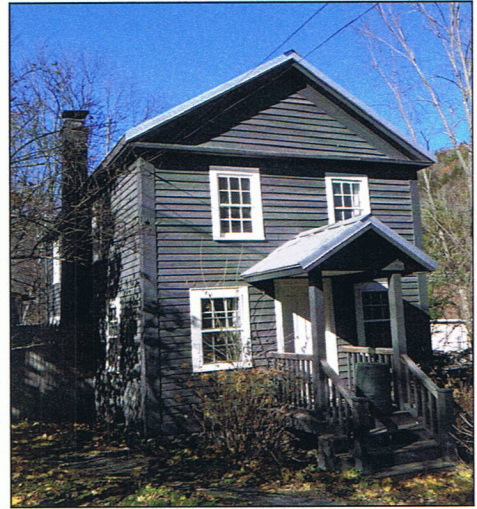


The Milanville Historic District: The Milanville PA Historic District was created in 1988 thanks to the spadework of local residents, and especially by the know-how of Mary Curtis, a National Park Service historian with deep family ties in the region. Mary drew a boundary that contains 20 structures, including fourteen listed on the National Register of Historic Places. I've tried to flesh out Mary's work by posting 2016 pictures of "listed" properties and adding brief notes.

"Downtown" Milanville (near the General Store)



The Eli Beach house c. 1850. Eli Beach owned and operated Milanville's tannery for several decades.



Ahern Residence c. 1880. A stone's throw from the General Store.



Milanville General Store c. 1850. Served as the tannery's "company store" (c. 1850—1880), and played the same role for an acid factory that occupied the former tannery site (c. 1898 - 1928).



J. Howard Beach house c. 1870. A son of Eli Beach, Howard became Milanville's first postmaster in 1861.

The Skinner Houses

Skinner families who migrated to the Milanville area from Connecticut in 1754 included twenty one year old Daniel. In 1764, guiding a homemade timber raft down the Delaware to a shipyard in Philadelphia, Daniel set off 150 years of timbering and rafting in the region.

Four Skinner houses survive in Milanville, including the town's oldest, built by Daniel's son Nathan in 1815. Great-grandsons Volney, Weston, and Milton owned the other three.



The Nathan Skinner House c. 1815. Nathan partly framed this house seven miles upriver and rafted it to Milanville.



The Volney Skinner House c. 1840. Enlarged in 1864 by Volney and his wife, it became the "Milanville House" and accepted guests.



Milton Skinner House c.1900. Milton created the Milanville Bridge Company which oversaw completion the town's first bridge in 1902. His house overlooks the Milanville bridge portal.



Weston Skinner House c.1870. Enlisting in the Union Army in 1862, Weston fought in General Sherman's campaigns in the South. In late years he tended his nearby store.

Public Places – three privately owned in 2016



Milanville Barber Shop c. 1880. The last barber was Herman Lurtz, who charged a dollar for three haircuts. When he closed the shop in the 1960s local voters lost their long-time polling place. It's now maintained by an owner who uses it for storage.



Milanville School House c.1880. In 1957 its single classroom held 33 students in grades one through six. It's now a beautifully maintained private home.



The Milanville Bridge, 1902. Listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places, and the National Register of Historic Bridges. Built for horse and wagon traffic, its design is greatly admired by modern bridge engineers.



Methodist Church, 1910. Built on land donated by the Skinner family. Now a privately owned chapel for weddings, memorial services, etc.

Early 20th Century



Frank Davis House c. 1900. A side gabled, 1.5 story residence. Just west of the Illman House, on the same knoll.



Illman House c. 1910. Merlin Illman ran the village barbershop until his death in 1950. At his shop in 1933 a loud rumble of water from Calkins Creek told him an upstream mill dam had burst.

Late 18th Century – not in Historic District



Abandoned Grist Mill – thought to date from the late 18th century. It was modified through the years and abandoned after a 1933 flood destroyed its dam. It's on the north fork of Calkins Creek, 0.7 miles SW of the General Store.



John Land House, 1796. John's father, Robert, was imprisoned during the Revolution for being a British Loyalist. John returned after the war and built what's considered the oldest house in Wayne County. Located 0.4 miles north of the General Store.

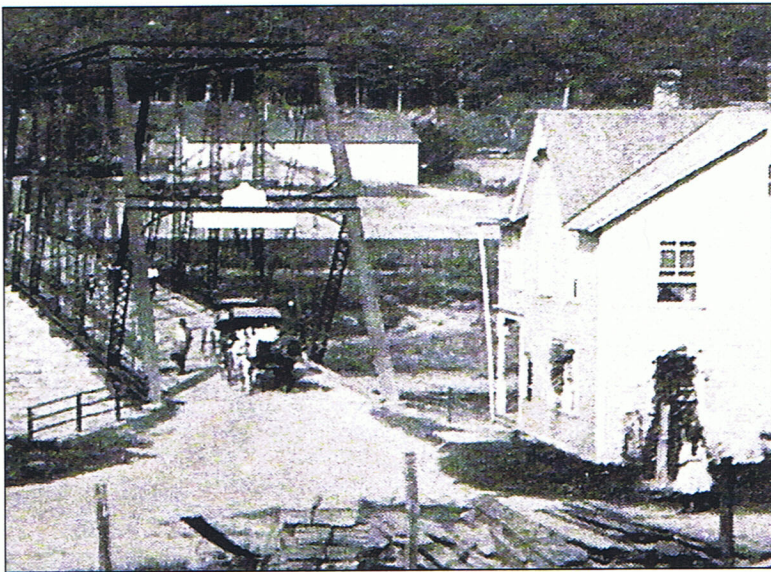
Bridging the years...

The Milanville Cemetery overlooks rich bottomland that early settlers called "Cushetunk," or "Flat Land." Headstones, which date from the early 19th century, include Skinner family members whose homes I've pictured.

On autumn days I find a sense of communion here, and of deep stillness.



The Milanville Cemetery lies on a knoll just north of the Milanville General Store. Dark hills are in New York, across the Delaware River.



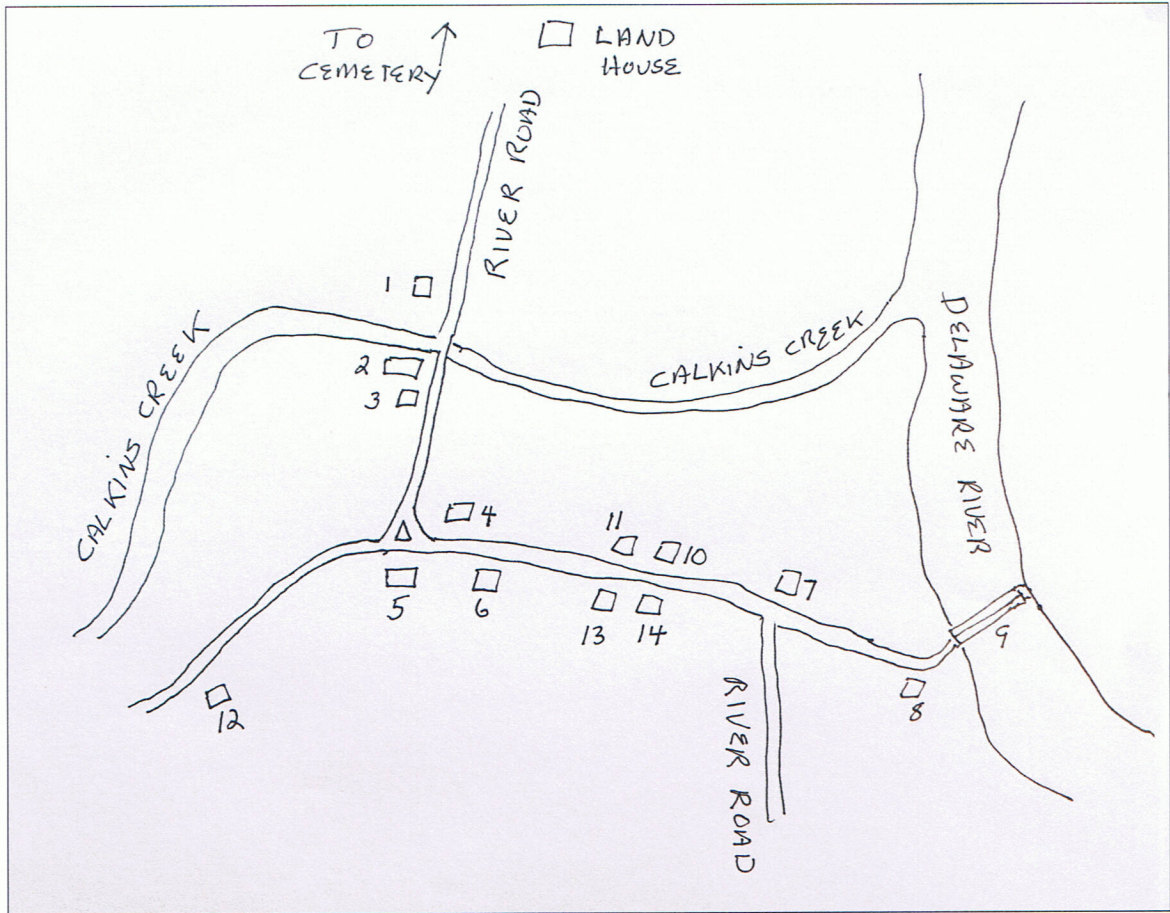
A carriage and team cross the Milanville Bridge from New York, ca. 1910. Note the dark post at bottom right, where a girl with a pig tail waits in a white dress.

In this early picture I imagine the carriage with a husband and wife dressed for church. Wearing her Sunday "best" is a girl in a white dress.

It's a fine June day, so an afternoon picnic may be planned. And there's a 15 cent toll to pay.

I treasure this timeless image of crossing a river, and of a waiting girl with a pig tail.

Milanville Historic District



The sketch map shows all fourteen Milanville properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. They are numbered below to match the way they are grouped on pages one to four.

“Downtown”:

- 1. Howard Beach House
- 2. Milanville General Store
- 3. Ahearn Residence
- 4. Eli Beach House

Public Places:

- 9. Milanville Bridge
- 10. Methodist Church
- 11. Barber Shop
- 12. School House

Skinner Houses:

- 5. Volney Skinner
- 6. Weston Skinner
- 7. Nathan Skinner
- 8. Milton Skinner

20th Century:

- 13. Frank Davis House
- 14. Illman House
- The Land House, just outside the District, is not numbered.

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