

Curriculum Connections: Life in Colonial Era Warwick
Notes from Under Old Rooftrees by E. B. Hornby
Extracted by S. Gardner, 2007

Under Old Rooftrees” was published in 1908, and contained Warwick oral traditions diligently recorded, dating back to the Colonial, Revolutionary, and Early Republic eras.

Topic	Descriptor(s)	Text (selections copied verbatim)	Chapt
Agriculture Food	Wheat, Gleaning Harvest	Gleaning the fields, that most ancient custom, was not unknown to our valley and a lady loved to tell how, having been given permission to glean wheat, she once gathered enough to buy her a dress with the proceeds.	II
Animals	Sheep, Butter Machines	Sometimes a sheep was kept for running the churning- machine..	II
Clothing	Socks	Stockings were hand knit, linen for summer and wool for winter	II
Clothing	Linseywoolsey	A stuff made of linen and wool, called linseywoolsey, striped and plaided and rivalling the peacock in the brilliancy of its colors, was much worn.	II
Clothing	Muslin Fire	The first piece of fine thin muslin ever seen in Warwick was brought there by Mrs. Katy Wood Krafft, of New York City. She made some of it into a cap with multitudinous frills. Many came to see and examine it. It was noised about that it was as inflammable as gunpowder and that in sewing on it she was obliged to sit far from the candles, for should a spark touch it it would go off in combustion so fearful that all the water in the township would be power-less before it. Many freely expressed the opinion that they would never endanger their lives by putting on their heads such a challenge to conflagration.	II
Clothing	Starch Recipe	Starch was all home-made, usually of potatoes. A large tub was filled with thin slices, the contents covered with water and allowed to stand a day and a night. The limp pieces were then lifted out, the water carefully poured off, and the layers of starch on the bottom cut in squares, dried and laid away.	II
Clothing	Corsets	The extent to which tight lacing was practised by some of our grandmothers can scarcely be credited. Here is a verbatim account of a young lady of Warwick robbing for her first ball in the year 1826, and of the corset she wore. This instrument of torture was made of heavy homemade linen of four thicknesses, and fairly quilted with stitching. The stays were shaved from ash wood. These were twelve in number, the front and back stays three inches in width, the others a scant inch. When this was placed upon the debutante preparatory to lacing her down for the trying-on of her first ball dress, one after another tugged at the lacer, a homemade.	VII

		hawser of hemp, to bring it together tightly enough to give the requisite slenderness to the girlish waist. At length the mother exclaimed with sudden energy: "Well, girls, we'll have to do as they used to when I was young, hitch it to the bedpost and let her draw herself in." This was done, the panting victim straining and pulling with all her strength until the awful vise was brought together, the stout ash boards meeting. The lace was then securely fastened, and the victim robed a radiant sylph in snowy muslin. This young lady was of plump, rather robust build. Let us not marvel at some of the plates in our early physiologies of laced, cramped and distorted female forms. They were but pictures of the actual and real.	
Courtship	Milking Girls	On farms the daughters of the family did the milking. It was esteemed a deep disgrace to be seen in the yard after sunrise or sunset and the marriageable future of a girl so belated in this bucolic employment was deemed sadly marred.	II
Courtship	Hog Trough	In a family of daughters on occasions in which a younger sister preceded the elder to the altar, the firstborn left in the matrimonial lurch was duly notified that on a specified night her young friends would appear and invite her to the performance. This is the account of it as it was witnessed on the borders of old Bellvale. A new, smoothly finished trough of ample breadth was brought to the house by a party of young folk. The girls of the company entering, seized upon the superseded daughter, and robed her in deepest mourning, with a long crape veil falling from head to feet. Weepers of crape streamed behind her. The trough was deposited in the middle of the room, and to the merry strains of an old colored fiddler, the girl sprang in and danced, while the party, clasping hands, circled around her singing. After a time a young man jumped in the trough, seized the devotee about the waist and danced with her. It was said this event was frequently followed by the early marriage of the girl, some tender-hearted swain probably finding a soft spot in his heart for her, and resolving to spare her another immolation. The trough was always presented to the family, Elder Williams, a Baptist minister who frequently visited Warwick in the early forties of the last century, and who was a Welshman by birth, declared he had heard the custom was Saxon... <i>(note: this custom is documented in folklore books and journals)</i>	VII
Daily Life	Spinning, Clothing	Shoe thread was spun by housewives and kept for use...	II
Daily Life	Textiles	Picking wool, hetchelling, carding, spinning, reeling and weaving went on vigorously. Every damsel had her chest of blankets and linen for the time of wifehood. Long webs of linen were spread, sprinkled and bleached for days and weeks, and laid away in lavender, lemon-balm and rose leaves.	II
Daily Life	Spinning Housekeeping	A hank of boonder cord was spun of tow <i>(note: unworked fiber, usually flax)</i> each year in many families.	II
Daily Life	Wood	On the mountain-side tenants resided, who gave to the owners of the land "board-	II

	Leasing land	load," after the old English custom; that is, the timber each tenant made agreement to carry yearly to the owner. Among tins quantity was usually specified so much for keeler tubs, boonders, fagots, oven-wood and ax handles, each of proper variety for its use. Loads of firewood were also comprehended in this "board-load."	
Daily Life	Pottery War of 1812	During the War of 1812 there was not a dish to be purchased in Warwick village, and many good housewives found their meager supply running low or entirely gone. Not even the common delft, with its oddly grotesque buff and indigo-hued figures, could be procured. A bed of blue clay was opened on a farm in the suburbs and tableware made therefrom. One good wife ²⁶ was quite an adept in moulding and firing these home-made substitutes for dishes and not only shaped and baked them for herself, but for neighbors and the village folk. ...yellow clay is of coarser grain than the blue, and was not used for moulding. In preparing the blue for dish-making, it was softened with linseed oil, and given, just before baking, numerous brushings with boiling sweet milk.	II
Daily Life	Cosmetic	The suet of lambs was simmered with scarlet, honey-filled blossoms of the red balm, making a simple, soothing lip salve. The blood beet formed an innocent rouge for pale lips and cheeks, and face powder was bolted from the home-made starch. The pomatum softening and making lustrous the smoothly worn bands and braids of hair was invariably of beef's marrow, perfumed with bergamot from the garden beds. Tansy, infused in buttermilk, was the favorite cosmetic for tan and freckles. When, in the spring, the family lard-tub gave out, there was found in the bottom a small quantity of fine lard oil. Rose leaves were simmered in this and it was used as an unguent for the face.	II
Daily Life	Soap Making	The annual soap-making was an event of deep interest in the family circle, and when it would not "make," or come, in household parlance, heavy was the woe of the housewife.	II
Death		Among the old customs, now almost obsolete, was that of tolling the bell for every death.	V
Death Superstitions	Passenger pigeons Feathers	The feathers of pigeons (very plentiful in their season in early days) ⁷⁹ were commonly cured and put in beds and pillows, and a superstition reigned that no poor soul could take easy flight from its lifelong house of clay if a single pigeon's feather were in the dying bed. So, many a time and oft, the passing sufferer was lifted from bed to bed, and if the mortal throes continued hard and unrelenting in severing the "mystic union," after every bed had been tried and each one duly condemned as surely having a pigeon feather somewhere in it, the patient was laid on a pallet of straw to die, and after this was always considered easy.	V
Entertainment	Sports	The butting contests of negroes was one. A gentleman	II

	African Americans Slaves	who well remembered these said he had attended them on the borders of what was then called Wickham's Pond. Many of the participators were ex-slaves of old families. These would congregate and butt each other with force and fury wonderful to behold, like veritable human battering rams, tumbling and rolling in the soil. (<i>note: the sport of head butting among African American slaves, in which the opponents would seize each other by the shoulders and bang their heads together until one became unconscious, has been documented; it appears to have its origins in the martial arts of the African homeland, such as the Kongo. The outcome was frequently wagered on, and often the matches were initiated by whites.</i>)	
Entertainment	Sports Dough Babies Baird's Tavern	A decidedly unique amusement often occupied winter evenings, particularly at the country inns. Rye bread was moulded into a ball with from three to five prongs by some housewife's hands. Many landladies became adepts in making these, and they were dubbed "dough babies." The boys and men hurled these against the wall, endeavoring to break off one or more of the prongs. So compactly and cunningly were they moulded that this was almost an impossibility....These bouts seemed peculiarly exciting, for one at the old Stone Hotel, (<i>Baird's Tavern</i>) in Warwick, once ended in a free fight, bloody noses and cracked heads.	II
Entertainment	Sports, Wawayanda Hotel, Quoits, Colonial Ave.	Pitching quoits was a favorite village pastime. A spot long used for this game was in front of the Ward Hotel. There it was played at one time almost incessantly. (<i>Wawayanda Hotel was on Colonial Ave., opposite intersection of Forester.</i>)	II
Entertainment	Art	Painful were the lives of those of artistic tastes. Not one avenue for the exercising of these tendencies opened to them. One lady, with an inborn love of art, painted all her pictures with colors expressed from field and garden flowers. Another made a landscape, quite a creditable picture, entirely formed of the scrapings of linen and wool. The effect was soft and mossy, and really very pretty, splotches of red and brown giving an effective autumnal tint to the foliage and foreground..	II
Entertainment/work	Knitting Fathoms Girls	Six lengths of yarn were measured from the ball by the rustic beau with the longest arms for as many of the bevy of damsels present as wished to enter the contest, and the fun commenced, the struggle being to see who could knit up the six fathoms most quickly.	II
Entertainment/work	Apple Bees	"Apple-bees" were an annual autumn frolic and looked forward to with much pleasure. A small urchin, astride a family horse, generally gave out the verbal invitations to the merrymaking', and on the appointed evening all gathered at the specified place where the kitchen was temporarily trans-formed into a huge apple-bin, and the tables groaned with tins, pans, trays, etc. After all were pared, cored and sliced, some for preserving, some for drying, and a goodly quantity for cider "apple-sass"; when every pretty young head had been encircled by an unbroken peeling,	II

		<p>swung gently three times around, to see what letter it would form when cast down, the debris was removed, the floor cleared, and a comfortable supper and dance followed. It was said that Cupid put in much fine work at these homespun gatherings, and when a couple had a bevy of daughters who lingered long by the hearthstone, knowing ones "reckoned they had better make a few apple-bees." "Trying the fortune," by sticking appleseeds on the upper eyelid, was a favorite pastime at apple-bees. Each seed was named for a rustic beau, and the Appleseed John hanging to this precipitous site longest was destined to win the fair. Sometimes, too, three or four persistently clung, when the damsel was thought to be fated to successive wifhoods and widowhoods. A mirth-provoking sight was a bevy of pretty girls busily paring apples, and scarcely daring to move the head lest the favorite suitor be dislodged..</p>	
Entertainment/work	Husking frolic Corn Harvest	<p>Of all the merrymakings of olden days the "husking frolic" was perhaps the gayest. The farmer invited his friends and neighbors, who husked all day, and in the evening the barn was swept and garnished, and heaped-up baskets of corn were brought in. Soon the girls of the neighborhood joined the huskers and took part in the work. The corn was thrown out in an immense heap in the middle of the barn-floor, and every swain chose a fair to sit by his side and husk with him. Whenever a red ear was found a kiss was claimed, amidst much laughter on the part of the company, and protesting and battling of the partner. There was strong suspicion that all the red ears found during the day were laid carefully aside to do duty for the evening, and there was always much wonder expressed at the amount of red ears "this year." After all were finished the merry strains of the fiddle began, and blithe was the dancing on the old barn-floor, gay was the supper, and sweet the two-by-two strolls homeward after all was over, through the delicious light of the full moon.</p>	II
Entertainment/work	Barn Raising	<p>The masculine portion of the community was wont to rejoice greatly when a "raising" was on the tapis (<i>note: 'on the tablecloth, under discussion</i>). It meant roast pig, a mighty potpie, with Chanticleer and Dame Partlett snuggling in dismembered savoriness through it, and pies and doughnuts, and all good things in such lavish abundance that no feast was deemed equal to a "raising" supper, and one small boy was once heard to exclaim, fervently and puffily, from the depths of his bursting jacket, "I wish we could have a new barn every day, I do."</p>	II
Entertainment/work	Haying frolic	<p>The "haying frolic" was also a hilarious time of hard work and much fun. It always wound up with milk-punch (A beverage using milk, spices, and hard liquor, such as eggnog), in such generous floods that the land seemed to flow with that soothing cordial for tired muscles.</p>	II
Entertainment/work Daily Life	Boonder frolic	<p>Among the most unique of these helpful neighborly gatherings was the "boonder frolic." (<i>Note: Origin of this word appears to be the Dutch word for "to brush or</i></p>	II

Courtship		<i>drive away</i> ", <i>boendere</i>). Milk and cream were kept in shallow keeler tubs. These required a vast amount of scrubbing to keep them clean and sweet, and were frequently scalded with boiling whey and hay tea. The modern brush was unknown, so sticks of white ash were cut and sawed into proper lengths, friends and neighbors gathered, each bringing a knife and the tough, supple wood was shaved up three-fourths of its length and turned back into a brush, very useful and lasting. No dancing or supper was allowed until each had completed one. When all was' done. the evening's merry making commenced. The beau who finished the first boonder was entitled to as many kisses from the assembled gathering of pretty girls as he could steal. It is said his head sometimes developed bumps unknown to Gall and Spurzheim, inflicted by the handy boonders in defense of cheeks and lips, and that frequently a black eye was added.	
Entertainment/work	Feather bees Geese	Very large flocks of geese were kept by many farmers, and the feather bees were the only ones from which the masculine element were excluded. When Goodman Jones, Smith or Brown found the borders of pond and meadow lands blossoming with feathers dropped from the overweighted birds, they were pronounced fit for picking. Large flocks were kept, usually numbering from ten to sixty, and as it was impossible for the owners to denude so many of their downy raiment, neighboring wives and daughters were invited to help. Each brought a linen pillow slip to cover the head and protect the hair from the flying down, and a long woolen stocking to draw over the heads of refractory and protesting geese and ganders to keep them from squawking and biting during the picking process. A paddle was also kept to spank the too unruly ones and it was said to be most effectual, --a thorough good spanking cooling down and rendering submissive the most clamorous matron goose and the most lordly and belligerent of the ancient ganders. The youngest girl at the gathering who plucked the most geese was entitled to enough down to sew herself a down tippet (<i>not:e a garment covering the shoulders and/or neck, often with ends hanging down</i>) for her fair neck. An aged farmer declared that the large flocks kept were most destructive to farms, and that though the wives and daughters pleaded for them, both for the pocket money and the nice pillows and beds, such was the destruction of lawns and pasture lands, hay crops and watering places by these birds, that they were at length utterly banished from almost every estate.	II
Entertainment/work	Textiles, Spinning Flax, Spinning frolic	It was a very common sight to see young ladies going through the streets carrying small linen wheels in their arms to a "spinning frolic." The disappearance of fields of flax, with its exquisite blue flower, from our landscape is much to be regretted.	II
Environment	Wood	One landed proprietor was wont, as he sat before his blazing hearth, to muse on the prospects of his descendants for fuel and grieve for fear the wood might be exhausted and future want exist. Sometimes the good old man, although owning broad acres of	II

		timber, would remove an extra brand, saying, "We must be very careful; I don't know what our children will do for wood, it's going so fast."	
Folklore	Ghost story	<p>The waters of Wawayanda Creek were not without their ghostly legend in early days, and it was awesomely told under the breath how a poor human, who found life in those primeval times too great a problem for his tired brain to solve, in one despairing moment ended all by quietly letting himself down into the "deep hole," and thereafter at the approved house for uncanny appearances, "his white face, looking black" (this is verbatim), would rise to the surface and long fingers would clutch at the tawny waters. Once it was affirmed that a small boy watching for muskrats heard this desolate ghost snoring loudly in his watery bed, and, fleeing home with hair on end, "musk-ratted" no more.</p> <p>The "deep hole" was a menace to the midsummer peace of many a Warwick mother, and in all probability this unpleasant damp spirit was held in lively remembrance by anxious matrons, distracted by the wiles of venturesome small boys with a passion for running away to swim.</p> <p>For the benefit of the descendants of all such transgressors, this history solemnly avers that this ghost is still there, ready to grab any pair of runaway legs kicking about its watery home, and that, being forever debarred from the luxury of hot towels, its clutch on young offenders is particularly icy, and its snore (when its cool coverlet of many waters is rumpl'd by pranksome limbs) quickly changes to horrific groans, fit to set every individual hair on end.</p>	IX
Folkways	Death	<p>"Telling the bees" when the head of the household died was a common custom. One of the female members of the family usually performed this singular office. Arrayed in deepest mourning she went sadly forth, tied a piece of crape on every hive, and tapping softly, said, "Pretty bees, your master is dead, but do not go away." [Chapter II, p.26] (A folk custom English settlers brought with them. Bees, it was once said, must always be treated as members of the family and kept informed of important news, particularly deaths and births event. If the bees were not told of a death, another death would soon follow in the household.)</p>	II
Food	Hunting Birds Passenger Pigeons Extinct Species	<p>Pigeons were very plentiful in the early days of the town. Sometimes the air seemed almost darkened with the immense flocks of these birds. A farmer living near the village one morning bagged ninety-six in a short time in the woods. They had settled so thickly on the trees and bushes that he clubbed many down, wrung the</p>	II

		necks of some, and every shot brought down numbers. Savory potpies, stews, broils and genuine pigeon-pies, in which the birds predominated over the crust, were plentiful in the humblest homes. (<i>note: this must be the flight of passenger pigeons over Warwick, which is also mentioned in "Warwick Woodlands" by Henry William Herbert, aka Frank Forester</i>)	
Food	Cheese Making	...cheese-making, that time delectable to childhood. The warm, frag-rant milk poured into the tubs where it slowly solidified in snowy whiteness, the cutting and breaking of the masses of curds for the huge creaking press, and the delicious squares doled out on the way to the old screw where it was moulded were episodes to remain long in memory.	II
Food	Recipes Huldah's Cider Flip	In the first place, a genuine good cider flip could neve'r be made until Boreas came with "bitesome breezes and blew-some blastesses" and froze the barrel of cider in the garret. Then a hot iron was inserted and a pitcher of the "heart" drawn forth. Into this allspice, ginger and cinnamon were lightly sprinkled and good browned sugar mingled with a tiny lump of butter. Then a portion of peach-brandy, sweetened with honey, was added, and a poker inserted until the whole was steaming hot. This was genuine cider flip, and in some homes, an iron kept for heating the mixture was called a "flip-dog."	III
Food Daily Life	Recipes Shortcake Dutch	When Huldah was done churning in the fall, she partly filled divers and sundry deep crocks with buttermilk, and poured cold water over them. The water was changed and renewed many times until the buttermilk assumed the consistency of snowy ice-cream; then the water was carefully poured off and it was gathered and set in a cold place for winter use. Now Huldah had never heard of baking-powder, never. Those women of blessed memory knew not tin's modernity. When her father shelled corn he threw out the largest, finest, whitest cobs, and these Huldah dried and then dedicated to a holocaust, and from that gathered a substance called pearlash, which, combined with the lactic acid of her deliciously rich buttermilk, one pinch of salt, a cup of butter and lard, newly laid eggs, and flour from their own wheat, freshly ground, made such short cake as, humping themselves in that old Dutch oven, we, alas! shall never taste.	III
Food	Winter	A farmstead cellar of the olden days at the approach of winter would be an alluring sight to the eyes of many a straitened housewife in these. Let me give a picture of one I hold in memory:	IX

		The meat from fifteen corn-fed hogs, in hams, shoulders, sausage, head cheese, pork; numerous stone jars preserving in lard chops, tenderloin and roasts. Beef from two mighty bovines weighing hundreds. Several firkins of butter, each containing from fifty to eighty pounds. Casks of cider and pear sauce. Barrels of delicious sweet cider and amber pure vinegar. Boxes of eggs packed in wheaten bran. Bins of choicest apples. Honey dripping sweetness, only surpassed by the contents of the jugs of delicious maple syrup. Jellies of apple, cherry, plum, peach, and the riotous wild grape fill the shelves of the old cupboards, looming darkly from webbed corners. Then the garret, with nuts, dried fruit and savory herbs, and the meal-room with wheat, rye and buckwheat flour and cornmeal, sack crowding sack. And this is the way they wintered in the good old days.	
Funerals	Textiles Coffins Death	Many housewives kept one pair of sheets, extra long, bleached beyond whiteness and of superfine fineness, for the dead, and a web for making shrouds. In the barn or garret, boards of red cherry were kept seasoning for the last narrow house, and in event of death were carried to the undertaker to be made up. No self-respecting landed proprietor ever allowed himself or family to be laid away in "boughten boards." They must come from the forest monarchs of the home acres. [II
Housekeeping Courtship	Girls	Damsels were very exact in polishing the big brass knocker of the front door. A well-kept knocker was considered "an outward and visible sign" of the housewifely qualities of the marriageable maidens within.	II
Housekeeping	Fire	...a plump little maid stood revealed, who asked for the loan of a few bits of live coal. "But you haven't fetched anything to carry it in," said Gammer. "Oh," replied the child, "my hand will do," and she proceeded to make a nest of cold ashes in her palm, drop a bright coal therein, top the whole with more ashes...	II
Housekeeping	Washing	Facilities for obtaining soft water being scarce, even well into this century, the family washing was very frequently done along creeks, brooks and springs.	IX
Medicine	Folk medicine Herbs	The bark and fruit of the wild cherry was used as a strengthening medicine, the green of the elder for a healing salve, the sumac as a gargle for sore throats, the yellow dock as a blood purifier, the slippery elm and mullein in dropsy, kidney troubles and consumption. The stramonium ⁶⁸ was considered invaluable. An ointment of the leaves was kept in every home for ulcers,	V

		rheumatism and eruptions. Clumps of hyssop, sage, lavender, rue, balm, motherwort were found in every garden, and the strings of red peppers glinting in the sunshine at pantry and kitchen windows were always called on in sudden cold, attacks of intestinal disturbance and sore throat. Almost every home-keeper, each recurring summer and autumn, gathered and most carefully dried spearmint, peppermint, catnip, elder-blossom, balsam, pennyroyal, burdock and dandelion for family use through the winter months. (many more plants mentioned)	
Medicine	Infection	Diseases were generally considered "a visitation of God," but little fear was felt of infection, and subjects of the most fatal and malignant types were publicly buried, frequently causing a wide spreading of the trouble.	V
Medicine	Hygiene	A fear of cold from fresh air, bathing or change of linen prevailed in early days. Patients in fever were shut closely in stifling rooms, scarcely a breath of air was allowed to enter by door or window, and a change of linen for patient or bed was considered by some almost certain death.	V
Medicine	Folk medicine	Many superstitions prevailed in regard to the curing of ague and fever. One was for the sufferer to run until in a profuse perspiration, and then plunge into a cold stream. Another, while the fit was on, to go to the top of the house and crawl headlong down each pair of stairs to the bottom, this several times.	V
Medicine	Bleeding	Many traditions of blood letting have been handed down...A physician of one hundred and twelve years ago drew fourteen ounces at a first bleeding, nine ounces twenty-four hours after, and then the complaint, pleurisy, continuing painful, a third and fourth bleeding were undergone.	V
Medicine	Folk medicine Herbalism	In the commencement of the eighteenth century, and during the decline of the seventeenth, the "fruit cure" for lung diseases was generally heard of. Marvellous cures of consumption from rigidly adhering to a diet of red and white currants, with bread and very spare regimen, were made known. Old residents went afar and procured the white currant, and these venerable bushes were long to be found in old gardens. The acid of these fruits was supposed to promote a gentle perspiration and to mildly and insensibly sweat out the disease.	V
Medicine	Smallpox Herbalism	Before vaccination was known the terrors of smallpox were mitigated by the subject rigidly dieting for two or three weeks, abstaining from all oily or heating foods, and	V

		then going to some one with the disease and deliberately exposing himself and contracting it. Hop tea and warm whey were then freely given to throw the eruption "from the heart" and a salve of elder-blossoms was applied. A lady whounderwent this experience in 1795 said that she had it lightly, suffered but little, and knew many children who ventured the same	
Medicine	Dysentery	Dysentery caused painful sickness and many deaths in the summer and autumn of 1822. An ancient remedy for this distressing illness, not only used in families, but ordered by physicians of the day, was to take a sheep's head and feet, with the wool on them, burn it off on a hot ploughshare, and then boil until the broth was a jelly. This was lightly salted and flavored with cinnamon. It was said that patients given over to die were perfectly cured by this broth.	V
Medicine	Mineral Springs	...the hearts of invalids were made glad with mineral springs of their very own, about three miles from Goshen, in old Orange, the Cheechunk Springs. Baths were kept for visitors. They were advertised as a delightful retreat for the invalid, and a pleasure-ground for those in pursuit of recreation. Daily stages ran from Newburgh to Goshen, and from thence to tile springs.	V
Medicine	Snake Bites	A cure for the bite of a rattlesnake was to take hore-hound and plantain, the entire plant and root in quantity, bruise and extract the juice, and give a large spoonful; this to be followed by one more, if the patient were not relieved. The wound was immediately thoroughly washed with turpentine and water, and a poultice of tobacco placed upon it. This remedy was said, if applied in time, to seldom fail.	V
Music	Pianos	Miss Diademia Austin was a daughter of one of the wealthiest citizens of Warwick, and her father presented her with the first piano ever seen in the village. It was called a "forte-piano." Rumor stated that the force required to extract the music was so severe that the young lady's fingers became splayed, "hard as drum-sticks" at the tips and greatly disfigured. (<i>note: likely the daughter of Alanson Austin</i>)	II
Native Americans		Apropos of the name of Wawayanda, again we find these soft Indian syllables occurring in the pretty name of Waweewana, of whom we relate this legend: Aunt Fanny Benedict, mother of Major James W. Benedict, was Waweewana's little white friend. The Indian girl lived with her parents in their wigwam near the spring on the Colonel Houston farm. Her mother was Winapawnac. She made	IX

		baskets to sell in the surrounding hamlets; wove them cunningly of osiers and bark, and stained them with pokeberries, sumach and the juices of barks.	
Occupations	Clothing-Shoemakers	“ONE of the most interesting characters of early times was the migratory shoemaker, who journeyed from house to house fitting out footgear for the family....”	II
Occupations	Clothing-Tailors Irons	The peregrinating tailoress had an individuality of her own, marked and original. Her advent, with the big iron, called a "goose," was looked forward to with deep interest by the young lads of the household whose garments were usually in various stages of dilapidation and repair. The goose was always the unprotesting butt of the stale puns and quips of the family wits, and the bachelor uncle was markedly particular as to the cut, fit and make-up of his suit if the tailoress were young, chatty and well-favored. Like the shoemaker, she brought breezy bits of gossip, delicate tidbits of scandal, light and airy as thistledown, and as her long, sharp scissors cut and clipped, and her bright needle flew through the homespun.	II
Occupations	Chimney Burner Slaves Fires	Tune...became Chimney Burner in Chief to the rural population of the section...Tall, long-armed, long-heeled, quick as a cat and supple as the snakes he had forsworn, Tune's new business of Chimney Burner for the country hamlets yielded him many bright shillings and plenteous meals. The chimneys in the isolated farmhouses, where wood was the only fuel, became periodically clogged with soot, and as a chimney sweep with his implements was then unknown, the only method of cleaning was to burn them out. This was a matter of some skill and anxiety and one the work stiffened old farmers often demurred at, as it frequently required a quick clambering to the roof of the home and adjacent buildings to quench the sparks drifting here and there. So	IV
Politics		In 1827 so high ran party feeling in Warwick between the Jackson and Adams factions that a meeting was called warning voters against the baleful effects of intemperate partyism. Every Jackson man had a hickory pole in his yard.	IX
Racism	Slavery	Early in 1800 a stranger came to Warwick and opened a business there. After a short time he brought his wife and children and resided in the lower part of the village. To the amazement of the townfolk who called, they found that the wife was a mulatto. It was as far as can be ascertained the first case of the kind occurring there. They had two children, William and Mahala, both bright and fine-looking, the daughter extremely pleasing in appearance and	III

		manners. The mother's story was the oft-repeated one in Southern slave days. Her mother was a handsome slave beloved by her master, a wealthy planter. His wife and only son dying, he freed her, and settled upon her and their daughter a comfortable sum. The young Northerner, traveling in the South, met the bright, well endowed girl and eventually returned and married her. After a few years' residence in New York City they came to Warwick. They lived a secluded life, the wife devoted to her family, shy of intercourse with white neighbors, and rigidly excluding all association with the slaves then plentiful in the township. The husband one Sabbath fell dead in the yard of the Dutch Reformed Church. The grief of the widow was pitiful, she refused to be comforted, left the town, and all trace of her was lost.	
Revolution	Tories	Deacon James Burt, of Warwick, used to relate a stirring incident which he witnessed at the first Baptist Church at Warwick at the outbreak of the Revolution. He said: "I went to meeting with my father and uncle Whitney. Elder Benedict was praying and we stopped in the door. He prayed very earnestly for the King and that no weapon forged against his majesty might prosper." At this point his uncle Whitney wheeled about toward his father and said aloud, "What, is the devil in the man?" He was greatly perturbed and was with difficulty quieted.	IX
School	Girls Women's roles	...the curriculum of early school days used to be related by a venerable lady ³⁰ who participated in the exercise. Saturday was never a holiday, and on that afternoon each week all small maidens over ten were required to come with an extra clean pinafore and hair of tin-rumpled smoothness to be instructed in "The Whole Duty of Woman." Each girl took her place in line, small calf-skins rigidly toeing a crack in the floor, and with hands meekly folded listened while the master read from Holy Writ such selections as conduce to duty and obedience in God-fearing women. <i>(also includes poems recited about role of obedience, etc.)</i>	II
Slaves		Serena was a tall, amply formed negress, her whole appearance imposing and majestic. A belle might have envied her her fine teeth, even in old age. Her laugh was so sweet and infectious that it was music. She was a dear lover of babies...Serena always wore a high, snowy turban wound around her head.	IV
Slaves	Jokes	Bets--for such was her abbreviated title all her life-- was a slave in	IV

		<p>the Wood family. Her mother was Dine, and came from New Windsor, on the Hudson. As a child her pranks were legion. Being left once with Sally and Mattie, two little daughters of the family, to pick wool in the absence of her mistress, she was told she could "pick away" while they went to "hunt eggs." When the little girls returned and resumed their work, she was no-where to be found. Thus they sat and worked at the sleep-inducing occupation until they were almost nid-nid-nodding, when suddenly the heap of wool began to move; it parted, and out sprang a horrid apparition with a chalk-white ghastly face, swathed in a sheet after the most approved ghostly fashion In wild dismay, almost frantic with fright, the little girls tumbled over each other in efforts to get away, nor did Bets's shrill screams of elfish laughter reassure them, or check their disordered flight</p>	
Slaves	<p>Fire Entertainment Stories Witches</p>	<p>Mitty was the delight of little children. Tradition said that her name was given her by her mother Waanche, who one day heard her master, in conversation with a friend, speak of the manumitting of the slaves. She knew that the word meant freedom for her race, and from it gathered the name, Mitty, for her babe. She had the gift of telling marvellously fascinating stories about fairies, witches and spirits, individually and collectively.</p> <p>Seated in front of the fire, she would seize the huge shovel, hammer the back-log, and make "the folks go to meetin'," to our immense satisfaction. The last spark to ascend the chimney, when she tired, was the sexton. When they begged for just one more shower of sparks, Mitty would declare "the meet-in' out, folks a-ridin' home, door locked, sexton jes' goin' off the meetin'-house stoop," and no persuasion could induce her to give the back-log another rap. She was a firm believer in witches... a poor old slave she knew was nightly turned, by a wicked witch, into a black horse and whipped and spurred and almost driven to death, and then threatened next day by his master because he was so lame and sore he could accomplish but half-a-day's work. (Mitty's) Husband, Josephus, was a smith....</p>	IV
Slaves	Stone fences	<p>Samp (Sampson)⁵³ was another ex-slave, whose face was familiar to the childhood of that day, as with slow, laborious movements he faithfully toiled. His forte was laying stone-fence. In this branch Samp was an artist.</p>	IV
Slaves	Racism	<p>Rosette was indeed an African. No base white blood ever mingled with the rich tropical stream that coursed through her veins. She was intensely black. Ebony, midnight paled beside her; indeed, she</p>	IV

		often remarked, with a mellow laugh, "Charcoal make white mark on Rosette." She was born a slave, where is not known, but always referred to it with horror....She had a hatred for a mulatto, called them "bad-pennies... She had character, decision and inborn sincerity of purpose.	
Slaves	Folk Remedies Sugar Loaf Native Americans	...our grandmother telsl of old Tune, an ex-slave of many quaint characteristics. He was born in the Tunison family, from which circumstance he inherited his name, at the foot of old Sugar Loaf Mountain...Here in his early youth Tune disorted himself after obtaining his freedom in his own fashion, catching rattle-snakes and skunks, and extracting the oils therefrom at an old disused forge in a ruined blacksmith's shop near his home. These he sold to rheumatics and paralytics...(he used to catch snakes) and was finally bitten by a rattle snake, and ran to old Claus, an Indian doctor famous for his cures of snake bites. He ministered skillfully to stricken Tune and succeeded in saving his life, although he was very near death.	IV
Sports	Fencing Baird's Tavern	Fencing was common, and much practised, the old Stone Hotel being the scene of frequent contests with sword and foil, and many young men evinced much skill in this art.	II
Textiles	Quilts Sewing	Quilts closely darned with quilting, and composed of pieces whose name was legion, covered beds. The patterns of these miracles of patient industry in early days were called by many high-sounding appellations, such as "Mississippi Valley," "Philadelphia Pavement," "Double Irish' Chain," "Baskets of Fruit," "Bed of Tulips," "Cross and Crown," "Outspread Wings," and others too numerous to mention. They were generally composed of gayest colors and set with white. Folded over the foot of the bed, too precious for use, was the ever present "Family Album Quilt." This was invariably made of bits of dresses donated by female friends, and often a corner from a vest pattern of a male acquaintance. It was usually pieced in a pattern called "The Rising Star," and somewhere in the multitudinous rays was hidden the autograph of the donor. These album creations were dearly prized, reverently cherished and very seldom used.	VII
Transportation	Mail	In early days the stage horn was the exhilaration of the town, as that cumbrous vehicle rolled up to the postoffice and deposited the mail. There was Davie Jones on his spotted pony, with his saddle bags, ready to receive it. In one side he stowed the Goshen papers, the Orange County Patriot, the Whig paper published by T. W. Crowell; the Independent Republican, by James A. Cheeve, and in.	IX

		<p>the other the few letters the villagers received. Davie supplied the eastern part of the town, going to Sugar Loaf, Chester, and as far as Washingtonville; Noah Carpenter, a cripple, the western district, himself, battered chair and wilful old mare, well-known figures, as far as Florida. Davie Jones and Spot, his pony, were both characters. Davie had ever a quip and jest for all, and a compliment and smile for every pretty girl.</p>	
Transportation		<p>Merry times had our ancestors in their journeys to New York City by stage and by sloop down the Hudson, ere the Erie was thought of. The stages of Benjamin Bradner, of Goshen, ran to New York, Albany, Newburgh and Easton. Chairs were on hire for the staid portion of the community. Many a merry junket was held on the good sloops as they glided down the noble Hudson. A favorite was the Montgomery, owned by Jacob and Thomas Powell, Benjamin Case, master. The Caty Maria, Sally Jane, Farmer's Son, Fanny, Sportsman and Packet boated up and down with jolly loads and produce.</p>	IX
Weather	Drought	<p>In 1814 occurred one of the most terrible droughts ever-recorded in the history of Warwick. It lasted nearly half the year. Leaves dropped from the trees, curled and withered; grass was literally burned black, and fell to charred dust beneath the feet; gardens and crops were ruined; no fruit grew to perfection; small wild animals and birds suffered from want of food and water. Residents of Orange and Sussex counties having cattle turned on mountain lands, weary of seeing the famished creatures agonized for pasture and drink, shot them down, one wealthy New Jersey farmer slaughtering eighty. Wells dried and people carried water long distances for family use; the roads were lined constantly with cattle driven to the creek and ponds where any water was found. A poor, half-crazed creature called Old Enos declared that, lying by the side of the road, he saw numbers of rattlesnakes, blacksnakes, pilots, adders and racers crawling from the mountain across the road to drink from the brook running by the old Sayer homestead, but as to the truth of this the narrator was not able to vouch to the writer. To corroborate his story he did bring to the village of Bellvale a rattlesnake with thirteen rattles he averred he killed while it was drinking at this stream. The creek was almost the only source of water supply left, and that was</p>	VI

		<p>very low....many had begun to predict and really supposed the end of the world was come. Prayers were offered in the churches, but supplications seemed in vain—the heavens were brass. On the aforementioned night, just after twelve, suddenly a gentle rain began to fall, which lasted four days. Never before in Warwick valley was such joy unspeakable known.</p>	
Weather	Lightning	<p>One of the longest and most frightful electrical storms recorded in the last century occurred at Warwick. Immediately after noon on a very hot day a sudden ominous hush and darkness fell on the town. The latter was so deep that fowls sought their roosts. For some time this strange darkened stillness brooded over the face of nature—it was absolute; not a leaf, not a breath stirred the air. Suddenly lightning began to illumine the heavens, and thunder to mutter. This increased until it became appalling. A vivid description of this storm was wont to be given by Aunt Sarah, an aunt of Capt. James W. Benedict, who lived and died in the old stone house. At its height she went to the west window of the homestead to survey the scene. She described the whole face of the heavens as like burnished copper. The lightning poured forth in streams, forked streaks and vicious zigzag bolts. The peals of thunder were ear-splitting and incessant. There was not much rain, the wind was not violent, but the blazing of electricity was as if the universe were on fire. Mr. Nathaniel Jones was then master of the village school. From this point he witnessed the storm and said he thought the Dutch Reformed Church and the old Baptist steeple were struck several times, but no accident took place of which there is record. He was kept busy in calming and reassuring the dismayed children.</p>	VI
Weather	Winter	<p>The winter of 1835-'36 has gone by the name of "the hard winter" ever since. Snow commenced falling in November, and with consecutive severe storms it accumulated to a great depth. The cold was unintermittent and excessive. Woodcock, partridge, quail and various small game were almost utterly destroyed. Great inconvenience and much suffering were experienced by the inhabitants of Warwick. Business at times was almost at a standstill from the depths of snow that impeded travel. Children were detained from school, physicians could frequently not be sent for to patients, nor attend them if they were. Stock was cared for and kept alive with difficulty. At one time five bodies lay unburied in the township, the</p>	VI

		<p>snow being so deep that the last narrow home could not be prepared nor the dead transported to it. (<i>note: the horrific day and night cold, and the weeks which followed it, which is recorded in this section appears to be that of Dec. 16 & 17, 1835, documented in various sources including "The Pennsylvania Weather Book" by Ben Gelber. The temperatures in northwestern New York froze thermometers at minus 40 degrees</i>)</p>	
Weather	Winter	<p>The year 1816 was the coldest ever known in this country. It is remembered as the year without a summer. There were snow and ice every month. On June 17th a terrible snowstorm swept from New England to New York, in which travellers were frozen to death. Farmers worked in overcoats and mittens to but little purpose. Scarcely anything planted grew. On our home place were a number of fine fruit trees. The young fruit managed to get a start, when there came a freezing rain. Every cherry, pear, apple, plum and peach was encased in an armor of ice, and was literally shaved from the trees by a fierce, cutting wind. On the 4th of July ice formed an inch thick. There was great scarcity and consequent suffering during the ensuing winter. The grain crop was a total failure. (<i>Note: It is now generally thought that the aberrations occurred because of the 5 April – 15 April 1815 volcanic eruptions of Mount Tambora on the island of Sumbawa in the Dutch East Indies (modern-day Indonesia) which ejected immense amounts of volcanic dust into the upper atmosphere</i>)</p>	VI
Weddings	Food Housekeeping	<p>One married in 1798 had 150 guests at the ceremony. Six pigs and twelve turkeys were roasted for the feast. Five female slaves waited on the guests, and the merry party danced till four o'clock in the morning. Cider, applejack and peach brandy were on the sideboard. Generous neighbors lent a helping hand in contributing to the feast, and several friendly Dutch ovens in near-by farmhouses assisted in baking three hundred rusk(7), as many biscuit, and the towering piles of bread and cake. Branches of evergreen, interspersed with sprigs of the same dampened and rolled in flour until snowy white, were used to trim the room. The floor was sanded in "herringbone" pattern. (8) (<i>notes: 7. A piece of bread browned by re-firing and sometimes sweetened. 8. Sand was sometimes used on the dirt floor in colonial times; it could be swept out when soiled. Rugs were rare.</i>)</p>	II