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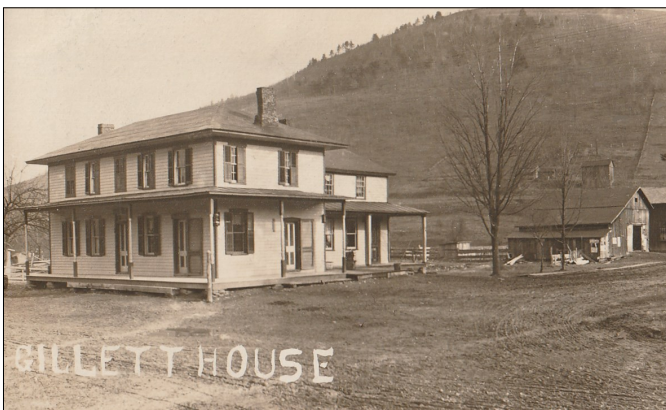
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## BCHA Party Line Volume 13 Issue 12 December 2023



***Christmas in the Village***— The weather forced this event inside but we were warm and dry. Visitors enjoyed the Live Nativity program, Jacob Gilpin's music, vendors, Bake Sale and refreshments. Thank you everyone for your support.

We are pleased to present Dave Lenington's General Store History



### **Gillett House, Gillett, Pennsylvania, Postmark 1907**

The village of Gillett was named in honor of Asa Gillett.<sup>5</sup> Mr. Gillett purchased the hotel which later was owned and operated by his son, John.<sup>5,6</sup> The hotel was a stage coach stop and eventually served as the post office.<sup>5</sup> The hotel, located on the corner of what now is Route 14 and the Thompson Hill Road, burned in 1914.<sup>6</sup>

In December Deb Lutz presented Dave Lenington's power point Silo research at the International Silo Association in Bird-in-Hand, PA. Perhaps you would enjoy knowing how this community became named.

The community was founded in 1734. The legend of the naming of Bird-in-Hand concerns the time when the Old Philadelphia Pike was surveyed between Lancaster and Philadelphia. According to legend, two road surveyors discussed whether they should stay at their present location or go on to the town of Lancaster. One of them supposedly said, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," which means it is preferable to have a small but certain advantage than the mere potential of a greater one; and so they stayed. By 1734, road surveyors were making McNabb's hotel their headquarters rather than returning to Lancaster every day. The sign in front of the inn is known to have once "portrayed a man with a bird in his hand and a bush nearby, in which two birds were perched," and was known as the Bird-in-Hand Inn. Variations of this sign appear throughout the town today.



**Dewey Brothers aka Strong & French  
Gillett, Pennsylvania**

Before it closed in 1964, Strong & French was “one of the few remaining old general stores” in the area.<sup>1</sup>

It had “been in the Dewey family since”<sup>1</sup>... Elmer Dewey and Charles Dewey built the store in 1898.<sup>2</sup> Elmer Dewey sold his portion of the business to his brother, Charles, in 1911.<sup>2</sup>

In 1921 Charles Dewey sold the business to his sons-in-law, Jesse Strong and Charles French. Mr. Strong died in 1946, and his wife, Mable, continued the partnership.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to groceries, the store inventory included hardware, work clothes, boots, shoes, parts for farm machinery, tools, roofing,<sup>1</sup> and fishing equipment.<sup>3</sup>

Charles French of Gillett said, “We sold just about anything.” “The farmers would all pull up stools and congregate around the register in the center of the floor and tell different yarns. No one was in a hurry in those days.”<sup>4</sup>

**E. C. Harkness General Store  
Gillett, Pennsylvania**

This general store was purchased from John Passmore by Earl Harkness in 1919. He ran the store until 1947 when his son, Wayne, and wife, Winnie, “took over and ran it” until 1960.<sup>1</sup>

**Interior of E. C. Harkness General Store**

“The wood floors were oiled, and the shelves are wood construction.”



**Did you Know?**

New York’s City’s Broadway is sometimes called the ‘Great White Way’. The nickname originated in the early 1900’s as a nod to the street’s electric lights. Broadway was one of the first streets in the city to be illuminated by white electric bulbs.

The internet slang acronym SMH means ‘Shaking My Head’. Commonly used online and texting, SMH is used to convey disappointment or embarrassment.

In 1914 show at the New York Theatre, entertainer and vaudeville actor Harry Fox performed a dance that consisted of fast, trotting steps. The dance became known as the Fox’s Trot.