



Nov. 15, 2023

TOURING SULLIVAN COUNTY MUSEUM . . . while dusting

A book being added to our collection is that of Ariel F. Way and Nancy S. Wilkinson done in 1985 entitled *Eagles Mere . . . The Town That Time Forgot*. Much review has been done over time and the ladies attribute much of their material to Dr. Horace and son, Robert McFarland from their 1944 book *"Eagles Mere and the Sullivan Highlands"*. In the first chapter *How Did Eagles Mere Happen?*, they've described in much more detail than we've room for here, the culmination of the lake and surrounding land scheme. Portions transcribed here:

"By what process of nature could a body of water three-fourths of a mile long and one-third of a mile wide, ranging in depth to sixty feet, be situated on top of a mountain 2000 feet above sea level?"

"We must go back about three hundred millions years when all of Pennsylvania stood about at sea level with the seashore slowly migrating back and forth. The ages of change are then explained in detail, culminating with "Near Eagles Mere the folding was not so pronounced, for it lies in a gentle trough of syncline between two arches or anticlines – one following Muncy Creek valley and the other centering from Lincoln Falls past Campbellsville, Laddsborg and Laceyville. Doubtless this folding took a long time.

"Then not so many million years ago slow uplift set in, soon revealing near present Eagles Mere the hard sandstone and conglomerate at the top of the Devonian and the base of the Carboniferous periods which had been completely worn off the crests of the anticlines, exposing Devonian red rocks below. This hard sandstone yet persists in the basins or synclines. It is what holds up the mountains all about Eagles Mere. Anyone observing closely in driving to Eagles Mere from Muncy Valley can in the six miles notice the leaving of the hardstone and encountering the softer red shales and sandstones of the underlying Devonian as the road becomes steeper."

The explanation goes on to state that "These slow-moving forces of nature subjected to erosion and probably earthquake, all recorded for us on steep-sided valleys of Fishing Creek at and about Jamison City, on the south side of North Mountain, where a gorge is nearly 1300 feet deep and only a mile wide at the top."

"When only a matter of thousands of years ago, the valleys had been worn down to near their present level, glacial ice spread over this area from the gathering ground in Labrador. It is believed that this area was overrun at least three times. The first time the ice spread southward as far as Selinsgrove, the next time it reached to

the neighborhood of Watsonstown and Williamsport, and the last time it extended glacial fingers down to Picture Rocks and Lairdsville.”

From the authors: “My own explanation of Eagles Mere is that – when the glacier retreated, it paused long enough with its end at Eagles Mere Park to lay down a mass of morainic material that choked or dammed the valley at that point and resulted in the present lake. If I am right, there should be solid rock underlying the beach at the north end of the lake as deep or deeper than the water in the lake.”

“As to the source of the lake into which no streams flow, surveys have determined the presence of deep, never-failing springs in the depths that make this “Lake on top of a mountain” a huge spring in itself. Surface water from an area of less than two square miles drains into the lake, with the result that even after the heaviest rains the lake water is never roily or muddy. A weir in the Outlet Pond at the south end of the lake controls the water level.”

The book goes on to describe the naming, living, the end of an era, railroads, paths and trails, lake boats, water carnivals, sights and Eagles Mere today. It is worthy reading for those of you interested in that area.

For this and more about the various histories of Sullivan County, you can contact us by phoning 570-946-5020 or emailing museum@scpahistory.com for research or an appointment. Also, visit our website at www.scpahistory.com and like us on Facebook.