

TAVERN IN THE TOWN

Good day everyone...it's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.

"Oh, there's a tavern in the town--and there my true love sits him down"--goes the old song. And at least a dozen Pennsylvania villages can trace their origin--the origin of their names--to the old tavern signs. The cross-roads hamlets of Lancaster County, whose names for some reason have been attributed to other designs, were named for taverns in the town. The quaintly named town of Bird-in-Hand in Lancaster County grew up around an eighteenth-century inn with a signboard depicting the maxim, "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush". A few miles away, an ancient log tavern called the Cross Keys gave its name to the settlement in the midst of which it stood--the town was Cross Keys--yet in 1813, the name was changed because of the Intercourse--or the crossing--of the two roads. Another Lancaster community, Blue Ball, likewise derived its name from a pre-Revolutionary tavern. Other place names originating in tavern signs include Red Lion in York County, and Lionville and White Horse in Chester County. The beast on the signboard at Lionville, like that at Red Lion, was rampant and red. Broad Axe, in Montgomery, was so called from the sign in the 1790's displaying a broad axe, a square and a compass. A tavern called Solomon's Temple gave the town of Temple, in Berks County, its name. Probably the most famous of all Pennsylvania geographical labels having a signboard origin, is the place near Philadelphia called King of Prussia. This was a popular name with German inn-keepers who frequently used it in the old days. The picturesque

inn at King of Prussia is still doing business, one of the most hospitable in the entire Pennsylvania countryside. Its sign, showing Frederick I on horseback is traditionally ascribed to Gilbert Stuart, the great American artist, who is said to have painted it when he was down on his luck. The village of Trappe took its name from a tavern, to which one approached on high steps, or TREPPE, in German. It became the Treppe Tavern, then Trappe. Lancaster was famous for its tavern signs a century ago--half the Kings of Europe were to be seen--Prussia, Sweden, the Prince of Orange, and there were the warriors whose names graced the taverns--Washington, Lafayette, Jackson, Napoleon, William Tell and a whole army of statesmen like Jefferson and old Ben Franklin. To have a good tavern in the town helped to bring it fame; helped to bring the traveller to it for food and drink; helped the economy of the community. It is so still today! And when you travel, perhaps to the tavern which Washington knew at Waterford in Erie County--it might be wise to look for the sign--the bull, king, prince, lion or seal of Pennsylvania--which shows that there is a good tavern in the town.

This is Pete Wambach. It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.