

# A History of Warrior Run Borough and its People

## Commemorating the Borough's 100th Anniversary

*Carved out of Sugar Notch, the Borough of Warrior Run was incorporated on January 25, 1895. Its origins as a community date back to the mid-1860's when the coal mining industry and the railroad companies endeavored to mine, transport and market the region's anthracite coal.*

*Herein lies the history of the land and its people.*

## Early History

### -Prior to 1770-

The rounded hills and valleys that now are the Borough of Warrior Run were sculptured by prehistoric glaciers many thousands of years ago. More recently this land was part of a densely forested Indian hunting ground. This is attested by the abundance of Indian arrowheads and other implements found locally over the years. Delaware, Shawnee and Nanticokes were some that had lived in the valley.

An Indian trail known as the Nattanhutter Path ran through the area leading to a gap in the mountains. This path was used by the Indians and later by white settlers in going from Wyalusing to the Lehigh (Fort Allen) and Bethlehem areas and is the same trail that over 100 men, women and children used in 1778 to escape after the Battle of Wyoming and Massacre. It became known as Warrior's Path and the spring along it Warrior Run or Warrior Spring. Beneath the earth, unbeknownst to all, were rivers of coal.

Ownership of this land was controversial. It was first claimed by the Indians and then by Yankees from Connecticut and the Pennsylvanians under William Penn, which resulted in the Yankee Pennamite Wars. The Connecticut Yankees were to succeed with their claim on the land.

### -Hanover Township-

The land which is now called Hanover Township was given to Captain Lazarus Stewart and 40 of his Paxtang Boys in the early 1770s as payment for aiding the Yankees against the Pennamites. Stewart and his men changed the name of the township from Nanticoke to Hanover in honor of Stewart's homeland in Dauphin County.

Lot 12 of the 1st division of Hanover Township was drawn by Thomas Robinson. This lot extended from the river to the township line on the mountain and contained the present Borough of Warrior Run. Shortly after, it was turned over to Matthias Hollenback, a Wilkes-Barre merchant and land speculator. Matthias sold to John Hollenback in 1777, who then sold to Deacon John Hurlbut, who established his homestead near the river, living there many years.

The Battle of Wyoming and Massacre of 1778 wiped out Stewart and many of the township's settlers. As a result, General John Sullivan and his men marched through the area and northward into New York, destroying any Indian villages they came across, thus ridding the area of any further danger of Indian attack and making it safer for the settlers to return.

### -The First Settlers-

The first settlers on the site of the present Borough of Warrior Run were Connecticut Yankees Elisha and Anna Blackman and their young children Henry and Ebenezer. They cleared the trees and brush and built their log cabin at what is now the corner of Front and Hanover streets in 1791. They had moved from Wilkes-Barre from where Elisha's parents, Elisha and Lucy Polly Blackman, lived.

Elisha was born in Lebanon, Connecticut, and came to Wilkes-Barre with his father's family in 1772 when he was 12 years old. He survived the Battle of Wyoming and Massacre of July 3, 1778, and then served as a soldier in the Revolutionary War. At the end of the war he returned to Lebanon to his family and former home where he studied surveying and learned the tanner's trade.

In 1786, with his two brothers Ichabod and Eleazer, he returned to Wilkes-Barre and built a log cabin on his father's farm located near the present Main and Academy Streets. In January 1788, Elisha married Anna, a daughter of the late Deacon John and Abigail Hurlbut of Hanover Township. Deacon Hurlbut's land extended from the river to the mountain. It was a section of this land, starting at the Middle Road and extending to the township line on the mountain, that was deeded to Elisha and Anna about the time of their marriage when her father's estate had been settled. Here they settled, devoting their lives to clearing the land, farming and raising their children.

### -Battle of Wyoming and Massacre-

Elisha Blackman, at 18 years old, was one of eight men out of the thirty-two comprising his company who escaped the battle and massacre alive. During the heat of the fight he slew an Indian. He and others escaped by swimming the Susquehanna River to an island called Monocanock. The Indians fired at them in the water and some were killed as soon as they got on land. Elisha reached the island about dusk, hiding under some willow bushes until all was quiet. Late in the evening the savages came toward the island searching for escapees. Any they found were killed and scalped. Elisha heard them walking on the willows over him but was not discovered.

By midnight the Indians finished torturing their prisoners. Only then did Elisha crawl out and swim back to the west shore of the river and down the river bank to Forty Fort. At daylight, he and a man named McMullen, having learned the fort was to be surrendered and determined not to be surrendered with it, went to the lower gate and waited for it to be opened. At 10 o'clock, the gate was opened to drive in some cattle and he and McMullen ran out. The guard shouted, "Halt, or I'll shoot," to which they answered, "Shoot and be damned!"

The guard didn't shoot and they escaped.

### -Blackman's Escape-

After escaping the fort, Blackman and McMullen went down river two miles (opposite Wilkes-Barre), where they found a canoe and crossed over to the east side to the Wilkes-Barre fort. Elisha's father was the only man in the fort, the others having gone with the women and children to show them the path to Stroudsburg. Elisha and his father waited until the middle of the afternoon. After Elisha went out into the woods and brought in their cattle, they started down the River Road. They had no idea how to get to Stroudsburg at that time.

At Nanticoke they made a fire and heated a rock to bake a cake from some flour Elisha had in a pillow case brought from the family cabin. While they stayed all night in a man's cabin, their cattle ran into a laurel swamp and were lost. In the morning, they were directed to the path for Stroudsburg. They arrived in two days, ill and exhausted.

The Blackmans returned to Connecticut where they could live safely. Elisha returned to Wilkes-Barre in August with Capt. Spalding's company and in October he helped bury the dead of the massacre at Wyoming. He later gathered as much of the crops on his father's farm that had not been destroyed by the Indians and Tories. He then joined the revolutionary army, serving until his discharge in 1782.

### -The Blackman Homestead-

In 1791, Elisha, 31, Anna, 28, and their children Henry, 3, and Ebenezer, a newborn, moved from Wilkes-Barre to her family's land that had been deeded to them after Anna's father's death. They selected a plot of land far back from the Middle Road for their homestead. Situated deep in the woods in a pretty valley between two steep hills, this land would make an ideal farm once the oaks, hickory, chestnut, black walnut and yellow and white pine trees were cleared. Their log home had a floor of yellow pine. The chimney stones of the large fireplace were mortared together by yellow clay. The walls were left unplastered. Outside the kitchen door they made the garden.

The trees were still so close that Anna feared a falling one would crush their home. As the first of the land was cleared for farming, apple seeds were planted for an orchard. Since they take about 10 years to mature, other crops could be planted amongst the trees as they became established and more land was cleared.

The Blackmans were the first settlers where Hanover Township's Back Road was to be laid out. For many years after, their land was the only cleared area beyond the Middle Road. No one imagined that the site of their homestead and the land they had been clearing for an orchard and farm would, within a 100 years, give rise to the Borough of Warrior Run.

They supplemented their crops by hunting and fishing. Most of the household goods they required were hand made. Goods made elsewhere and transported by wagon over great distances were very expensive, and the settlers had no money anyway. They kept a cow and hogs and raised flocks of chickens, geese and ducks. The woods were abundant with deer, bears, turkeys, pheasants, wild pigeons, geese, wild ducks, quails, groundhogs, squirrels, rabbits and beavers. Turkeys ran and flew wild in the woods in flocks of a dozen or more. Fishing was not done regularly, but in the spring, when the shad ran up the river to spawn, every family in the township had at least one of its members down at the river.

Along with the wanted animals came wolves, panthers, catamounts, wild cats, foxes and skunks. They were too numerous, and a bounty was offered for the scalps. Wolves in particular were a nuisance. They would frequently howl around the houses all night long. Sheep, hogs and cattle had to be secured. It was not uncommon to be overtaken by darkness in the woods a distance from home, forced to climb trees to get out of the reach of wolves, and sit there shivering all night. In later years, Blackman and other settlers would get up large hunting parties to hunt wolves. Most were finally exterminated.

### -The Blackman Farm-

In the year 1800, Elisha Blackman turned 40 and Anna 37. They then had four living children - Henry, 12, Ebenezer, 9, Hurlbut, 6, William, 4, and Elizabeth, 1. Two other children died young. By 1810, two other children, Elisha and Julia Ann, had been born.

The family owned two oxen, a horse and a cow. The oxen were used for plowing and hauling.

Anna's responsibilities were far more than the raising of her six children and caring for her husband and home. Her domestic duties also included spinning, weaving, dairying, butter and cheese making, wool raising, bee keeping, and flax raising.

They added a frame structure to their log cabin, thus increasing the size to one and a half stories in height, a considerable improvement over their small cabin. The large room on the ground floor was carpeted in the winter with rag carpet. A cupboard with open shelves displayed their chinaware and pewter dishes. Some bedsteads were located here as well.

The big blazing wood fires provided light, warmth and cheer during the long winter evenings. In warmer weather they used candles of their own making. They also burned lard in iron lamps hung by a cord from the ceiling. These lamps made a good deal of smoke, and were dull lights compared to the gas, kerosene and electric lights of later days. Until bedtime -about nine o'clock- all kept busy. Women carded wool or spun tow or flax, and the men and boys shelled corn, made splint baskets or chairs, twisted tobacco to press into plug, or made rakes, flails and other useful things.

The Blackmans had few luxuries. Their farm was self sufficient, producing nearly everything with the exception of tea, coffee and sugar. But there was a great scarcity of some necessities produced elsewhere. They sometimes collected furs and bartered them for articles such as salt that came from abroad. There was little or no money of any kind in circulation in the Valley so other things had to be used as a substitute. Tobacco, always an important crop, was raised on nearly every farm and used to pay small debts. Iron was also used in place of paper money. Farmers dug iron ore out of their own land, hauled it to Bloomery Forge at Nanticoke and received iron for it.

The only fuel the Blackmans had to heat their homes was wood, which was "all too plenty." They knew about coal, called "stone coal" because of its hardness. Although it was used by blacksmiths, it didn't find a regular use in homes until 1808, when Jesse Fell, a Wilkes-Barre blacksmith, discovered that coal could be burnt in an open grate, set up in an ordinary fireplace that had been built for the burning of wood. Soon the Blackmans had their own grate and used coal to warm their dwelling in the winter.

The few doctors in the Valley in those days were located far apart. They had no high regard of doctors. If they did call one, it was only as a very last resort. They did not wish to be poisoned for life by calomel, which contained mercury, but they did make it a practice to go once a year to the doctor to be bled! During illness, some didn't consider being bled necessary but others felt the practice was necessary to keep well!

### -The 1820s-

The 1820s were a time of great change for the Blackman family. Most of Elisha and Anna's children had gone west to Ohio and Indiana, as did many other Yankees. Their houses and farms were sold to the Pennsylvania Dutch. With travel so difficult, the Blackmans were uncertain if they'd ever see their offspring again. The youngest, Julia Anna, remained with them her entire life.

One day a man on horseback came to visit but none of the Blackmans recognized him. He asked if he could stay for dinner and have his horse fed. After examining him for a long while, Anna asked him if he wasn't "some of our folks." He laughed and said he was their son Hurlbut, whom they had not seen for many years.

Living to a ripe old age, Julia Blackman witnessed the development of canals and railroads, the growth of the coal mining industry, the onslaught of Welsh, Irish and Polish immigrants and the transformation of her father's farm to a thriving little community.

### -The 1830s-

Anna Blackman died in early 1828 and was buried on the "Green" among many of the other township's early settlers. Julia Anna, 22, the only child living at home, assumed all her mother's domestic duties, including caring for her aging father, spinning, weaving, dairying, butter and cheese making, wool raising, bee culture, and flax raising. Later that year, Julia married Charles Plumb, a newcomer to Hanover, who built carding machines with his father at Behee's Mill near the river. Shortly after the birth of his son, Henry Blackman Plumb, Charles died in 1831. Julia Anna was left to care for her father, now in his seventies, and their infant son.

The opening of the canal greatly changed the quality of life. Luxuries once only attainable at enormous cost were now available for exchange at a reasonable rate. A market was opened to Harrisburg, Baltimore, Philadelphia and towns along the way. Coal, wheat, rye, potatoes, Indian corn, oats, buckwheat, beans, onions, oil cake, hay and pork were taken to market at a cheap rate.

On November 13, 1833, residents of Hanover Township were frightened by numerous falling stars seen through the night. The whole sky was alight with hundreds of flashes in every direction, and a bright tail behind each. Most of the tails were about the length of four or five diameters of the full moon.

In the summer of 1835, a tornado whirled along up the valley near the Back Road (now Main Street Sugar Notch), flattening everything in its path. Trees, fences, and buildings were smashed to pieces and carried away by the wind. The McCarragher barn was leveled to the ground, but the family house escaped serious damage. Here the tornado changed course, passing across the valley just below South Wilkes-Barre, crossing the river and disappearing as it crossed Shawnee Mountain.

The winter of 1835-6 brought the deepest snow anyone in Hanover Township could remember. Five foot drifts covered the fences and broke in the roofs of many buildings. The following winter produced another very deep snow, but not quite so deep as the first.

### -1840 - 1860-

Elisha Blackman spent his final days on his farm, entertaining a stream of visitors with tales of the "olden" days. His children visited one last time from out west before he died on the homestead in 1844 at age 84. A large monument now stands on his burial plot in Hanover Green.

In the final years of his life, Blackman was able to see a glimpse of the future. The township at this time was being inundated with foreigners. Most were a floating population of undesirables, those without families, or those associated with the mines or the railroads.

Julia Blackman Plumb inherited the family homestead. Young Henry Plumb, educated in Wilkes-Barre common schools, attended the old academy. The farm was to become known as the Plumb farm, and the road adjacent to it Plumb's Cross Road (now Front Street).

Henry, at age 22, married Emma L. Ruggles, daughter of Ashbel and Angelina Bennet Ruggles. They had one son, George Henry Ruggles Plumb, before Emma's untimely death. Plumb read law with Volney L. Maxwell and at age 30, was admitted to practice in Luzerne County in November 1859. His law career was interrupted by the Civil War, in which he served as a corporal in Company K of the 30th Pennsylvania Volunteer infantry.

### -The Coal Mining Industry-

The coal mining industry was the founding father of the community of Warrior Run. During and after the Civil War, the American industrial revolution took off and coal was its fuel. Coal production boomed in the Valley as anthracite was recognized as a superior fuel for steel mills, factories, railroads, and heating homes. Our pre-war agricultural society gave way to an industrial one. In 1864, the Warrior Run Mining Company was organized, reopening the old Holland and Hillman mine. Wishing to provide only the purest, highest quality coal sorted by size, the company constructed a breaker at the foot of the mountain which opened in 1867. This was a huge tall building in which coal was tumbled down long chutes and open troughs. Breaker boys, mostly between ages 10 and 17, sat astride the chutes, plucking out the slate and sorting out lumps of coal by size. At about the same time, both the Lehigh Valley Railroad and the Nanticoke Branch of the Central Railroad of New Jersey completed their lines through the area, thus making it possible to conveniently mine, transport and market the area's rivers of coal. From this point on coal production overshadowed nearly everything.

Workers in large numbers were needed to labor in the mines or railroads, repair shops and machine shops. The local population was not sufficient to fill the demand so skilled Welsh miners were recruited. Other foreigners, mainly Irish who had been jobless and poverty stricken in their homelands, turned to America for relief and relocation. The Warrior Run Mining Company operated these mines until 1869, when they were then leased to A. J. Davis, who operated until about 1919.

The Blackman-Plumb farm was never the same again.

### -Warrior Run Mining Village-

The community called Warrior Run Mining Village arose on land owned by the Warrior Run Mining Company. The company purchased nearly all the land around the colliery. This land was once the Rummage farm and then part of the Colonel Hendrick B. Wright tract. Here they built offices and three nice large houses for the mine bosses on what later became known as Boss Town Street (now Lower Beaumont), which was then adjacent to an orchard. The mining company also erected company houses so that employees could walk to work. Many of these were little more than shacks, but they were rented out at a profitable rate.

These houses extended to what was then Main Street, now Chestnut and Upper Beaumont Street. Much of this area was an unappealing place to live. Since workers did not own their houses and usually didn't live in them for long, little was maintained. Unruly boys and men, goats, cattle, and hogs ran at large. The houses had no shade trees, fruit trees, shrubbery, gardens or fences. Goats were kept in large numbers, and their destructiveness made it almost impossible to grow anything.

### -Plumbtown-

The village of Plumbtown arose on the site of the Blackman-Plumb farm. After serving in the Civil War, Henry Blackman Plumb returned to the family homestead and lived with his mother Julia, who was in her fifties. Plumb, educated as a lawyer, never returned to this field. The influx of so many foreigners who needed shelter near where they worked presented Plumb with a new business opportunity. Beginning in 1867, he laid out streets and lots on the Plumb orchard/farm. This area extended from what he called Front Street to Back Street (now Orchard). There he erected shanties for lease. Robert Bauer, a Wilkes-Barre printer and businessman followed suit with land he had invested in. The shanties, originally about 20 in number, totaled 90 by 1885. Each shanty had three rooms with rough boards for ceilings, floors and partitions, and had no siding.

### -The Borough of Sugar Notch-

By 1867, the combined population of Warrior Run and Sugar Notch mining villages was over 500. Almost all were employed at the mines. Sugar Notch mining village, situated about a mile or more from Warrior Run, was so named because it was located at the Sugar Notch Gap in the Little Mountain where a large number of sugar maples were located. On April 3rd, 1867, these villages were organized by legislative enactment into a borough called Sugar Notch. The borough was incorporated after being carved out of Hanover Township. The first burgess was Charles Parrish and the first council was composed of David Caird, Henry B. Plumb, Samuel Roberts, Adam Shiedel and George Cyphers.

#### -The 1870s-

The occupations of nearly all males of working age in the area were directly associated to mining, although it was about the most miserable, strenuous, and dangerous job on earth. Mine workers had to drop hundreds of feet below the ground into pitch blackness for 10- to 14-hour shifts, and risk serious injury or death by explosions or rock falls, flooding or poisonous gases. Missing fingers, stitches, scars, limps, or cracked ribs were common. Often, one had to work for hours at a time on his knees or stomach. Miners continuously inhaled dust fumes and damp air. Their hands and faces were often black with dust which would imbed into the skin. Even worse, coal dust accumulated in their lungs. Men who worked the mines had shorter life expectancies.

Three general categories of workers were employed and compensated accordingly. There were the very knowledgeable and skilled, such as engineers, carpenters and fire bosses; the moderately skilled such as the miners; and the unskilled, which made up the majority. Engineers directed the projects, and carpenters built support systems to keep mines from collapsing. Fire bosses responsible for monitoring safety of underground workings commanded high wages, lived in fine company homes and enjoyed other benefits.

The miners had the dirty job of extracting coal from the seams. They dug into walls of coal with drills of various sorts, sometimes tamping small charges of powder behind the face on which they worked. They received less pay, but considerably more than the unskilled, common laborers, who had the backbreaking job of loosening the coal with picks and shovels, chopping it into smaller pieces and loading it into cars which were tagged and sent off toward the surface. Their pay was poor.

Nearly all the boys in the town, 10 years of age or older (there were no child labor laws at this time), were hired to work in the breaker, where lump coal from the mine was cleaned and sized. Large rollers with projecting teeth broke the large lumps into marketable sizes. Next, the coal passed through a series of metal screens which separated it into uniform sizes, each for a different use. The sized anthracite traveled down chutes manned by the boys who picked pieces of slate and rock. Cleaned and sorted coal was loaded into railroad cars at the bottom of the breaker. Boys worked 10 and 11-hour shifts, six days a week. After a few years in the breaker, he could be fortunate to apprentice to a transportation crew as a patcher, then be a mule driver, rise to a laborer and at last be a contract miner.

The welfare of the mine workers and their families was dependent on the state of the industry. There were many periods when laborers and miners only worked part of the time, or not at all, due to periods of low production. The industrial depression of 1873-78, followed by strikes against the coal companies in the late 1870s, had many families living on mush and molasses for long periods. Prosperity did not return until the early 1880s. Due to a more mobile society, there was nearly a complete turnover in population since 1870. People had to move where their work was.

#### -The 1880s-

The 1880s were a time of prosperity and growth and the village of Warrior Run really began to thrive. More immigrants, mainly Welsh and Irish and Polish, were needed to fill the many available jobs. Many new houses were built while old ones were repaired and reoccupied. The mines prospered so the community prospered.

Residents of the early 1880s included the Brisilins, Rhyeses, Shovlins, Joneses, Williams, Evans, Wagners, Devines, Tudgays, Lloyds, Cyphers, Richards, and Jenkins. By 1885, telephone lines ran everywhere. Railroad Street had Pehle's general and drug store, John Elliot's saloon, John Evans' general store, Plumb's Reading Room and Shadrach Jones' Butcher shop. Orchard Street had Pearson's general store, William Richards' butcher shop, Barney Smith's butcher shop, the Smith Hotel and Rose Sheridan's Hotel, Dr. S. S. Pace's drug store, David Jones' tavern and an early schoolhouse.

Hotels in the town served food as well as drink and thus were the town's early restaurants and saloons. These hotels boarded newly arrived workers who had not yet established a residence for their families as well as single men who chose not to board in private homes. Housing being expensive, it was not typical for single men to own or rent their own home.

The Plumbs still lived at the corner of Front and Railroad. Henry, almost 60, spent his time reading, writing and in other academic pursuits, along with managing his real-estate. One of his achievements was the writing of "History of Hanover Township," published in 1885. His mother Julia, blind at 77 and later deaf but otherwise unusually healthy and vigorous, died June 29, 1889, at age 83. She was buried in Hollenback Cemetery.

Other prominent residents of this period included George A. Pehle and Nels Pearson .

Pehle (pronounced Peely) and his wife Henrietta came to Warrior Run from Wilkes-Barre in 1873 and opened the village's first drug store. Situated directly across from the passenger station of the Jersey Central Railroad on what is now Hanover Street, it served as a general store as well as their residence. Pehle learned the druggist business with Peacock and Lafferty in Wilkes Barre. As a boy he was a newsboy and boot black. He later became the town's first postmaster, appointed by President U. S. Grant. The post office (Peely) was named for him.

Pehle did more to build and promote the Baptist Church in Warrior Run than anyone. Being a respected pillar of the church, he refused to sell tobacco or liquor. The Pehle's large, three-story home on Hanover Street was built about 1890 and still stands today. The store built adjacent to it, which later housed the American Store, has since been converted to a residence. George died of typhoid fever at age 43 on October 16, 1895. His funeral was one of the largest in Warrior Run's history. Henrietta, with the help of their daughter Deborah and George's two sisters Minnie and Jane, operated the store until 1925.

Nels Pearson, one of the earliest residents of Orchard Street, immigrated from Sweden with his wife Betty in 1872. He was first employed as a laborer in the coal mines. In 1881 he erected the three-story Pearson Building which was located on the lot now occupied by the Nitkowski residence. The first floor served as a general store, the second floor was their residence, and the third floor was a hall. For a period, Nels was the town's postmaster. For many years the Pearson Building was the social center of the town and the meeting place of various lodges in the town. The Presbyterian and Baptist Sunday Schools also met there. Pearson later built a second store diagonally across the street where the Kasian's operated for many years. Children of Nels and Betty included Ludwig, Nellie, Virola, Arthur, Rudolph, Bertha and Clarence. Pearson, chairman of Warrior Run Borough's first council, was a prime instigator of Warrior's Run's separation from the Borough of Sugar Notch. He died at his farm on Middle Road in 1919 at age 72.

#### -The 1890s-

The prosperity of the 1880s continued into the early 1890s. Town residents were confident that life would go on as always, but in 1893 came one of the worst depressions in the nation's history. Heavy indebtedness led to bank failures, business closures and a severe industrial depression. Unemployment was rampant through the remainder of the decade.

The society of Warrior Run was divided into two groups during this period. The first group was composed of residents who had resided here for several years and thus were already established in the community. They typically owned their own homes and, being experienced, commanded the best jobs with the best pay. These were the native born Americans, the Welsh and the Irish.

The second group, the newcomers, were mainly Polish and Ukrainians from Eastern Europe, who had no mining experience and were given the lowest paid, most difficult and gruesome jobs. They were regarded by the first group with disdain because they looked strange, spoke gibberish, had strange customs, were unskilled and were a threat to their jobs.

As the final decade of the nineteenth century commenced, daily life for the established residents of the town was simpler, more structured and predictable. The wife ran the household without the conveniences now taken for granted, doing everything laboriously by hand. She followed a weekly schedule. Traditionally, Monday was washday, Tuesday was ironing day, and Wednesday was for sewing and mending. Thursday was a day to do her own thing, such as embroidering, reading and resting. Friday was for cleaning, and Saturday for baking. This was in addition to the day-in, day-out duties of meal preparation, general care of family and community activities.

Life was particularly harsh for immigrants. They were lowest class in their homeland and had moved here to escape the dreadful poverty. Here, they weren't liked, were given the worst jobs and had to survive on incomes Americans deemed too low to support human existence. The wives would take in laundry, sew, cook, clean, and tend to boarders. They lived in small, clap-board houses, 12 or 16 to a room. They even went barefoot to save shoes. But it wasn't unusual for them to mail money back to relatives, and, after a period, some began to purchase properties in the town at alarming rates.

But for most mining families, life was a constant struggle. The mines were as dangerous as ever. Single men of the town had no alternative except to board and younger married couples boarded until they saved money. Young girls slaved in silk mills, standing for 12 hours at the machines. They gave what they earned to parents to help ends meet. Given illnesses, mortality rates and migration patterns, it was common for widows, stepsisters, cousins and in-laws to share households.

On what had once been farmland and orchards and then the shanties of Plumbtown, a community now stood, looking very much as it does today. Henry Plumb's lots now contained homes and businesses. Many of the houses were fairly comfortable, painted in different colors and heated by a series of coal stoves. Some were lighted by kerosene lamps and others by electric. All families had their privies outdoors. Typical bathing facilities included a washtub in front of the kitchen stove. Backyards had, in addition to the privy, a barn or storage shed, a chicken coop, vegetable garden and grape arbor. The telephone, introduced in the early 1880s, was fairly common by 1885 and lines ran to the mine offices, shops, stores, doctors' offices, hotels, and to any private houses that could afford them.

The streets of the town were as yet unnamed or were called by different names than they are today. The early name of Orchard Street was Back Street, Hanover was Railroad Street and Lower Beaumont was Boss Town. Chestnut Street was still called Main Street. The streets were packed dirt, sometimes dusty, rutted or muddy and lit by gas lights. Horse manure required pedestrians to tread carefully.

It was unusual to see someone outside without a hat. Women used parasols and umbrellas as sun shields. Most people found time to make it a part of their daily routines to see what was going on about town. There were at least three general stores, three butchers, one drugstore, a post office, four hotels, three saloons, one shoemaker, one barber and two railroad stations in town. A visit to any of these places wasn't complete without an exchange of view on the weather or the latest bits of local news. Such news was often relayed in native tongues or heavily- accented English.

Life's pleasures were self-generated and simple. People went for walks, buggy rides and bicycle tours. They attended lectures, teas, birthday parties and band concerts. They fished and camped and swam in lakes of astonishing pureness. Picnics, hayrides, dances and outings and church socials were common. In winter, they ice skated and sledged. Fraternal lodges were numerous and popular. Organizations included the Warrior Run Band, Warrior Run Glee Club, Catholic Total Abstinence Society, Mattanna Tribe, Sons of Temperance, as well as the many church societies.

### -The Rowdy Times-

Newspaper editorials in 1894-95 from the Wilkes-Barre Record revealed the borough was a rough place, as these "headline" excerpts show:

"Recent events here visibly demonstrate the need of a lockup in Warrior Run. Not a week passes but a drunken brawl, some disgraceful scene, or even worse, throws a shadow over our little town. Something is infinitely wrong. Give us constables who will attend to their duties and give the constables a place to which these creatures of disorder will be committed."

"Workmen are employed widening the road between this place and Sugar Notch. Wonder if this means electric cars for Warrior Run. We hope so."

"Wonder if the saloon keepers have a special license for the sale of their wares on Sundays."

"It is time the people of Warrior Run were awakening to that the greater portion of that part of the borough known as Plumbtown is totally unfit for humans to dwell in. During the warm weather the air is laden with an odor which arises from the filth that amasses throughout the back streets and alleys and which would, should a contagious disease enter our ranks, make our people an easy prey for its ravages. Let the necessary steps be taken to improve the sanitary condition of this portion of the town."

"There is some talk that Warrior Run will not turn out this election again. They are trying to have the borough divided."

"Dividing of the borough is the chief topic of conversation at all corners. Warrior Run will no doubt succeed, and we congratulate them. Not one representative of Warrior Run in any of our offices and they pay taxes to support the borough. Go on with the good work."

"It now looks as if the new borough is a sure thing. And why should it not be? If we are taxed, ought not we be represented?"

"Today we understand comes the final settlement of the division of the borough."

The division of Sugar Notch was reported in the Wilkes-Barre Record in late January 1895 when "Judge Rice yesterday handed down the order making Warrior Run a borough."

"The first election in the borough to be held on February 19 next in Plumb's reading rooms and David Hopkins is appointed judge and William Stinson and David C. Evans inspectors of the election board."

### -The Borough of Warrior Run-

On January 25, 1895, the Borough of Warrior Run was thus incorporated. The name Warrior Run had already been in use for many years. Both of the town's railroad stations were named after the Warrior Run Mines. Charles Williams was elected first burgess on February 19th. Elected to council were Thomas Tudgay, John Cyphers, John Elliot, Shadrach Jones, and William Richards, with Nelson Pearson as chairman. Isaac Lewis was elected secretary, John Evans treasurer and Edward T. Edwards as chief of police. Police appointed were Frank Crosky, James B. Brislin and John Shovlin.

A lot on Railroad Street was selected for the borough's first town hall. This lot was actually located at the end of what is now called Academy Street, about where it joins with Jones. Here, at a fairly central location between Boss Town and Plumbtown, the town hall and lockup was built.

# 100 Years Ago

## -Back Street-

Back Street had been the commercial center of the town since the 1870s. Situated on land owned mainly by Plumb, the street was renamed Orchard Street for his apple orchards. This street was always teeming with activity, being the locale of a number of hotels, saloons, meeting places, grocers, butchers, drug stores, confectioneries and general merchandise stores. Chief residents of this street were the proprietors of these enterprises and their families. The south side of the street was forever changed on August 30, 1892, when a great fire destroyed seven buildings, including the homes of Charles Wagner and Thomas Stinson, the hotel of Patrick McGonigle, and the home and store of Adam Ace. Much of this area was immediately rebuilt.

Charles Wagner, a mine laborer, was born on that land and lived there with his wife Annie and son Leonard. His parents were William and Katherine Wagner. Katherine was the daughter of Mary A. J. Ruggles, the widow of a very early resident of Hanover Township, Lorenzo Ruggles. She was the original owner of that property. Charles and his son Leonard later opened their well-known confectionery and were the proprietors of the town's post office for many years.

West of Wagner's was Patrick McGonigle's Hotel and Saloon. After the great fire, McGonigle conducted the saloon in his barn until a new one was built. One year, Pat could not get a liquor license, so to keep his business, he sold a wintergreen lozenge for a nickel and gave a free beer along with it. A free whiskey was obtained by purchasing a peppermint lozenge for a dime.

From 1893 until 1896, the post office was located in a small building next to the saloon. McGonigle, the postmaster, died of typhoid pneumonia in 1896, and his saloon/hotel was purchased by Charles Stegmaier, owner of the Stegmaier Brewing Company. For a period, Frank and Victoria Brodginiski were the proprietors. Later owners and proprietors were John and Victoria Dzikowski. The saloon, known as Orchard House, closed in the late 1940s.

Behind McGonigle's was the borough's baseball diamond. The first game was played there in 1893, with Warrior Run defeating the combined Askam-Hanover teams, 24-3.

Up the street from the McGonigle's Hotel was Nels and Betty Pearson's grocery store. This store replaced the one operated by Adam Ace which had burned in the fire. The post office was located here from 1896 until 1905 with Nels Pearson as the postmaster. Later proprietors of this store were Louis and Mary Fierman, Isadore and Ida Seeherman, Konstany and Sophia Szigel, Simon Brodginiski, Alex and Natalie Zuk and Ted and Anna Kasian. Lerner's clothing store also operated here for a short period. This was the Pearson's second store. The first, called the Pearson Building, was located diagonally across the street on the lot now occupied by the Nitkowski residence. Described previously, this three story building was a landmark of Orchard Street. In its heyday, the hall had been the social center of the town. Victor Brill was a proprietor of a hotel here for a period. A smaller building adjacent to the hotel served as the site of Alex Palski's barber shop, the Polish National Church, and as a private residence before the Nitkowski residence was built.

A few lots up from Pearson's grocery store was the site where Simon Brodginiski, son of Frank and Victoria Brodginiski, built his grocery store in the 1940s. He previously had a small confectionery on this site. Bill Richards, the butcher, and Levanbrook's dry goods store had, at earlier times, operated out of an older building which had been on this site.

Farther up the street, on the same side as McGonigle's Hotel, was the Smith Hotel which was owned and operated by Edward and Mary Smith through the 1880s and 90s. Their son Barney operated a butcher's shop on the west side on the first floor. Later proprietors of the hotel were Anthony and Mary Rivers and then Clemen and Kataryna Rinkus. Stanley and Cecilia Podsiadlik operated a grocery store here as well. This building was owned and occupied by the Kizelevich and Ellis families for many years.

Farther up and across the street was the grocery store operated by Frank and Theresa Rivers. The building on this site was replaced by the Zulkoski residence in the late 1950s.

Smith Field was located behind Smith's Hotel, at the end of Orchard Street toward Russian Hill. This field, once used for track meets, baseball and softball games, has since been erased by strip mining.

Adjacent to the Pearson Building on the north side of the street was the hotel owned and operated by Rose Sheridan. John and Lucy Rivers later owned this building and operated a saloon. Their daughter, Violet Yadsnukis, operated a pool room and confectionery for a period. Lerner's clothing also located here.

Next to the Sheridan Hotel was a building occupied by David Hopkins, which was an old school house converted into a dwelling. This building was later purchased by Stanley and Cecilia Podsiadlik and used as their residence and grocery store. Next to his dwelling, Hopkins operated a shooting gallery and candy store. This long narrow building was also purchased by the Podsiadliks, who at one time operated it as a nickelodeon and then a saloon. This is the building in which Stanley Zionkowski operated the S&S Cafe for many years.

Barbers at one time or another occupied the next two buildings. The building next to Hopkins' shooting gallery was later occupied by Calvin Stackhouse, a barber. Stackhouse, completely bald with a huge white mustache, once ran for county sheriff. This house burned down in the late 1950s and the property is now an empty lot. The next house was occupied by Thomas Tudgay, a barber in the 1890s. This is the same house in which Joseph "Yudi" Pehala operated his shop for so many years. A drug store from Sugar Notch was also here for a period when it was owned by Rose Kilinski.

Farther up the street, Jesse Arndt's drug store and residence was later built. This is now the Kish residence.

Across the street was the butcher shop owned and operated by William Richards (since torn down). A hotel/tavern was later operated here by Mike Zilinski, Waclaw and Rozalya Wiekowowski, then by Josephine and Alex Palski. Next, toward Wagner's, was a later a butcher shop first operated by David Jones, then by Joseph and Lucy Ojevich.

## -Railroad Street-

The upper portion of Hanover Street (formerly Railroad Street), from the corner of Front to a little beyond Orchard, was mainly business oriented. Located here were the fine residences of Henry Plumb, George Pehle and John Elliot, along with the passenger station of the Jersey Central Railroad; Pehle's Drug Store; Dutch Charlie's shoemaker's shop; the Elliot Building which housed a saloon, hotel and Arndt's drug store; a general merchandise store and Evans' grocery store. The lower portion, towards Lower Beaumont, was mainly residential.

The Henry Blackman Plumb house stood at the corner of Hanover and Front, back a distance from the road. It was built in 1874 on the site of the old Blackman homestead in the style of a Gothic cottage. It was here, on the outskirts of Plumbtown, that Henry Plumb lived with his mother and son. Set back in the rear of a plot several hundred feet square, it was surrounded on all sides by a six-foot corrugated iron fence. The only method of ingress and egress to the plot was through or over a high stile located on the Front Street side. The property was filled with apple trees. Henry Plumb would willingly sell abundance of the fruit to anyone for a few cents, but he hated to have it stolen. According to a popular story in Warrior Run, the inside of the fence was strung with fish hooks to catch the youngster attempting to scale the fence to steal fruit. Still standing, the home is hidden by a hotel/saloon built and operated by Morris and Viola Thomas. Later owners were Peter and Irene Piesneschi, Frank and Rose Wiekowowski Karwacki and Anna and Stanley Nadwadny.

Down the street, situated directly across from the passenger station of the Jersey Central Railroad, was a residence and general/drug store owned by George and Henrietta Pehle, and a small three-room building housing Plumb's Reading Rooms, which was organized by Henry's son, G. H. R. Plumb. Their large, three-story home, located adjacent to the store and back from the street, was built about 1890. After George died in the late 1890s, Henrietta, with the help of her sisters, operated the store until 1925. Later this building housed Mullison's grocery store, the American Store and a pizzeria, before being converted to a residence. Next to this store was a building which later became Victor Brill's butcher shop. Lerner's clothing store also operated here for a period.

On one corner of Hanover and Orchard streets was the dwelling and shop of Dutch Charley, the shoemaker. Originally from France, he had his shop on this site for over 20 years. It was said that Charley, a bachelor, always had young kittens. Holding them in his leather apron, he would tell anyone they could have one if they could take one out. But the kittens would claw and scratch so viciously that no one was ever able to take one. A large home was later built on the site about 1920 and was owned and occupied by Enoch Thomas and family for many years. Known as Squire Thomas, he was a lawyer and burgess of the borough for many years.

Opposite Dutch Charley's was Elliot's Corner. It was here that John Elliot operated a saloon in the early 1880s. The saloon later burned down and the Elliot Building was erected here by his son, Charles, about 1896. It housed a hotel, saloon, social hall and drug store. The hall provided competition to the deteriorating Pearson Building as the social center of the town. The hotel/saloon was operated by the Piekarski's for many years and then bought out by Daylida's. The drug store was operated by Jesse Arndt until he built his home and store on Orchard Street in 1920. The Elliot Building fell into disrepair and was torn down in the 1960s. Across the street were a series of homes built by the Elliot family. The homes they didn't occupy were leased. Annie Wagner, Lenny Wagner's mother, was Charles Elliot's sister.

Next to the Elliot building was the hardware store (Star Dry Goods Co.) operated by Samuel Pripstein, and later his son Sidney. The elder Pripstein peddled his goods about the area. This building had also been built and owned by the Elliots and leased to the Pripsteins, who operated here until the early 1970s. Adjacent to Pripsteins was David C. Evans' grocery store. The store was founded by his late father, John Evans, sometime prior to 1880. The post office was located here from 1889 until 1893, with the elder Evans as the postmaster and from 1905 until 1914 with the younger Evans as postmaster. Later, this store was operated by Benny Bosch and now houses Daylida's Bar & Grill. Bartleson's also sold gas and confectioneries here. Adjacent was a smaller building which at one time served as a nickelodeon and later a pool hall. It has since been torn down.

#### -Front Street-

Front Street, one of the earliest roadways in the area, was originally known as Plumb's Cross Road because it ran past Julia Blackman Plumb's farm and connected the Back Road (Main/Chestnut Street) with the Middle Road. This road was also a part of Plumbtown. Miller's Hill was at one end and Valley Hill at the other. In the early days Valley Hill was much steeper than it is now. By the 1890s, Front Street had many residences, two churches and a few businesses.

The Henry Blackman Plumb house, which stood at the corner of Hanover, faced Front Street. Up from Plumb's was where Adam and Josephine Ptokowski later operated a wholesale liquor business and then a general merchandise store, and where Lewis Levanbook had his dry goods store until 1954. Next came the Mike Sheridan Hotel, which was later owned and operated by George and Helen Rivers. Later they operated a grocery store here. Veronica "the Spanish dancer" Patrylak of Askam had an ice cream shop here as well. It is here that Walter Roxie Wojciechowski opened his gas service station in 1950. Farther up was later located Felix Kwiatek's grocery store, Edward and Margaret Gaughan's Hotel, which was owned and operated by Alexander and Mary Zuk for many years and later housed Talman's Bar, and finally, John and Mary Parulski's Confectionery.

Across the street from Kwiatek's store was the Welsh Baptist Church, erected in 1891. The church was first organized in 1883 with 13 members. Its first services were held at the home of Gaynor Lloyd. Thereafter, services were held either in Pearson's Hall or Plumb's Reading Room. Before the erection of the church edifice, the Warrior Run Coal Company Water Dam and Bennet's Creek in Askam were used for immersions. In a building next to the Welsh Baptist Church, the Welsh Congregational Church held its services from April 1888. First organized in the school house on Chestnut Street in February 1885, it has since disappeared.

Farther up the street was the future location of the present borough building. This was the second borough building. Erected in 1917, it contained council chamber, fireman's room, cell room and fire truck room. The Anthracite Hose Company, formed on January 8, 1897, had 19 charter members. Their first uniforms included a red cloth shirt with a blue bosom with the letter "A" working white on the blue, black caps and belts with the name of the hose company on them. Mascot Aaron Hopkins had the same kind of uniform.

Up from the borough building, toward the American Legion building, John Rakshys had his shoemaker shop for many years. Joe Ozmina's and Edward Zulkoski's blacksmith shops and Helen Bonsavage Grsesik's and Stella Markiewicz's confectioneries were all located on this side of the street.

#### -Main Street-

Chestnut Street was originally part of Hanover Township's Back Road. It was named Main Street because it was a continuation of the Main Street from Sugar Notch. It was changed to Chestnut Street about 1910. The Chestnut Street section of the borough was known as Music Hill since about 1880 because of a story circulated that everybody on the hill had some kind of a musical instrument.

The street car line ended near the corner of Valley Hill and Chestnut Street. At this corner, Mrs. Grace Shoemaker lived and later opened a confectionery. This operation was later taken over by her daughter Katherine and son-in-law Joseph "Harry" Tudgay and has been the Tudgay residence since. For a period, this ice cream shop was operated by Veronica Patrylak of Askam.

Up on the hill, in the pines above the end of the streetcar line, was the Warrior Run Race Course. A quarter mile long, it was the site of many foot races in the 1880s. Also located here was Pine Grove, which was popular in the 1880s and 90s for local picnics. The band house was just west of it. The 20-member Dew Drop Band, organized by David P. Jones, practiced here.

Up and across the street from the Shoemakers was the post office from 1886-89. Michael McDonald was the postmaster at the time. The post office was located in a small building next to the home they had lived in since the 1870s. This home burned after 1910 and was not rebuilt.

The Lehigh Valley Railroad Station was situated across from the McDonald home. It had a platform which extended 100 feet or more and a mail post where the mail was hung where it could be snatched by the fast flying mail train. The sewing factory that was built here in the late 1960s now houses a video rental store owned by the Wootens. A little farther up the street past the station was a coal hopper and an entrance to a slope. Still farther up on the opposite side was a two-room (later a three-room) school house. It was located about 100 yards east of the Welsh Presbyterian Church. School was held here in the years prior to the construction of the Washington Building. It was later converted to a dwelling. The Welsh Congregational Church was organized in this school house in February 1885.

The Welsh Presbyterian Church was situated farther up the street. It was organized in 1870 and dedicated in November 1874, the first services being held at the home of James E. Roderick. They met at the office of the A. J. Davis Coal Company until the church edifice was erected.

Some other early residents of this street were the Shovlins, Burnses, Dowlings, Moores, Devines, Lloyds, Thomas, Evanses, Gallaghers and Joneses.

#### -Boss Town/Academy/Pine/Slope/

#### Brislin/Boyle Streets-

Lower Beaumont Street was also originally part of Hanover Township's Back Road. The Back Road turned sharply onto Chestnut Street at the top of the steep hill, known as Rummage's Hill. It was called Boss Town Street because the mine bosses lived in three houses on the west side of the street when the Warrior Run colliery was open. The company barn was located in the rear of these houses, and there were also two large orchards known as the lower orchard and the upper orchard. David R. Evans' ice house was built near here in 1887. Boss Town Street wasn't called Beaumont Street until about 1910.

The Lloyds, Roberts, Richards, Thomas, Lewis, Prices, Darvis, Rhyses, Joneses, Morgans and Baths were early residents of this street. Griffith Lloyd, a blacksmith, his wife Annie, and Thomas Rhys, a miner, and his wife Elizabeth, lived here since the 1870s.

Jones Street was named for all the Jones families that lived there. Early Jones Street residents were Shadrach, John and William Jones. Shadrach Jones' butcher shop was located at the corner near Railroad Street.

Academy Street was first named about the time the 1909 school house, the Washington Building, was built. In 1916, a second school house, the Lincoln Building, was also erected. For a period this area was called Nuttyville. Earlier schools were first located on Orchard Street and then on Chestnut Street. The Warrior Run Playground is also located on Academy Street. At the end of Academy, about where it joins Jones, was the site of the first borough building and lockup.

Pine Street was thus named because of the nearby pine woods. Slope Street was referred to as the Patch. This was originally a cluster of houses located near the Warrior Run colliery. They were all company houses for the miners working at that colliery. Many of the families that clustered here were Eastern European. John and Tetkla Good were among the early residents of this street. Families such as the Moores, Feddocks, Opalkos, Romancheks, Haverlacks, Kutsups, Tomzaks, Skipalises, Hasinuses, Rzemians and Hunchars came later.

A store owned and operated by Mary Surczynski and her daughter Helen Beznoschak was a landmark of the patch area for many years. Purchased from the Marcuses, it was located in the basement of the current Seferyn residence until about 1935 and then relocated to Upper Beaumont Street.

Mary Gomb also had a grocery store in her basement on Slope Street. It was noted for a talking parrot which was kept outside in a cage. The parrot entertained the youngsters as they passed on their way to the Villa to swim.

Brislin Street was named about 1920 for Charles and Annie Brislin, who lived here for many years.

Similarly, Boyle Street was named by 1910 for the Boyle family. It had previously been known as High Street. Cornelius and Mary Boyle and their children James, Anna, Condy and Joseph Boyle were long time residents of this street. Also on this street were the early residences of several Eastern European families such as the Feddocks and Hovicks. Several of these families had been neighbors in the old country.

## The 20th Century

### -The Anthracite Strike-

The history of Warrior Run in the first half of the 20th century continued to be tied to the mining industry. Economically, the lives of the people remained difficult. In prior years there had always been repeated booms and busts, usually brought on by the mine owners. It was typical of the owners, seeking to make quick fortunes, to saturate the market, driving coal prices down. This overproduction made it unprofitable for most mines to work more than three days a week, which was disastrous for most families. Though working conditions continued to be woeful, workers were afraid to speak up, worried they would lose jobs.

In 1900, the mine workers of Warrior Run were organized into a labor union known as the United Mine Workers of America, and two years later took part in what was to be the longest strike yet in history. Organized by John Mitchell of the United Mine Workers, the Anthracite Strike lasted 165 days. For the first time, all ethnic groups of the borough -native Americans, the Welsh, the Irish and the Eastern Europeans- banded together. The entire community lent support in holding out against operators.

Those who were not directly affected by the strike shared their possessions and did anything else they could for the struggling mine workers' families. The borough's businessmen, butchers, grocers etc., provided goods and accepted payment "on the book." In the settlement, which was helped by President Theodore Roosevelt's intervention, miners won the right to organize, negotiate and to hold some authority in the industry. They received a 10% raise, an eight-hour working day for skilled workers and a nine-hour day for others.

Even with the advances made by the strike, life in this decade continued to be demanding. The mine workers were still underpaid and all the dangers remained. Accidents were frequent, diseases that were preventable later in the century continued to take many lives, illnesses and epidemics were distressingly common, and infant mortality was high.

Life expectancy of a male and female born in these times was about 46 and 48 years, respectively. Influenza, pneumonia, cholera infantum, typhoid fever and tuberculosis killed many. Parents often survived their children, and it was not unusual for many of the town's most prominent citizens to be cut down in their prime.

On July 27, 1908, Andrew Hovick, was killed in a mine accident and on August 28, 1908, six men were killed by a runaway car.

James Stinson of Orchard Street made news in 1905 when he became one of the first state policemen. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania had formed the Pennsylvania State Police that year with a primary mission of keeping order among laborers, particularly in mining areas. They wore gray uniforms and rode black horses.

### -Warrior Run Baseball-

When the 1902 mine strike shut down most of the valley, unemployed young men of Warrior Run formed one of the area's leading baseball teams, the Warrior Run Indians. They were one of the first teams in the valley to wear uniforms and were considered to be exceptional hitters. The uniforms were gray with bright red stockings.

To keep the team going, residents responded generously with donations out of their meager savings. Regular donations from businessmen in Warrior Run, Sugar Notch and Askam also were received.

Games were played on a diamond at Clark's Crossroads every Sunday. The field, now long gone, was always packed with cheering fans.

Dissension cropped up after about four years and directors Dennis Brislin, Hughie Hughes, Charles Wagner, D. C. Evans, D. P. Jones and James "Clagger" Brislin took over.

### -Prosperity and Growth-

Evidence of progress and growth in the borough could be seen. The electric streetcar replaced passenger trains as the chief means of public transportation for mine workers to go to and from work from places like Sugar Notch and Rhone (now, the Hanover section of Nanticoke), as well as transport shoppers and workers to Wilkes-Barre. This streetcar traveled on rails on just about the same route buses run today.

Shoemaker's, located at the end of the street car line at the corner of Chestnut and Valley Hill, was the place to go for sodas and the finest homemade ice cream.

By early 1909 electric street lights were installed. This same year the Washington Building school house on Academy Street was erected.

The first decade of the twentieth century literally ended with a disastrous blast. On February 21, 1910, gas from the mines exploded, destroying two homes on Boyle Street and killing some of the occupants.

The town again made news on June 11, 1911, when the entire election board was arrested and later prosecuted.

By now, the horse was being replaced by the automobile. Jesse Arndt, the town's druggist, and Charles Elliot, a building contractor, owned the first automobiles in Warrior Run. The emergence of gasoline vehicles presented new dangers. On August 15, 1915, Mary Wasiaski was killed by an auto truck, and on July 22, 1918, Helen Hadala became another vehicular accident victim.

A second school house (called the Lincoln Building) was erected in 1916, adjacent to the Washington Building. Teachers of this period included Cora Jones, Gladys Rhys, Mamie Casey, Theresa Stinson, Alice Dowling, Henry Gaughan, and Prof. Edward Williams. In 1917, the second (and current) borough building was built at the north corner of Hanover and Front Streets.

### -World War I-

As World War I created a large market for coal, the borough thrived, but even with the prosperity, life for many individuals remained difficult. Although the war created a labor shortage and higher wages, the prices of nearly all goods skyrocketed. With the war also resulting in fewer boarders, the extra income many families relied on disappeared. Numbers of immigrants dwindled because fewer traveled during war times. The few newcomers that did board did so with members of their family or with someone they knew.

### -Economic Depression-

By the 1920s, the town had already entered into a depression. An increase in the use of oil, along with the closing of many factories, led to a decrease in the demand for coal. This depression, except for a brief interruption by World War II, continues today. United Mine Workers strikes of 1922 (163 days), 1923 (18 days) and 1925 (170 days) were additional blows to the borough's economic health. The strike of 1925 was the most damaging to the coal industry. Markets lost were never regained.

During this time, the A. J. Davis Colliery discontinued operations, being bought out by the Lehigh Valley Coal Company and then the Glen Alden Corporation. Glen Alden owned nearly all the borough's land, except for most of Orchard, Front and Hanover Streets. Home owners on Glen Alden land were required to have long-term leases.

The slope located near the Washington school building was still in operation at this time. A constant rumble often hovered over the town as the hoisting engine at the slope dumped coal down a chute into the hopper.

The women's suffrage amendment to the constitution gave women the right to vote. Their skirts were no longer ankle length. Hair was cropped and smoking became acceptable in public.

The prohibition amendment, prohibiting the manufacture, transportation and sale of intoxicating beverages, angered many in town. Abuse of this law was flagrant and illegal alcohol could be gotten at any of the town's many speakeasies. Many in town even made their own home brew.

Homes in the town, once lit by kerosene lamps, were converting to electricity. Streets were paved. Radios were popular and found in most homes.

The playground was built on land owned by the Lehigh Valley Coal Company. It was beautiful and well kept, equipped with a May pole, swings, merry-go-round, swimming pool and a shanty for artwork. Caretakers were hired to instruct and guide the children.

Street vending and door to door selling of goods were still common, mainly by the "foreigners" and gypsies.

On April 7, 1925, the Warrior Run Legion Post was organized through the efforts of First Lieutenant Edward Brown. First officers were Commander Brown, Senior Vice Commander Edward Linkiewicz, Junior Vice Commander Merle Bartelson, Adjutant Joseph L. Brislin, Finance Officer William J. Williams, Color Bearer John Stecko, and Chaplain Isaac Williams.

The decade ended with the stock market crash of 1929. At first, the crash only affected those with large amounts of stock. The people of Warrior Run, already in a depression, later suffered further as jobs were lost through the continued production cuts in the mines. In many ways, they were forced to revert back to those self-sufficient days on the Blackman Farm 100 years before.

### -Warrior Run Football-

Amateur football, organized by Jerry and Jim Brislin in 1926, became a major sport in Warrior Run. The team, known as Warrior Run Athletic Association, was supported by donations from fans at the games played Sundays at Smith Field. They played a schedule of 12 games for the season.

The players were rugged individuals, used to the hard work in the mines. The team won 45 games, lost 15 and tied 1 during its existence.

In 1929 they were the undefeated champions of the county league. In the title match at Smith Field, before one of the largest crowds ever, the locals defeated the Swoyersville Buffalos by a score of 14 to 13. Two blocked punts that were later converted into two touchdowns and two extra points made the difference in the game.

### -The 1930s-

On January 13, 1930, Warrior Run became the scene of one of the most dramatic and deadly robbery attempts in the history of the valley. Four men were killed and several others maimed for life when bandits boldly ambushed a pay car of the Glen Alden Coal Company as it was going to the # 20 tunnel. The killers exploded a cache of dynamite by means of an electric wire connected to a battery. The resulting blast blew the pay car to bits, sending debris, bodies, and cash flying high into the air. The bandits never got the \$35,000 carried in the pay car, but the crime cost two of them their lives. Joseph Szachewicz and John Nafus were electrocuted for this deadly deed.

The historic Pearson Building on Orchard Street caught fire at about this time. By the time firemen arrived with the old fashioned cart wheel fire apparatus, the building was destroyed.

There was little growth in the borough during the thirties. Wells were still used for water. Nearly everyone raised chickens and had large gardens. Cows grazed in the Front Street field. Milk was delivered to most homes by a milkman. Coal was expensive and family members would glean the coal that was mixed with the rock from the culm banks. But they would always buy some out of fear they'd lose their job if they didn't. Clarence Pearson, a Glen Alden employee, was the local coal hauler.

Few homes had indoor plumbing and relied on outhouses. It was not uncommon for sewage to run into the fields and storm sewers. Since there was no garbage collection, trash had to be thrown in alleys and in fields behind houses.

Gas pumps were found on Orchard Street in front of Wagner's Confectionery and on Hanover Street, outside Bartleson's.

In 1936, the dam above Warrior Run burst, flooding the old mines and ending their operation. A few men drowned.

A miner's strike caused considerable unrest and violence in the area. The streets of Warrior Run were policed to the extent that people were afraid to leave their homes.

Every so often, a siren would blow, as it had done many times in the past, indicating a serious accident in the mines. Every family member's worst fear was to see the vehicle that delivered a deceased miner drive up to the home.

Although prohibition had been repealed, the town still had a number of speakeasies which sold illegal alcohol. There was one or more on just about every street. Proprietors saw it as a way to earn cash. Alcohol was hidden in back rooms or cellars, out of the sight of liquor control agents.

### -World War II-

The economic depression of the area was suspended during World War II as the mines operated full time. Truesdale #20, located above Chestnut Street toward the Sugar Notch line, was in operation at this time. Men of the borough would walk there on a path through the woods.

Food was rationed throughout the war due to shortages. Not much meat was available, so people continued to raise their own poultry and livestock.

The population of the town reached its all time high of over 3,000. Many were boarders hired to work in the mines.

A number of Warrior Run men served in the war. Residents would bid their farewells as troop trains with their loved ones traveled through the borough. The town was greatly saddened by the loss of Michael Klem who died serving his country.

### -The Decline-

The end of World War II in 1945 meant an end to wartime prosperity and the prospect of a dismal economic future. The need for coal continued to decline. Coal, once the primary heating source in homes, was replaced by oil, natural gas and electricity. There were no local jobs waiting for the men returning from the war. Many men left the valley for other industrial cities, costing the town many of its long-time families.

Economic disaster would have been certain had it not been for the garment industry, which employed countless women of the town. In many cases, the woman labored in the mills while their jobless husbands tended to the home and garden.

The continuing decline in population of the borough resulted in the abandonment of the Washington Building school in 1948. High School at the Lincoln Building was discontinued and six teachers lost their jobs. Four teachers plus the principal, Miss Gladys Rhys, were retained to teach the lower grades. Members of the school board at that time included John Jevit, George Bath, Joseph Zula, Sr. and John Bonsavage. High school students were sent to Meyers High School in Wilkes Barre. This was also the end to the popular dances held in the school's gymnasium. In 1949, the old school building was converted to a garment factory.

By now, homes in town were equipped with indoor plumbing and many had electric refrigerators and clothes washers.

In November 1949, the Warrior Run Fire Relief Association purchased its first new fire engine. The previous ones were second hand. The new engine had a Chevrolet motor and chassis and cost \$6,637.

Street parties were popular for many years. Similar to the later day bazaars, Front Street was blocked off, starting from the borough building. Food, beverages, games, music and dancing were enjoyed by all.

Sports were ever popular. They were always available, whether it was a "pickup" game among the youngsters or a league game on the courts of Warrior Run High School. Supporters came out in throngs for the bigger games. Helen Bonsavage Grzesik's candy and soda store on Front Street was a popular refreshment place for youngsters after the game.

### -Warrior Run Basketball-

Warrior Run High School Basketball was organized in 1928 with Stewart Hettig as coach. Later coaches were Joseph Richards, Henry Piestrak and Edward (Cliff) Chmura.

One of the biggest and longtime rivals of Warrior Run was Swoyersville High School. Swoyersville once had a record 72-game winning streak broken by Warrior Run. The coaches at that time worked nine months and were paid \$1,170, or about \$130 a month.

Scholastic basketball ended with the closing of the high school.

### -The 1950s-

The trackless trolley, an electric bus system that was powered by electricity from an overhead wire, replaced the street car, and then it was soon replaced by diesel. More and more people owned their own automobiles. Plymouth's, Ford's, Chevies, Hudsons, Edsels, Buicks, Oldsmobile and Cadillacs were popular. In 1950, Walter Roxie Wojciechowski opened his full service gas filling station on Front Street.

Day to day life in the 1950s was much different than today. Although some residents had acquired television sets -black and white, of course- the "tube" did not yet command the attention of peoples' lives.

Orchard Street was always filled with people. Occasionally a huckster could be heard chanting his litany of vegetables for sale.

Whistles of passing trains could be heard both day and night. Car horns of wedding parties filled the air on Saturdays as the parade of decorated cars passed up and down the streets.

Coal for heating was still common. Delivered by truck, it was dumped down chutes into coal bins in the cellar.

Women shopped, socialized and sat on porches when not doing their housework. Backyards included the familiar lines of clothes hanging out to dry. But never on Sunday, for this was the day of rest. Conversations were heard in Polish as well as English. Children, dogs and cats were everywhere. Flocks of pigeons were a joy to see. Many men in the town raised hunting dogs for their past time.

The Blue Room, located on the third floor of Stanley Nadwodney's Cafe, was a popular place for dances and political rallies. A soft blue light beckoned dancers to its large hall.

Lenny Wagner's was the hangout for teenagers, providing sodas, ice cream and pinball machines. It was also the post office. Men of the town socialized at one of the many beer gardens. Joe "Yudi" Pehala's barber shop was also a place for conversation, with pigeons, hunting dogs, politics, sports and talk about the old days among the most common topics.

Other well-known figures of the town were Stanley "Stacky" Chmura, the milkman; Steve Kotch, the dry cleaner; Sidney Pripstein, the proprietor of the hardware store; Alex "Lefty" Truszkowski, the polka king; Tom, the mailman; and Joe, the rag man. Joe visited the town about once a week with his horse and old wagon, collecting rags and scrap metal. Children could earn a few pennies by selling stuff they acquired from their parents. Joe was always happy to give the children a free wagon ride down the alley from Bauer to Hanover.

Penny candy was sold in every store. An ice cream cone cost a dime. The 1950s ended with the music of Elvis Presley, Pope John XXIII, Eisenhower, Nikita Krushchev, fear of atomic war with Russia, and fallout shelters.

Strip mining, which had been gradually replacing underground mining, continued to mar the landscape. The peacefulness of the town was often disturbed by the rumble of steam shovels at work. Much of Warrior Run land that had no homes or businesses on it was stripped. As the field behind Orchard Street was stripped, long abandoned mining cars were retrieved, indicating the shallowness of the old Warrior Run mines. The Truesdale colliery burned in 1953, curtailing local operations. Underground mining in the Wyoming Valley permanently ceased in 1959 when the Knox Coal Company disaster flooded mines.

Subsidence had taken its toll on the topography of the town many times over the years. As the mines caved in, buildings sometimes sank and tilted. Rudolph Pearson, in his twilight years, reminisced that as a boy in the 1890s, he had been able to sleigh -downhill- from the Hanover Street end of Orchard Street toward Bauer Street. Residences on both sides of Hanover Street were on equal levels, instead of one side of the street being raised much higher than the other. And Valley Hill was much steeper.

The culm banks from the old mines continued to burn, as they had for decades. The reddish glow of the burning embers were easily seen at night. Sometimes, when the wind was calm, a sulfurous stench hung like a veil over the town.

#### -A New Era-

The 1960s signaled a new era for the nation. The people of Warrior Run experienced this first hand in October 1960 when the handsome presidential candidate, Jack Kennedy, and his wife Jackie rode through the town during a campaign visit to the Valley. The glamorous couple rode in a convertible down the Valley Hill, around the corner to Hanover Street, en route to Nanticoke. Residents lined the streets to catch a glimpse. JFK is believed to be the only presidential candidate to pass through Warrior Run. Our town, like the nation, was stunned by Kennedy's death in November 1963. Many homes hung American flags tied with black rope in mourning.

Then along came the Beatles. At first, the Beatles' music sounded like noise to most adults. Tunes such as "I Want to hold your Hand" and "She Loves You" took the town by storm and could be heard in every home with youngsters. To parents' dismay, the long-hair style of the Beatles quickly replaced the popular crew cut of the fifties on most young teens.

Bazaars have always been very popular. The American Legion, the Fireman's Association, and sometimes the Little League sponsored events almost yearly, usually at the baseball field on Front Street, the playground on Hanover Street, and in later years at the newly built American Legion Building on Valley Hill. These events drew large crowds, providing festive ethnic music, food, drinks, and games. Menu items always included the finest homemade foods such as pierogi, potato pancakes, and french fries (with vinegar, of course, a telltale of the town's Welsh heritage), as well as corn on the cob, hot dogs, hamburgers, and Nardone Brother's pizza. Stegmaier and Gibbons were the popular brews, and sodas, in old fashion flavors as birch and root beer, creme, black cherry, and ginger ale, were also provided.

Popular organizations at this time included the American Legion and its Woman's Auxiliary, the Ladies' Aid Society of the Welsh Presbyterian Church, the Volunteer Fireman's Association and its Woman's Auxiliary, and Boy Scout, Girl Scout and Cub Scout organizations. The Askam, Sugar Notch, Warrior Run (ASNWR) Little League provided youngsters with an opportunity to play baseball. The Twin Borough Lion's Club annually provided a Santa Claus and boxes of chocolates at Christmas and an egg hunt at Easter for all the children of the town. The Polish National Alliance Council 141 provided an opportunity for youngsters to demonstrate their heritage through Polish dancing.

All of the organizations of the town paraded in unison through the streets each Memorial Day in honor of the war dead.

Elementary school at the Lincoln Building was discontinued after June 1967. The school was one of the last of its kind in the area. The first eight grades were contained in three classrooms managed by only three teachers. Even with these difficulties, a fine education was gotten by all who applied themselves. Students were sent to the Wilkes-Barre School District for a period before being consolidated into the Hanover School District. Teachers during these final years included Miss Jane Lloyd of Warrior Run, Mrs. Viola Trochimovicz and Mrs. Eleanor Jones of Sugar Notch, and Mrs. Mary Dew of Nanticoke.

These women did much more than teach. They were truly dedicated to the well-being of each child. In addition to instilling moral values, they provided parties for every holiday, as well as yearly excursions to Witinsky's Villa for ice skating and to San Souci Amusement Park. They always held a dinner dance for outgoing eighth graders, and it was not uncommon for them to contribute to these events out of their own pockets.

In the summer of 1967, the people of Warrior Run joined the Borough of Sugar Notch in celebrating their centennial.

Sans Souci Amusement Park, located where the Hanover Area High School campus now stands, was dismantled. For years, residents had picniced, swam in the huge swimming pool, or danced to Joe Nardone and the Allstars, and other legendary local groups in the Souci's ballroom. The park had a great roller skating rink, and dozens of rides, including the Wild Cat roller coaster, Caterpillar, Tilt a Whirl and Spook House. On summer evenings, residents could hear the grinding rumble of the Tumblebug soaring through the air.

The Viet Nam War shadowed the final years of the 1960s. Jack Kutchta, one of the town's young men who served our country with great enthusiasm, was felled by a shrapnel wound to the chest in early 1969. One of the saddest days in the town's history was when his body was returned home. Nearly every home along Main Street Sugar Notch and in the town of Warrior Run displayed the American flag in his honor.

After the last of the trains passed through the town, the tracks were quickly removed. The Elliot Building, a landmark at the corner of Hanover and Orchard Street, burned and was torn down. Pripstein's hardware store, adjacent to the Elliot Building, was in its final years of operation. The popular confectionery of Lenny Wagner's on Orchard Street was turned over to his nephew, Andy, upon his death. Local grocery stores were on the decline. The popularity of supermarkets such as Acme and A&P signaled the end of Kasian's, Brodginiski's, Wagner's, Gill's, Kwiatek's and Parulski's.

Popular as ever, Daylida's Bar & Grill, a local landmark for seafood dining, provided the finest of clams, lobster, shrimp and scallops. Those of us less fortunate could appear at the back door, empty plate in hand, and leave with a most generous portion of the most delectable french fries for a quarter or more. Established in 1948 by Edward and Helen Daylida in the old Elliot Building, it was moved to its present location, a few doors away, in 1955.

#### **-1970 to Present-**

The early 1970s were a time of great national upheaval. The country was still deeply involved in the Viet Nam War. Nixon became the first U. S. president to resign from office. Most young men in town sported long hair and mustaches became in vogue. The only style of slacks to be worn were bell bottoms. Miniskirts were the rage for girls, followed by the midi and the maxi.

The apparel industry, once a major employer, was on the decline as cheaper labor was found in foreign countries. Then came the oil crises, meat and sugar shortages. Larger cars were replaced by smaller, more fuel efficient models. Prices of many items skyrocketed to highs never seen before. The people of the town suffered with the rest of the nation through a national recession.

The 1980s were a time of continued unemployment. Jobs were scarce, especially for older workers approaching retirement who had lost their jobs to changing times. Many of the older families of the town had passed on or moved away and their homes were now occupied by new families. Many long-time residents felt that the town had become foreign to them. They had once known all the occupants of the town; now, they hardly knew any.

Many households contained microwave ovens, video recorders, and telephone answering machines. Cordless telephones and video cameras also became popular.

The old Washington School building burned to the ground and in its place was built a new home for the Warrior Run Borough Fire Company. Since 1917 it had been housed in the Borough Building on Front Street. This new fire hall is a testament to the strength of volunteerism in the borough.

Warrior Run Borough has been fortunate to have the cooperation of Hanover Township as the emergency response provider for those in need of emergency medical care.

The Warrior Run police force, although small in number, has always been admired and respected by borough residents. Each evening, the cruiser weaves its way through the borough's streets, keeping the residents, streets, and homes protected.

The final decade of the 20th century began with the installation of a new sewage disposal system, which links with Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority. Taking years to complete, it ended with repavement of roads and the rebuilding of sidewalks. Such improvements were important for attracting new business.

The Sears warehouse opened in November 1992, sitting atop 333 acres of former Blue Coal Corporation land in Warrior Run, Sugar Notch and Hanover Township. U.S. Rep. Paul Kanjorski called it "a symbol of something new in Northeastern Pa." For Warrior Run residents this landmark also provided new opportunities as a potential workplace.

The extension of Hanover Street into Sugar Notch serves a dual purpose. While accommodating operations at the warehouse, it also provides residents with an area for walking with friends or their favorite pets. This road resulted in the rerouting of through traffic, which had previously come through Main Street, Sugar Notch, to the intersection of Chestnut Street and Valley Hill, and then down to Hanover.

The winter of 1993-94 was one of the worst in memory. An all time record of over 100 inches of snow fell.

#### **-Reflection-**

In observing this centennial celebration, we reflect upon the past. One thing constant about the history of Warrior Run Borough and its people, however, is the continuous change.

Sometimes the change reflected the national scene as the culture of the country evolved. Too often though, it was on a more personal level as beloved ones of the town were lost.

The one thing that the future guarantees is change.

*Sources included early U. S. Census records, the Wilkes-Barre Record, Luzerne County Court House records, resources of the Osterhaut Library and of the Wyoming Valley Historical Society, the writings of Henry Blackman Plumb as well as personal interviews.*

Edited by Jim Zbick