

Sewickley Valley Historical Society

Signals

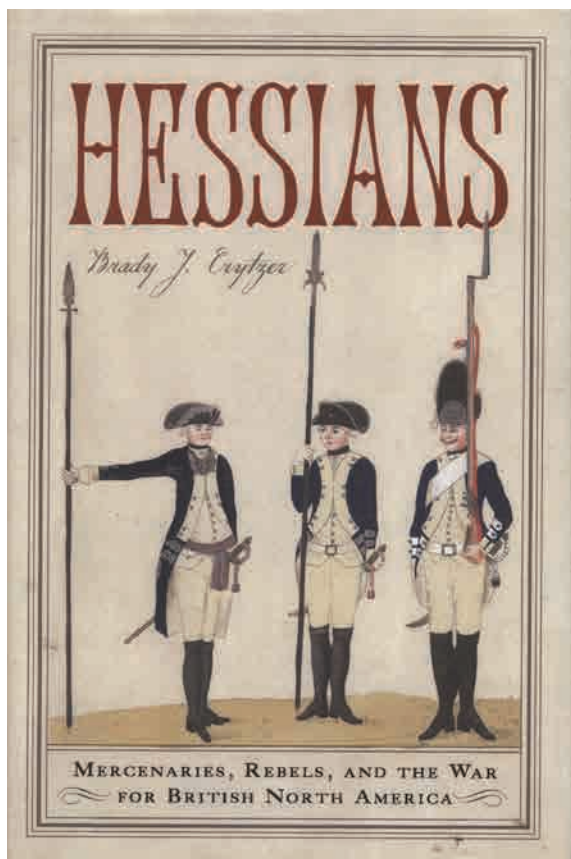
XLIV, Number 1

September 2016

Wednesday, September 14th, 2016 at 7:30 p.m.
Old Sewickley Post Office

The Hessians

A Presentation by Brady Crytzer



Brady J. Crytzer holds an MA in History from Slippery Rock University and teaches History at Robert Morris University. He is the author of five books studying Empire in North America and is the host of the hit television series "Battlefield Pennsylvania" on PCN. He is the winner of the Donald S. Kelly and Donna J. McKee Awards for Scholarship and Service in the field of History. His next book "War in the Peaceable Kingdom, The Kittanning Raid of 1756" is due for publication this fall.

"Hessians: Mercenaries, Rebels, and the War for British North America" tells the story of the contract fighting force from

six German states, especially Hesse-Cassel, hired by the British to fight against their rebellious colonists. Crytzer uses the journal accounts of three individuals to illustrate the roles played by Hessian forces across all theaters of the Revolutionary War from Quebec and the Hudson River Valley to the Caribbean and West Florida: Captain Johann Ewald in command of a Corps, Fredericka Louise Von Massen, a Baroness and wife of Colonel Friedrich Adolf Riedesel, commander of Hessian and Indian forces at Saratoga and Philip Waldeck, Chaplain of the Third Waldeck Regiment, stationed in Florida.

Field Trip to Zelenople, Pennsylvania

Saturday, September 17, 2016 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



A 10:00 a.m. tour given by the Zelenople Historical Society of the 1805 Buhl house and the 1808 Passavant house, both museums, followed by a Dutch treat lunch at the Harmony Inn, Harmony, Pennsylvania at 12:30 p.m. Meet at the Historical Society in Sewickley at 9:00 a.m. and drive in our own cars the twenty-five miles to Zelenople. R.S.V.P. by Friday, September 16, to the office, 412-741-5315 or sewickleyhistory@verizon.net. Call if you need a ride.



The mission of the Sewickley Valley Historical Society is to promote interest in and to record, collect, preserve, and document the history of the Sewickley Valley.

"A Two Ferry Tale" by Franklin T. Nevin

Author Of The "Village of Sewickley"

Reprinted from the Sewickley Herald, November 30, 1928

When the Ohio River bridge was opened to traffic in 1911, it put out of service two ferries, Lashell's and Stoops', the one at the foot of Chestnut, the other at Ferry Street, which had long served a public need; now they are but a memory. The lands of Jacob Lashell and William Stoops adjoined on the south side of the river, the two properties having together a river frontage of approximately 3,000 feet. Close under the precipitous hillside and at some elevation above the shore line ran a charming country road bordering the two estates and forming a part of the highway between Middletown (now Coraopolis) and the Narrows Run valley. Stoops Ferry was the older and more frequented crossing point, being directly opposite the mouth of the Narrows Run ravine by way of which, tradition says, the Indians passed to and fro between the trail which is now the Brodhead Road and the great Fort Pitt-Fort McIntosh-Sandusky-Detroit trail which skirted the river on its northern shore (now Beaver Road). The Narrows Run ravine (now University Boulevard) was a natural gateway to the Indian country lying north and east of the Ohio River and a canoe kept on the river here furnished the connecting link between two great and well marked trails.

It was in the year 1865 that William Stoops and his wife, Nancy, moved to Sewickley from the home of their pioneer ancestors on the banks of Chartiers Creek. Mr. Stoops on coming to Sewickley bought from Captain John C. Anderson a sixty foot lot on Beaver Street, east of Division Street, with the brick dwelling which had been Captain Anderson's home for eight years. Down by the river at the foot of Ferry Street was a sawmill owned and operated by Joe Banks, Samuel McMaster and Henry Warner, which they had bought from "Seat" Guy and his father "Jake." This sawmill William Stoops bought and soon thereafter he purchased from Guy the ferry rights and the land across the river with the stone dwelling house where he made his home and where he died on August 20, 1879.

Jacob Lashell and William Stoops did not actually operate their ferries. Each employed a ferryman to handle the skiffs and flats. Mr. Jolly who for so many years ran Lashell's Ferry will be remembered by many who can picture him as he rowed leisurely across the river sitting sideways on the thwart for the purpose of more easy expectoration downstream. Do any recall Syd Sawyer, Mr. Stoops' ferryman, a silent philosopher who knew every skiff, barge, towboat and packet on the river? Close to the stone dwelling

there was a country store, the site of which is now covered by the tracks of the Lake Erie Railroad, a little country store where folks came to trade and to gossip, farmers down from Sharon (later called Carnot) with butter, eggs and berries. It was on a bench in front of this store that Syd Sawyer, the ferryman, sat all day long chewing his natural leaf Virginia tobacco and whittling a stick. Here he had a full view of all the river craft and could respond to a hail from either shore summoning him to his intermittent duties as ferryman.

Entrusting the ferry to Sawyer, Mr. Stoops devoted himself to the busy life of a river captain. He owned and ran at different times several steamboats; the last one which he had built at Pringle's Boatyard up the Monongahela he named the *J. S. Pringle*, after its builder. It was of unusual design having two engines and two stern wheels, one of which could be stopped or reversed while the other went ahead thus enabling the boat to "turn on a ten cent piece." The *J. S. Pringle* ran in the Pittsburgh-St. Louis trade carrying passengers and 700 to 800 tons of freight. Captain Stoops ran also to New Orleans and was active in his river interests down to the time of his death in 1879. Five years after Captain Stoops' death, his widow parted with the title to the property and the old stone house came into the possession of one Jeremiah Meek who took by the same conveyance "all the rights, liberties, privileges and franchises connected with or necessary to the proper enjoyment of the ferry, etc." and continued to run it. The naming of the station there Stoops Ferry by the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie Railroad preserved the historical name.

Jacob Lashell looked to the river for a livelihood as did William Stoops, though in a different fashion. He had the income from his ferry and his earnings as a mate on one or another of the river steamboats, but more important than these sources of gain were his ventures down the river, as far as New Orleans, carrying potatoes and other produce which he bought on Neville Island and floated down on flatboats, which he had built for the purpose. Arrived at the end he would sell the flat for its lumber and come north to repeat the operation another year. He was an enterprising man; his versatility was shown when he gathered together a string of horses and drove them over the mountains to Philadelphia for sale. He died April 11, 1886, since when most of his land has passed to other hands, though descendants possess some. In 1892 his sons John and George with two other incorporators secured a charter for the Lashell Ferry Company "located more than 3000 feet from any other ferry." Then in 1911 the highway bridge was built and both Lashell's and Stoops' ferries passed into the limbo of half-forgotten things.



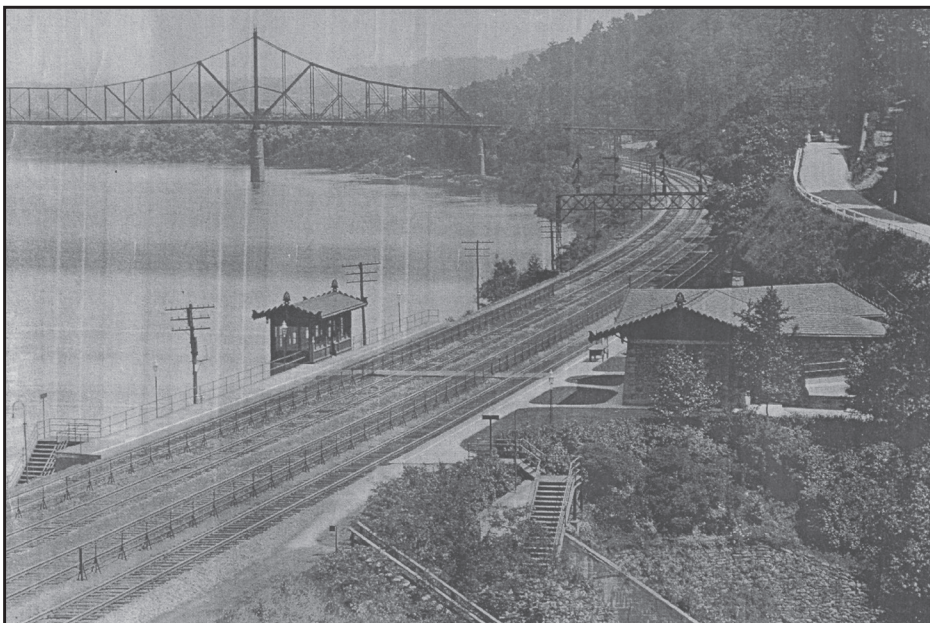
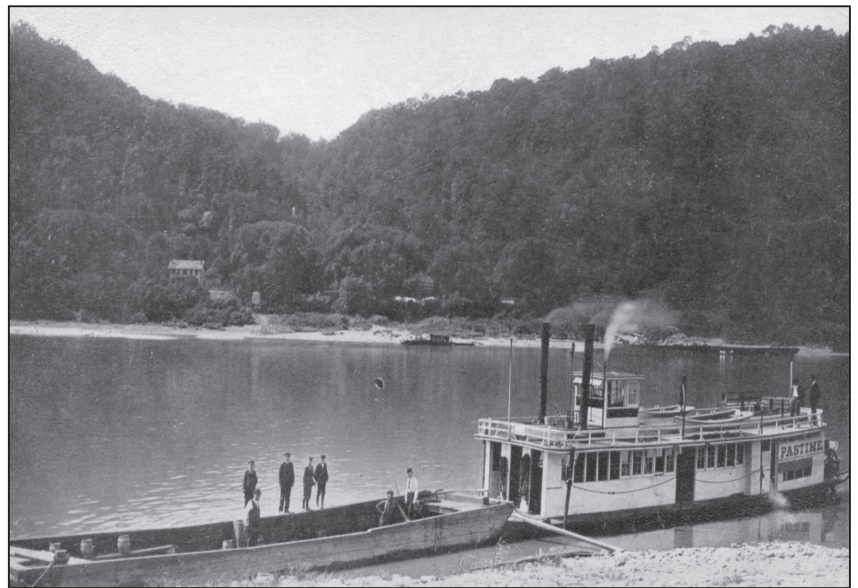
Jacob Lashell



William Stoops



Stoops' House, today the location of a motorcycle shop. The road to the left is now University Boulevard. The hillside here was cut back in 1935 in a Route 51 improvement.



Photos captioned clockwise from upper left.

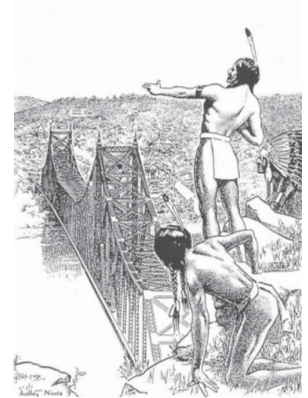
Looking down Narrows Run toward Stoops Ferry with the river and Sewickley on the shore beyond.

Stoops Ferry and Narrows Run viewed from the Sewickley shore. The flatboat moored along the opposite shore is likely the ferry.


Stoops Ferry Station on the P&LE Railroad Line looking upstream towards Sewickley Bridge.

Sewickley Valley Historical Society
200 Broad Street
Sewickley, PA 15143

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September 2016

<p>SEWICKLEY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY</p> <p>President Michael Tomana</p> <p>Vice-President Donald Traviss</p> <p>Secretary J. Judson Brooks, Jr.</p> <p>Treasurer David Genter</p> <p>Directors Hal Bonnett Jennifer Cowley Vincent Delie Douglas Florey Thomas Hay Fran Merryman Mary Anne Riley Jean Sebolt Dan Telep Peter Theis</p> <p>Executive Director Harton S. Semple, Jr.</p>	<p><i>2016 Day Of Giving Contributions</i></p> <p><i>Thank you to the following who participated in the Pittsburgh Foundation's Day of Giving on May 3. Their gifts were matched dollar for dollar, doubly benefitting the Society. Special thanks to Vincent Delie, First National Bank, for providing matching funds.</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Joseph J. Brooks</td> <td>Frances Merryman</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Harold & Barbara Bonnett</td> <td>Gail Murray</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fitzhugh Brown</td> <td>Mary Anne Riley</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Robert & Gretchen Burnham</td> <td>Harton Semple</td> </tr> <tr> <td>William & Barbara Burroughs</td> <td>Richard Semple</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Donna Kipp</td> <td>Michael Tomana</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Susan Cockrell</td> <td>Donald Traviss</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Daniel Telep</td> <td>William & Roberta Walker</td> </tr> <tr> <td>David & Ann Genter</td> <td>Duncan Whittaker, Jr.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cynthia & Kathrin Hays</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Joseph J. Brooks	Frances Merryman	Harold & Barbara Bonnett	Gail Murray	Fitzhugh Brown	Mary Anne Riley	Robert & Gretchen Burnham	Harton Semple	William & Barbara Burroughs	Richard Semple	Donna Kipp	Michael Tomana	Susan Cockrell	Donald Traviss	Daniel Telep	William & Roberta Walker	David & Ann Genter	Duncan Whittaker, Jr.	Cynthia & Kathrin Hays		<p><i>2015 Preservation Awards</i></p>  <p>2015 Preservation Awards presented at the annual meeting in May 2016 to Sewickley Heights Borough for their Plan Book, Phil Hundley and Belinda Thompson accepting, left, to Carole Moore Ford, center, for her house at 216 Henry Avenue, and right, Tim Merrill accepting for the Presbyterian Church's restoration of the former Coyle house at 202 Beaver Street.</p>
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<p><i>Special Contributions</i></p> <p><i>Thank you to the following who made gifts to SVHS to honor the memory of Carol W. Shary.</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Edward B. Aufman</td> <td>Jean Sebolt</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mr. & Mrs. Richard A. Hay</td> <td>Marguerite O. Standish</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Frances Merryman</td> <td>The Little Garden Club</td> </tr> </table>	Edward B. Aufman	Jean Sebolt	Mr. & Mrs. Richard A. Hay	Marguerite O. Standish	Frances Merryman	The Little Garden Club	<p><i>New Members</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Anthony Barton</td> <td>Rich Hayden</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Scott F. Fetterolf</td> <td>Elizabeth W. Peer</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trudy File</td> <td>Tom and Jeannie Sadd</td> </tr> </table>	Anthony Barton	Rich Hayden	Scott F. Fetterolf	Elizabeth W. Peer	Trudy File	Tom and Jeannie Sadd									
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<p><i>Donation</i></p> <p>The Ann & Frank Cahouet Foundation</p>	<p><i>In Memoriam</i></p> <p>Dr. Jeanne Gannon Alvin Carol W. Sharp Charlotte T. Hamilton</p>																					

Visit our website, www.sewickleyhistory.org — e-mail us at sewickleyhistory@verizon.net — or call us at 412-741-5315.
 We're open 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, or by appointment.