

From: WELCOME TO HISTORY IN NEWSPAPER

By E. Eugene Moore

The items listed below (on this page) are History in Newspapers items that are relevant to all townships in our area, Conestoga, Manor, Martic, Pequea as well as Millersville and Washington Boroughs...

...The source of this material are various newspaper that are on-line, the *Lancaster Intelligencer* and *The Columbia Spy* are all at the Penn State Digital Book Shelf [Page](#) once there click on Digital Collection and then Civil War Newspapers. Unfortunately, this doesn't include the full run of either paper, they run from about 1848 to 1870. Previously the Lancaster County Historical Society had the Columbia Spy on-line that was complete but when this collection was transferred to Penn State only the Civil War period papers were placed on-line.

Thanks to Lancaster Newspapers Inc. and the Sterling Gazette for permission to use the copyrighted material on these pages. Some newspapers, like the Philadelphia Inquirer, Columbia Spy and other newspapers are beyond copyrighted., they predate 1925, but I'm pleased to be able to present this material. Expect future updates to these pages.

While this pow-wow doctor wasn't from our area we did have pow-wow doctors here and I thought, how they practiced their craft would be interesting...

Examiner & Herald.
January 19, 1876

An Old Fashioned Witch. - SUPERSTITION THAT IS TWO CENTURIES BEHIND THE TIMES - MEDICAL PRACTICES IN SOUTHERN PENNSYLVANIA- PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN CHARMS, SPELLS, HAZEL RODS, AND HOCUS PCUS GENERALLY - HOLDING HER POWER FOR HALF A CENTURY. - The New York Sun of a recent date contains the following communication from this county on the subject of witchcraft and its practice in this section of country. The article reads as follows;

LANCASTER, PA., JAN. 6. - We had a long drive nearly down to the borders of Berks, past log houses a hundred years old, past people who have never traveled by railway and who have lived their years upon the same farms where they were born. We were in quest of the homestead of Granny Tribble, the most famous of backwoods sorceresses, and some of the most successful in the practice of primitive black art. She is visited, fed, and believed in by hundreds of simple people in her part of the country.

"Pow-wowing" is an institution in this section of the State. Nearly every town, hamlet, borough or village in Lancaster, Lebanon and Berks, has its witch or soothsayer, and these people really derive large incomes from their reputed powers. They profess to heal the sick, detect crime, reveal the past, present and future, bring about pestilence and famine, destroy

crops, put spells on horses and cattle, and plagues on individuals, restore lost articles, and in all these specialties their professions are received with implicit faith by those who patronize them. Granny Tribble is said to be the most successful of them all. Her works are known far and wide.

Our drive led us past Kuauer's, a small post village of Brecknock and the landlord of the White Hall inn there, in great seriousness and earnestness, directed us on our way to Granny Tribble's.

GRANNY TRIBBLE AT HOME

The house was half frame, half log, with a chimney on one end, containing enough material to build a dozen small houses. We were invited to enter, not with a pleasant bow or a glad smile, but with a haughty sway of the head and a sweep of the hand, which seemed to say, "Come in...if you want to." The woman was tall and straight to her shoulders, but her head bent forward until her chin nearly touched her breast. She was more than eighty years old, with gray hair, dark eyes, a fair white skin, and regular features. She must have been beautiful once. She rested upon a heavy cane, and, half turning she told us to be seated.

She seated herself in an old hickory chair, and said, "Well, well, what is it ye want? Are ye crossed in love, sick or unhappy? What is the trouble?"

This was very much like the soothsaying of two hundred years ago. Her story, which she did not give us until after some solicitation, was equally old-fashioned in the simplicity and assurance of its pretensions. It was hard to believe that the woman who was talking lived in Pennsylvania and in the nineteenth century.

Her father, Heinrich Tribble, she said, was a seventh son, born among the Hartz mountains. His grandmother had inherited from her grandmother a rare and mysterious book, which, for nearly 300 years, had been handed down in the family, and ever looked into except by the owners. When the last grandmother was dying she called Heinrich Tribble to her bedside and predicted that he would marry a seventh daughter, and that in course of time his seventh child would be a daughter, and to that daughter she would leave an heirloom, a book more precious than gold. She further stated that that seventh child would be born with a "veil on," and that when she reached the age of seventeen she should receive the book and all its contents. The aged sorceress died, and, according to her prediction, everything came truly to pass. The father was enjoined to keep this word and follow out her commands to the very letter, "and ever since," said the old woman, "I have been in the possession of the book left to me by my father's grandmother" ...

"When I had read it three years I made up my mind to commence business, and I went to work; and since then I have been doing for myself, and have managed to get along without a husband.

AN EXTRAORDINARY MATERIA MEDICA

"In that book I can see anything I wish. It is not printed, but written. How old it is I cannot say. The first thing I ever learned from it was to stop the flow of blood. It is all in Dutch, and I must say the words in Dutch. I can stop a wound from bleeding by saying: "Blood, blood was not made to flow; the Lord, himself hath willed it so." (this is the translation.) I say these words, pass my finger-over and across the wound, blow on it three times, and the blood will

stop flowing, the wound heal up, and there will be no inflammation. I have three words yet to say when I do this. The words I cannot tell you."

To cure scalds, burns, bruises, sores, ring-worm, scrofula, and kindred diseases, the old woman has another "pow-wow." It consists of two verses, which are repeated while the sores are smeared with grease rendered from the weasel. Wild fire, small-pox, and the itch must be treated with grease rendered from a black cat that has died with its throat cut."

"These are the commonest uses of pow-wowing," she went on. "I almost forgot to mention the falling fits and 'falling away.'" Babies waste away to skin and bone, and their mother's don't know what's the matter with them. They bring the little things here and I take the spell off them and they get fat and healthy. "Spells are put on babies by evil spirits, and the innocents waste away and die, just like the plant that withers for want of water. My book tells me what evil spirit hangs over the child, and that spirit must first be killed. If that is done, the little ones live to a very old age!"

Granny was asked whether she had faith in it. "Faith in it!" said she; "indeed I have. Nothing would work unless I believed and know it would under the charm. I have never failed. I have brought back horses, and cattle, and money. I have brought back men's wives, and daughters, and sons; and I have brought back husbands from the paths of vice to their firesides.

The Granny stretched up her thin, bony arm, crooked her finger and mysteriously shook her head. "Yes, indeed on the wish bank over the meadow, many and many a time, have I sat with my hazel rod and studied the moon and the stars, and read their signs, and heard the voice of the spirits telling me this and this and this. I did as I was told, and I have yet to know of a single man, woman or child, I ever deceived or advised wrongly."

"Yes, I am often asked to do wrong. I can conjure, to be sure. I had an enemy long ago, and he's pulled frogs and worms out of his hide for blaspheming me. A farmer cursed me, and his stock and children died. A toll man reviled me, and he was carried off by unknown hands to the hills, where he nearly starved to death. How he got there he does not know."

She was asked where she kept her book, "That is buried, and it will be out of sight many days. I dare not look at it myself. It is wrapped in the veil that came over my face when I was brought to earth, and everything is buried in ashes from the wood of the cypress tree. I have made my peace with Heaven, and do no more injury to others. Their crops may flourish for all I care, but some must be punished. Many a midnight I have walked around farms and made them barren for a season. I have cured a horse by rubbing his tongue with birch bark and repeating a German appeal to the Most High. I have cursed St. Anthony's dance by the "fire stone," and have relieved people from all bodily complaints by the lily root."

"Salt in the stocking prevents toothache; a piece of paper, with 'Hear me, near me, fly not from me,' written with a raven's quill with lamb's blood, is a sure protection from assault or danger by flood or war, or pestilence, or disease; four eyelashes wrapped in muslin and carried in the left shoe will increase the sight and the speed of walking; dried snake skin about the wrists prevents apoplexy; and at this Granny pulled up her sleeves and exhibited two ornamented bracelets made out of the skin of beautiful rattle-snakes. Several years ago, she said, she had two fine copperheads stuffed and mounted on a spiral wire that would around her arms or neck just like a real serpent. This was to aid the free circulation of blood, and to keep off nervousness and dyspepsia.

"For luck at sea, carry the hazel blossom, wet or dry for chills, the fire fly; for contagious diseases, such as small pox, &e., black fur from the left fore foot of a cat.

"To cure ringbone on animals, take a chicken that is perfectly black and less than a year old, and cut its head off. The blood flowing is put on the sore every five hours for three times. To prevent erysipelas from spreading, use the blood of a black cat. This has done its work when doctors have failed.

"A child lost the use of its arms and limbs. I bathed it in the rain drops under the eaves, dried it with a wash cloth, buried a shoe found on the wayside and that child got well"...

These and many other cases were related by this strange woman. She lives alone, and makes a comfortable living. She has no charges, but takes what is given to her as a present. The farmers fear her, and have great confidence in her powers. She has lived among them for fifty years, and has never been known to be sick.

Information sourced from: <http://sites.rootsweb.com/~pacahs/news.htm>
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