

6 Phillip J. Bertin Farm Site

On this site stood the farmhouse and buildings of the Bertin farm. Its 88 acres were first cleared in about 1857 by John Gruver and farmed by the Phillip Bertin family from 1875 until 1906 when it was purchased by the Citizens Gas and Water Company and the family relocated to South Williamsport. The water for the house was supplied by a spring in the hollow to the south and pumped by a "water ram" to the cistern which can be seen behind the house foundation. Typical of the time, the farm had horses (to do the plowing and haul the wagons), cows, pigs, chickens, turkeys, geese, ducks, and guinea fowl. Vegetable gardens, berry patches, fruit trees, and an apple orchard surrounded the house. There were no motorized vehicles, machinery, or electricity; many tools and implements were made by hand.

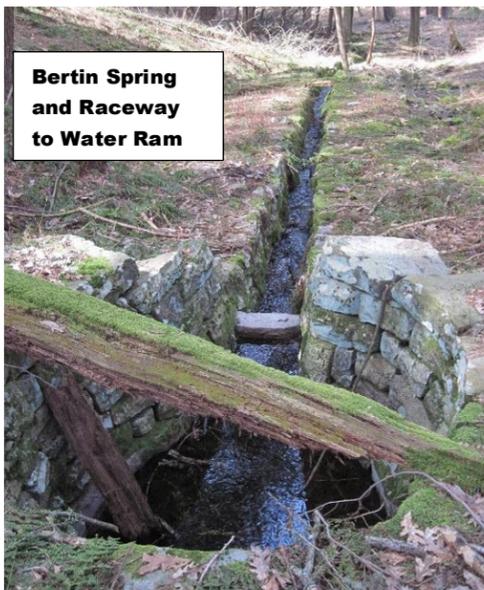
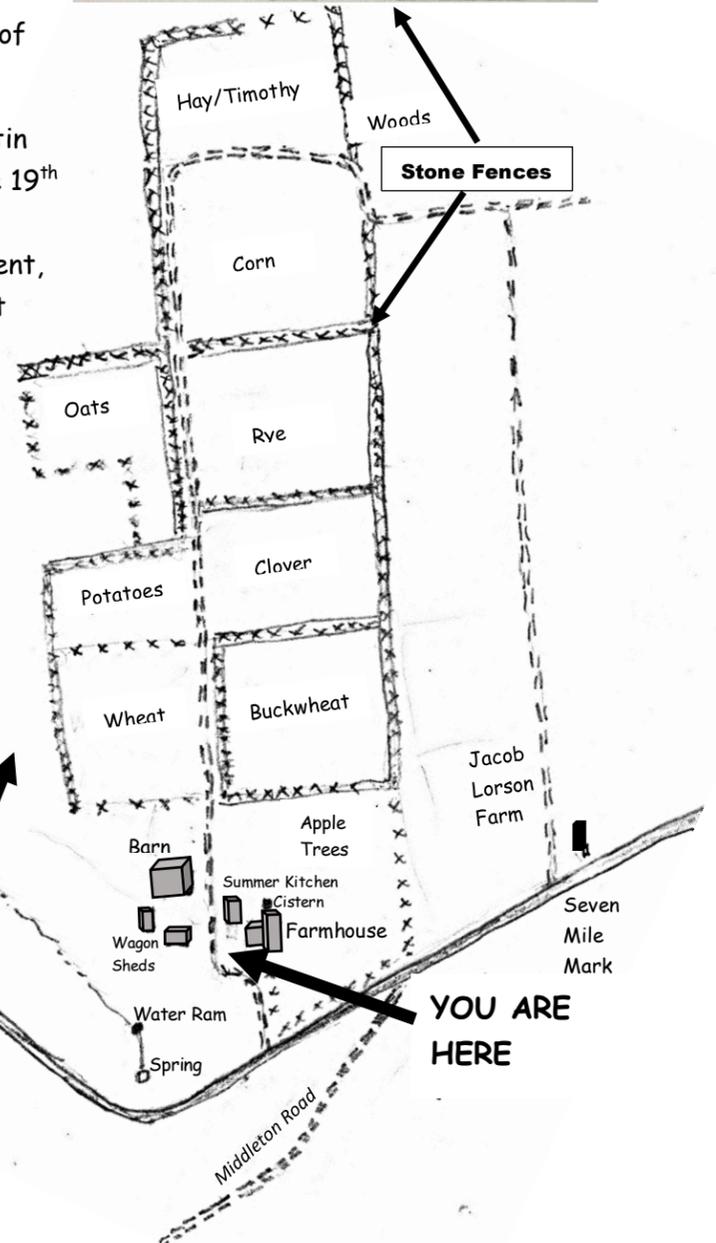
The farm was quite self-sustaining, and income was generated from sale of crops not needed to raise the livestock, as well as produce, eggs, meat, fresh and canned fruit, apple butter, and crafts that were carried by horse and wagon to sell at the Market Square farmers' market in Williamsport on Saturdays.

The children all had their chores and were essential to working the farm. They walked about three miles down to school in Mosquito Valley, made their own amusements, and used the farm, woods, and streams as their playgrounds. Many of the nearby neighbors were related and formed an extended family.

In the Muncy Historical Society journal *Now and Then*, July 1971, Eugene P. Bertin chronicles the history of this, his childhood farm in extensive detail. He saw the 19th century family farm as an important part of the history of our country and its demise as a passing of a way of life. The farmers were independent, self-sufficient, and able to work hard, live off of the land, and prevail against the obstacles that nature and weather could throw at them.



Bertin Family



Bertin Spring and Raceway to Water Ram



The Barn

For more information, please visit the WMWA website at wmwa-wsa.org and click on *Watershed/History*.

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