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TO BECOME LIKE THE GARDEN OF EDEN

THIS LAND THAT WAS DESOLATE IS BECOME LIKE THE GARDEN OF EDEN:  
THE INSTANCE OF THE PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH

By

James M. Nyce, B.A.

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AUTHOR: James M. Nyce, B.A. (Northeastern University)

SUPERVISOR: Professor Richard J. Preston

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## ABSTRACT

Fogelson has noted that what characterized Hallowell's work in ecology was his interest "...in how human beings perceived nature and acted within a culturally constituted behavioral environment...a subbranch of ecological studies that is now being increasingly referred to as ethno-ecology" (1976:xiii). This thesis, it can be said, represents a contribution to the same area of ethnographic inquiry. It is concerned with why the Palatine and his descendants in North America (particularly those of the nineteenth century) perceived the wilderness as they did and how their acts of labor both reflected and expressed this conception of the natural world.



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The title has been taken from Ezekiel 36:35.

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## PREFACE

The conventional ethnographic form has been deliberately set aside here in order to describe as accurately as possible the mental processes which both support and sustain a people's interaction with the natural world. Before going on to show how the Palatine conceived of the wilderness and responded to it, several characteristics of ethnographic description need to be considered, for it can be shown that these features actually hamper our attempts to understand and to represent another people's conception of the natural world. Through demonstrating this, an alternative to the more conventional means of argument will suggest itself and presently be developed so that this study will obscure as little as possible the lineaments the wilderness has for those enmeshed in it.

The verisimilitude of any depiction of this interaction is hampered by two factors, the complexity of this ongoing process and the inability of conventional forms of description to adequately handle this level of symbolic action. The linear series of words which form the basis of ethnographic description can best approximate events that are serial in nature (Bateson 1958:3; Sapir 1921:226-227) rather than the interplay within a network of domains of shared meanings which situates a person in a given world (Sapir

1949[1927]:548).

To avoid confusion, it may be necessary to point out that all non-literary prose shares this characteristic (Frye 1957:332,337). To regard this problem as the result of certain inadequacies found only in the conventions of ethnographic description would be a mistake because this characteristic of narrative structure is common to all forms of written exposition. For this reason, the subsequent elaboration of the significance that the farm has had for the Palatine and his descendants in Pennsylvania is, by necessity, arbitrary and artificial (Bateson 1958:3). Since the manner of approach here is literary rather than discursive, the conventions are different. Symbolic action can as a result be more accurately represented.

When the reader believes that the conventions have been followed, "...the material 'disappears' [and]...we...move in the artistic medium as a fish moves in water..." (Sapir 1921:221-222). But when the reader does not recognize that a particular set of conventions are being employed, "the artist [seems to] transgress the law of his medium ...[and] we realize with a start that there is a medium to obey" (Sapir 1921:222). A kind of dissatisfaction presently sets in and although its source is difficult for the reader to pinpoint, the piece invariably is deprecated and regarded as flawed.

However difficult it will be to represent or to describe

the significance of the farm, it is apparent that the desire and concerns of a group of men are expressed through the figure of the farm and that this traditional design is responsible for the shape that the wilderness begins to assume. The appearance then that the world has for an individual at any given moment depends on the immediate convergence of the several dimensions of meaning which the farm here mediates. This essay will attempt to describe these dimensions of meaning and consequently will be concerned with how the farm organizes the environment and provides orientation for the self in relation to a conception of the natural world.

However for reasons which have already been discussed, the convergence which characterizes experience for a people is difficult to represent. Nevertheless, the available historical and ethnologic material can be arranged to provide a semblance of continuity which would approximate the one that the farm, as a frame of reference, provides for the self.

## CHAPTER ONE

Even the first Germanic settlers to come to the colony of Pennsylvania had a clear idea of how they desired to alter their surroundings (Klees 1950:193). The response these people made to the wilderness was not simply an expression of anxiety, the emotional or psychological need to escape from an unintelligible situation, but rather an expression of a positive desire, the reordering of an environment to make it conform as closely as possible to a traditional design. The labor of these people upon the frontier both reflected and rested upon the figure of the Palatine<sup>1</sup> farm which they had in the back of their minds (Klees 1950:193). Consequently this model is responsible for the transformation of the wilderness into a particular form of human nature.

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1. "The geographical borders of the Palatinate at that time [the early eighteenth century] exceeded the present limits of the Rhenish Palatinate, which is today a part of Bavaria...Mannheim, Heidelberg, Worms, Alzei, were within its borders. Its area was about 340 German square miles, a little less than the area of the present state of Massachusetts, and the number of inhabitants about 500,000.....The emigrations from the Palatinate for a time surpassed in extent those from all other parts of Germany, so much so that in England and America emigrants from Germany were commonly called Palatines..." (Faust 1927:53-54, I).

This thesis will attempt to show how this occurred. However to understand why the farm is being approached from such a perspective, it is necessary to consider how this farm has been studied in the past.

The literature on the Pennsylvania German farm has mainly been concerned with its architecture and the manner in which it was built. One study (Brumbaugh 1933) for example has dealt with the arrangement of the land and the layout of the individual buildings which together constitute the farm. Although Long (1972) adhered to this approach, his study more than its predecessors indicated the significance that the farm had for those who worked it.

However, as Yoder (1971-72:14) has pointed out, neither Long nor anyone else has discussed the farm as the organizing principle of rural life. That so few attempts have been made to discuss the farm as a frame of reference is not surprising, but rather indicative of the direction in which Pennsylvania German studies have continued to move i.e. towards the collection and study of particulars and away from any kind of synthesis that would reproduce for the reader the setting in which these objects were used and traditions given credence.

In the ethnological literature, the manner in which man establishes a system of meaning through which

he interprets experience has been discussed (Douglas 1973). More recently in a study of the relationship between description and interpretation (Watson-Franke and Watson 1975), the premises upon which work of this kind rests have been questioned. Because this discussion helped determine the manner in which the farm was to be studied here, it needs to be reviewed.

From a variety of perspectives, the papers in the collection Douglas edited (1973) approach the problem of how a particular notion of the world is imposed upon the physical environment and maintained. Of these papers, those which come from her own discipline were among the least convincing.

To understand why this is the case, it is necessary to see how anthropologists have handled this problem. Generally, when the question is raised, man is thought to reduce the physical world to a natural order by running it through a taxonomy of cognitive classes.

To view the way in which man transforms the physical environment into a personally meaningful universe through such a framework reduces what in actuality is an intricate and ongoing process to an operation of cognition. Other factors such as feelings and motives are also involved and need to be taken into account. To neglect them simply because they cannot be handled



theoretically as well as cognition, Watson-Franke and Watson argue (1975:249-250,253), would impoverish our understanding of these events and would only exemplify the consequences of relying upon a narrow, deterministic framework of explanation.

In other words, to regard the assimilation of the wilderness to a human design from such a perspective obscures that description of the world which structures a people's perception and subsequent transformation of an environment. However, if we can refrain from imposing our categories upon another set of meanings, our rationale for behavior upon another set of actions, in short our interpretation of the world upon another, the nature of this other world can for a moment show through.

Although the farm has been seen as the primary social and economic unit (Klees 1950:193-194; Long 1972: xii), its importance cannot be wholly accounted for in these terms. Because for the Pennsylvania Dutch, it will be argued here, the farmstead also invests the environment with a particular human design and meaning.

In other words, the interaction that these people have with the natural world is determined and structured through the metaphor of the farm. Following Burke (1957), metaphor is seen as both a figure and a frame through which various perspectives of experience are organized

and integrated for the person. The role that the farm has here, has grown out of the manner in which their forebears experienced and dealt with the wilderness that was eastern Pennsylvania.

Although the frontier is commonly associated with the West, it was until the middle of the eighteenth century only seventy miles north of Philadelphia (Klees 1950:153). Consequently, the Germanic immigrants of the time who moved north, apparently along Indian trails (Lawton 1969:38; Long 1972:11), found themselves confronted with, for the first time, the wilderness. That students of the Pennsylvania Dutch have not given either this encounter or its possible significance much thought is disappointing considering that the wilderness both as a natural condition and a symbolic construct deeply affected these Germanic settlers. Even if a large body of material existed on this topic, it would still be difficult to reconstruct the impression that the wilderness made on a people some two hundred years ago.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to come to some understanding of the significance that the wilderness had for these people. The territory which this early wave of settlement covered has either been regarded as property (Lawton 1969:39) or simply a natural environment (Brendle 1922). Hallowell (1948:356-357) argues that the descrip-

tion of any human habitation in materialistic terms such as these does not exhaust its significance. Man, he believes, invests any region he inhabits, even a frontier, with a particular meaning and this meaning cannot be entirely described in these terms. In other words, the perspective that has been employed by students of these people, while necessary to come to any understanding of the region, tells us little about the personal meaning which the wilderness had for its original European inhabitants.

The area where they settled has also been described as a portion of a specific county, a designation that marks the assimilation of an environment into a human affair. This process of assimilation, which Frye (1971a:199) has described as one of material and imaginative digestion, proceeded relentlessly once set into motion. But for the time being, the natural world appeared to the settlers as something set over and against them. This expanse of forest and earth, therefore, remained a wilderness; something that the Palatines did not feel related to in any way and consequently felt they had little part in.

These immigrants had not seen either the frontier or Philadelphia before. But cities at which they had landed and then travelled on from, had already become

part of their experience.<sup>2</sup> The city, even for the provincial among them, had acquired through the course of their lives a personal meaning: Philadelphia therefore, was at the same time something both familiar and unwonted. On the other hand, the wilderness little resembled what the Palatines had known and thereby could identify with. For this reason the wilderness appeared impenetrable, and to impose a human design upon it seemed beyond their ability.

The wilderness appeared to have a shape and a meaning but, to borrow a phrase from Northrop Frye (1963a: 3), it did not have a human shape or a human meaning. In this way the wilderness was different from any natural condition, even the forests of the Palatinate they had previously known.

The landscapes of the early eighteenth century portray southern Germany as being wholly assimilated to a human design. Spindler more recently described the

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2. From both England and the Netherlands a number of Palatines left for Pennsylvania and in 1683 Germantown, the first German settlement in the New World, was established (Faust 1927:30,34-5,I). After the War of Spanish Succession (1707) some thirteen thousand of these people left the Rhineland for England (Faust 1927:73,78,I) and in 1709-1710 thirty-six hundred German Protestants were sent to New York and the Carolinas (Faust 1927:79-80,I). Every year from 1710 to 1724 as many as eight thousand persons from the southwestern part of Germany, the Palatinate, Wurtemberg, Baden and Switzerland (Order indicates relative numbers) emigrated to Pennsylvania (Faust 1927:53,111,I). Whether they embarked for America from Dutch or English ports, they first travelled down the Rhine to the Netherlands and from there left the continent (Faust 1927:68-69,I).

Rhenish woods and the environment generally in much the same terms. "This forest", he says, "like everything else in the Remstal is cultivated for human use" (1973: 14). The agreement between these two quite different forms of description suggest that this is indeed an accurate representation of this area.<sup>3</sup>

Consequently, the Germanic settlers found themselves confronted with a natural condition that had little resemblance to their native homes.<sup>4</sup> Most likely the wilderness would have appeared to have been its anti-thesis, a land where nature did not at all conform to a human ideal.

It seems that the Palatines were confronted with dense, unbroken forests (Klees 1950:194; Long 1972:11). Because for centuries the dark woods in western tradition have represented the feral condition (Nash 1967:2; Piehler 1971:75-77,113-117), it is hardly surprising that the Germanic immigrant disliked and feared this environment. Also the woods were believed to be owned if not actually ruled by other-than-human persons whose inten-

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3. That an entire countryside can become subject to an aesthetic order has been suggested before (Frye 1963a:4,52) and the present day appearance of at least one other European countryside has been explained in this way (Piehler 1971:99-100).

4. Not only was the forest outside of their experience but often the flora which comprised it was unfamiliar to them as well (Raup 1938-39:2).

tions regarding man were often unintelligible and at best ambivalent (Nash 1967:10-13; Super 1911:73).

As a result, these people found themselves in a world that for them had no apparent rationale. Despite the fact that the wilderness was not objectively fraught with danger and individuals did not generally suffer from want (Lemon 1972:150-151), a Palatine would feel alone and unwanted. In short, he was unable to identify with the new environment, to conceive of it as part of himself and he, a part of it.

This kind of awareness is the result of the self being split off from everything other than its own perceptions. Simply, the Germanic immigrant, although capable of apperception, could not relate to this environment on the basis of previous experience and therefore is unable to participate in it meaningfully. For this reason his habitual state of mind is one of feeling separated from the environment.

However, for the immigrant, to paraphrase Frye (1963a:4) the feeling that "the world is not part of me" soon becomes "this is not what I want". In other words, he realizes that there is a difference between the world he finds about him and the one he desires to live in. The Germanic settler then erects shelter, at first often a crude dugout scooped from a hillside and hews a clearing

wanted there. The flora no longer appeared as an undifferentiated mass of vegetable life because the physical environment had become categorized according to a traditional design which mediated human need and desire. Because this process of classification both resulted from and informed the labor of these Germanic settlers, its categories were neither cognitive or affective but rather both at once. Through such actions, the self no longer remained detached from the environment but instead came to participate in it in a manner determined by past experience. As a consequence, the wilderness began to assume a human definition.

There is, however, a dialectic involved here. Here the example Frye customarily uses (1957,1963a,1963b,1971a) to illustrate this point (that of weeds in a garden) has been extended. The concept of the garden developed the conception "weed" and clearing the land made the remaining forest seem even more ominous. The categories into which a physical environment were divided and the meanings they were assigned not only depended upon the goals of a person's labor, in this instance a well-tended garden and the assimilation of the wilderness to a traditional design. They also try to define the obstacles to fulfilling one's desire; the presence of weeds, plants which disfigure the garden, and the encircling forest.

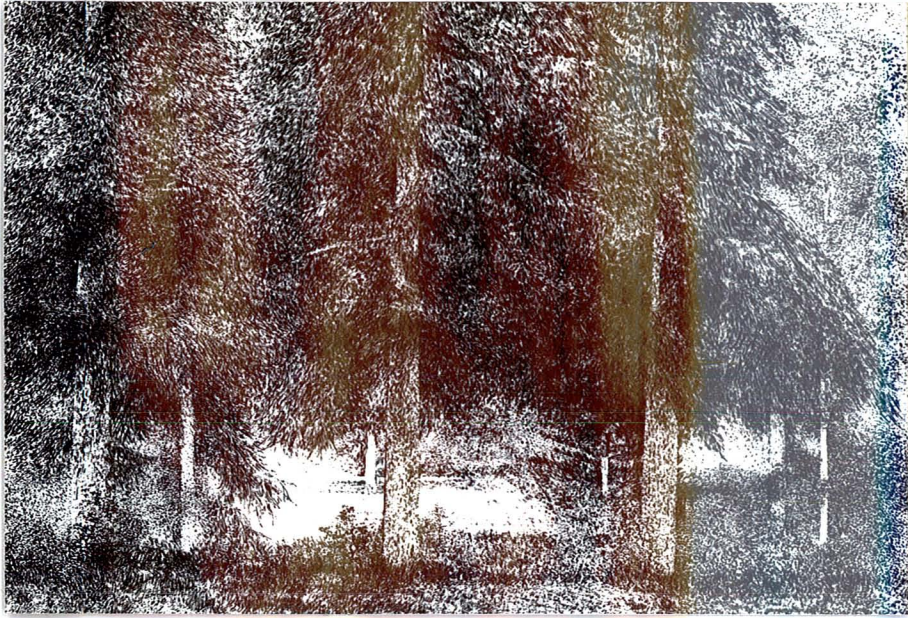
Farming and gardening then not only provided necessary foodstuffs but also exemplified the drive to transform the environment into a world of human meanings. This drive which Frye has called desire

"...has nothing to do with the biological needs and wants of psychological theory but is rather the impulse toward what Aristotle called telos, realizing the form that one potentially has" (1963b:152).

This partly conscious, partly unconscious working out of a human design immanent in the traditions of a people underlay and shaped the Germanic settler's cultivation of the wilderness.

Although the majority of these people were Lutheran and Reformed (Yoder 1956:40), they, like the Sectarians who came to America with them, were deeply affected by the Radical Reformation of the sixteenth century and this to a large extent determined the design that the settlers would fashion out of the wilderness. The conversion of the disorder of the wilderness into a garden is a theme that runs through the Old Testament (Williams 1962:14) and those that moved further from Catholicism than either Luther or Calvin took it quite seriously (Williams 1962:65). This theme provided a motive for emigration (Williams 1962:94) and when German colonists established





Leaving the Grove  
Richard Claude Ziemann



Farmlands I  
S. L. Carson

farms in the wilderness it both informed and supported their enterprise (Williams 1962:70). This of course exemplifies the Judeo-Christian position that man, because he is the climax of God's work, has dominion over all living things and can, indeed should, impose his order upon the natural world (Glacken 1967:150,152).

The present argument can be summarized emblematically in the transition from wilderness to a county<sup>5</sup> which has often been the subject of American landscapes (Marx 1964:220-222; Nash 1967:81-82). This transition, of course, is not from absolute nature to an absolute order and is perhaps best represented in the movement from Leaving the Grove by Richard Claude Ziemann to S.L. Carson's Farmlands I. The unbroken forest overshadows at first a regular, rectangular clearing which only suggests a human intrusion and the nature of that intervention. To paraphrase Frye (1971a:200) what is essential in Ziemann is an imaginative instability; the uneasiness and dissatisfaction, that tension of mind, which comes from not yet having a land of one's own.

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5. Not only is a county a political, judicial and administrative unit, it is also a domicile that generations of men have fashioned out of the natural world.

The azoic<sup>6</sup> for Carson has become a domicile shaped according to a human design but not yet wholly assimilated to that traditional design. For although her farmlands reflect a pattern of human need and desire, mountains figure in the background and remain separated from the fields and meadows by only an indeterminate darkness. The spectre of the wilderness, it seems, continues to dwell not simply in the forested hills, or beyond one's own property, but also as an imaginative category which determines, in part, a person's response to this world.

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6. In a strict sense, the Azoic is a geologic period when there was no life at all. Here it refers to an environment that man has not yet occupied and arranged to suit his own needs and desires.

There was little in the forest to appeal to the romantic. It was completely empty. It had never been humanized, like the woods of Europe.....In an unfamiliar region it is always necessary for the stranger to begin at once to construct the familiar...

A Burnt-Out Case  
Graham Greene

## CHAPTER TWO

When Silvestrius, the twelfth century commentator on the Aeneid, discusses the sixth book; he, according to Piehler (1971:77), describes the Trojans who cut down the trees in the wood as philosophantes, as those who through their labor impose a design upon nature. Acts of labor accordingly do not so fully represent a technique but are moreover grounded in and reflect the meaning that the world has for a group of people.

Turner argued (1921:2,4,9) that what distinguished the American people from their European forebears was their encounter with the wilderness. Although the frontier since Turner has been seen as the force that moulded the American character, few attempts to demonstrate this have been made.

Smith believed (1950:123-124) that a people's response to the frontier was determined as much by what they conceived it to be as by its actual dimensions. Marx (1964) and Nash (1967) have been concerned with the place of the wilderness in western tradition and how it structured man's interaction with the American wilderness.

Few people, however, have described the significance the wilderness has had for a specific group of people or shown how their encounter with it affected them. This is important and needs to be considered.

The wilderness for the Palatines is not simply a physical entity, for the forest in western thought has long been seen as a place of chaos, where the darker side of man not only prevails but reigns (Nash 1967:29-30; Piehler 1971:73-76). The forest in northern European experience took on many of the attributes of the Biblical desert (Williams 1962:66); it was "...beyond God's presence and somewhat beyond his control..." (Williams 1962:14) and consequently was a realm of disorder and the demoniacal (Williams 1962:13-14).

To remain in this forest for too long is to become part of it. The rather horrible merging of tree and man, one of the other-than-human persons who lived on the margins of their world, has been eloquently portrayed (Rackham 1916:77) and perhaps best exemplifies this loss of identity. There are, however, other figures which represent this disintegration of the self. The Wild Man, that combination of feral and human characteristics which traditionally inhabited the wilderness of medieval Europe (Nash 1967:12-13) was encountered by these people and their descendants in the forests of



Pennsylvania (Anon. 1874; Townsend 1949 [1871] :3 [AS] ).<sup>7</sup>

Nevertheless, through clearing the woods, man can gain mastery over the forest and himself because, through labor, features of this environment become named and are ordered. Silvestrius implies, in the epithet he gave the Trojans, that the chaos which is the wilderness can only be resolved through a systematic framework which determines the manner in which it is named and ordered. Similarly, it has been noted that "this philosophy stems to all departments of life and things around [the Germanic settlers], even to the geology..." (W.M.F. 1952 [1837] :6) and is responsible for the meaning that these people impose upon the world and the appearance which the forest assumes as a result.

The English, Scotch-Irish and Germanic settlers along the frontier were never, even in the best of times, particularly close. Even when the Irish called upon their Dutch neighbors on holidays in the nineteenth century, they did so, according to Power, only to inquire whether "Any gintlemen in the place might be inclined for a fight" (1836:114,I). Nevertheless, items of material

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7. Dr. Don Yoder of the University of Pennsylvania recommended additional sources and suggested that the files of Alfred Shoemaker, now at Ursinus College, Collegeville, Pa., be consulted. In instances where material collected by Dr. Shoemaker has been used, the citation is marked [AS].

culture and technique were frequently exchanged (Glassie 1968:47; Yoder 1956:36-37).

As a result, girdling, the method of deforestation used by the English and Scotch-Irish, was known to the Palatines (Brendle and Lick 1923:29). It, however, was not adopted because the procedure did not leave the land clean. That this would be reason enough for these people not to clear the forest in this fashion shows that this desire to impose order upon the natural world pervaded and determined their responses to the wilderness.

The forest held out against and at times would not succumb to the desire of these people to transform the wilderness into a farmstead. Clearing the land then is not simply necessary but exemplifies the desire of the Palatines to have the elements of nature conform to this traditional design. One result of this was trees were cut down and their roots removed from the ground (Rush 1789:23; Shryock 1939:47). Those that were not needed were then burnt (Rush 1789:23).

A tree that had to remain in the field or a stump which could not be removed was often fenced in (Rush 1789:23). When kept in by a high fence, "...young forest trees are suffered to grow, to replace those that are cut down for the necessary use of the farm" (Rush 1789:23). Trees, it seems, even when enclosed and fostered, remain



part of the forest and consequently bring the wilderness to mind. For that reason, they are never entirely above suspicion.

Marking off stumps can prevent a plow from being broken in a field and fencing in a woodlot could protect it from cattle (Rush 1789:23) which grazed freely over most of the year (Klees 1950:197). It could be argued that these forms of labor were employed and became characteristic of the Germanic farmer because they enabled him, given the knowledge and technological level of the Palatines, to make the most of a familiar technique and an available resource. But such an argument is not sufficient to the problem, and although these people made use of trees, to them they represented that which man could never wholly order, and for this reason they were not considered a natural resource.

Many of the Germanic immigrants were unfamiliar with the fence, particularly the wooden fence, as an enclosure (Long 1972:57) and this practice, like other elements of material culture, was borrowed from other people (Faust 1927:40,I). They, however, resorted more frequently to fences than the people from whom they learned the technique and the fences they put up were more finely made (Rush 1789:23). "...The vast amount of labor expended by the farmers and craftsmen in erecting

such [fences]..." (Long 1972:60) indicates how important it was to these people that the wilderness be physically enclosed and thereby delimited properly. Such means of imposing order upon the natural world appear to be characteristic of the Palatines and exemplifies their desire to arrange features of the environment to conform as closely as possible to a traditional design.

Although Long observed (1972:49) that "fruit trees had a definite and appropriate place within the area of the yard and garden", he did not realize that both the location and its propriety are determined by the Germanic conception of a farm. From this perspective, other trees do not belong in the yard of the farmhouse. If such a tree had to be left standing, it was negated and somehow domesticated. Branches would be lopped off (Klees 1950:323) until nothing even reminiscent of a tree remained and (often well into the nineteenth century) it would be whitewashed (Long 1972:480) to a height of four or five feet (Keyser 1971:4).

The Pennsylvania Dutch, as the following shows, have continued to equate order with the trimming and whitewashing of trees. A friend of one of my father's uncles came to visit him while Uncle Pete was staying at the Silver Birch Inn in the Poconos. The inn stood in a grove of trees and its name was taken from the silver

birch which surrounded it.

Uncle Pete's friend, as Pete's sister tells the story, became impressed with the way the owner ran the inn and the condition in which it was kept. At one point he turned to Uncle Pete and, not realizing that the trees were silver birches, observed that the proprietor had even taken care of the trees. Silver birches, of course, naturally have no limbs except at the crown and their trunks are an off-white color.

Although whitewash was regarded as having prophylactic qualities (Klees 1950:197), it was more frequently used to preserve and improve the appearance of fences and buildings (Keyser 1971:4). Paint until quite recently was scarce and expensive (Long 1972:480). The "universal custom" among these people of using whitewash has been remarked upon (Bernard 1887:248) and has as its purpose that, in Hoffman's words again, of "cleanliness and appearance" (1889:26[AS]).

"It was rather a common thing to whitewash trees, especially those growing in the yard or garden" (Anon.: 1877:67[AS]). This was done after the fences and out-buildings had been whitewashed but with the same material (Anon. 1877:67[AS]). In other words, whitewashing the few trees left near the farmhouse was an attempt to have them become more like parts of the farm than manifestations

of the wilderness. This characteristic form of labor then is due more to the desire to have the elements of nature conform as closely as possible to a traditional design than to a technique to protect these broken trees from insects and disease.

The trees nevertheless remain, for a world can never be wholly fashioned into what man desires (Duvignaud 1972:20,24). Man, through the labor most characteristic of him, attempts to complete this humanization of reality (Frye 1970:174). His works, however, can only conform to this design as closely as the circumstances allow, and what cannot be transformed to this extent in some way has to be negated.

For example, trees in the orchard were often grafted. There might be as a result two kinds of apples or cherries on the same tree. Quite simply, such trees not only have been worked over, but have been re-arranged to suit man as well. Orchard trees in the nineteenth century were named after members of the family and were referred to by their proper names (Shuey in Yoder 1965 [1876]:26). In this fashion, they were brought into the family and consequently no longer were part of nature.

To recapitulate, the wilderness, after having a forest cut down, was opened and became a clearing. Any grove that remained would be fenced in and then looked

after as a woodlot. A tree that remained in the field would simply be enclosed while one left near the house would be dismembered and whitewashed. While the tree in the field was left to follow its natural course of development, in the second case it was not. The tree there represented the end that man labored towards more than the consequences of its own development.

As Maranda found in traditional Finland (1967:87, 90-91), the degree of order that is imposed increases from clearing, through woodlot, fields, orchard, garden to the farmhouse and from her remarks it is inferred that the need to impose order follows the same progression. Although the world can never entirely conform to man's desire, the extent to which this design can be realized is evident in the passage from wilderness to nineteenth century farmhouse, from forest to garden. The last instance best exemplifies the transition from wilderness to domicile and for this reason the garden needs to be considered more closely.

The kitchen garden was enclosed (well into the last century) by a whitewashed fence (Keyser 1971:4) and could only be entered through a gate (Long 1972:38). Inside the enclosure were generally four (although six were not unheard of [Keyser 1971:5]) square or rectangular beds of equal size separated from each other by a path,

which like the fence, went around the garden beds (Long 1972:38). Between the fence and this outer path was a narrow bed of herbs and flowers which also encircled the garden (Keyser 1971:5).

The manner in which the garden was set out and maintained has also been described.

"Much time was spent by the housewife making sure that the edges of the beds were straight and the sloping sides neat. Some women even went to the extremes of running strings to keep the edges of the bed straight" (Keyser 1971:6).

Conversely, this insured that the paths would remain in good order and the same width, never less than a foot (Keyser 1971:6), but no more than two feet across (Long 1972:40), in any garden. Similar care was also given to the laying out of the garden so that it would be as symmetrical as possible (Klees 1950:399).<sup>8</sup>

A board three to four inches wide and the length of the garden bed (Keyser 1971:8) would be put down between straight and evenly spaced rows (Klees 1950:399) where work had to be done (Long 1972:40). Depending on what needed to be done, the farmer's wife or the children

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8. One eighteenth century observer noted in reference to their farms and gardens that "description cannot convey a correct idea of the elegance of their management" (Preston in Barbara 1947[1836]).

stood or kneeled on this board (Long 1972:40) always taking care not to fall or step into the garden for this would not only disturb the prepared ground (Long 1972:40) but, more importantly, would disfigure the garden (Keyser 1971:8).<sup>9</sup>

To ensure that its symmetry would not be marred, children especially had to spend many hours weeding the garden and its paths (Long 1972:40,42). Few weeds had a chance to flower and as a result none were allowed to run to seed (Long 1972:42).

"The garden was generally no larger than could properly be cared for..." (Long 1972:42) and to keep it completely free of weeds was regarded as caring for the garden well (Klees 1950:399; Long 1972:42). So much so that a weed which was left "...while not exactly a disgrace was something that needed to be explained away" (Klees 1950:399).

A man's work failed when it did not conform as closely to the traditional design as might be possible. The flaw that resulted, the weed which had been overlooked for instance, was embarrassing for this reason and had to be corrected.

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9. Although Keyser mentions this practice only in connection with planting onions, he does remark that "once the garden has been dug, it was against all rules to have any footmarks on the ground" (1971:8).

Although the size of the garden and the kinds of vegetables, herbs and ornamentals found there were determined by the circumstances and tastes of the family (Klees 1950:399; Long 1972:37-38), it has been recognized that

"the arrangement of the garden and planting have much significance, even a kind of mysticism for many who were engaged in gardening; consequently, special effort [as we have seen] was exercised" (Long 1972:39).

The characteristic acts of labor are not instruments of mysticism, but rather the means through which the garden has become the place where nature is finally enclosed, ordered and subdued.

The enclosed garden in western thought and art, the locus amoenus of medieval and renaissance allegory and iconography, represents this reconciliation of nature to a traditional design (Piehler 1971:78).<sup>10</sup> It is not surprising then that through his labor the Germanic settler attempted to realize this garden of the imagination in the wilderness. A primary source of the

10. Among the New Englanders who had settled on the Susquehanna near Wilkes-Barre, two Moravians noted in 1798 that they "...saw here no...neatly fenced gardens, as grace the premises of the German settlers in Pennsylvania" (Heckewelder and Mortimer in Wallace 1958[1789]:342 [AS]). One reason for this and perhaps the most important is that these people were not as concerned as the Germans were with having the natural world assume a traditional form.



imago<sup>11</sup> is "the paradise presented at the beginning of [the Bible]; the true garden...which all existing... gardens struggled to make manifest in the lower world" (Frye, 1963b:143; Piehler 1971:78,98-99).

Keyser, by his own admission (1971:15), did not intend to write a definitive study of the garden and therefore no attempt was made "...to explain the symbolism which is undoubtedly connected to the garden..." He did, however, ask whether there could be a symbolic tie between its four paths and the four rivers of Eden, between the kitchen garden and the Paradisal Garden (Keyser 1971:15).

Although there is some evidence to support this relationship, it was not something that these people sought after or could even directly acknowledge, but rather a tacit correspondence, a parallel and mutual reinforcing of traditional design and desire, which is expressed through characteristic forms of labor and belief. Where the paths cross in the kitchen garden, a circular enclosed bed, which contained a large plant or bush was placed (Keyser 1971:5; Long 1972:38). While

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11. Following a classicist (Piehler 1971:12) rather than a psychoanalyst, "Some composite definition [of the term] might read: a description of a traditional figure or its locale, carrying specific symbolical and intellectual overtones of meaning."

there are differences of opinion regarding how prevalent this was, when it was present an Adam and Eve plant, Adam un Eva, was the center of the garden (Keyser 1971: 12; Long 1972:39). There are few other references to Yucca filamentosa L. in the literature. Brendle and Lick (1923:37), however, note that the plant, among other places, is met with in old gardens.

There is, however, another Adam and Eve plant which does figure in the traditions of these people. A rare but well-known plant, Aplectrum hyemale, also bears this name (Brendle and Lick 1923:36) and has come to be associated with illicit sexuality (Brendle and Lick 1923:36-37; Shaner 1965:48). Once, when it was found and transplanted, Shaner was told (1965:48), it had fled from the garden, grew under the garden fence and escaped back into the forest. Consequently, this plant was called Adam and Eve for they were also expelled from the garden for much the same reason (Shaner 1965:48).

Frank Texter of Mehn's Hill, Berks County, when interviewed by Shoemaker,<sup>12</sup> talked about this plant. According to a note of Shoemaker's,

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12. On October 29, 1955.

"if planted in a garden, within ten days it would no longer be there...because of 'Don't you know what it says in the Bible about Adam and Eve' (driven from the garden). It was also [Texter said] 'used to force a girl.'" 13

Corn for the family was grown in the kitchen garden (Klees 1950:399). By the middle of the last century, corn, like other produce, was grown for market (Long 1972:43). However it was not planted in the kitchen garden which supplied the family but in a "truck patch" (Klees 1950:399), a larger, less formal garden located further away from the house than the kitchen garden. In fields, along with the coarse, larger kernelled variety of grain that would only be fed to livestock, several rows of broomcorn would sometimes be planted.

While used in the barn and other outbuildings, brooms of this sort were also used in the houseyard. Through such labor not only the buildings but the walks and the yard (Long 1972:2,249,254) were "immaculately kept and maintained" (Long 1972:18). To make certain that the yard remained in the same condition as the outbuildings (Klees 1950:322), the housewife and her

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13. This could be done by dropping the root of the plant into a drink of hers (Shaner 1965:48).

children swept it frequently.

However, by the third quarter of the last century, the cornbroom had been relegated to the outbuildings and yards because the more familiar strawbroom, which could clean much more thoroughly, became available. Porches and floors of the house would be swept two or three times a day with these brooms and washed at least once a week (Klees 1950:322). "Women [would] get down on their hands and knees and scrub the kitchen floor as though it were a religious rite" (Klees 1950:322). Even the cellar steps had to be washed down (Klees 1950:322). Everything in the house not only had to be neat and clean but through interminable labor was kept that way (Anon. 1951:3; Klees 1950:5,322-323).

Although hygiene figures here, to regard this concern with dirt as a mania inspired only by the fear of disease would be unjustified, for dirt also offends against order (Douglas 1966:2; Klees 1950:197,323). These characteristic forms of labor "...are not governed by the anxiety to escape disease but are positively re-ordering the environment, making it conform to an idea" (Douglas 1966:2) and, here as in the garden, the desire to have the environment conform to a traditional design not only reaches its apogee, but is nearly realized.

I am a homestead in a hundred acres:  
I draw them around me and devour them.  
I eat the farmer's flesh and his children  
-Who but I hollaed the sweating team?-  
Their hands were worn away in my service,  
Sold my acres one by one to strangers.

. . . . .  
I shall never be done: no man shall see it.  
My brightness overtops his dream.  
I am the scourge of hope: I bury my servants.  
I am the sink of wealth: behold my trees.

"The White Mansion"  
John Glassco

### CHAPTER THREE

The German settlers who came to Upper Canada after the turn of the eighteenth century<sup>14</sup> brought with them the faith, the language and traditions of their forebears (Reaman 1957:xiii). The skills and techniques they had learned or perfected along the frontier of Pennsylvania were called upon again to transform the forest<sup>15</sup> into farmland (Reaman 1957:xix-xx).

They were not, as has often been believed, a people who "...responding kindly to the beauty and bounty of nature, found that nature responded like-wise to them..." (Epp 1974:78). This idyll of

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14. Shortly after 1776, emigration to Upper Canada began with the arrival of settlers from New York (Reaman 1957: xiii). However, the majority of these people came to Canada between the years of 1796-1812 (Reaman 1957:44) from Pennsylvania (Reaman 1957:30). In the eighteenth century, some two thousand Mennonites travelled through New York to Upper Canada (Epp 1974:50-51,67). How many other Germans emigrated has not been determined. However by 1780 fifteen of the thirty-two counties in lower Ontario had been settled (Reaman 1957:209) and it is known that the Germans were the first to come to Upper Canada in any large number (Reaman 1957:207).

15. In 1789 Heckewelder and Mortimer commented on how the landscape they observed on their journey from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania to Fairfield (Moraviantown) in Upper Canada changed "...from a well-settled countryside into wilderness" (Heckewelder and Mortimer in Wallace 1958 [1789]:363).

"...unpolluted streams bubbling with fish, woods abounding with live venison, trees in creek beds thick with plums and berries, bee-trees filled with tubfuls of honey, and maple trees dripping with gallons of syrup" (Epp 1974:78)

is neither substantiated by historical evidence nor by the testimony of informants.

The statements of descendants of the settlers themselves do not support this conception of nature. For example, they believed that "...the forest had to be removed...[because] there was nothing in the forest that would sustain human life" (Snider 1918:14-15). By clearing the forest, a shelter could be built and a garden planted. Through his labor then, the German settler could not only survive but once again impose a human design upon nature.

However, "it often seemed...as if Providence was against him. Some seasons the frost damaged his crops, and they had to war against the beasts of the forest" (A. Sherk n.d.:52). When nature appears to disregard human interests and human need in primitive circumstances, there is a tendency for God, at least for his less benign attributes and more unpleasant creations, to become identified with nature (Frye 1971b:151). Nature in turn is perceived as an immense force which can overwhelm man

and engulf him.

In the wilderness these people believed this could happen, and whatever else being lost in the bush may be, it approached this state too closely. "My mother and father" recounts Sherk (n.d.:54) "often told the story of the mulatto boy raised by Abraham Erb" who became lost in the woods.

While the history of this boy was widely known, the manner in which it has been handled suggests that for the Germans the story is not simply an entertainment. "The early settlers never forgot to tell this incident to their children and [their] children's children" (A Sherk n.d.:55) in part because it was didactic.

In the account Ezra Eby gave of these events for example, the consequences of losing one's way in the wilderness are made quite clear. In this version the searchers found "...the poor colored boy...almost dead from starvation and unable to walk" (Eby 1895-96:n.p., I).

Today most of the forest has been cleared and what remains poses little danger. Nevertheless what Sherk wrote more than a hundred years ago, "I heard this story when a little boy and it is as fresh now as when I



first heard it" (A. Sherk n.d.:55) is still true.<sup>16</sup> It is difficult to know why this would be so unless these people have continued to see that "what we call nature is nothing else than/The triumph of life other than our own" (Dudek 1956:100).

Once land was cleared and the settler had "surmounted his first difficulties", Howison believed that "he ought to make a small kitchen garden" (1821:252). He added though "this is a convenience which few Canadian families care to possess" (1821:252).

However Anna Jameson noted that the "Dutch and German...are always to be distinguished from the British settlers..." (1838:101,II). "...Their houses..." she continues "have a distinct and characteristic look" (1838:101,II).<sup>17</sup> The presence of a kitchen garden on the farm may in part account for this observation of hers.

After clearing the land along the frontier in Pennsylvania, one of the first things a Germanic settler

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16. Today oral versions of the tale are still very much like those recorded in the last century. The story is plainly told; the particulars of the incident are simply stated.

17. When asked on August 12, 1976, what set the German house apart from others, E.S. born 1893 of Kitchener, Ontario, replied, "We had English neighbors, Scotch neighbors and they were fine [housekeepers]. But they didn't put the emphasis on the outside the same."

would do is start a kitchen garden (Long 1972:37).

Although descriptions of how the earliest farms were managed or arranged are neither extensive nor complete, there is little evidence that suggests these people did not deal with the wilderness as they had before (Reaman 1957:143).<sup>18</sup>

Observers, for example, commented upon the excellent farms and orderly households the Pennsylvania Dutch established even in the forests of Ontario (Alexander 1849:232-233,I; Brown 1851:62,231; Talbot 1824:167,I). Another commentator noted that what was characteristic of these people was their desire to break the forces of nature and to have the natural barriers and wilds of the country serve their own ends (Coffman 1926:228).

The kitchen garden exemplifies this desire to have the natural world assume a traditional form and once again will be considered. Because no studies like Keyser's (1971) or Long's (1972) have been done, it is necessary to review and synthesize the literature that pertains to this topic. Unfortunately descriptions

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18. Reaman goes on to say that "It would have been impossible [for the Germans]...to girdle trees, or to continue to plant around stumps rather than to take them out; or to have no...gardens..." (1957:147). One difference was that in Canada the dialect names for two garden crops, rhubarb and spinach, were either forgotten or simply not used (Graeff 1946:73).

of the kitchen garden do not appear in Canadian works until the late nineteenth century.

In the papers of two Waterloo County families,<sup>19</sup> it is mentioned. In "Sketches of the Life of Catharine Breithaupt: Her Family and Times,"<sup>20</sup> the following description of a kitchen garden appears:

"Along the street line was an immaculate white picket fence. A well cultivated vegetable garden outlined with thick rows of currant bushes adjoined the rear of the house" (Anon. 1911: n.p.).

The Sherk family papers have more to say about this "well cultivated" garden. It was enclosed by a high paling fence and was, as Abraham Sherk wrote, "a necessary appendage of the...German house" (n.d.:62).

Until late in the fall many of the foodstuffs the family required came from the garden. When the growing season was over, he continued, some crops would be buried there so that fruit and vegetables would be available throughout the year.

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19. The Breithaupt and Sherk family papers can be read at the Kitchener Public Library, Kitchener, Ontario and are part of the Waterloo Historical Society Collection.

20. A typescript in the Breithaupt papers.

The kitchen garden is described in greater detail in Pen Pictures of Early Pioneer Life in Upper Canada:

"The gardens of our forefathers were models of neatness and order as well as pictures of beauty. Among the Pennsylvania Dutch settled in Canada, the garden plot stood close by the house and was surrounded by a picket or board fence.....A path ran around the sides of the garden and one or two paths through the centre. The bed enclosed by the centre-walks was usually devoted to flowers and the rest of the garden to vegetables, herbs, etc.... Their gardens were apparently their [the women's] pride and they spent a good deal of time working in them. It is the custom always to take visitors out and show them through the garden before leaving... In the flower beds plants were to be seen blooming the whole summer through commencing with crocuses, tulips and daffodils and ending in the fall with dahlias, phlox and asters" ("A Canuck" 1905:105-106).<sup>21</sup>

The author goes on to describe the other flowers, vegetables, fruits and herbs that comprise this garden and notes where each of them is generally located.

What may be planted in the garden and where the garden is located was determined by the family's tastes

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21. Michael Sherk, Abraham Sherk's son, published this work under a pseudonym. Both men wrote extensively on the Mennonites in Canada. Included in the Sherk family papers are several of the articles he had published and some of the essays his father left in manuscript.

and circumstances. The manner in which the kitchen garden was laid out and worked, however, varied little from family to family. These aspects of the garden for this reason characterized it and needs to be described.

The garden was entered through a gate and was encircled by a whitewashed fence.<sup>22</sup> Two cross paths divided it into four rectangular plots of equal size. Where they intersected, there was often another bed. This circular bed contained flowers and often an Adam and Eve plant.<sup>23</sup> The path would also traverse the perimeter of the larger beds inside the fence.

The garden paths were regularly swept and like everything else in the kitchen garden kept in good order. Each year the cross paths were made over with the aid of boards.<sup>24</sup> Boards were also laid down after a rainfall and used to make certain that the paths stayed true and were everywhere the same width.<sup>25</sup> Around the outside of the garden, flowers would be planted and a woman could look after them from the path without having

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22. E.S. born 1893 of Kitchener, Ontario, when interviewed on August 12, 1976 noted that trees left standing in the yard would also be whitewashed.

23. Interview with M.M. born 1904 of Hawkesville, Ontario, July 30, 1976. This center bed appears to have been more common in Ontario than in Pennsylvania. What was rare in Canada were center beds of any other shape.

24. Interview with M.M. born 1904 of Hawkesville, Ontario, July 30, 1976.

25. Interview, E.S. born 1893 Kitchener, Ont., Aug. 12, 1976.

to disturb the rest of the garden.<sup>26</sup>

While men seldom had much to do with the garden, they would help the women of the household get it ready for planting. In the spring, the beds would be turned over and manured.<sup>27</sup> Each year they were also banked up and because of this the garden paths eventually became lower than the individual beds.<sup>28</sup>

After the garden had been tilled, the children of the family worked alongside their mothers and more often than not they "could not understand why Mother was so particular about her garden."<sup>29</sup> She would, for instance, run a piece of string across one of the garden beds to make sure that the rows were evenly spaced and set in straight lines.<sup>30</sup> String was also used to ensure that the beds themselves were square.<sup>31</sup>

Footprints were not to be left in the garden, particularly after the crops had been planted.<sup>32</sup> On some farmsteads planks of wood the length of the bed

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26. Interview, O.S. born 1900 Preston, Ont., Aug. 12, 1976.

27. Interview, A.M. born 1908 Kitchener, Ont., Aug. 1, 1976.

28. Interview, E.S. born 1893 Kitchener, Ont. Aug. 12, 1976.

29. Interview, A.M. born 1908 Kitchener, Ont., Aug. 1, 1976.

30. Interview, M.M. born 1904 Kawkesville, Ont., Jul. 30, 1976.

31. Interview, E.S. born 1893 Kitchener, Ont., Aug. 12, 1976.

32. Interview, V.H. born 1894 Preston, Ont., Aug. 12, 1976.

were laid down between the rows so that the garden could be tended.<sup>33</sup> A woman would also work out of a garden bed backwards and in this fashion avoid leaving footprints in the garden.<sup>34</sup>

Weeds also marred the garden and were removed by the women and children of the household.

"Oh, of course we hever had a weed.  
Q: Weeds did not exist in your garden?  
They didn't dare".<sup>35</sup>

Vines and bushes were kept cut back. Nothing was allowed to run wild or go to seed.

The kitchen garden continued to be worked by hand until just after the turn of the century.<sup>36</sup> When a scuffler, a hand drawn cultivator that was adjustable and made of cast iron, became available, it was adopted and the form of the garden began to change. Rows were set further apart and paths became wider in order to accommodate the new implement.

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33. Interview, E.S. born 1893 Kitchener, Ont., Aug. 12, 1976.

34. Interview, A.C. born 1886 Preston, Ont., Aug. 12, 1976. Little mention of "back hoeing" has been found in either American or Canadian literature on the kitchen garden. However it has been reported that planks were set down only during planting (Keyser 1971:8). When this was so, the other technique could have been used to keep the garden in order.

35. Interview, V.H. born 1894 Preston, Ont., Aug. 12, 1976.

36. This account rests on interviews with A.M. born 1908 Kitchener, Ont., Aug. 1, 1976 and E.S. born 1893 Kitchener Ont., Aug. 12, 1976.

Before the First World War many of these farmers also began to farm commercially. The acreage they had under cultivation increased but they continued to feed their families out of a traditional kitchen garden and supplied the market with produce grown in plots out in the fields.

With the introduction of the roto-tiller apparently the traditional form gave way entirely and crops since then have been planted on the site of the old kitchen garden but in long, straight rows. They are still well-kept and occasionally a white fence surrounds one.

The corpus of material on the kitchen garden points to a concern with order. The integration of this concern into a market economy indicates its viability but says little about the concern itself.

In his review of The Deficit Made Flesh, Frye considered Glassco's series of poems on rural life, one of which prefaced this chapter, and observed that what lies behind the work of country people is "...a feverish vision of a paradise of conquered nature which forces generations to wear themselves out..." (Frye 1971c:91). While the forms of labor characteristic of these Germans may embody this vision, they are not simply various



manifestations of it.

In the traditional garden, plants, vegetables and herbs were carefully arranged and looked after. Here man could rearrange nature to suit a picture he had in his mind. However when he was through, nature was not simply subdued but fashioned into something beautiful which the women would show to their visitors.

Poe, it might be added, said (Poe in Harrison 1965:274) that gardening was as fine an art as poetry and painting and could be as profound. There are, it seems, motives other than the one Frye recognized, and while it may be a principle motive, it was not the only one.

Just outside the village of Lederach on the way to Skippack there is a farm that looks like many of the farms in Upper Montgomery County. Whenever Wallace Nyce passes by the farm on 113 however, he always remarks on what a beautiful farm it is.

To believe that "farmland is not admired by those who work it..." (Shepard 1967:131) and to argue what little appreciation an agricultural people may have for the land rests solely on utilitarian principles reduces

the relationship that a people have to the environment to the lowest of terms. No doubt considerations such as productivity are important in valuations but factors like this are certainly not the only ones weighed. Perhaps the most important are those which cannot be articulated so readily.

The work which a people do is based on necessity but the traditional design into which they desire to fashion the physical world determines how even the most elementary of needs are to be satisfied. In rural life, Frye argues from The Deficit Made Flesh the vision of conquered nature which lies behind this desire to have the world assume a traditional form is only one expression of a more universal principle. He called this principle "the structural mania of the human heart," a phrase borrowed from another of Glassco's country poems "Gentleman's Farm", and described it as "the lunatic compulsion to take thought for the morrow and keep rebuilding the Tower of Babel" (1971c:91).

The Tower of Babel was never completed, not because man had attempted to construct a human world and to separate it from the natural world, nor because this labor separated man from God. Man had become wholly preoccupied with having the natural world conform to

this design. To believe as they are said to have that "...nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do" (Genesis 11:6) sustained this project. However man's desire can never encompass the world and to believe that it could, in the end caused the work to fail.

In Frye's mind, apparently their monomania has parallels to the farmer's labor both in the ends it seeks to achieve and the kind of work it is. No doubt he would as a result agree with Shepard that "the beauty of the farmed land is seldom felt by the farmer...but by those who live in the city and travel through the countryside" (Shepard 1967:131).

It is difficult to accept the premise on which this argument rests: persons from the city have developed an aesthetic and rural people have not. It seems instead that in the first instance admiration for a landscape is expressed and the reasons for the feelings are often made explicit while in the second, it generally remains private and perhaps closer to an emotional response.

Therefore to understand the relationship that a farmer has with the land from the perspective of a formal aesthetics is difficult, and to evaluate this relation-

ship according to aesthetic principles (as Shepard and Frye have done) almost insures that the relationship will be misunderstood. For this reason, it is better to try to understand the relationship on its own terms and thereby discover the character that it has for those involved in it.

It is clear that the Pennsylvania Dutch appreciated what they fashioned from the earth, but their appreciation was not limited to the products of their own labor. For example, a well-kept garden would be admired, and because everyone had a garden like this, the labor that went into it could be appreciated.

But this was not the only reason that the kitchen garden would be admired. The work that a person did in the garden, no matter what else it achieved, made the garden what we might call a thing of beauty and was therefore satisfying.

"Q: Was it a lot of work?

No, I liked hoeing.

Q: You liked hoeing?

Oh, I liked it. Nothing better than to have a hoe going down the turnip field."<sup>37</sup>

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37. Interview, V.H. born 1894 Preston, Ont., Aug. 12, 1976.

To argue that this is because such acts of labor are nothing more than the means to some end, whether that end is construed as a large harvest or the fulfillment of a traditional design, is neither convincing nor a sufficient answer. The Pennsylvania Dutch did not so much impose a traditional design upon their environment as fashion one from its elements.

A "...design/Must marry the ragged matter..." (Glassco 1958:26) and their desire to achieve this cannot properly be called an obsession. It did not ignore necessity, but was rather the means through which a variety of human needs could be satisfied. Inherent in this design there were also aesthetic principles. When a people have few specific art forms, Shepard and Frye have unfortunately assumed that they have neither an artistic sensibility nor an imagination.

In the case of these Germans, however, creative expression is not separated from other forms of labor. Rather it is embodied in the work which these people have customarily done. This is particularly true when a family now grows a single cash crop and farmwork has become largely mechanized. One such family outside of Cambridge, Ontario, for example, still plants a kitchen garden to keep them in vegetables and continues to work

it by hand. The intention that determines labor of this kind, it seems, cannot be reduced to a preoccupation with having things in their proper places or to a need to impose a system of meanings upon experience.

Several lines from "Gentleman's Farm" which Frye did not discuss

"And the end is perfect beauty, the blessed vision,  
The working out a man's reverie  
Of his own memorial!" (Glassco 1958:25)

suggest that other satisfactions are obtained when the traditional design has become reconciled to individual circumstances. If this is not recognized, the factors which have already been seen as contributing to the characteristic form of these people's labor are given disproportionate importance. The problem has been posed, and thereby a step has been made towards better understanding how the Pennsylvania Dutch have perceived and responded to the natural world. The farm was a frame of reference, an investment of human design and meaning that for these people mediated between desire and necessity. In the labor of farming the Palatine and his descendants embodied an aesthetic, never explicitly defined by them, but no less real and significant. Objectified through labor, set forth in the consequences

of that work, such an aesthetic is difficult to appreciate. This thesis has but begun the task of translation.

## APPENDIX

### "Gentleman's Farm"

Ten miles from anywhere eighty years and more,  
Where the frozen roadstones grind iron shoes  
and tires

And the timberwood's last stand  
Lives only in brushwood and long memories,--see,  
The new-peeled posts are marching, the taut wires  
Sing to the naked land,

Sing to the valley of slash and beaver-meadow,  
The stone-pocked fields and bog-born stunted  
alders

And the black hills rising sheer  
As mountains of iron and sand round the Genie's  
castle  
(The age-old view of eyes that each November  
Look back on a wasted year)

That things are humming, that even here at last  
The lights are going on, the wheels going round  
As the wasteland fulfils  
The singular purpose, powered and glorified  
Of the weekday absentee whose will has broken  
Between these barren hills,

And where the regional serf, time out of mind,  
Morning and evening, blind with sweat and fury,  
Hollaed his shaggy tyke  
After the peaked-arse cows in the hummocky  
pasture  
Till they buckjumped to the dislocated barn,  
Their slack bags black with muck,



The silos rise and the cupolas of chrome,  
 Minarets of the mosque, the milkwhite temple  
     Gleaming below the hill,--  
 And look, by the mailbox winks the coloured  
     legend,  
 Hillsvieview Farm, the Home of Reg'd Holsteins  
     Stamped on a plaque of steel.

What passion is this? What fancy fed with tractors,  
 Engines and rancho-fence and palisades?  
     Not here, at least,  
 Has the urban dream flowered in a homing impulse  
 Towards the inane, imagined verities  
     In the soil, the dung, the teats,--

Things of an island whose longed-after earth  
 The city Columbus, falling on his knees,  
     Kisses and calls it Saviour,  
 Making his garden where he can, his plea  
 Against the unreal tenures which enrage  
     A street-begotten fever--

No, this is a dream-barn, a body of wood and iron  
 Figuring forth on the mind's wilderness,  
     With wealth for an ally,  
 The structural mania of the human heart,--  
 Whose buildings rise in a kinder soil than this,  
     And beneath an inward eye

Where all goes well and the pioneer has profit,  
 Where the titan's work subserves as in a dream  
     The all too fictive goal,  
 And the end is perfect beauty, the blessed vision,  
 The working out of a man's reverie  
     Of his own memorial!

But here, while the eternal mountains stand,  
 Immortal stones come up beneath the plough,  
     This valley's sun and rain  
 Score harshly and the bitter autumnal crop,  
 Scratched out with a hoe or shovelled by machines,  
     Is still the same:

O prefixed harvest of man's reverie driven  
 Into the light of day and life of men,  
     You bring the same revenge  
 On the impresarios of all sacred sweetness,  
 Whose eyes shall wake to witness, spring by spring,  
     The sad and stealing change,

Hope battered into habit, and a habit  
 Running to weariness,--the proof and process  
     Of powers which must equate  
 Farmer and Gentleman through their monuments,  
 Till time's mathematic of indifference  
     Confound these, to create

Not the bare living nor the orgulous legend,  
 (Improbable flowers from seed of sweat or treasure)  
     But what's more tenuous still,  
 A feast for the idler and the ragamuffin,  
 A more conspicuous waste of all endeavour  
     That has had its will--

A common loveliness!--Look backward now,  
 As we breast the rubbly hill to the rotting sawmill,  
     Back to the shining roof  
 That parries the pale farflung November sunlight  
 On lightning rods and the stammering weathervane  
     Of a gilded calf:

See that the wreck of all things made with hands  
 Being fixed and certain, as all flesh is grass,  
     The grandiose design  
 Must marry the ragged matter, and of the vision  
 Nothing endure that does not gain through ruin  
     The right, the wavering line.

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