

Oct. 16, 2013

TOURING SULLIVAN COUNTY'S MUSEUM

... while dusting

A recent acquisition of a July 1988 edition of the *Now & Then* brought out an interesting subject: Schreyvogel's. The article is from one written in 1874 by A.R. Sprout and J.F. Meginnis from a trip they'd take through Sullivan County starting with a visit to Thornedale and continuing toward Lopez and



on to Ricketts and Ganoga Lake. Anyway, it's an insight to a long gone town from almost one hundred and forty years ago.

"Who has not heard of Schreyvogel's? It is a famous place – a wayside inn – on [the] Loyalsock, some four miles beyond Thornedale. Its history dates back more than three quarters of a century, and from that time down to the present has been the resort of hunters, "tourists", pleasure seekers and tourists. The name is an odd one as well as a jawbreaker, and has puzzled more than one person to pronounce it intelligently. A few years ago, a number of gentlemen from New York were visiting Mr. McFarlane at Thornedale and having heard much about Schreyvogel's, were naturally anxious to visit the place. One of the party, a lawyer, was deeply interested in going there soon, but found great difficulty in remembering and pronouncing the odd name correctly. One morning he became very impatient and anxiously inquired of Mr. McFarlane when he would send the party "to – to – (confound the name) to – I mean Swine Eagles's!" This was as near as he could get the pronunciation, but it was considered a good "hit", and caused much laughter. Our excellent friend Mr. Wrede, who is an educated Prussian and understands the meaning of the word, laughs at the puzzled New Yorker to this day and relates the joke with gusto.

"When he told the story to our party, each man declared that it was "good", and insisted upon being sent there that day. Even Mr. Sprout became interested, lowered his spectacles, deliberately put away his notebook and "vowed" that he would like to be sent to "Swine Eagles" at once. With a merry twinkle in his eye, Mr. Wrede ordered out one of his best "Sullivan county buggies" and directed a trusty driver to convey us to that celebrated place without delay. In due time we arrived there, after a very pleasant trip over the plank road, but what we saw and learned must be reserved for another chapter.

"This place is better known [locally] to our older readers as "Ellis". Many years ago a settlement was made here by Henry Ellis, who cleared up a farm and erected a hotel, which, in course of time, became a famous stopping place for hunters, fishermen and tourists. In the old family burying ground near by are the graves of the family. And inscription on one of the tombstones reads as follows: "Amos Ellis, died May 2, 1829, aged 70 years." The graves are surrounded by a broken stone wall and briars and bushes encumber the ground where these pioneers have been laid away.

"After the deceased of Mr. Ellis the property passed into the hands of F. Schreyvogel, a German, who came here some thirteen or fourteen years ago. The old fashioned which creaks in the wind bears this inscription: "New Thuringen Hotel." The building is a plain old structure and three roughly hewn sand stone steps land you in the front door, where many gay parties have sat and enjoyed themselves.

“Entering the house you are ushered into a neatly furnished sitting room, while on the opposite side is a little dingy barroom, ornamented with four or five deer heads nailed to the wall. In one corner stands the bar, over which many barrels of fire water have been passed out.

“The famous Berwick turnpike passes this place. Years ago it was a great thoroughfare and stagecoaches rolled over it from Berwick to Towanda and Elmira. Lewis Wright, Esq. of this city, informs us that forty years ago, he traveled the turnpike in elegant four horse coaches. But they have long since disappeared and the road has fallen into decay.

“Schreyvogel, who kept the hotel for a long time, fell from his wagon two or three years ago, and sustained injuries which resulted in his death. His widow has recently married a young German name John Seamon. She is forty-nine – he is twenty-two and yet they are happy. May it always continue.”

This piece, while interesting on its own merit, is intriguing for what may seem today an old style of writing; not only in it's sentence structures but also in the words used. We hope you find the article as interesting as we have. For this and more you can make an appointment to come into the museum (usually Tuesdays and Thursdays, weather and personal schedules permitting) by calling 570-946-5020 or emailing museum@scpahistory.com or visit our web site or see us on Facebook. Footnote: from Peter Tomasak's book on Lopez, he records notes from Jesse Wrede for New Thuringen as being where Shreyvogle moved from in central German from the town of Thuringen. The name change occurred in 1875 according to tax records.