readily as it can enter wood in tension. Ancient carpenters knew this, and used the knowledge practically and effectively.

APPENDIX C

RESTORATION PHILOSOPHY

Notes for 1971 Lecture in Bucks County, Pennsylvania¹

Conserve = 1. To keep from being damaged, lost or wasted.

Requires existence of something to conserve; in this case Bucks County characteristics which you do not wish to see damaged, lost or wasted. . . .

To keep them [old farmhouses and historic sites] from being damaged, lost or wasted is a big order + a complex one. It involves the entire concept of preservation, about which there are - 2 views -

1. Everything always changes, e.g., leave it as it is now—1971—thus constitutes preservation. With this view, why stop at 1971? Let it continue to change. Just let it alone. It will, ere long be damaged, lost + wasted. 2. A bldg, or site is interesting + valuable either because it represents (or did at one time represent) something we admire either because of its beauty or because it inspires worthy memories.

I subscribe to 2. Decide why you want to protect it: Then remove clashing elements, which destroy, in a degree, its message. This is restoration. If well done,—effective; if badly done,—not effective.

Architecture very sensitive thing, by its very nature. —always has portrayed the best thinking of the society that produced it - always will. No one, consciously records his worst motivations for the world to see. (Documents of history)

We do not advocate preservation of unworthy chapters in the history of our county, state or nation. They had best be denounced and forgotten (not glorified).

Even worthy chapters are often dimmed by ignorance, lack of ideals, or deliberate selfishness. (These are the changes I do not advocate conserving). They must be erased from the record, or else, in all honesty, they will add their base testimony to the record of history.

And this is where restoration comes in—no task for ignorance, or for uninformed hands—if for a man's own domicile he can, of course, do what he wants to do. If it is to function as conservancy of the best of the County—must use studied care. . . .

. . . Not all properties require the same detailed care. Judgement must be used. . .

In carrying out your work I know you are wise, kind, and brotherly. If you are not practical, you will secure no cooperation.

But please try to keep your sights high. Remember that one pronounced discord can ruin a symphony—

¹ Office Records, Box 111, Brumbaugh Papers.

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