

Woman's World

in the

WILLIAMSPORT SUN-GAZETTE

8

Friday, May 13, 1966

History Surrounds 'House of Many Stairs'

From the handmade bricks of its fireplace to the rustic wooden roof now obscured by red tin, the Pennsdale residence of the Elwood F. Brants is steeped in history. Dubbed the "house of many stairs," it derives its name from a jumble of stairways—seven in all.

One of the historic homes in the county which the Junior League has included in an illustrated lecture for presentation to local groups, the structure originally served as a residence and as protection from the In-

dians. It was first constructed from hand-hewn logs sometime between 1784 and 1790 and later limestone and fossilstone were added. Interestingly, the stone has now taken on a rosey hue perhaps from standing through the changing climates of more than a century and half of existence.

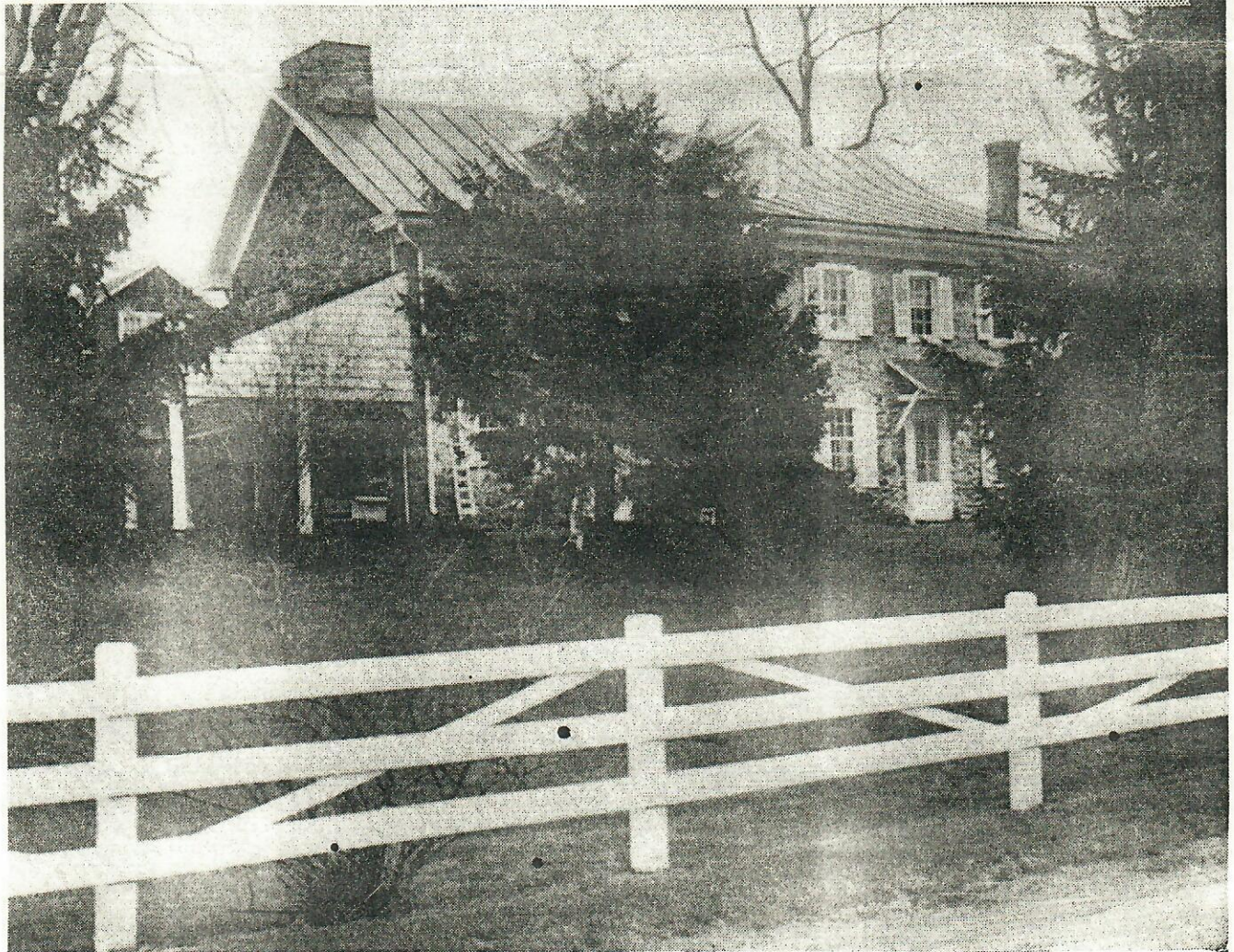
By 1790 the structure was converted into a tavern and became a stop for the stage-coach line. Later, according to prevailing accounts of its early days, the house was used as a hideout for highwaymen. Over the doorway

is a keystone with the initials JS and ES and the year 1807 carved therein. The initials are those of John and Eva Stryker, who apparently converted the building back to a home from that of a tavern.

Although the original structure consisted of two stories and an attic, it had but one room on the first floor. This was used as living room and kitchen and the present owners have preserved the large fireplace with antique kettle as it probably was during the early nineteenth century. Two bayonets from Harper's

Ferry muskets, which were discovered by Mrs. Brant buried in the yard, have been placed above the fireplace.

The shutters and much of the glass in the Pennsdale home are from the original and inside one can see a secret passage way where slaves en route to Canada, were hidden. Every room in the historic home is on a different level and a series of four or five steps lead into each room. The high ceilings are reminiscent of the days when the house was an inn and later a tea-room.





SPINNING WHEEL, HARPER'S FERRY MUSKETS ADD INTEREST TO FIREPLACE



MRS. ELWOOD BRANT, CENTER, WITH JUNIOR LEAGUERS MRS. ALLAN N. YOUNG JR., LEFT, CHAIRMAN OF THE HISTORIC HOMES PROJECT, AND MRS. MARSHALL D. WELCH JR., OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

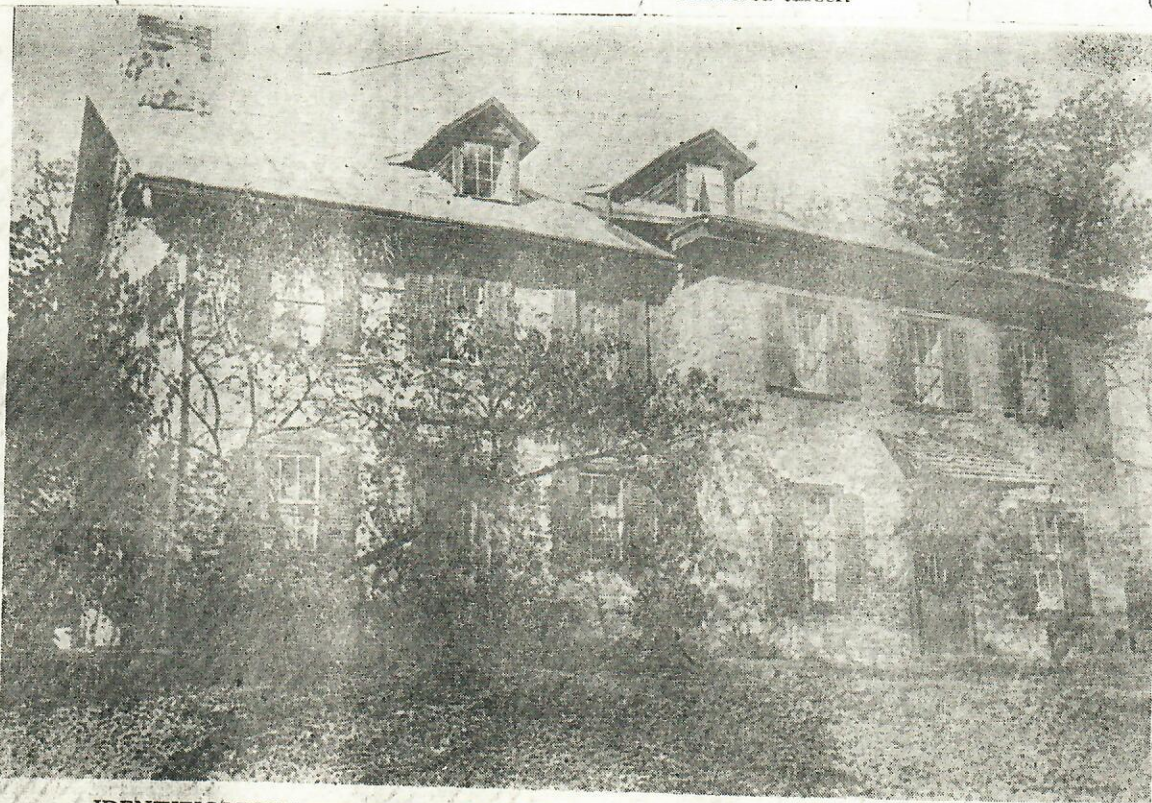


House of Many Stairs

Historic and beautiful House of Many Stairs in Pennsdale, home of the Ernest and Elwood Brandts in its cloak of snow, is the popular conception of how a home should look during the Christ-

mas season. The old home depicts contentment, good cheer and good will toward men, as it snuggles down under its white blanket to pass another Christmas in its over a century and a half of a checkered career.

(Sun-Gazette Photo)



IDENTIFICATION WILL BE MADE IN A LATER ISSUE