

# The Good Messengers

*missionaries along the American frontier*



.....Dimitri Gallitzin, the missionary prince



**Once upon a time, a prince was born in a palace. Now most stories that begin that way are fairy tales but this one isn't. It's the story of a real prince who was born in Belgium in 1770.**



**His name was Dimitri Gallitzin and his parents were members of one of the oldest and richest families in Europe. Now like all parents, his mother and father had high hopes for their son.**



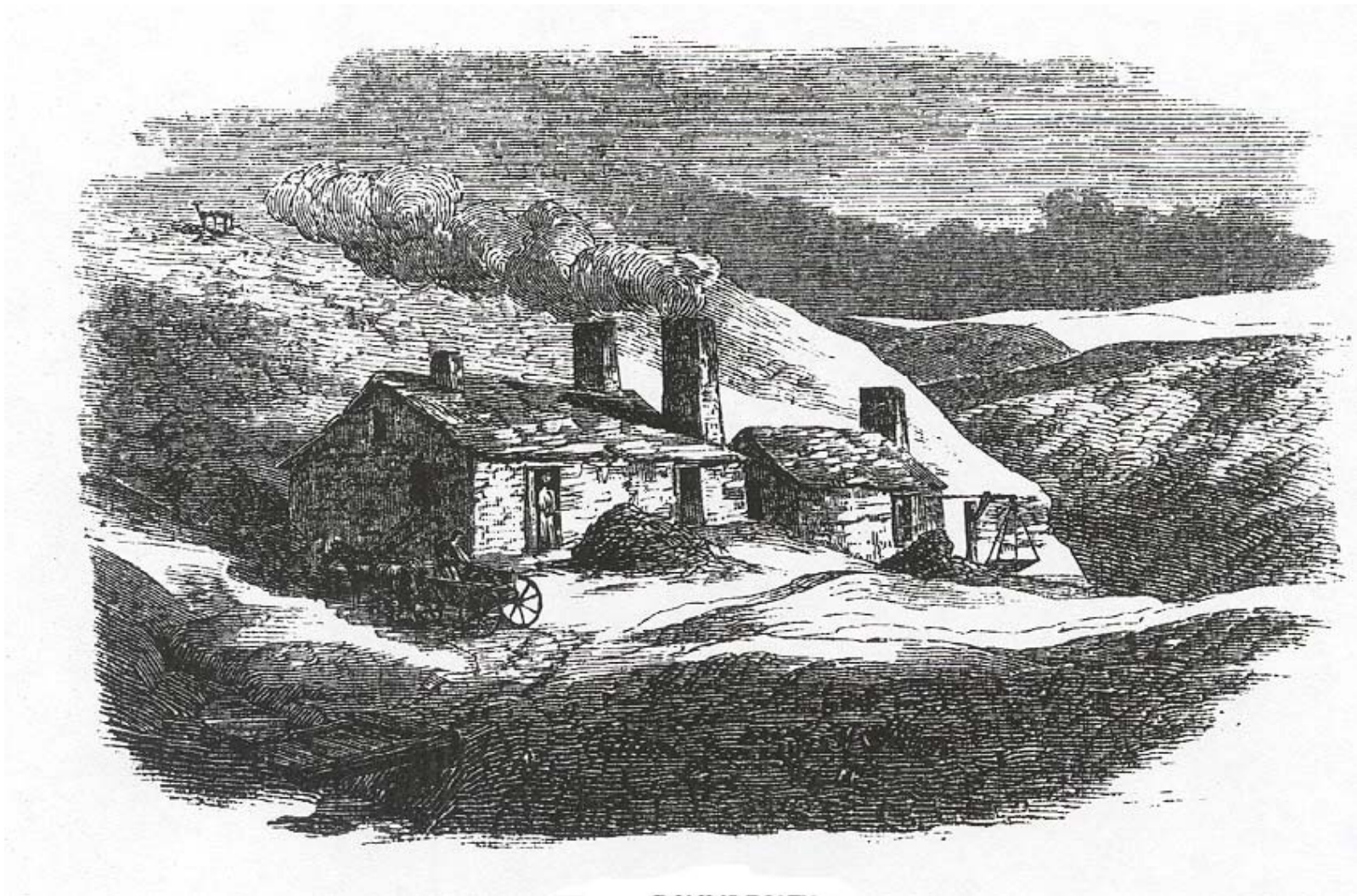
**His parents thought that when he grew up he would dress like this.**



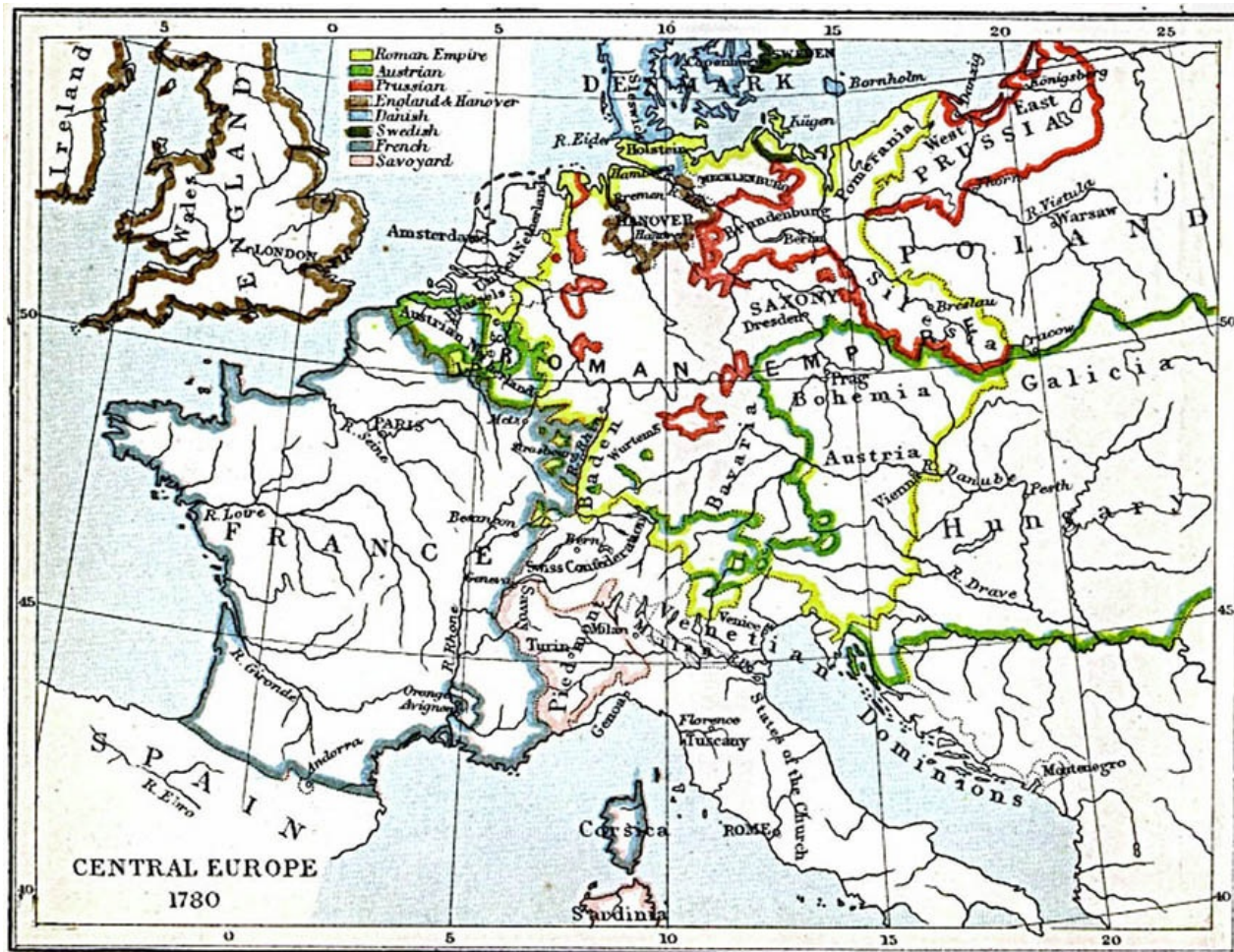
**And he'd live in a house that looked like this.**



**But when he was 22 he decided that God wanted him to dress like this....**



**...and live in a house that looked like this. So he did. He became one of the first Catholic priests ordained in the Unites States and spent the rest of his life on the Pennsylvania frontier.**

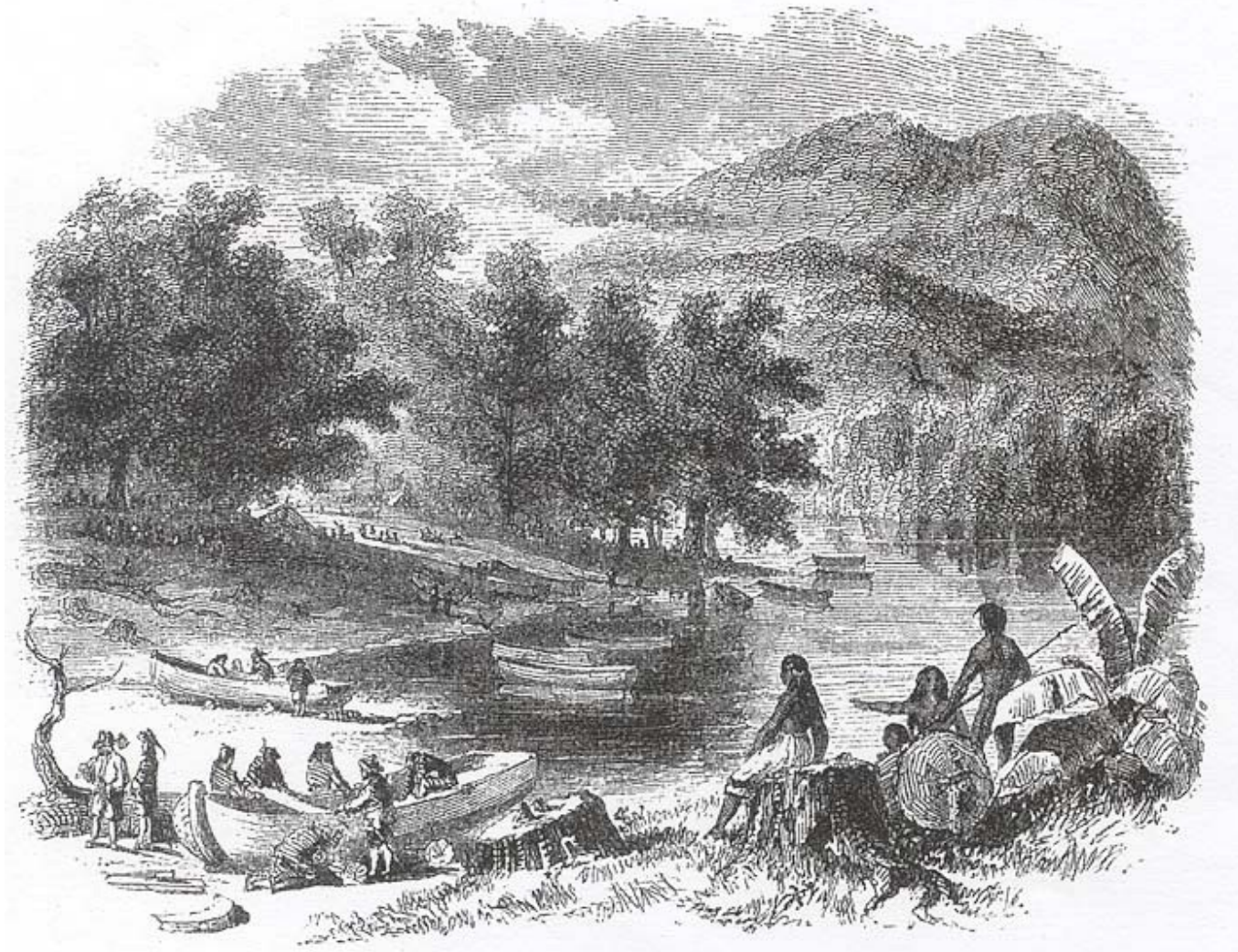


When Dimitri was eighteen years old, the sons of wealthy parents in Europe were expected to travel from one country to another. This was called making the Grand Tour. But Dimitri told his parents that he'd rather make his Grand Tour in America.

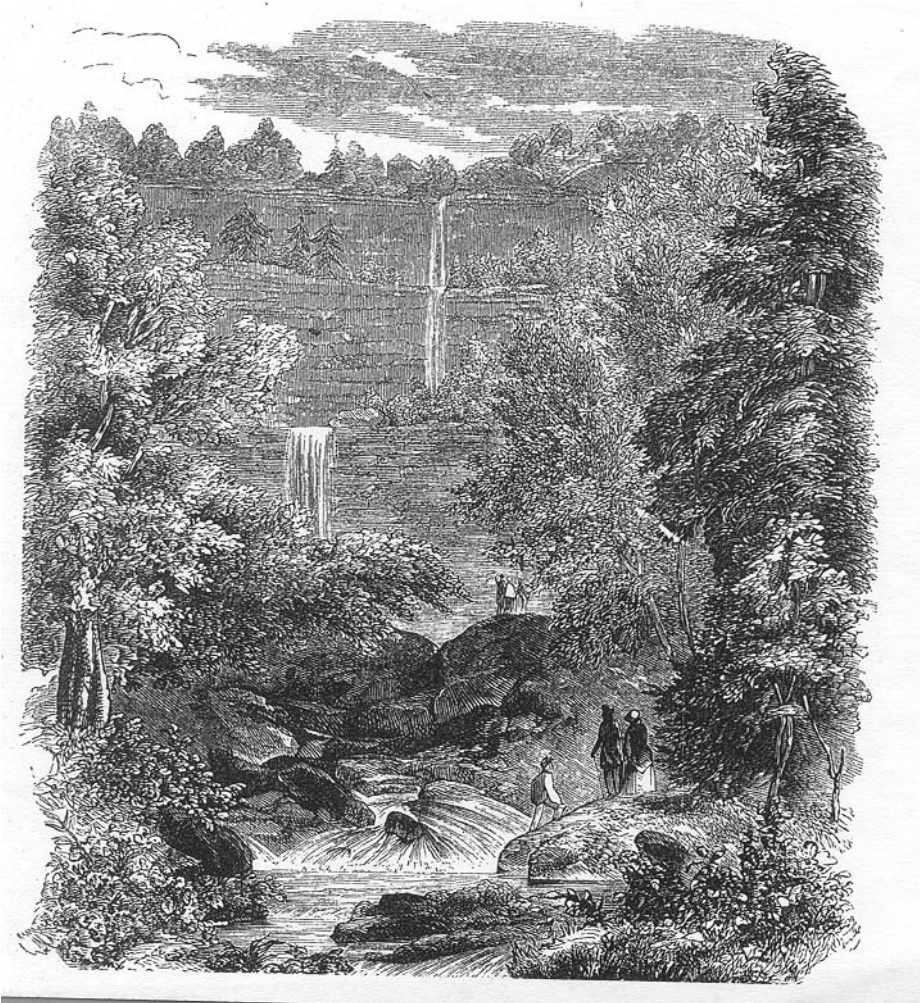




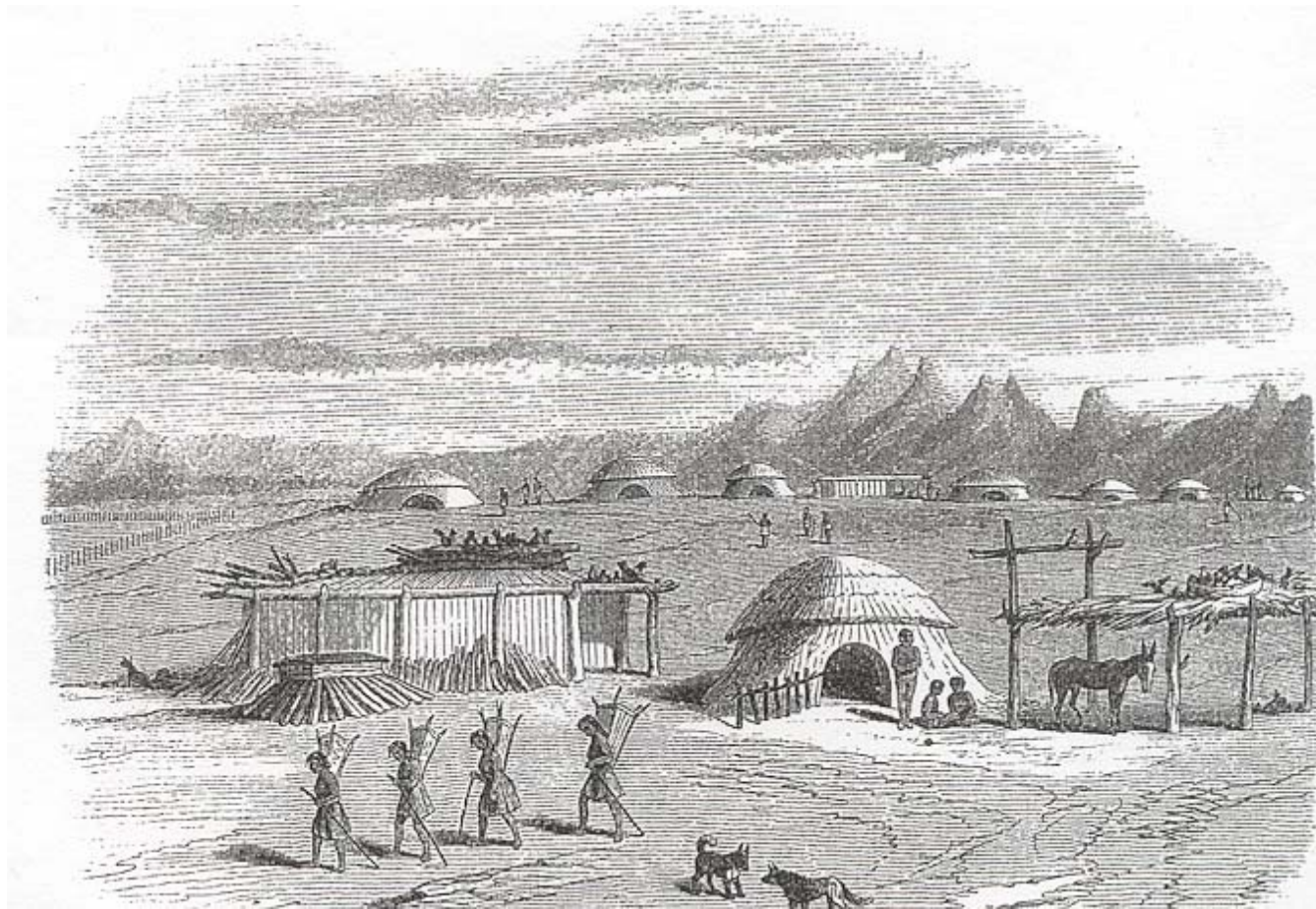
**Times were changing. Many people in Europe had heard exciting stories about America. They thought it was a wild new land full of exotic animals.**



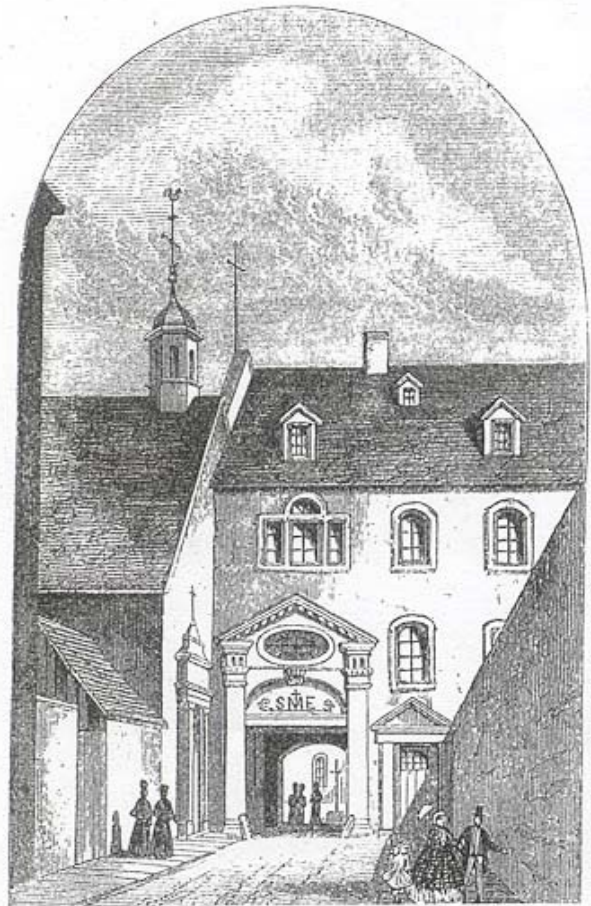
**There were tales of Indians that roamed over a strange new wilderness that few people in Europe had ever seen.**



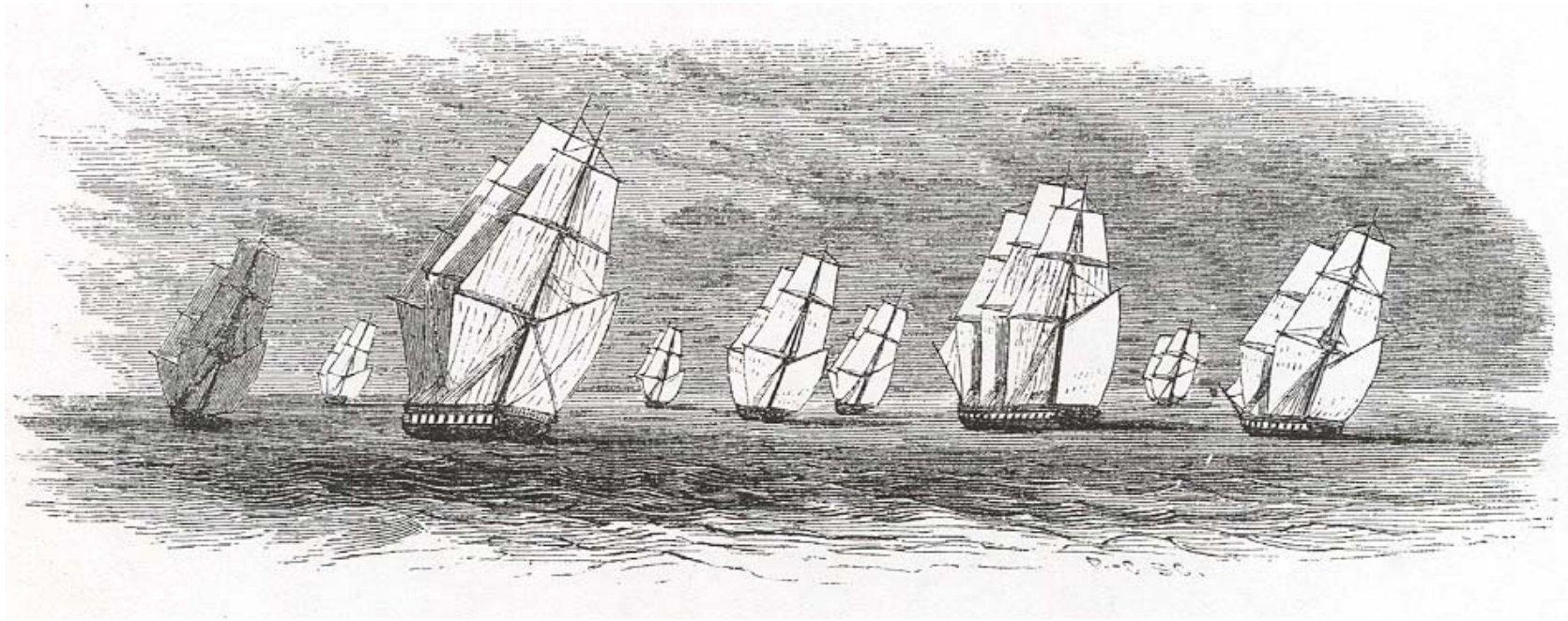
**There were huge waterfalls.....**



**Dimitri had heard tales of the Indians tribes that lived on the Western Prairies.**



**So Dimitri told his parents that he'd like to make a Grand Tour of America rather than travel around Europe.**



**So in 1792 he sailed from Amsterdam, Holland to Baltimore in Maryland. In those days it took a month or more to cross the Atlantic Ocean in sailing ships.**

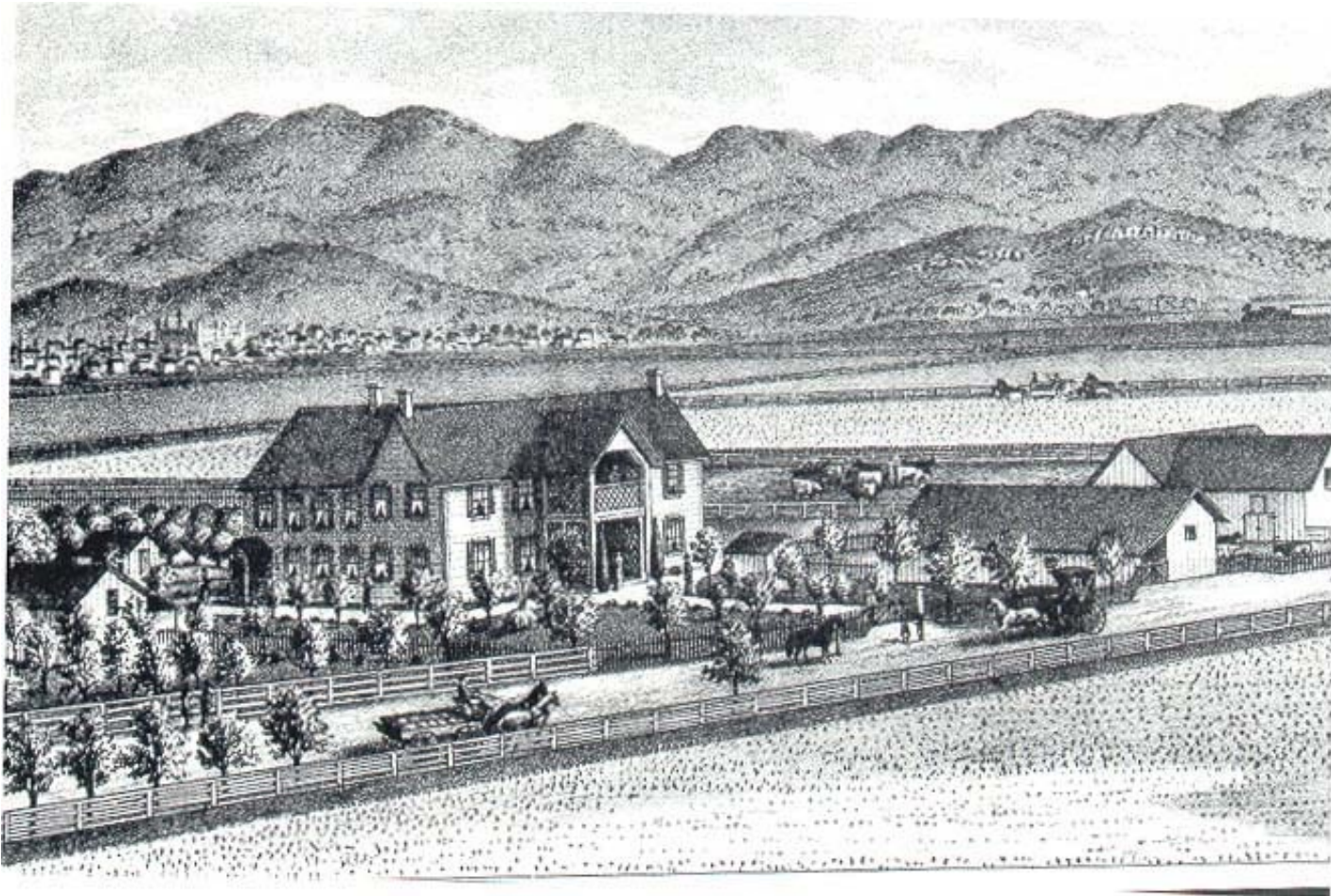


**The high seas were dangerous. Nations were at war. There were pirates in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean.**





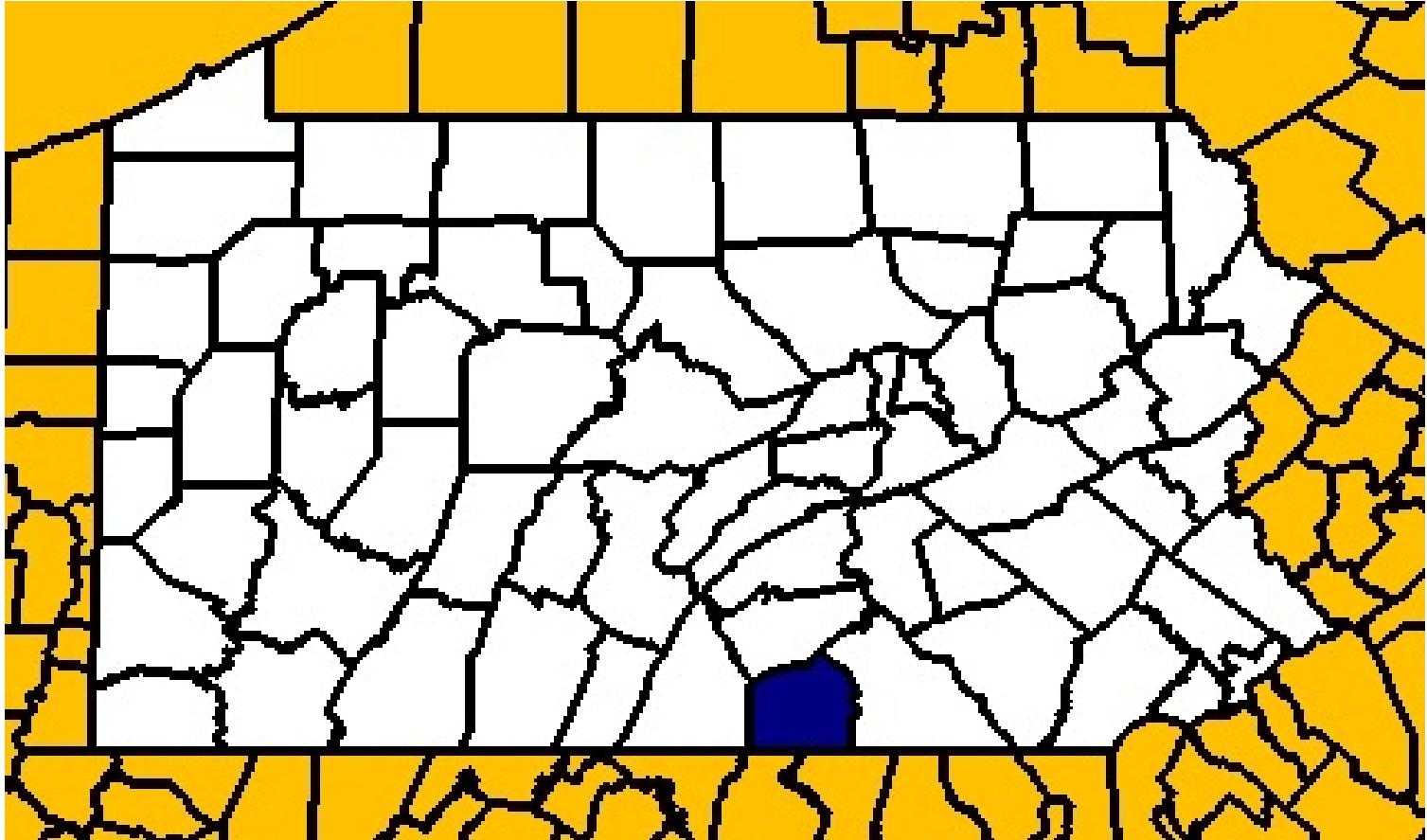
**Prince Dimitri landed in Baltimore, Maryland and was supposed to spend about three weeks there. He must have liked Baltimore because he decided to go to college there. About two years later he decided to become a priest and enrolled in a seminary in Maryland. In 1795 he became one of the first Catholic priests who had ever graduated from an American seminary.**



**Father Gallitzin was assigned to a parish near Baltimore. But he still wanted to see the American frontier so he decided to ask Bishop John Carroll, the first Catholic bishop in the US, to assign him to a parish in the West.**



**In 1799 Father Gallitzin went to see Bishop Carroll and asked to be sent as a missionary. So the bishop sent him to Pennsylvania. At that time most of western Pennsylvania was a wilderness. So in the spring of that year he was sent from Baltimore to a settlement on the frontier that he would call Loreto.**



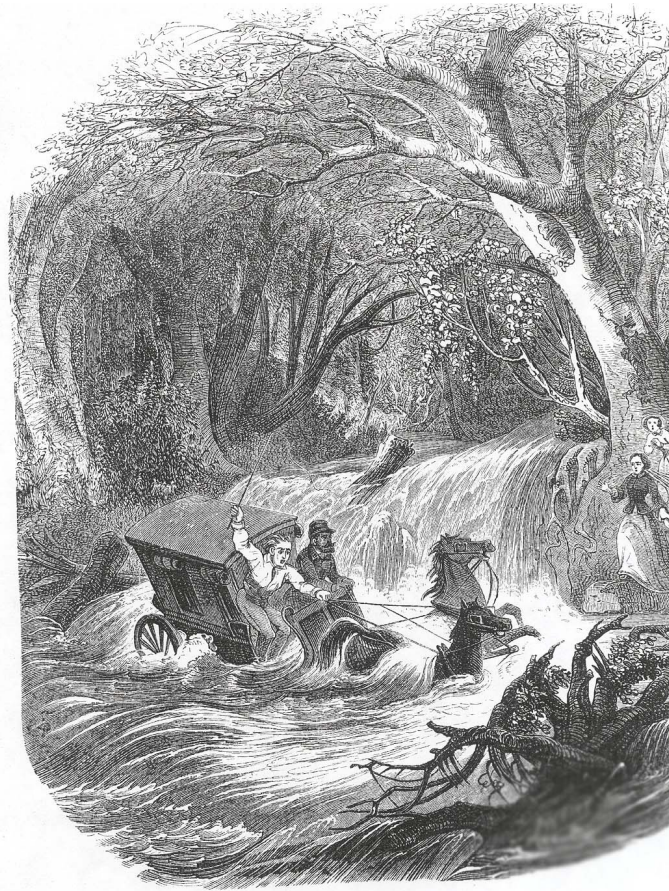
**Today it only takes a few hours to drive this distance. It took longer in 1799 when Father Gallitzin made the trip on horseback.**



**In those days there were no roads...just trails. You needed a good horse and about a month to make the trip.**



**Every time you came to a river you had to find a way to get across it. There weren't many bridges. Crossing the bridges that were there was sometimes an adventure.**



**Sometimes a traveler had to cross a river or stream where the water was shallow.**



**In the spring the melting snow made some rivers overflow their banks. When that happened a traveler would have to find another way to go or wait for a few days for the water to go down.**





**When Father Gallitzin got to the place he'd been assigned to he found nothing but the most beautiful country he'd ever seen. So the first thing he did was build a church and start a town. Both the church and the town are still there. But that's the story in the next book.**

**THE END**