

## NOVEMBER 2014 NEWSLETTER

# WALLENPAUPACK HISTORICAL SOCIETY



*"Keeping the history of Lake Wallenpaupack alive and accessible for present and future generations"*



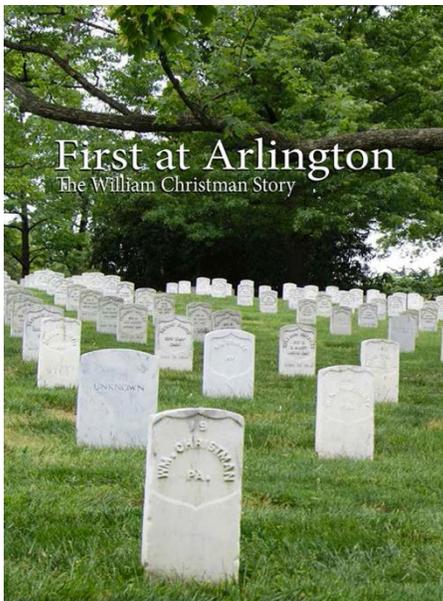
### Wallenpaupack Historical Society's Upcoming Events

- ‡ Wednesday, November 19, 1:00 p.m., the ELC -Rick Bodenschatz of the Historical Association of Tobyhanna Township will present "The William Henry Christman Story," a veterans' program about Private Christman of Tobyhanna Township. Pvt Christman was the first soldier interred at Arlington National Cemetery.
- ‡ Wednesday, December 17, 12:00 noon, the ELC - Holiday Party and Concert by WAHS Choir.

### First at Arlington

#### The William Henry Christman Story

By Rick Bodenschatz with Kim de Bourbon, contributing editor/designer



This book highlights Pvt. Christman's family life, his military career, his death during the Civil War and his legacy, epitomized by his unique status as the first soldier buried at Arlington National Cemetery. The story shows how his sacrifice helped establish the family he left behind. More than 30 photographs and illustrations, many in color, document this historical account of national significance and local community pride.

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In 1864 at age 20, William Henry Christman left his family and the community of Tobyhanna Township in northeastern Pennsylvania to fight for his country in the Civil War.

As it was for so many, he died in service, on May 11 in a Washington, D.C., military hospital. At the same time, a new military cemetery was being established just across the Potomac River: Arlington National Cemetery.

On May 13, 1864, Private William Henry Christman of Tobyhanna Township was the first soldier to be buried at this now famous Hallowed Ground.

## WHS Holds Round Table Discussion to Focus on 2015 Membership and Future Programs

The scheduled October membership program on Dr Weber's missionary medical work in Africa was cancelled, and instead a group discussion was held regarding membership and future programs.

Discussion was raised about how to engage the community and recruit new members, including how to recruit volunteers for historical society projects and endeavors. Ideas such as the making of name tags for each meeting were suggested.

WHS hopes to strengthen its connection to the community in the future. The goal is to communicate to people who are currently unaware of the mission of the Society, inviting them to become members. Also, the WHS board of directors hopes to encourage new and current members to participate in the committee functions and leadership roles of the Society.



*Pictured, Audrey Graybill leads the discussion at the October membership meeting held at the PPL ELC, Hawley.*

## MEETING UPDATES October 9 Board Meeting

### Facilities Committee

The Facilities Committee has been working on improving the Williams House by making repairs and preparing for winterization. The Purdytown Cemetery volunteers have planted 280 tulip bulbs, and plan to plant 20 more at Taft Cemetery. Dick will be receiving a stone delivery for use on the damp areas of Purdytown Cemetery.

### Collections Committee

Ann and the collections committee have been logging all WHS artifacts into a new computer database. The committee received a recent donation from Bob Ammon, who donated a wooden armoire for storage of Society clothing and artifacts.



## History of the First Pennamite Wars 1763 - 1771

*The following historical account of the Pennamite Wars appears in Pennsylvania - A History, Volume I, p. 509, Editor-in-Chief, George P. Donehoo, Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1926.*

The charter of James I to the Plymouth Company in 1620 covered the territory extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific and lying between latitude 40 degrees and 46 degrees N. Connecticut purchased a part of this territory from the Plymouth Company in 1631, with the boundary the same on the west and latitude 41 degrees on the south. This sale was confirmed by Charles II in 1662. The grant of the same Charles II to Penn extended to latitude 42 degrees N. Thus the Connecticut grant and the Pennsylvania grant overlapped each other to the extent of one degree. In 1753 an association called the "Susquehanna Company" was formed by people in the province of Connecticut, and with the consent of the Connecticut Assembly, applied to the crown for leave to plant a new colony west of the Delaware. The application was favorably received, and the company sent agents to the fourth colonial convention at Albany, where committees from the various legislatures met representatives of the Six Nations to arrange a treaty of friendship in view of the renewed opening of hostilities with the French. In the course of the convention the Connecticut agents of the Susquehanna Company succeeded in obtaining from

( continued )

the representatives of the Six Nations the cession of a tract of land on the eastern branch of the Susquehanna River --- the beautiful valley of Wyoming. Friction with the government of Pennsylvania at once, of course, arose. The proprietaries of Pennsylvania made it clear that this land was included within the limits of their charter, and that they intended to hold on to the claim. Prior occupancy by the Dutch and the settlement of boundaries had created an exception in favor of New York and New Jersey ; but all the country west of the Delaware within the same parallels of latitude as Connecticut was still claimed by that colony as part of its domain. The French and Indian War prevented any attempt at settlement until August, 1762, when a hundred and five settlers went from Connecticut to the Wyoming Valley. This particular group of pioneers, however, proved to be merely preliminary. The season was late and they returned. When winter had passed they got together again, and in May, of 1763, they returned and took up their abode in the valley. Meanwhile, the authorities in Pennsylvania were keenly watching the invasion of the Connecticut settlers and were deliberating as to the action that ought to be taken. They began by issuing proclamations, and writs of ejection were placed in the hands of the sheriff of Northampton County, which at that period was without delimited frontiers, and ranged to the north and east according to the broadening of the edge between civilization and the wilderness. Then events of a more serious nature began to occur, and it became plain to both sides that the dispute was not to be a mere fence affair, but carried within it the seeds of tragedy. In the autumn of 1763, according to one version, a war party of the Six Nations descended the Susquehanna and murdered Teedyuscung, a renowned chief of the Delawares, who was regarded by his kindred and others with strong affection. The crime was charged to the account of the Connecticut settlers. As a result there was great agitation among the Delawares, and a spirit of bitter hostility against the Connecticut settlers was fomented. This enmity speedily issued in preparations for vengeance. At noon on October 14, when the men from Connecticut were working in the fields of the valley they had claimed as their rightful abode, the Delawares descended suddenly upon them with revenge in their hearts, and in the attack thirty of the settlers were killed. Immediately consternation spread in all the vicinity. Men, women and children fled to the mountains, from coigns of vantage in which they saw their homes plundered and burned and their portable property and cattle taken away. It then became apparent to them that the valley had become too dangerous and that in their small numbers and with their weak resources, and with so much hostility surrounding them, both among the Indians and among the adherents of the Pennsylvania government, they were taking a risk which the advantages did not justify. They therefore returned to Connecticut, withstanding much hardship, and the settlement on which they had established so many hopes was left without any human indication save the relics they could not take with them and the work of their hands traced in the meads along the

Susquehanna. Meanwhile the authorities of Pennsylvania gathered a force together and took possession of the Wyoming Valley. They built a fortified trading house there and fixed habitations for those whom it was desired to leave. In addition another Connecticut association, called the "Delaware Company," had begun a settlement on the Delaware River. This was in 1769, and two years later forty pioneers of the Susquehanna Company went there to assert their rights. As a result a species of civil war ensued. In 1768 the proprietary of Pennsylvania purchased from the Six Nations the whole Wyoming Valley, and when the Connecticut men sought again to clear the way for planting a colony, the Pennsylvanians interfered. A lease of the region was given by the Pennsylvania proprietaries to three settlers in that province, who took measures to defend property which they considered theirs. Active hostilities began when in 1769 the Susquehanna Company invested the block house of the Pennsylvanians, then garrisoned by ten men. Word of the attack was immediately sent to Governor Penn, and in the meantime the weaker force tried to see what it could do by strategy. Three of the Connecticut men were lured into the blockhouse under pretense of the purpose of consultation by which the opposing sides might seek an adjustment of their differences, and were seized by the sheriff and taken off to jail at Easton in Northampton County. Then reinforcement in the shape of new settlers came to augment the numbers on both sides, the sheriff of Northampton calling upon the posse of the county to assist in the arrest of the Connecticut intruders. The Connecticut people also had built a block house, which they named Forty Fort, a place round which was later to cluster passionate memories of the Revolutionary War. The Pennsylvania sheriff broke down its doors, arrested thirty of its inmates and sent them to Easton jail. When admitted to bail these people of Connecticut returned with about two hundred men from Connecticut, who build Fort Durkee, just below Wilkes-Barre, so named in honor of their commander, John Durkee. It was when this occurred and the bitter determination on both sides presaged a more serious state of affairs that the sheriff reported to the Governor that the whole power of the county was insufficient to cope with the invasion of "Yankees."

In the meantime the company had sent commissioners to Philadelphia to confer on the feasibility of a compromise. Governor Penn refused to restore them and, in place of any attempt at conciliation, sent an armed force under Colonel Francis into the valley. The sheriff of Northampton County joined Francis with a strong armed party which carried with it a six-pounder canon. Colonel Durkee and several of the inhabitants were captured and the fort was surrendered upon conditions that were immediately violated. The next year Colonel Durkee, having been released, took command of the Connecticut people and entering the valley again and

*Wallenpaupack  
Historical Society  
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making a surprise attack, captured the sheriff's cannon. There was also an exciting incident round the house of Amos Ogden, a leader among the Pennsylvanians, whose fortified house was attacked by the Connecticut men, so that they were able to enter and carry Ogden away. Imitating the bad faith of their opponents the Yankees seized his portable property and burnt his house to the ground. Things went on in this fashion, fortune favoring now one side and now another till 1770, when Governor Penn called upon General Gage, in command of the British troops in New York for a detachment "to restore order in Wyoming." The general refused to lend any aid, and the Pennsylvanian authorities were thus left to arrange matters as best they could. Amos Ogden was as a consequence given charge of some forces and with these in the autumn he marched by the Lehigh route with the object of surprising the men of Connecticut in the valley. Arriving by way of the mountains he and his hundred and forty men took their position on the mountain tops and from that post of vantage was able to observe at ease the farmers on the banks of the Susquehanna engaged in their avocations. It was clear that there was no suspicion of danger in the minds of the workers below, and as a result the men of Pennsylvania were able to make their preparations for attack without being observed. When they were ready and the opportunity presented itself they swooped down upon the settlement under cover of darkness. The settlers were most of them sleeping and Fort Durkee was filled with women and children. The surprise attack succeeded. The fort and the houses of the settlement were plundered and the leading men among the inhabitants were lodged in Easton jail. The Yankees were thus cleared out of the valley and the Pennamites, as the people of Pennsylvania were called, took possession again.

The interval of quietude was brief. On the night of December 18 the men of Connecticut, led by Lazarus Stewart, returned in heavier force, and attacking Fort Durkee, captured it in turn and drove the Pennamites out of the valley. Then again came the turn of Pennsylvania. In January following Penn's men returned, having also augmented their force, and attacked the settlers again. The attack succeeded . . . an interval of peace this time was longer, and was not ended till the following midsummer.

## Wallenpaupack Historical Society Membership

Membership benefits include a monthly newsletter, special notices of upcoming programs of interest, and the right to vote in the corporation. Memberships are for the calendar year. New membership applications received in the final three months of the fiscal year (October, November and December) are automatically extended until the end of December in the following year.

Please complete the following form and mail with your payment, payable to Wallenpaupack Historical Society, to:  
 Wallenpaupack Historical Society  
 P.O. Box 345  
 Paupack, PA 18451

- Student \$5.00     Individual \$15.00     Family \$25.00     Corporate \$50.00

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