

3

HIKES
THRU

Wissahickon



B917.4811
F31t
C.1

FEDERAL
WRITERS
PROJECT

WPA PHILA. PA.





THE PENNSYLVANIA
STATE COLLEGE
LIBRARY



American Guide Series

3

HIKES THRU
THE WISSAHICKON

LIBRARY
The Federal Writers' Project
Works Progress Administration



Compiled by
The Federal Writers' Project
Works Progress Administration

Copyright 1936

B917.47

131

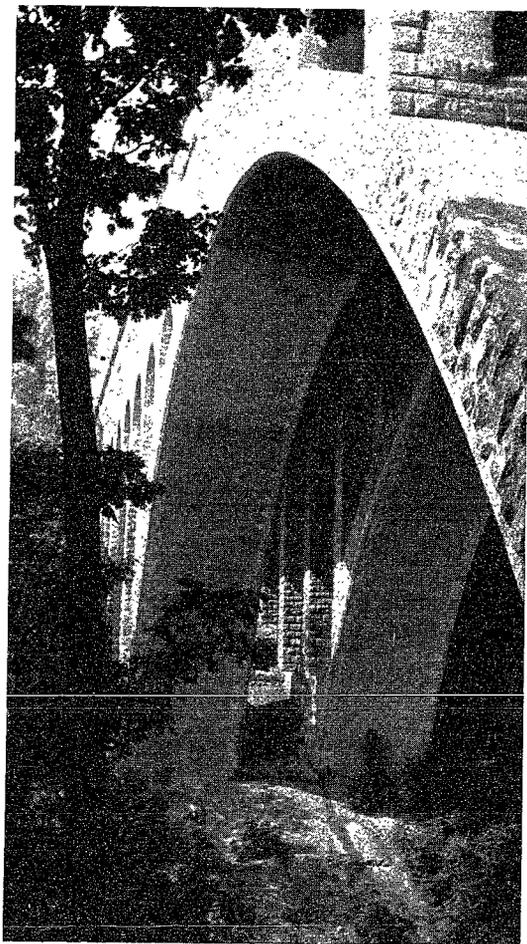
10.1

NOTE

THIS brochure, **3 Hikes Thru the Wissahickon**, has been selected from the Philadelphia Guide, one of the American Guide series of regional, state, county and city guidebooks being compiled by the Federal Writers' Projects of the Works Progress Administration.

The Philadelphia Guide, now being carried to completion by 130 writers, editors and research workers, will appear as a comprehensive volume of approximately 450 pages of text, 150 pages of maps and illustrations, and 50 pages of indices, bibliography, chronology and other informative material. It is designed to present an accurate and inclusive picture of Philadelphia, with its rich historic past and varied contemporary culture.

PHILADELPHIA
WISSAHICKON
HIKES
THRU
THE
WISSAHICKON



ARCHITECTURAL BEAUTY

Of Walnut Lane Bridge is detailed in this fascinating view from an unusual angle.

190108

The name, Wissahickon, lent by the creek to that section of the park through which it flows, from City Line to the Schuylkill, is of Indian origin. It is derived either from the Delaware word, "Wisaucksickan," meaning "yellow-colored stream" or "Wisamickan," the Delaware word for "catfish creek." The latter is the likelier because of the abundance of catfish it once supplied for Philadelphia's famous catfish and waffle dinners.

Though the Wissahickon's 1200 acres comprise less than one third of the total area of Fairmount Park, this section is longer than the main body of the park, extending for six and one-half miles, and its surpassing charm has been immortalized in song and story.

Whittier wrote of the Wissahickon in his "Pennsylvania Pilgrim;" Poe in his sketch, "Morning on the Wissahiccon;" Fanny Kemble, famed English actress, visited the valley in 1832, while appearing at the old Walnut Street Theatre, in Philadelphia, and sang its praise in her book on the United States; Christopher Morley, a native son and a contemporary, has endeavored to portray the valley's beauty in his writings.

Yet its story is untold; the song unsung—nor can the nature-lover retrace his own steps over the trails, however often, without observing new depths and new facets of its charm.

Perhaps no more apt impression can be obtained than that presented by the contemporary Philadelphia poet, Tom Daly:

"There earliest stirred the feet of spring,
There summer dreamed on drowsy wing,
And autumn's glories longest cling
Along the Wissahickon."

FOREWORD

THE Wissahickon Valley, untouched by glaciation which leveled other areas, has remained through the centuries unspoiled—in fact, enhanced—by successive occupations of red men, mystic monks and millers.

Today, but for such mementos of past epochs as the picturesque ruins of a few old mills and the legends of Indians and Pietists, the valley is again the rugged, uninhabited wilderness that it was before the power resources of its tiny torrent and the seclusion of its rocks and trees drew white men to its fastnesses.

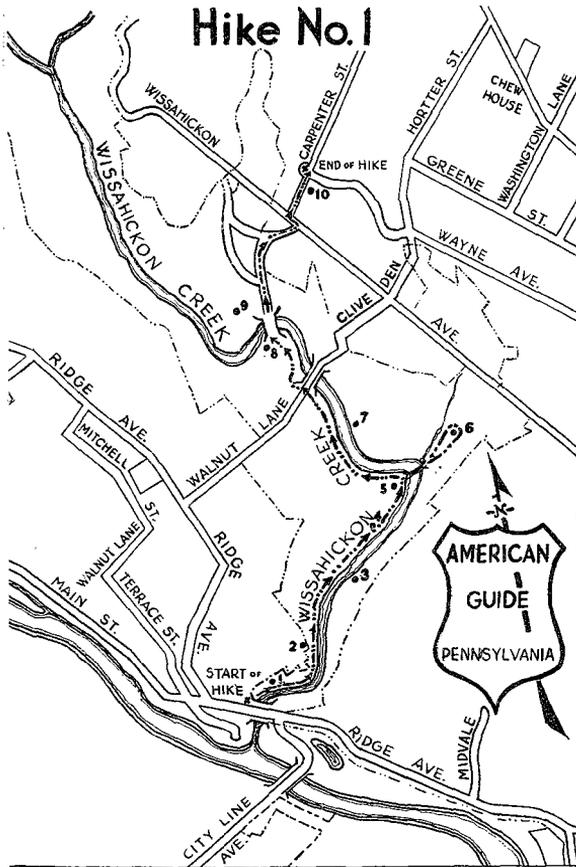
The valley owes its inherent beauty not alone to its great age but to the hardness of its underlying rock, which is a part of the Appalachian mass, believed to be one of the foundation strata of the North American continent.

Through this rock, reaching an altitude of 400 feet in the surrounding area, the spirited Wissahickon Creek has cut a narrow, irregular gash from 100 to 200 feet deep. The hard rock has retained the steep sides of the cliff-shadowed valley and its deep, narrow tributary gorges.

It is acknowledged the most beautiful section of the great 3,845-acre Fairmount Park system, which begins a stone's throw from City Hall and extends northwestward in ever-increasing width along both banks of the Schuylkill River until it reaches Columbia Avenue. The park attains its greatest breadth at this point and narrows gradually as it nears the Falls of Schuylkill, where the river swings abruptly westward, leaving to the park in its stead the scenic charm of its tributary, the Wissahickon.

WISSAHICKON

Hike No. 1



LEGEND

1. Waterfall
2. Canoe House
3. Hermit's Lane Bridge
4. Henry Avenue Bridge
5. Shur's Lane Bridge
6. Rittenhouse House
7. Walnut Lane Bridge
8. Kitchen's Lane
9. The Monastery
10. Car Loop

HIKING TOUR No. 1

(Approximately 4 miles)

ROUTE: Take Route 61 trolley car marked "Manayunk," northbound, at 9th and Market Sts., to the entrance of the Wissahickon Gorge at Ridge Ave. and Wissahickon Drive. Enter the path left of the falls and proceed along the creek. Returning: Leave the park at Kitchen's Lane and walk right to Wissahickon Ave. Turn left to Carpenter's Lane and at Wayne Ave. take Route 53 trolley, southbound, to Broad St. and Erie Ave., then Broad St. subway to City Hall.

THE WISSAHICKON VALLEY extends $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Ridge Avenue on the south to City Line on the north, with Manayunk and Roxborough on the west and Germantown and Mt. Airy on the east. Its northern extremity cuts through Chestnut Hill. (See map.)

Centuries of constant erosion created the rugged gash called the Wissahickon Valley, and its chief artisan was the creek that sparkles in its depth. In autumn the foliage on its ridges and slopes blazes with varied color. In winter the ice-covered shrubs and whitened tree boughs form a vista of vigorous beauty.

To the people of Philadelphia the park offers a place of recreation and rest from the routine of metropolitan life. Bridle paths and foot-trails are numerous. Bridges of wood and stone, high and low, ancient and modern, span the stream at intervals along its winding course.

Except for a mile on Wissahickon Drive, where it parallels the creek north of Ridge Avenue, automobiles are barred from the valley, though park guards are inclined to be lenient with visiting motorists unaware of this restriction. Persons coming to the Wissahickon by motor are permitted to park in the valley near points of entrance, but only horses, carriages, and pedestrians are allowed to traverse the drives along the stream.

To the right of the Ridge Avenue entrance the creek cascades over a dam in a thin sheet of silver before it empties into the nearby Schuylkill. Here the leftward path leads along the creek in the shadow of great overhanging rocks. Wooded cliffs loom high over the valley on the left. Along the opposite side of the creek winds the traffic of Wissahickon Drive.

Above the dam, like an ancient Roman viaduct, the stone bulk of the Reading Railroad Bridge spans creek and drive. A short distance beyond, the creek's flow is impeded by a small waterfall. On the left, a few hundred feet farther up, is a CANOE HOUSE, open from the beginning of April to late autumn. (Canoes, 75c. per hour, \$1.25 for 2 hours, \$1.50 for 3 hours. Rowboats, 50c. per hour. Daily from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.)

A cable ferry crosses to the drive in front of the old

WISSAHICKON HALL. This structure, formerly one of the numerous taverns and inns in the valley and a rendezvous for gay sleighing and carriage parties from the city, is now a station for park guards. Like other inns and taverns along the Wissahickon, it specialized in catfish and waffle dinners. Old-timers still sniff reminiscently when passing.

The cable ferry is a small flat-bottomed boat fastened to a pulley cable stretching from landing to landing. It is operated by hand, and accommodates as many as 10 passengers. Those wishing to reach the canoe house are carried free. Others pay 5 cents each for the trip. This primitive transport method lingers here almost in the shadow of a modern bridge across which railroad traffic roars, while not far distant the stacks of great industrial plants plume their smoke against the sky.

Since catfish have virtually vanished from the stream, trout fishing has become the Wissahickon angler's chief sport. In winter, skaters by the hundreds glide up and down the creek from near the falls to Henry Avenue Bridge.

North of the canoe house the path follows the gentle undulations of the ridge before descending finally to HERMIT'S LANE BRIDGE, a small stone span arching the stream. The trail swings left at the bridge to follow Hermit's Lane to the HERMITAGE ESTATE on the hill's crest. Opposite stands the HERMIT LANE NURSERY, on the right side of Hermit's Lane. Here the way turns along the Hermitage. A few yards beyond the fence corner a narrow, obscure path to the left leads downward about 150 yards to a cave. A spring bubbles from the rocks close by.

Johann Kelpius and his Pietist followers here founded the "Society of the Woman of the Wilderness." Popularly the group was called the "Hermits of the Ridge." A mystic of Siebenburgen, Germany, Kelpius came to America in 1694 to await the millennium, which he expected would arrive about 1700. With a group of devotees from Germantown he founded a colony on the Wissahickon, where members of the group practiced and taught magic, divining, and healing. They also cast horoscopes, and, according to The Rev. Henry Muhlenberg (Saschse's "German Pietists of Provincial Pennsylvania, 1694-1708"), "at the same time practiced alchemy." Kelpius engaged in gardening and developed the first botanical garden in what is now the United States. Several years after Kelpius' death a second garden was begun by Dr. Christoph Witt, one of his celebrated followers.

Kelpius established free schools in his colony, and his reputation as a saint and sage spread through the Delaware Valley. On the site of the present estate he and his companions constructed a "Tabernacle of the Mystic Brotherhood." Their piety, however, was touched with paganism. It was their custom on St. John's Eve to ignite a pile of leaves and pine knots on the wooded hillside. With the bonfire aglow, they flung flaming brands into the valley to signalize the ascendancy of the power of the sun.

Failure of the millennium to materialize did not affect the colony's growth. It thrived until 1708 when Kelpius, his slender strength sapped by severe exposure, succumbed to tuberculosis at the age of 35. Despite his youth he had been the force which kept the sect intact. After his death the community disintegrated, most of his followers returning to normal pursuits in Germantown. The rest lingered awhile in their old haunts before migrating to Ephrata, a gathering place for mystics, and today famous for its cloisters.

Kelpius was buried somewhere in the lower Wissahickon; the exact spot remains unknown. Should his grave ever be found, these lines from Whittier might well serve as an epitaph:

"Painful Kelpius from his hermit den
By Wissahickon, maddest of good men.

"Deep in the woods, where the small river slid
Snakelike in shade, the Helmstadt Mystic hid,
Weird as a wizard, over arts forbid."

Back at Hermit's Lane, a bridle path below the Nursery leads under the arch of the HENRY AVENUE BRIDGE, opened in 1932 and famed for its height and architectural beauty. It was designed by Ralph Modjeski, and is constructed of concrete and field stone, with a light limestone trim. Its single concrete arch, the highest in the country, forms a sweeping arc almost directly above Hermit's Lane Bridge. The bridle path continues past

LOVER'S LEAP, right, a rocky projection jutting into space—the summit of a mass of rocks which overhang the stream. According to legend an Indian girl and her lover jumped to their deaths from this rock when their marriage was prevented by a wily old suitor. There are those who like to believe that George Lippard, romancer of the Wissahickon, sought to defy the rock's legendary spell when, on a moonlit night in 1847, he was married there with Indian rites to his frail young sweetheart. Keipius used this eminence as a vantage point from which to study the heavens.

HENRY AVENUE BRIDGE, highest single concrete arch in the country, framing a rustic vista featured by the Hermit's Lane Bridge and its mirrored image in the creek.



The trail after leaving Lover's Leap descends gradually to an open field where a public golf course is being constructed. Here it meets Shur's Lane and Shur's Lane Bridge, more familiarly known as the Blue Stone Bridge, which has replaced an old covered wooden structure. From the center of this span camera shots can be taken of the Wissahickon in some of its most charming aspects.

Crossing Shur's Lane Bridge, the trail follows West Drive to a sharp turn in the creek, where it meets Lincoln Drive. Just inside the park is a bronze tablet commemorating a skirmish between Continental troops and a detachment of Hessians in 1777. The latter, an outpost for the British billeted in Philadelphia, occupied the high ground on the right of the creek. A brief account of the action is given on the tablet:

On the Morning of the Battle of Germantown
October 4, 1777

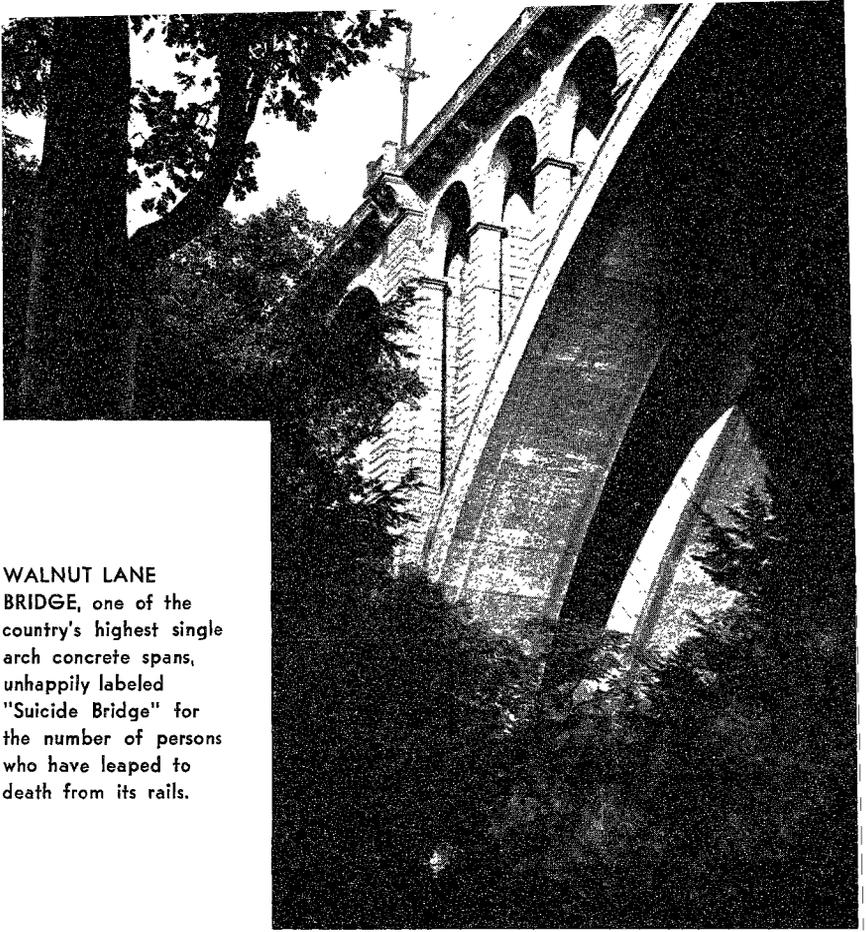
The Pennsylvania Militia Under
Gen'l John Armstrong

Occupying the high ground on the west side
Of the creek opposite this point engaged in a
Skirmish the left wing of the British forces
In command of Lieut-Gen'l Knyphausen
Who occupied the high ground on the
East side along School House Lane
Erected by the Pennsylvania Society of
Sons of the Revolution, 1907

About 300 yards up Lincoln Drive to the left is the RITTENHOUSE HOME, where lived the famous astronomer, statesman and clockmaker, David Rittenhouse. The structure, built of stone in 1707, has well withstood the ravages of time. A tiny brook called Monoshone Creek or Paper Mill Run, which tumbles through a moss-covered spillway along one side of the house, marks the site of the Rittenhouse paper mill, one of the first in the Colonies.

RITTENHOUSE HOME,
quaint, humble dwelling
of David Rittenhouse,
clockmaker,
statesman,
astronomer.





WALNUT LANE BRIDGE, one of the country's highest single arch concrete spans, unhappily labeled "Suicide Bridge" for the number of persons who have leaped to death from its rails.

The route turns back over Lincoln and West Drives, passing a spring of sparkling, clear water on the way to the Blue Stone Bridge. At the bridge the way turns right and continues along the right bank of the creek, where a footpath leads away from the drive under

WALNUT LANE BRIDGE, popularly called "Suicide Bridge," which is one of the highest concrete arches in the country. It rises in a simple crescent of beauty, its white surfaces shining in reflected sunlight. The bridge was opened in 1907. Its chief engineer was George S. Webster, and Henry H. Quimby was his assistant. Within recent years a number of persons have leaped from the bridge railings to death on the rocks of the valley.

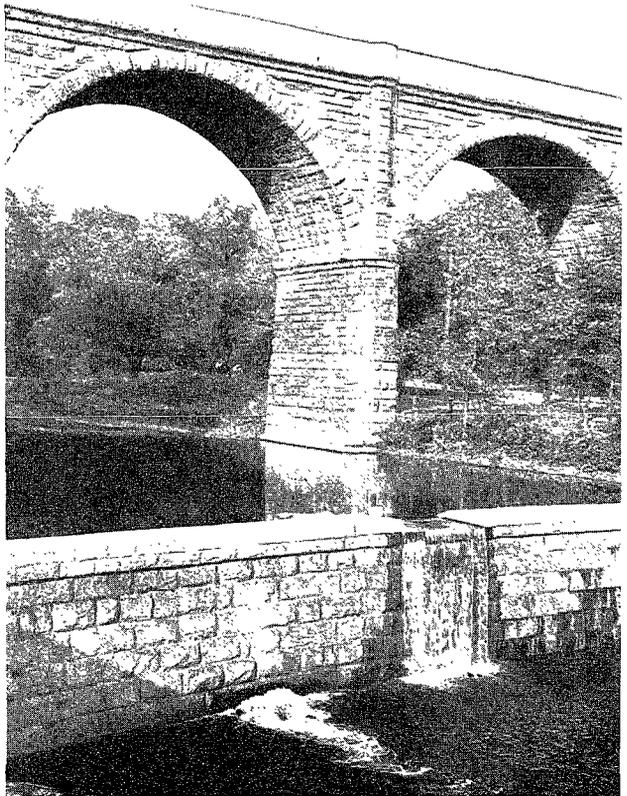
Beyond the bridge the trail parallels the creek, following a path-way cut into a rampart of high cliffs. A short distance onward the cliffs converge into a narrow gorge. Oaks and beeches blend with hemlocks to clothe the hillsides with shade and beauty. The path ends at Kitchen's Lane, just beyond

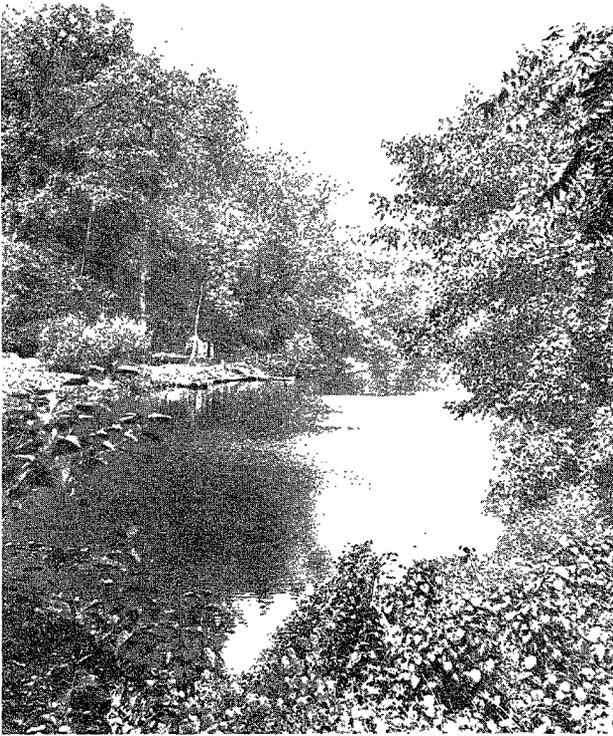
KITCHEN'S LANE BRIDGE, a picturesque span of trellised wood. Not far away, on a high, rocky cliff, stands a white stone statue of WILLIAM PENN, erected in 1883 by John Welsh, one-time American Minister to England. The heroic image, bearing the simple inscription "Toleration," occupies an eminence on

MOM RINKER'S ROCK, a massive stone shoulder that basks in sunlight long after the valley is dense with shadow. It owes its name to one of the many legends of Revolutionary times. Mom Rinker, says the story, was a shrewd old woman who day after day sat on the rock placidly knitting a piece of handiwork that never seemed to finish. Because of her innocent appearance she excited no suspicion among the British patrols guarding the army in Philadelphia.

Although she seemed occupied with nothing but her knitting, the legend continues, she actually was waiting her chance to drop a ball of yarn containing information on British activities down the rocky ledges to an American patriot waiting below. The Colonial, hidden from the patrols by trees and shrubbery, then carried the message to Washington's headquarters.

READING RAIL-ROAD BRIDGE, spanning both creek and drive above Ridge Avenue entrance to the park, with dam and small cascade in foreground.





CANOE HOUSE near Ridge Avenue is seen on the left bank of the creek from a point a few hundred feet down stream.

The trail continues to the right up Kitchen's Lane. High on the cliff to the left is the MONASTERY, built in the middle of the eighteenth century by Joseph Gorgas, a Dunkard, on the site of a cabin erected in 1737. Gorgas established here a Seventh-Day Baptist colony as a branch of that in Ephrata. This second hermit colony was founded about 20 years after the decline of Kelpius' community. It observed fasts and practiced a modified form of mysticism.

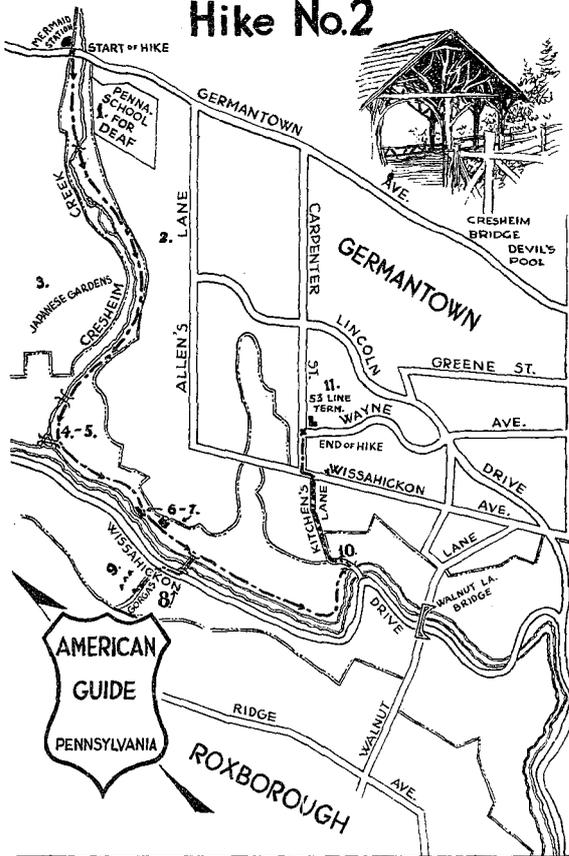
Converts were initiated into the order by baptism in a pool formed by the creek. The community lasted only a few years, after which most of the members went to the Ephrata Cloisters. The MONASTERY, built of wood and stone, now is used as a park guard-house.

A half-mile up the hill the trail turns left on Wissahickon Avenue to Carpenter's Lane. Right on Carpenter's Lane, it leads to the terminus of Route 53 trolley cars, and the end of a brief sojourn in the valley.

The visitor to the Wissahickon feels again the impact of commerce and industry and the tension of a fast-moving civilization.

WISSAHICKON

Hike No.2



LEGEND

1. Penna. School for Deaf
2. Butter Cup Cottage
3. Woodward Estate
4. Devil's Pool
5. Rustic Bridge
6. Valley Green Canoe Club
7. Livezey Mills
8. Allen's Lane Bridge
9. Caves
10. Kitchen's Lane Bridge
11. Car Loop

HIKING TOUR No. 2

(Approximately 3 miles)

ROUTE: Take Route 23 trolley car marked "Bethlehem Pike" or "Mermaid Lane" at 11th and Market Sts., and ride to Cresheim Drive. Walk left through Cresheim Valley to the Wissahickon Creek and follow the stream to Kitchen's Lane. At Kitchen's Lane Bridge turn left on Kitchen's Lane to Wissahickon Ave., then left to Carpenter's Lane and right to Wayne Ave. Take Route 53 trolley car southbound to Broad St. and Erie Ave., then Broad St. subway to City Hall.

CRESHEIM VALLEY is the age long work of Cresheim Creek, a tributary of the Wissahickon. It is much smaller and more peaceful than the Wissahickon Valley, and its slender stream, where the sun catches it unawares, sparkles like silver.

Except for a few hundred yards of paved roadway on Cresheim Drive from Germantown Avenue westward, the valley has never been landscaped, thus preserving the impression of nature in the rough—rambling and wooded. And there is added charm in the contrast between the wildness of the valley and the urban character of its surroundings.

On Emlen Street, past a small park of hemlocks, the way leads to BUTTERCUP COTTAGE, shielded by a vine-choked picket fence, at the head of Buttercup Lane. Near the junction of Emlen Street and Cresheim Road the trail shifts sharply right into a bridle path. Behind Buttercup Cottage lies another meadow where buttercups and wild strawberries grow in abundance in their season. In winter the meadow provides a panorama of glittering crystals. At sundown, the scene recalls Whittier's lines:

". . . the oxen from their ploughs
Rested at last, and from their long day's browse
Came the dun files of Krisheim's home-bound cows."

Excursions in the meadow can be made at random, but a convenient weed-grown trail skirts the creek and eventually climbs to the bridle path from Buttercup Cottage. The bridle path clings to a slope wooded with maple, oak, hemlock and beech, growing so densely that even at high noon the way is like a darkened corridor.

After a short distance the trail descends to a lower level, where a road entering the valley from the right joins the bridle path at a tunnel bridge. The bridle path turns left, but a footpath leads to the valley floor. The trail here is rough, littered with upthrusts of rock and exposed roots. Not much farther on the trail rejoins the bridle path under an iron highway bridge. Here the path drops sharply, and the creek, on the right, tumbles over a 10-foot declivity into a dark pool, the blackness of which is intensified by overhanging beeches.

Below the falls where a stone-guarded spring flows from the cliff, the bridle path turns right over a bridge. Beside the spring, to the left, a narrow footpath crosses a split-log bridge over a gulch and for some distance follows along the wooded hillside.

Beyond the bridge the bridle path skirts the creek. On the right a private road, with a "No Dogs Allowed" sign at its entrance, leads a few hundred yards uphill to the GARDENS of the Woodward Estate. They are free to visitors during daylight hours.

Upon the hillside sloping down to the creek the expertly tended flowers mass in deep contrast each spring and summer, their colorful and fragrant blooms. The wild and the cultivated—bishop's-hat and chickweed, violets and arbutus—grow side by side among the quiet terraced pools from which, level by level, clear waters cascade to the Cresheim. The route descends through the gardens and rejoins the bridle path where it fords the creek.

At the entrance to the drive stands an old stone fountain erected in memory of the Germans who settled the valley and named it "Krisheim" after their native village. An arbor forms a background for the fountain, and the outspread branches of a towering beech keep it in constant shade.

About 50 feet to the left of the fountain, beginning at German-town Avenue, a narrow footpath, parallel to creek and driveway, leads beneath a bower of trees. Through occasional openings in the wooded slope to the left loom the turrets of the PENNSYLVANIA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF.

Not far beyond the fountain a small park guardhouse stands in the fork of Cresheim Drive and another paved thoroughfare leading right, to Lincoln Drive. Left of the guardhouse the foot-trail passes under a stand of hemlocks and turns into Cresheim Drive. Here the creek also swerves and flows unseen but not unheard beneath a bridge to reappear on the right of the roadway.

The trail continues along Cresheim Drive, where tall beeches and hemlocks cover the slopes on the left, and the creek, now far to the right and down in the valley, can be faintly heard. Gradually the drive descends, finally leveling out and passing under a high railroad trestle. Lincoln Drive leads right, and Cresheim Drive merges with Emlen Street, an unpaved road.

As though weary of being cramped in narrow gorges, the valley spreads into a wide meadow of thick grass, daisies and black-eyed Susans, through which the creek meanders between retaining walls of field stone. On the meadow are assembled irregular clumps of weeping willows, their drooping boughs interlaced in an unbroken canopy of green. Though squirrels abound everywhere in the park, this meadow is a favorite playground, where they leap from ground to tree-trunk and from branch to branch to the sound of the singing wood robins and Kentucky warblers.

The creek suddenly widens into LAKE SURPRISE, fringed with water birches and clumps of tiger grass. Not far from the inlet a tiny island clustered with willows breaks the surface of the lake. At the outlet the excess water spills over a stone breastwork and continues its flow down the valley.

LAKE SURPRISE



Past the entrance of the WOODWARD ESTATE the bridle path penetrates a belt of woodland, where an immense stone chimney rears itself amid the trees. This pylon of field rock is all that remains of an old settlement. Emerging from the woods into an open meadow, opposite a hillside thick with evergreens, the path splits, one branch swinging sharply leftward, fords the creek, and leads to Kitchen's Lane. A foot-trail also crosses the creek and skirts the left bank. The route, however, follows the right branch of the bridle path away from the creek and over a hill.

After a short distance the bridle path descends to the creek, where a wooden bridge crosses the stream. Here several bridle and foot paths meet. The hiker follows the path on the left of the creek that is accessible only to pedestrians. Though it follows over precipitous slopes, the path has been beaten into a safe aisle by countless human feet.

The creek plunges on through the valley, now narrowing into gorge, now widening into glen. The path swerves toward and away from the stream, following the gentler slopes to a small open space, long used as a picnic ground. Though tables and benches are available, fires of any kind are prohibited by the Park Commission. From the picnic ground the trail ascends toward

DEVIL'S POOL, which the credulous believe bottomless. That, however, does not deter the neighborhood youngsters from using it as a swimming hole on hot summer days.

A wooden bridge shadowed by tall trees spans the creek at the pool. Its rails are covered with a mosaic of hearts, monograms, and initials carved, by lovers who frequent this secluded spot, as a lasting symbol of the depth of their affections. On the far side stands a rustic pavilion, and high above is a stone bridge which carries a pipe line over the narrow valley. Cresheim joins the Wissahickon a few feet beyond.

The trail continues along the left bank of the Wissahickon, hugging slopes sheltered by tall hemlocks and beeches and flanked by moss-coated rocks. Soon it reaches the VALLEY GREEN CANOE CLUB, housed in a structure built in 1696 and enlarged in 1747, and known variously as the Old Livezey House and "Glen Fern." This ancient building was the home of Thomas Livezey III, miller, poet and statesman, who purchased it in 1747. His descendants retained possession of the dwelling until the valley was dedicated to public use.

In 1909 the Livezey family helped found the canoe club now occupying the building. The club membership numbers about fifty business and professional men and is purely of a social nature. During the season several dozen canoes of various colors are stacked in rows near the clubhouse. The creek has been deepened and enlarged in the vicinity to provide better canoeing facilities.



OLD LIVEZEY HOUSE

Built in 1696, now home of Valley Green Canoe Club, founded in 1909 by descendants of Thomas Livezey, III, who purchased and enlarged the home in 1747.

Just off the creek, below the famous house, lie the ruins of the old Livezey Mill—long famed as the largest grist mill in the Colonies. Farther downstream, on the far side of the creek, stands a lone pier, the only visible remains of a bridge which 150 years ago carried farm wagons over the creek to the mill.

A flight of stone steps ascends sharply to where the trail again levels out on a higher plane, crossing a wooden bridge over a narrow gulch. In some places the trail is flanked by towering trees, and at other points gigantic rocks overhang the pathway.

Again the trail descends to the creek. It leads to ALLEN'S LANE BRIDGE, which must be crossed to reach a group of old caves in the cliffs above Gorgas Lane, to the right. The largest cave recalls the "gold rush" of more than a century ago, when a local "explorer" wandering through the glens of the Wissahickon came upon a glittering fragment of rock near the bridge. As a result hundreds of Philadelphians rushed to the valley and staked claims, expecting to carve their fortunes from the hills. Analysis of the metal hewn from the rocks showed it to be iron pyrites, or "fool's gold," a worthless substance found in abundance in many places.

The "prospectors" returned sheepishly to their homes—grub-sacks, picks, gold dust sacks and all. But before their feverish spades had dug the graves of their hopes they had made numerous small caves in the hillsides. In recent years these caves have often served as temporary abodes for wandering Gypsy bands.

The trail continues on the right bank of the Wissahickon along the drive to Kitchen's Lane Bridge, thence across the bridge and up the hill to Wissahickon Avenue. A half-block left of Carpenter's Lane, then right up Wayne Avenue, brings one to the end of the hike.



CAVE above Gorgas Lane

A quarter-mile down the valley looms the first of the tree-cloaked Wissahickon Hills. A few hundred yards farther on

BELL'S MILL ROAD BRIDGE, a low stone span, must be crossed to reach a wide bridle path shaded in season by walnut, oak, hemlock, beech and tulip poplar trees. Sheer cliffs rise above the roadway for a half-mile; across the creek the hills slope gently upward. In early summer the air is fragrant with violets. Farther on

THE OLD COVERED BRIDGE, known also as THOMAS MILL ROAD BRIDGE—relic of a day when the valley was the industrial center of Philadelphia—leans uncertainly over the water. Its dim recesses, lighted here and there by sunlight sifting through openings near the roof, seem to conjure up the shades of long-departed Colonial and pioneer. Through the bridge, and to the left behind a small stone house, a path swings up and along the hill to

INDIAN ROCK. According to legend some of the early Lenni Lenapes (named Delawares by the English) held tribal councils near this rock. Atop this massive formation crouches the stone figure of an Indian, tomahawk on bent arm and gaze fixed across the valley. The statue, that of Tedyuscung, famed pre-Revolutionary chieftain of the Delawares, is the work of Massey Rhind. It was erected in 1902 by Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Henry to replace the crude wooden figure that previously occupied the site.

In late afternoon, when the sun's rays project a belt of brilliance upon the forested heights, the arresting image of that sagacious but intemperate chieftain stands in white relief against rock and tree. Below the stone figure nestles a small cave, frequented by children "playing Indian" in the very shadow of the Lenni Lenapes' last great representative.

The statue is reached from the trail by a flight of stone steps. From the bottom of the steps the trail leads across INDIAN ROCK or REX AVENUE BRIDGE, and then left on the drive to one of the first drinking fountains erected in Philadelphia. The fountain, moss-covered and weathered, bears the inscription:

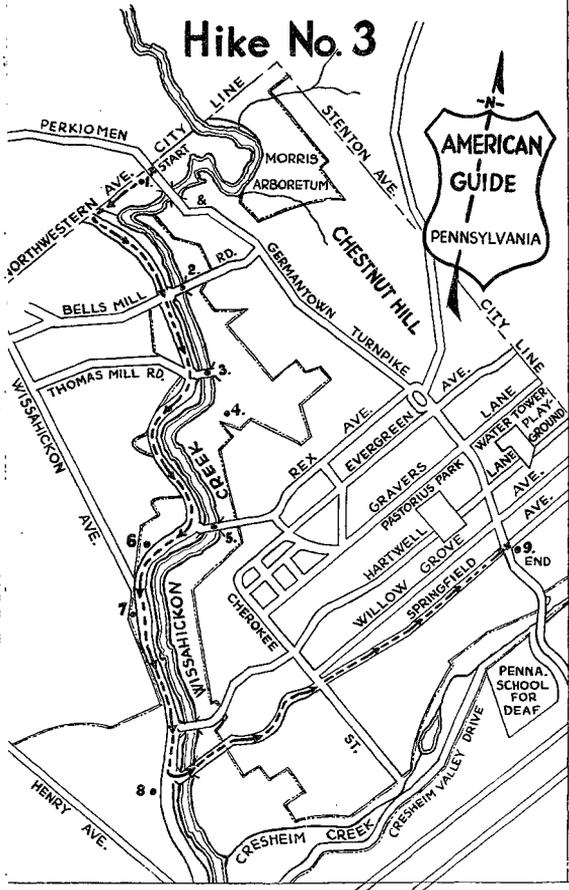
"PRO BONO PUBLICO A. D. 1854 ESTO PERPETUA."

Some distance below the fountain stands a slate-roofed Park guardhouse. Originally it served as an office for the last of the Wissahickon paper mills and now remains as a link between the present and the time when the valley hummed to the rhythm of a half-hundred water-wheels.

As early as 1690 the Wissahickon Valley became an industrial center, growing with the years. For almost a century and a half, while laden wagons and straining horses blazed highways of commerce to the valley, the gentle stream turned the wheels of mill upon mill, grinding corn into meal; pressing linseed into oil and changing wheat into flour.

WISSAHICKON

Hike No. 3



HIKING TOUR No. 3

(Approximately 3½ miles)

ROUTE: Take north-bound Route 23 trolley car marked "Bethlehem Pike" at 11th and Market Sts. At end of line transfer to Bus "X." Walk left to park entrance. Proceed down creek drive through park to Valley Green. Turn left over bridge and walk up Springfield Ave. Returning, take Route 23 trolley south-bound to Market St.

AT THE park's entrance a 20-acre tract known as Harper Meadow has been filled in and landscaped by WPA under sponsorship of The Friends of the Wissahickon. This is now being developed as a picnic ground and a recreation spot. Flowers and shrubs have been planted along the bridle paths. Hundreds of trees have been purchased and, as soon as they are large enough for replanting, will be distributed in the meadows.

A dirt road leading, left, from City Line into the park, skirts the meadows and slopes almost imperceptibly creekward under rows of oak and maple trees. Where the road meets the creek at a sharp bend a small open building to the left is being constructed as a shelter in which is to be placed, a memorial to William Warner Harper.



MIRRORED LOVELINESS

The soft charm of sun-dapple plumes of foliage along the creek-bank is redoubled by the clear reflection in the water's depths.

Such names as Paper Mill Run, Wise Mill Dam, Bell's Mill Road, Thorp's Lane, Levering Mill Lane, Livezey Lane, Righter's Ferry Road and a score of others perpetuate the memory of the Wissahickon's busy life in the days when sixty thriving industries drew power from the crystal water. The last of the Wissahickon's mills was the Megargee Paper Mill, removed by the Park Commission in 1884. With the departure of this final industrial milestone, the creek settled back to the quiet of former years and was given over to the service of those who come to dream and to delight in its manifold beauties.

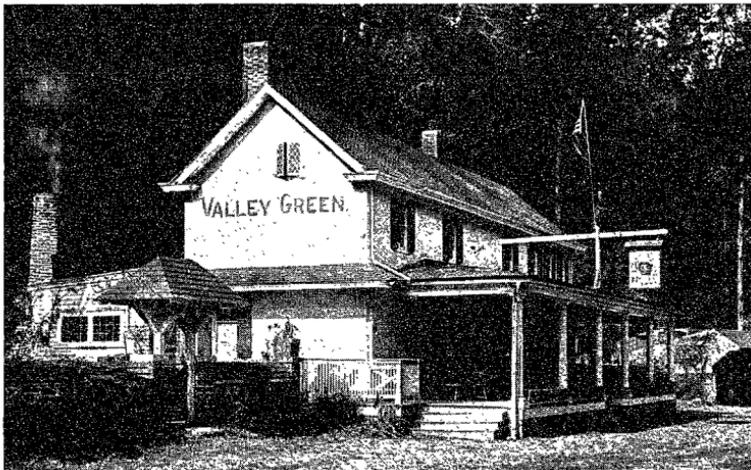
From the fountain it is an easy stroll down the drive past Hartwell and Springfield Avenue Bridges to VALLEY GREEN, an ancient tavern where light refreshments can be purchased. Though little remains of its original interior, the century-old structure retains in outward aspect a strong flavor of Colonial architecture. Its green, steep-gabled roof and green shutters contrast sharply with the white plaster of its facade.

Here the stream serves as a feeding ground for a colony of wild and tame ducks. On almost any summer day visitors can be seen lining the fence along the stream, watching delightedly as the ducks clamor and fight for the crusts thrown into the water.

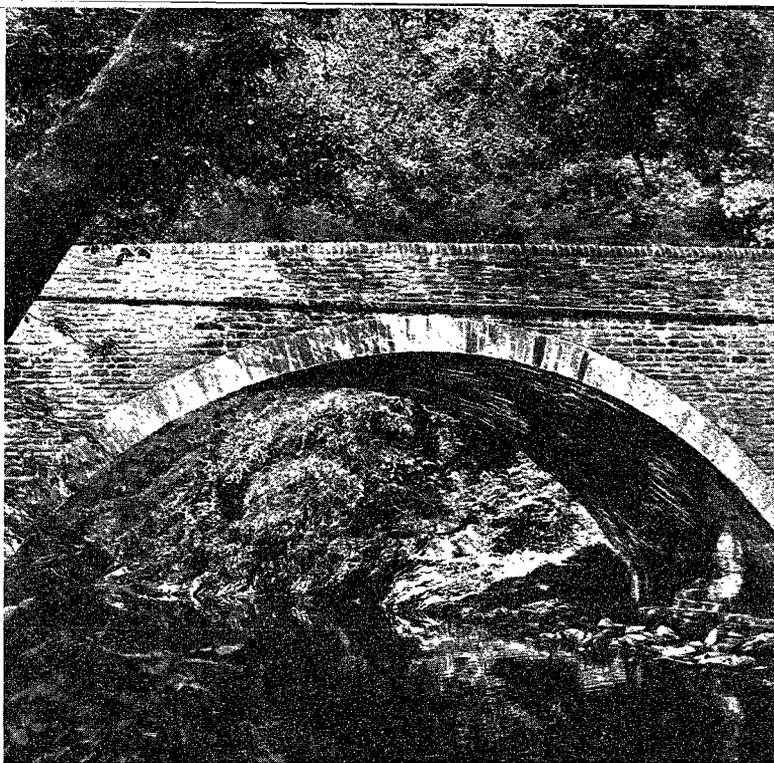
On the other side of the drive the slopes rise sharply, though not too steeply for climbing. Giant hemlocks, clinging to the hill-sides, shadow the inn and the creek even at midday.

Valley Green has long been a rendezvous for horsemen. Automobiles are allowed to cross Springfield Avenue Bridge to park at the tavern. Visits up and down the drive, however, must be made by horseback, carriage, bicycle, afoot, or, in winter, by sleigh. When snow cloaks the valley the inn becomes a gathering place for sleighing parties and devotees of snowshoe, ski and sled.

VALLEY GREEN INN, colonial hostelry which still provides refreshments for visitors to the valley.



SPRINGFIELD AVENUE BRIDGE, crossing the creek a little north of Valley Green Inn.



In nearby reaches of the creek trout fishing is popular. During the fishing season scores of fishermen in hip boots can be observed wading the stream, casting for the elusive trout in waters once teeming with catfish. To improve trout breeding a number of retards, made of twigs and stone, have been installed by the WPA, as well as runaways or "deflectors," which quicken the flow of water in sluggish places. These devices not only help to aerate the water, but provide shelter in times of flood. The stream is stocked annually, and fishing is permitted every Wednesday and Saturday during the trout season (April 15 to July 31).

Springfield Avenue Bridge is a stone span about 100 yards north of Valley Green Inn. After crossing this bridge the hike winds up Springfield Avenue through forested slopes. Some distance beyond the bridge, to the left of the roadway, stands the Wayside Shrine, thoughtful tribute of Mrs. Samuel F. Houston to the memory of World War dead. It is a tiny shelter perched atop a narrow shaft. Under the pedestal's sharp-gabled roof a diminutive soldier offers his crown of laurel to the thorn-crowned Christ.

Springfield Avenue leads uphill approximately a mile to Germantown Avenue, whence a 23 trolley car runs back to the city.