COLUMBIA COUNTY
TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO

by

EDWIN M. BARTON

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**Bicentennial
Pennsylvania
1976**

So your children can tell
their children.

JACKET FRONT:

A traveler before the Revolution coming to the mouth of the Catawissa Creek on the North Branch of the Susquehanna River pronounced the view the most beautiful he had ever seen. He almost surely did not have the opportunity of viewing the scene from the Catawissa Outlook as is afforded us in this picture. The view includes the stretch of the river where it courses through the Catawissa Narrows, with the gently rising area of Bloomsburg in the background.
color photograph by David K. Shipe

JACKET BACK:

Orangeville, nestled at the foot of Knob Mountain, marks a site of early settlements, Indian depredations, and an important point on Indian trails. The picture also shows a sample of the beautiful scenery of the County.
photograph by author

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Preface

The present work is the attempted fulfillment of the decision of the Columbia County Bicentennial Commission to publish a history of the county's region in the period of our country's War for Independence. The county's early pioneer history was also to be covered. Generally the period will be from 1768 to 1800, but without rigidly applying these time limits.

During this period the region was part of the outer edge of the Western Frontier. This frontier needed to be defended. It was attacked at a number of points, one of which was in the upper valleys of the Susquehanna River, of which our region formed an important segment. The larger battles were fought nearby with supporting actions in our area. These actions by their very closeness are of interest to us, the beneficiaries of their struggles and achievements.

The wartime struggles and pioneering activities of those early years in our region are samples, with local variations, of what was going on up and down the whole length of the western frontier. Let us learn about them and we will know better the forces that built our whole country.

As commissioned author, I have endeavored to discover all sources of information and give them proper study. I have especially endeavored to discover and utilize eye-witness accounts of the personal experiences in tragedies and achievements of the people who laid the foundation of our communities.

In acknowledging help, I regret that my loyal wife and helpful critic is no longer with me to accept my gratitude. A number of persons as part-time secretaries have been helpful through the years in various ways. More immediately working with me on this manuscript, in order of length of service, are: Melissa D. Gratton, Donna A. Ohl, and Paula R. Welliver. More than meticulous transcribers, they have read the manuscript critically and share in whatever merits it may have.

Dr. John E. Bakeless, besides extending encouragement through the years, has channeled invaluable source material, which otherwise might not have been found. This help is acknowledged with special thanks.

Prologue

In celebrating the bicentennial of our country's founding, it is a helpful coincidence to keep in mind that it is also just about two hundred years ago that our region, the upper valleys of the Susquehanna River, was emerging from obscurity to join in the history of our nation. Prior to this time, the region had been Indian Country, controlled at the time of Columbus and of the first settlements of the English, by a powerful tribe of Iroquoian Indians, the Susquehannocks. They became involved in bitter warfare with the English and the Five Nations of Iroquois of New York. At first, as indomitable foes, they maintained an unequal fight, but finally disease, as well as battle losses, led to their defeat and final, complete subjugation. This happened just a few years before the coming of William Penn, in 1682.

The Iroquois, as conquerors, exercised control over all the unsettled parts of the Susquehanna valleys as well as areas far beyond. In the exercise of this control, other conquered or dispossessed tribes were encouraged to settle in the conquered lands, some in our region. As recorded by a missionary in 1758, others, especially the whites, were not to settle: "They (the Five Nations) settle these New Allies on the Frontiers of the White People and give them this Instruction. 'Be Watchful that no body of the White People may come to settle near you. You must appear to them as frightful Men, and if notwithstanding they come too near, give them a Push; we will secure and defend you against them...'."[1]

During this period of the Iroquois as overlords of our region, a number of tribes or portions of tribes left their names at various places. The Nanticokes, from the Maryland region, settled for a time where they have given their name to modern Nanticoke.

A related group, the Conoys, or Gangawese, were mentioned by Captain John Smith as resident in the Chesapeake Bay region (1608). Living near the Piscataway Creek, they were sometimes known also by that name. In their considerable migrations, some of them are mentioned as having lived briefly at Catawissa.

The Tuscaroras, an Iroquoian tribe of the Carolinas, after having been weakened by conflicts similar to those which destroyed the Susquehannocks, petitioned the Five Nations to join their confederation. This was granted. They migrated in the course of a number of years through Pennsylvania, leaving their name in a number of places. Finally, in 1714, they joined the Five Nations, which thus became the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy.

The Shawnees seem originally to have been living in what is now the eastern parts of Kentucky and Tennessee. They migrated, or some of them did, into Pennsylvania and lived at varying times along the Delaware River, at Shawnee Flats on the site of modern Plymouth, and at other places. In passing up the Susquehanna, the Shawnees may have been resident in the vicinity of the mouth of the Fishing Creek for some time.

"The Delawares: Physical Appearance and Dress."

Wallace, *Indians in Pennsylvania,* p. 16; courtesy of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

The Delawares originally called themselves the Lenni Lenape, and inhabited New Jersey and the Delaware River Valley. At one time they were proud to be given the name of an English leader, Lord Delaware. After repeatedly having been treated unfairly and compelled to leave lands that were successively promised to them, they became hostile. One division of the Delawares, the Munsees, in their successive migrations, gave their name to modern Muncy, also the city Muncie, Indiana. They are noted as living at, or in the vicinity of, the Forks of the Susquehanna, at Shamokin. They, with some Shawnees, were the dwellers in the upper Susquehanna valleys when the first whites settled. There is no estimate

available as to the size of this shifting and changing Indian population at any one time.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                       Diagrammatic Map                            │
│         THE IROQUOIS CONFEDERATION OF FIVE NATIONS                │
│                  (AFTER 1711, SIX NATIONS)                        │
│                    Often referred to as the                       │
│                        "LONG HOUSE"                               │
│  WEST                                                     EAST    │
│                                                                   │
│  Mohawk River                                    Confluence of the│
│  Headwaters                                      Mohawk River with │
│                  Mohawk River and Valley         the Hudson River  │
│                                                                   │
│  SENECAS    CAYUGAS     ONANDAGAS      ONEIDAS      MOHAWKS        │
│                                                                   │
│  Keepers    Younger    Tenders of the   Younger    Keepers        │
│   of the    Brothers   Central Council  Brothers    of the        │
│  Western    to the         Fire         to the     Eastern        │
│   Gate      Senecas                     MOHAWKS      Gate          │
│                                                                   │
│               After 1711 at the South                             │
│                      TUSCARORAS                                   │
│                  on the "Cradle Board"                            │
│                                                                   │
│      Susquehanna River valleys - several Indian tribes in varying │
│              regions as assigned by the Iroquois                  │
│   Wallace, Paul A. W., Indians of Pennsylvania, p. 89.            │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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In 1764, a period of over sixty years of intermittent warfare was brought to an end. These wars had pitted England against France; English colonists against the French colonists; and the Indian allies of the English, the Iroquois, against those siding with the French, the Delawares and the Shawnees. The latter two tribes had grievances because of various land deals by which they had been treated unfairly or defrauded. In these wars the French were defeated and gave up their claims to lands in North America, including Pennsylvania. Indians not willing to accept defeat, formed a confederation and fought a brief but threatening continuation of the war, known as Pontiac's Rebellion. When this confederation was defeated, a treaty was negotiated at Fort Stanwix, now Rome, N.Y., by which the Iroquois sold to the Penns, Proprietors of Pennsylvania, an enormous strip of land stretching irregularly from the northeastern corner of Pennsylvania to its southwestern corner. This was in 1768. It was called *The New Purchase*. With the exception of a small strip at the southern end of Columbia County, previously purchased, it included all of our County.

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1. Christian Frederick Post, "Observation," quoted by Wallace, Paul, *Indians in Pennsylvania*, p. 105.

Indian Trade Goods

By the time of William Penn, the Indians had been in contact with the Europeans for half a century, probably more. Their manner of life as stone age people had been changed profoundly as can be seen by the following list of articles which had come to be desired by the Indians. These trade goods by which the whites purchased lands or traded for furs were highly important articles of commerce for both the Indians and Europeans for many years through Colonial days into our National period.

> 350 fathoms of wampum, 20 white blankets, 20 fathoms of strawdwaters, 60 fathoms of duffields, 20 kettles, (4 whereof large,) 20 guns, 20 coats, 40 shirts, 40 pair stockings, 40 hoes, 40 axes, 2 barrels powder, 200 bars lead, 200 knives, 200 small glasses, 12 pair shoes, 40 copper boxes, 40 tobacco tongs, 2 small barrels of pipes, 40 pair scissors, 40 combs, 24 pounds red lead, 100 awls, 2 handsfull fish-hooks, 2 handsfull needles, 40 pounds shot, 10 bundles beads, 10 small saws, 12 drawing knives, 4 ankers tobacco, 2 ankers rum, 2 ankers cider, 2 ankers beer, and 300 guilders.

From William Penn's treaty with the Delaware Indians, 1682, quoted by Martin and Shenk, *Pennsylvania History as Told by Contemporaries*, p. 35.

"Far above the river winding," From Bloomsburg State College former Alma Mater.

North Branch of Susquehanna River curving to enter the Catawissa Narrows.

The confluence of Fishing Creek with the River, concealed behind the foliage in the lower left corner, was long considered to be at the southern limit of the Connecticut Claim, and as such a significant landmark.
photo by author

CHAPTER 1

Pioneers and Indians in
Our Susquehanna Valleys

Conflicts and Their Causes

The Treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1768 was an important turning point in the history of our Central Susquehanna Valley lands. With the French rivals having been previously defeated, these lands were now, by this purchase from the Iroquois, brought under the rule of Pennsylvania authorities. In this situation, the Indians, chiefly Delawares, but other small groups also, were to move farther west, although they did not by any means all do so at once. The fur traders were soon to follow the Indians, seeking areas where fur-bearing animals had not been so nearly killed off. The area became open to Pennsylvania settlers, or so it seemed at the time. But actually, terrible events were in the making. Connecticut people laid claim to the northern part of Pennsylvania and endeavored to settle it. Conflict with bloodshed resulted. Within seven years, the War of the Revolution was to break out. These two conflicts were intermingled and both involved our region. And many Indians, bitter in being compelled to leave lands previously awarded to them, fought against the settlers, bringing destruction and loss of lives to these valleys. These struggles as they affected our region will now be explained. We will look first at the coming of the pioneers.

Early Explorations in the North Branch Country

Long before 1768, information about the Susquehanna lands had been growing. Fur traders journeyed deep into the Indian Country. They reached the Forks of the Susquehanna at an early date. Not many such persons have left records, but James LeTort was an Indian trader involved in this trade and was often used as an emissary to the Indians. The following letter records some of his activities and gives more than a hint of events on the then distant frontier among the Indians.

Catawasse, May ye 12, 1728

We always thought the Governor knew nothing of the fight between the Shawaynos and the White People. We desire the Governor to warn the back Inhabts not to be so ready to attack the Indians, as we are Doubtful they were in that unhappy accedent, and we will use all Endeavaurs to hender any Such Like Proceeding on the part of the Indians. We remember very well the League between William Pen and the Indians, which was, that the Indians and white people were one, and hopes that his Brother, the present Governor, is of the same mind, and that the friendship was to continue for three Generations; and if the Indians hurt the English, or the English hurt the Indians, itts the same as if they hurt themselves; as to the Governors Desire of meeting him, we Intend as soon as the Chiefs of the Five Nations Come to meet the Governor, we will Come with them; but if they come not before hereafter, we will to Philadelphia to wait on the Governor. We have heard that William Pen Son was come to Philada., which We was very Glad of.

James Le Tort[1]

Conditions Before the Settlements

What a glimpse this letter gives of conditions in our valleys when they were the "back" country. There were fights between the Indians and the "back inhabts." Le Tort was writing to the Governor, reporting negotiations with the Indians as with a powerful nation, which they were, and was being sent to them as an emissary. At this time when he was designated a fur trader, he was located in "Catawese" region. And how did these people called "back inhabts" come to be inhabiting country still acknowledged to belong to the Indians?

Early Explorations

In the forty years, and more, following this letter, travellers and traders, such as those referred to by Le Tort, continued to push their activities into these as yet unopened lands, including those later to become Columbia County. Missionaries visited various tribes, endeavoring to convert them to Christianity, succeeding to some extent. Friendly Indians acted as guides. The soldiers defending the frontier learned of these lands. They must have told prospective settlers about them. The confluence of the North and West Branches of the Susquehanna, then called Shamokin, was an increasingly important base of operations for all of these elements, traders, Indian travellers, missionaries, and frontiersmen. Representatives of the Pennsylvania government journeyed to the councils of the Indian overlords of this region. The Iroquois confederacy in New York could, and undoubtedly did, give descriptions of these

lands, for this region was of necessity traversed. Fishing Creek at the River was actually noted in some of the journals, for it was a well known landmark. These journeys and exploratory trips increased with the passing years. After these lands had been brought into full possession of the Proprietors by purchase from the Indians, explorations and surveys were commissioned. Some of these journeys will be told about as we get into details of settlement.[2]

Learning Further About the Frontier Lands

The Proprietors of Pennsylvania, the sons of William Penn, had earlier sent exploring parties into the region of the "New Purchase." Trips must have been made by canoes up the larger streams, and overland with pack horses at other places. Explorers went up Fishing Creek, passing Knob Mountain into Huntington Creek. Catawissa Creek, as well as lesser streams, must have been included. The falls and rapids of Roaring Creek immediately above its confluence with the river, together with the rugged country beyond, made access difficult so that its upper valleys to the south must have been approached overland.[3]

Purchasing Land in Colonial Pennsylvania

When the King of England in 1681 gave William Penn the Charter of Pennsylvania, it was in settlement of a debt owed to Penn's father for services rendered when the latter was an admiral in the King's navy. Penn, having received these lands, then expected to sell them to actual settlers. Furthermore, Penn insisted on buying these lands from the Indians as illustrated in the New Purchase, noted in the Prologue. To sell lands, Penn and his sons set up a land office. Would-be settlers would be required to find out in a general way where a section of land was located as, for illustration, one mile above the mouth of Fishing Creek. The amount was expected to be about 300 acres. Such a location would have been learned about by a trip to the desired land, or from travellers, explorers, fur traders, or soldiers, in their military expeditions. On the basis of this information, an application would be filed. Then a survey would be ordered. Now the purchase could be made at the rate of fifteen pounds per three hundred acres. An annual quitrent payment of a penny per acre, approximately two cents, was also required. This was when a laboring man working by the year might earn fourteen to twenty pounds with "meat, drink, washing and lodging." By the day he might earn the equivalent of twenty or thirty cents of our current money.[4]

The Surveyors and the Conditions under Which They Worked

The early surveyors usually went out in the spring, staying through the summer. Their duties were to survey the tracts of land which had

been applied for. The surveyor's party consisted, in addition to himself, of a chainman to measure distances with a marked chain, and a rod man to hold a rod to mark points as they were established, along with other needed helpers. The surveyor himself used a sighting instrument to direct the work of establishing the property lines. Occasionally a shelter might be found, but usually it was necessary to set up a tent for sleeping. Here also the surveyor made his calculations and prepared his maps. Food was prepared from supplies carried with them, supplemented by fish or game that might be secured. At earlier times, dangers included hostile Indians. At later times, they might encounter unauthorized persons who had gone into the wilds to make settlements. Such persons looked with hostility on surveyors whose reports would show that they had no rights to the land they were occupying. Wild animals might also be encountered, including the dangers of the poisonous snakes. We in our time can hardly realize the hardships and dangers of the surveyors in the unmapped woodlands. There were no roads, few paths. Settlements were few and far between, many large areas with none at all.[5]

Who Would Want Wilderness Lands and Why?

Cheap lands, even if uncleared of their generally dense forest covering, attracted hundreds of pioneering people to the Susquehanna valleys, as they did to other areas. This was happening in 1768 and the following years. Such pioneers came from Philadelphia and Southeastern Pennsylvania, from New Jersey, from Connecticut, and from the "old country", as the home lands in Europe were called. American lands, previously settled and subjected to the wasteful farming practices for fifty or seventy-five years, had become less productive. They could not support adequately the families living on them. Often these lands were abandoned and their former occupants searched for new lands. The large families of those days resulted in further demand for unsettled lands when the many sons and grandsons had grown up.[6]

Causes for Immigration

Political oppression and economic hardships which had caused Europeans to migrate earlier to the new colonies continued to cause many ship loads of immigrants to come to America in later years. Since it was easier and less expensive to acquire land under the Penns than in other colonies, a large share of the newcomers came to Pennsylvania. Many having left conditions of hardship in England, Germany, and elsewhere, were unable to pay the ship owners their passage money. These people sold their services for a period of years to meet these obligations.

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They were called *indentured servants** or *redemptioners*. In effect, they were slaves for a period of the agreement, usually averaging about four or five years. Besides the large numbers of farmers who got their start in the New World by being redemptioners, there were many skilled craftsmen, carpenters, masons, blacksmiths, and masters of other trades. All would be needed on the frontier. A redemptioner, when his term of service was completed and he became fully free, would accummulate savings from his wages or from what he might earn from his craft. With these he would be able to buy lands that were opening on the frontier from time to time.[7]

The Speculators and the Sale of Lands

Observing the demand for frontier lands, wealthy people in Philadelphia, as well as elsewhere, saw the opportunity for buying up frontier lands and then selling them to the actual settler at markedly higher prices. Such people are *land speculators*, at that time also called *land jobbers*. Speculators had money of their own to use in speculation. The Penns had intended to sell farm size plots of approximately 300 acres to individuals who would themselves settle on the lands.** Speculators, however, generally evaded these restrictions. A speculator would have members of his family or his friends buy additional plots with money furnished by him and then transfer the plots to him. In this or similar ways, speculators acquired hundreds of acres of land, in some cases, thousands. In many cases more land was acquired than any one individual could pay for. In such cases money was borrowed.

Financial Risks

The large amounts of money required for such extensive purchases were not the only expenses. Even before any prudent person would have made a purchase, he would have explored the land after a long and expensive journey, or as was more often the case, he would have paid others to make the explorations. After the purchases had been made, there were other expenses due every year, the quitrents and the interest on the borrowed money. These were small for one year, but accummulating year after year on unsold land, they became more and more

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*The agreements for these terms of service were written in duplicate on one sheet of paper and then cut or torn apart so that the edge was jagged or irregular, an indented edge. The matching edges would show at a later time that the two sections were duplicate copies. Servants thus working under such an agreement were called indentured servants. By working his full term, the agreement was redeemed and the worker might be called a *redemptioner*.

**This amount of land would be about half of a square mile, or a square about .7 mile on a side. Students might find it helpful to compare this amount of land with their school campus, or their father's farm.

EARLY LAND TITLES.

WARRANT DATED APR. 3, 1769 TO HESTER BARTON. ON
APRIL 21, 1796 TITLE PASSED TO ABRAM KLINE - ORANGE TWP.
WARRANT DATED JUNE, 1769 TO FRANCIS STEWART. IN
1772 PATENTED TO JAMES Mc CLURE, SR. - BLOOMSBURG.
WARRANT DATED APR. 3, 1769 TO JOHN SPOHN. WAS
PATENTED FEB., 1784 TO MICHAEL BRIGHT, LATER
TO LEONARD RUPERT - MONTOUR TWP.

SAMUEL BOONE CAME FROM EXETER TWP.,
BERKS CO. TO SCOTT TWP IN 1775. HE
WAS A QUAKER AND OF THE BOONE
FAMILY MADE FAMOUS BY DANIEL
BOONE.

△ INDIAN VILLAGES.
1 - Oskohary - Lapachpitton's
    Town. Conoy & Delaware.
    village 1728-54.
2 & 3. - Delaware villages.

✕ FORTS.
1. - Wheeler. Built in 1778
     by Moses Van Campen.
2. - McClure. Built in 1780
     by Moses Van Campen.
3 - Jenkins. Built in 1777.

---- INDIAN PATHS.

12 ORIGINAL TWPS.
   BLOOM.
   BRIAR CREEK.
   CATAWISSA.
   FISHING CREEK.
   GREENWOOD.
   HEMLOCK.
   MIFFLIN.
   SUGAR LOAF.
   CHILLASQUAQUE.
   DERRY.
   MAHONING
   TURBOT

SULLIVAN

LYCOMING

SUGAR LOAF 1812

JACKSON 1838.
PINE 1853
JOHN LYON 1802
JACOB LUNGER 1800
JOHN GODHARD 1792
BENTON 1850
BENTON BORO 1894
BENJ. COLEMAN 1791
STILLWATER BORO 1899.
LUZERNE

GREENWOOD 1799
MILLVILLE BORO 1892
FISHING CREEK 1789
MADISON 1807
JOHN EVES 1740
DANIEL McHENRY 1783
JERSEYTOWN
MICHAEL BILLHIME 1775
MOUNT PLEASANT 1818
1839 ORANGE
ORANGEVILLE BORO 1900
PETER W. EVELAND
ABRAM KLINE 1785
1797
BRIAR CREEK
EVAN OWENS 1772
BERWICK BORO 1818
N. CENTRE 1923
BRIAR CREEK BORO 1917
JOSEPH SALMON 1775
HEMLOCK 1801
PETER BRUGLER 1788
FISHING 1853
SCOTT TOWN or 1810
JOSIAH ESPY 1775 ESPY
S. CENTRE 1823
MIFFLIN
MONTOUR
LEONARD RUPERT 1788
MONTOUR 1837
BLOOMSBURG
MIFFLIN 1799
JOHN BROWN, SR. 1793
SHAMOKIN
CATAWISSA BORO 1892
CATAWISSA
MAINE 1844
1785
JOHN CLEAVER
FRANKLIN 1843
SAMUEL JOHN 1772
WM. HUGHES 1774
BEAVER 1845.
ALEX. McCAULEY 1774
ROARING CREEK
ROARING CREEK 1832
SAM'L HUNTER 1774
1893
CLEVELAND
LOCUST 1842
ALEX. MEARS 1794
SOUTH BR. ROARING CREEK
JOHN RHODEBURGER 1804
CONYNGHAM 1856
CENTRALIA BORO 1866
TAKEN BY MONTOUR IN 1850.
NORTHUMBERLAND
SCHUYLKILL
LUZERNE

The L. E. Wilt Historical Map of Columbia County, 1941
Used with Permission of L. E. Wilt. Revised by Edwin M. Barton, 1976

Wilt Legend, Revised

Columbia County organized March 22, 1813

Name taken from Joseph Hopkinson's song, Hail Columbia, so popular during War of 1812.

First settler, exclusive of squatters, probably John Eves, 1770, on Little Fishing Creek.

Then followed Evan Owen, Thomas Clayton, John Doan, John Webb, Peter Melick, George Espy; George Espy at or near confluence of Fishing Creek and North Branch of Susquehanna River. At Catawissa or vicinity, Ellis Hughes. William Hughes laid out Catawissa, first town, 1787. On or about same time, Evan Owen laid out Berwick. Mifflinville, first known as "Mifflinsburg," laid out 1784.

Berwick settlements began about 1790 when Evan Owen took up residence there. Bloomsburg laid out 1802.

Oldest Church, Catawissa Friends Meeting House about 1788 or 1790.

First Iron Furnace erected by John Hauck in Maine Township, 1815, then part of Catawissa Township.

First mill constructed at Catawissa, 1774.

Construction of North Branch Canal begun at Berwick, July 4,1826.

First child, it is claimed, was James McClure, Jr., born 1774.

Liberty, later Espy, laid out on or about 1800.

Additional Early Settlers

Isaac John 1772	Leonard Rupert 1788
Cornelius VanCampen 1773	Peter Appleman 1790
Samuel Hunter 1774	Benjamin Coleman 1791
Alexander McCauley 1774	John Godhard 1792
William Hughes 1774 `	William Hess 1792
George Espy 1775	Alexander Mears 1794
Joseph Salmon 1775	Lewis Schuyler 1794
Samuel Boone 1775	John Brown 1795 purchased lot
Michael Billhime 1775	John Lyon 1796
Daniel Welliver 1775	Ludwig Oyer (Eyer) c. 1796
Daniel McHenry 1783	Jonathan Colley 1796
John Cleaver 1783	Samuel Cherrington 1798
Abram Kline 1785	Jacob Lunger 1800
Abraham Dodder 1786	John Rhodeburger 1805
Peter Brugler 1788	Abraham Whiteman 1805

Sources, are primarily this L. E. Wilt Map. Revisions: John Brown settlement, Columbia County Deed Book; Ludwig Oyer (Eyer), Duy, *Atlas of Bloomsburg*, p. 7

burdensome. Many prominent persons engaged in this speculation on the whole national frontier, often with great success. Others were not so successful. Robert Morris and James Wilson, as examples, signers of the Declaration of Independence and prominent statesmen in the founding of our nation, both speculated in western lands, some in our area. Robert Morris is noted in our county records as a one-time owner of extensive lands in our general region, including some bordering Catawissa Creek. James Wilson, similarly was involved in dealing of extensive acreages, some along Fishing Creek, and along the river opposite Mifflinville. Robert Morris died in financial ruin, having overextended his resources in such speculations.[8] Wilson was also in grave financial troubles from similar causes at the time of his death.[9] Few of the first purchasers actually settled on the frontier lands. They were usually speculators, hoping to make money by selling to actual settlers or to other speculators.

Typical Procedures

In order that we may understand more fully the important part which these land speculators played in the opening up of the New Purchase lands, let us imagine a farmer in the Philadelphia region who wanted to sell his farm, probably run down, and take up new lands on the frontier. He had limited funds to pay for explorations. He had limited time and money to use in applying for lands at the land office. After applying a wait was necessary until the land was surveyed and a report made. Finally, after making payment, a patent (certificate of ownership) would be issued. The speculator had already taken care of all these necessary matters. He was able to tell about desirable lands and their locations, as, for instance, at the mouth of a creek, at the site of an old Indian village, or near some distinctive landmark, such as Catawissa Mountain. The settler would be told to look for ax marks, called *blazes*, on trees, which would mark boundaries.

Who Were the First Settlers? The Squatters

Were the first settlers the unauthorized persons whom the surveyors might encounter, as noted above? Were they the "back inhabts" mentioned earlier by Le Tort? From the very earliest times there were venturesome people unwilling to go through the legal proceedings of acquiring new land, or those unwilling to pay the fees, however modest compared with those fees charged in other colonies. They might, and often did, take up land not yet purchased from the Indians. They constructed shelters, more or less crude. They cleared some land and put in some crops. These were steps looking toward the establishing of permanent homes. Such persons were called squatters. This practice prevailed in all the English colonies and was widespread in Pennsylvania, including our region. By 1726 it was estimated that two thirds of the 670,000 acres

(about 1,000 square miles) then settled, had been occupied by squatters. Gradually, better buildings were constructed and more land cleared. In some ways the squatters looked forward to making their holdings permanent and legal. In many ways, this is just what happened.[10]

This practice was highly objectionable to the Pennsylvania authorities, because it evaded the payment of the purchase price, and also the quitrents. Bitter hostility of the Indians was aroused when these settlements were made on land not yet purchased from the Indians. Pennsylvania repeatedly tried to prevent this practice, often by evicting the squatters and burning their cabins. The squatters, after enduring dangers of Indian attacks and the hard grueling work of bringing the wild forest into the settled conditions of cleared fields and better homes, looked with hostility on distant government or speculator who did nothing for the frontier, or so he thought, and just wanted to collect money. More or less vague references to nameless settlers indicate that this widespread practice must have been present in our area.[11]

Some Views of Our Region at the Beginning of Settlements

In August, 1770, Benjamin Lightfoot, an experienced surveyor and explorer, journeyed to "Tankhanninck" to view some large pine trees suitable for ship masts. In this journey he noted passing and camping on "Pepomaytank Creek" (Roaring Creek). He wrote that the "east" branch of Susquehanna at Catawissa was "the most beautiful river" he ever saw. In fording the river, he found the water "scarce belly deep on our horses." The party camped at "Caunshanank", i.e., Briar Creek, and noted passing the mouth of "Nesquaspeck" creek and also the "Falls which are now rapid and narrow but hardly perceivable at the time of Freshes."

One of the party stopped at a certain "McClures", which, from the context means near the mouth of Fishing Creek. He noted further, "From the mouth of Fishing Creek to this place is a Connecticut Township which they endeavor to lay out 5 miles square and each (with) lots 32 perches wide (.1 mile). We observed as we rode up ye many trees marked, as we supposed with numbers of Lotts and several settlements along ye river, chiefly Germans."[12]

How Did It Come About That There Was a Connecticut Township in Pennsylvania?

Over a century earlier, 1662, there were no settlers in the valley of the Susquehanna. In fact it was when there were only a few scattered settlements along the whole Atlantic coast and there was little knowledge of the geography of North America. This was when the King of England granted land to Connecticut with boundaries extending westward to the South Sea, which then meant the Pacific Ocean. It also meant, as was

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only to be realized later, that this grant would extend through large parts of what were to be New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Twenty years later came the King's grant to William Penn, to which grant the Connecticut people made no objection.

The Urge of Connecticut Farmers to Migrate

By the 1760's, after almost a century of occupation, the lands of Connecticut were getting crowded from increasing population and the soil was becoming exhausted under the wasteful farming practices of the time. To attempt to take up lands in the strong and well established colonies of New York or New Jersey was not feasible, but there were the lands of the Susquehanna valleys with the reports of their beauty and fertility. They were due west and well within the original grant to Connecticut, and they were almost as close to Connecticut as they were to the settled parts of Pennsylvania in the Philadelphia region. Some Connecticut people, undoubtedly speculators, organized the Susquehanna Land Company of Connecticut. Surveyors were sent out to survey town sites, which were to be five miles square. This whole area of northeastern Pennsylvania was made the Town of Westmoreland, of the Connecticut county of Litchfield. It extended as far south as the mouth of Fishing Creek and included the site of Bloomsburg. Almost immediately after this, 1760, the Connecticut Company started to attract settlers and to make settlements in Wyoming.[13]

Indian Opposition

There was opposition, however, from both the Indians and from Pennsylvania. Let us tell about the Indians first. The Delawares, after a number of successive sales of lands to the whites, were successively compelled to move, each time farther west. At this time they had been assigned to live on the highly desirable Wyoming lands. When the Connecticut settlers, ignoring this arrangement, attempted to settle there in violation of this plan, the Delawares were embittered. They attacked the Wyoming settlers and wiped out the settlements. Many of the settlers were killed, some with cruel tortures. Others were taken captive. The remainder fled back to Connecticut.[14]

Opposition from Pennsylvania

After 1768, there was renewed interest in the Wyoming Valley on the part of both Pennsylvania and Connecticut. Settlers came. Pennsylvania authorities attempted to assume control, but were resisted by the settlers from Connecticut. The region was too distant from Philadelphia or Lancaster for regulation of the settlements or for conducting relations with the Indians, as well as for resistance to the Connecticut intrusions. The settlers needed a nearer county seat than Reading, the county seat of

Berks, of which our county was then a part. A new county, Northumberland, was established in 1772.[15] It included an enormous extent of land, from the forks of the North and East branches of the Susquehanna River and far beyond. The county seat was placed at the "Forks", but the name was changed from Shamokin to Sunbury.*

Armed Conflict

Armed conflict with bloodshed broke out between the Pennsylvania forces, called Pennamites, and the Connecticut settlers, called Yankees. These conflicts on the eastern borders of our county make a story too long for our history. At the outbreak of the Revolution, both factions were ordered to desist and join the common effort to secure independence.[16] A special court held at Trenton, in 1782, awarded the disputed territory to Pennsylvania. The conflicting claims of settlers for land plots were not settled till 1802. The Connecticut settlers generally had their claims confirmed while those from Pennsylvania were paid money for their claims.

Results

The hostility aroused between the two sets of settlers in this conflict lasted for many years. Another of the results was that four or five thousand settlers were brought to Wyoming and neighboring regions. These people were to help build up the upper Susquehanna Valleys. These settlers were mostly Connecticut people, although many were from New York, New Jersey, and elsewhere. That some settlers were attracted even from Pennsylvania is of special significance to us, because some of them helped establish Bloomsburg.[17]

Beginnings of the Scotch-Irish in the North Branch Country. The Conestoga Outrage

The Scotch-Irish, as elsewhere on the American frontier, were generally among the advanced groups making settlements on the frontier. Many of them, for this reason, were squatters. And because so many of them were also far out on the frontiers, they were the victims of the

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*The earlier name, *Shamokin*, was, at a later time, adopted by the coal mining town, far up the Shamokin Creek. Salem township, a township of Luzerne County, on our eastern border is named after the town of Salem in Connecticut, Munsell, *History of Luzerne, Lackawanna and Wyoming Counties*...etc. p. 324. *Huntington* township and *Huntington Mills*, in neighboring Luzerne County, and *Huntington Mountain* and *Creek*, both partly in both Columbia and Luzerne Counties, carry the name of a distinguished Connecticut statesman and patriot, Samuel Huntington, who was at one time or another, governor of Connecticut, signer of the Declaration of Independence, and the President of the Continental Congress.

Long lasting hostility was aroused between the two sets of settlers. See testimony of Fithian, quoted in *Northumberland Proceedings*, II, p. 6; Godcharles *Chronicles of Pa.*, pp. 673-675; 903-907.

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Indian attacks following the outbreak of Pontiac's War. In Lancaster County, to the southeast, it was claimed on doubtful evidence, that a small group of Conestoga Indians, the last surviving remnant of the Susquehannocks, who were living peaceably, were giving information that was helpful to those Indians "on the warpath," and that they were harboring Indians who had been guilty of participating in massacres. The Scotch-Irish groups appealed to the Proprietors, the Penns, and to the Assembly, for protection against the Indian attacks. They also appealed for the punishment of the perpetrators among the Indians, especially those alleged to have taken refuge among the Conestogas. A group of these Scotch-Irish, called the Paxtang Boys,* impatient with the slow moving government, took laws into their own hands and advanced against the Conestogas with the intention of seizing the suspects, 1763. When the Indians made, or seemed to make, a show of resistance, they were attacked and the whole community was eventually massacred.[18]

The Lancastrian Migration to Wyoming and James McClure Included

This outrage aroused the authorities to make an attempt at punishment of its perpetrators, an attempt that was unsuccessful. The attempt, however, seemed to confirm the feeling of these frontier elements that the authorities would not protect the frontiers against the Indian outrages. As a result, many settlers decided to organize a migration to Wyoming and throw in their lot with the Connecticut settlers. A report by a military representative of the Penns, May 12, 1769, noted that he found James McClure along the river above the mouth of Fishing Creek. McClure stated, according to this report, that he was a member of a party of five, the advance party of a group of one hundred on the way to join the Connecticut settlement at Wyoming, and that they were chiefly from Lancaster County.[19]

McClure's Settlement at Fishing Creek

The leader was Lazarus Stewart, who had married the daughter of Josiah Espy, another Lancaster county resident. Her sister was the wife of James McClure. This relationship between these two brothers-in-law, Stewart and McClure, may help to explain McClure's association with this Connecticut movement; also his taking up of land in the neighborhood of Fishing Creek, but under Connecticut's claim for its control. In 1769, McClure's settling there would, under Pennsylvania's laws, have made him a squatter. Three years later as the opposition on the part of Pennsylvania to these Connecticut settlements became stronger and stronger, McClure completed his purchase under Pennsylvania law. He

*Also written *Paxton*.

bought from Francis Stewart, almost surely a speculator, but no relation to Lazarus Stewart.

This property, first occupied as a Connecticut tract had been named *Beauchamp* (Beautiful Field), but when purchased from Stewart, was named *McClure's Choice*. McClure soon built a log cabin. In this log cabin in 1774, was born James McClure, Jr., claimed to be the first white child born in the area between the North and West Branches of the Susquehanna. McClure became a vigorous leader in the defense of this outpost of civilization until his death.[20] It was about this same time that Espy completed his land purchase, farther up the river and also under Pennsylvania authority. We can only infer that, as the steps taken by the Pennsylvania government to oppose the Connecticut intrusion became more and more determined, McClure and Espy both decided that it would be more prudent to accept Pennsylvania's jurisdiction.[21] They then both purchased these lands under Pennsylvania law. Within a few years more settlers came, joining the scattered neighborhood of those who had previously arrived. Some others were Quakers, who will be taken up later.[22]

Catawissa

Down the river a mile or so from the mouth of Fishing Creek on the south bank at the mouth of the Catawissa Creek was a place noted among our earliest records. It was further distinguished by the grandeur of Catawissa Mountain in the background. It had long been the site of an Indian village or a succession of Indian villages. The name Catawissa, apparently, was used by the various tribes of Indians that had occupied the general area. This name, under different renderings as the Indian sounds were recorded in English, always meant pure water. This village was the last Indian settlement at this site.[23]

The Coming of the Quakers to the North Branch Region

Fur traders were at Catawissa as early as 1728 when Le Tort, himself a fur trader, wrote from Catawissa region and referred to the "back inhabts."[24] According to family tradition, a German immigrant named Hartman was living in this area on land he had taken up, which probably means that he was a squatter, as early as 1760.[25]

Lightfoot, in his report of 1770, mentioned securing ferry service and the rental of a horse from persons at Catawissa. Ellis Hughes, a former Quaker, who would soon renew his allegiance to the Quakers, was a member of Lightfoot's party.[26] He was soon to be purchasing large amounts of land in the Catawissa region and became a settler himself.[27]

The Leadership of Moses Roberts

Moses Roberts was one of his purchasers. Roberts was a young and able Quaker who had won respect as a leader among his neighbors at

Oley, near Reading. This record led the Governor to select him to investigate a situation on the West Branch where a speculator was suspected of having taken up land illegally. The difficult journey and its mission, also difficult, were carried through successfully with the result that the speculator was compelled to vacate the land that he had taken up illegally. For us it is important because it brings Moses Roberts to our attention as one of the important founders of Catawissa. In his journal, Roberts wrote, in part: "And when we came to the inhabitants of the New Purchase, I lamented the loose and unreligious lives and conversation of the people. Yet there was something that attracted my mind to that country....and sometime after I returned home, I felt a drawing of love in my heart to visit some friendly people about Catawesey, and to have a meeting amongst them for the worship of God...". It is to be noted that he reports people already at Catawissa, but also notes their "loose and unreligious lives." Roberts, joining his influence with that of Hughes, was able to persuade a dozen or so families from Maiden Creek and Exeter in Berks County to settle in the Catawissa region. Their route would have been from Reading to Harrisburg. From there they ascended the Susquehanna River in boats to the mouth of Fishing Creek.[28]

Roberts is recorded as having built the first permanent residence, almost certainly of logs, in 1775.[29] Here in this house was held the first Quaker Meetings in Central Pennsylvania.[30] Application to hold an "Independent Monthly Meeting"* was made, but was not granted until 1796.[31]

Quakers on Little Fishing Creek

John Eves was a Quaker, born in Ireland, who migrated to America in 1738. He settled at Mill Creek, near Newcastle, in Delaware. He early won respect from his neighbors and was chosen for several offices, in which he showed great ability. According to family traditions, he journeyed to Little Fishing Creek in 1769. Having come up the West Branch to a small settlement near the present site of Milton, no one was able to direct him to the land of the McMeans, for which he was looking. Finally, two Indians guided him along the trail between Great Island, on the West Branch, and Nescopeck on the North Branch, a trail which led through the valley of the Chillisquaque. When he reached the high hill overlooking modern Millville, now called Fairview, Eves recognized the land that had been described to him. After examining the timber and the soil, he returned to his Delaware home. The next summer he returned with his oldest son, and together they built a log cabin. In the third sum-

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*In Quaker usage, "Meeting" is equivalent to church service. In another usage, it means an approved organization. As another denomination would say, the Catawissa Church, the Quakers would say, "Catawissa Meeting."

mer, 1772, he brought his family. At this time he did not own the land and would, therefore, have been a squatter. There must have been, however, an understanding with Reuben Haines, a prosperous Philadelphia brewer and land speculator, the then owner of extensive lands, including this tract. In 1774, Eves purchased 1200 acres of land from Haines.[32] This area took in the site of present Millville and much surrounding territory, almost two square miles.[33]
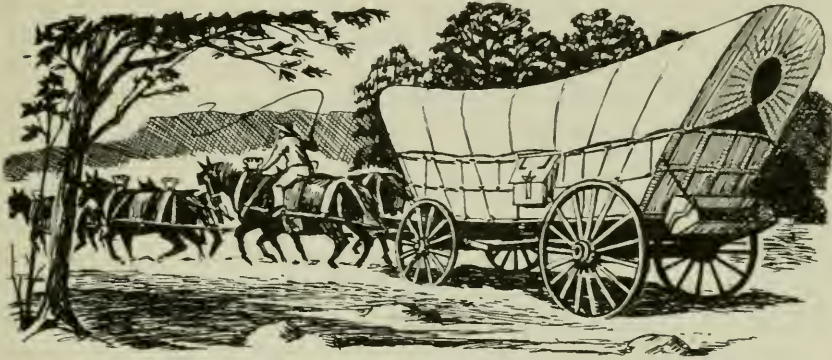
Just when the covered wagons, Conestoga wagons, came to be used in our area is unknown, but references suggest that it was before the Revolution. Several settlers are recorded as having lived in their wagons through one or more winters. The author has seen old wagons of this type, but not as large as the big freighter pictured. These could have been pulled by two-horse teams or a team of two oxen.

William H. Shank, Indian Trails to Super Highways, p. 31, with permission of the author.

Conditions on the Eve of the Revolution

In the six years, more or less, following the New Purchase, a land rush brought beginnings of settlements to widely separated places. At the mouth of Catawissa Creek we can picture Ellis Hughes and Moses Roberts with the Quaker families they had induced to join those already there, along with an Indian village newly established. Some of the Quakers were to be found in the south in Roaring Creek valley.[34] According to a family tradition, a man named Hartman had been living in the region as early as 1760.[35] He apparently won the friendship of the Indians by tanning hides for them. Warrants for surveys in this valley had been issued at almost the earliest possible time, in 1769. Samuel Hunter purchased a farm in this valley in 1774.[36] Up the Catawissa Creek, near Mainville Gap, Isaac John had settled in 1772. Still farther up the creek, Alexander McCauley had settled in 1773, with a result that his name came to be attached to the sharp ridge in that area. Along the

River, up stream from its confluence with Fishing Creek, were the Boone, McClure, Doan and Kinney families.[37] Farther up the river, a traveler would have found the Peter Melick family, settlers from New Jersey, and on farther were the Bright, Brittain, Creveling, Henrie, Leidle, and Webb families.[38] A "compact settlement" in Fishing Creek valley, two or three miles above its mouth, could not have been very compact for our times, but it was so reported.[39] A short distance to the east, in an area later to be known as Cabin Run, the Aikmans, Solomons, and VanCampens were to establish homes in 1777. They would find some nameless settlers already there.[40] Also, at least one nameless family in the vicinity had settled prior to 1780. Far up Little Fishing Creek, we have noted the arrival of John Eves and family.[41] The Whitmoyer, Billhime, and Welliver families were to come and settle to the east about 1775 at the headwaters of the Chillisquaque Creek.[42]

There is evidence of keen interest in other areas. Explorers must have been ranging widely to make possible the extensive purchases by numerous speculators. One such speculator, Benjamin Chew of Philadelphia, purchased approximately 2,000 acres in the Greenwood Valley.[43] In 1769, over a thousand acres of land "eight or ten miles north of 'Fishing Creek Mountain,' meaning Knob Mountain, were surveyed and given the name of 'Putney Common'."[44]

The American Revolution Occurred

1765 Stamp Act passed by Parliament of Great Britain, quarrel with Mother Country started

April 19, 1775, the Battles of Lexington and Concord marked the opening of our Revolutionary War for Independence

July 4, 1776, our Declaration of Independence

1778 the Battle of Wyoming and the Great Runaway

1781 General Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown

1783 Peace was secured and our Independence acknowledged

The Developing Quarrel With the Mother Country

The decade between 1765 and 1775 was when the friction arose between England and her American colonies, which was to result in our War for Independence. The progress of this dispute does not seem to have aroused much attention in the remote valleys of Roaring Creek or Fishing Creek. Settlers continued to come, as elsewhere, to Cabin Run, or to the headwaters of Chillisquaque Creek, or to the foot of Knob Mountain. With the outbreak of the War, a "Committee of Safety" was set up for all of Northumberland County, of which we were then a part.

Our region, then a part of Wyoming Township, was represented on this committee by three of our nearby settlers, Thomas Clayton, James McClure, and Peter Melick.

Despite these evidences of developing conflict, settlers continued to come, as we have noted elsewhere, to our remote valleys. At this point, we need to learn of the developments that were to bring the war to our region.

1. Minutes of the Executive Council, *Pennsylvania Archives*, I., p. 216.
2. In 1737 Conrad Weiser, the great Indian interpreter and official emissary to the Indians, passed through our area on a return trip from the Iroquois of New York. Here he found five men, two traders and others, seeking land. He also reported a large body of land "the like of which is not to be found on the river." Munsell, *History of Luzerne Lackawanna and Wyoming Counties*, p. 31, citing Weiser's Journal of April 26. Missionary activity of a number of missionaries is well summarized in the reference, Munsell, op. cit., p. 32. David Brainerd, one of these missionaries, preached at an Indian village of "12 houses at Opeholhaupung" (Wapwallopen), 1744, op. cit., p. 32; Dwight, ed., *Memoirs of Rev. David Brainerd Among the Indians*, p. 163.
3. Travel conditions: Wallace, *Indian Paths of Pennsylvania*, pp. 1-5; Lightfoot, "Benjamin Lightfoot and His Account of an Expedition to 'Tankhannick,' " *Northumberland Proceedings*, IX, p. 171.
4. Dunaway, *History of Pennsylvania*, land prices, p. 205, wages, p. 210.
5. Gearhart, "William Maclay, the Surveyor," article in *Northumberland Proceedings*, IX, pp. 20-43. See also the work of the surveyors in establishing the Mason and Dixon's Line, Bates, *History of Pennsylvania*, pp. 95-97; Godcharles, *Daily Stories*, p. 919. A full account of a surveyor's trip into the wilds in 1770 is given in text of Benjamin's Lightfoot's, "Notes of the Expedition to Tankhannock,' " in the year 1770 in Lightfoot, op. cit., pp. 177-186. See also, Trescott's article #5, p. 23 of *Catawissa Items*, in W.P.A. papers #5, "The Early Surveys Within the Forks of the Susquehanna;" Hubbard, *Moses VanCampen*, pp. 281-282.
6. On pioneer farming and its wasteful practices: Clark, William, *Farms and Farmers*, pp. 57-58; Dunaway, op. cit., Ch. XI; Fletcher, *Pennsylvania Agriculture, 1640-1840*, pp. 145-146; Schmidt, *Rural Hunterdon*, (N.J.), pp. 76-77.
7. Many standard histories explain the importance of indentured servants. See Battle, *History of Columbia and Montour Counties, Pennsylvania*, pp. 60-61; Clark, Chester, "Pioneer Life in the New Purchase," *Northumberland Proceedings*, VII, p. 26. Dunaway, op. cit., pp. 67, 206-207; Fletcher, op. cit., pp. 110-113. Also consult a United States History textbook.
8. Morris' holdings are recorded in *Columbia County Deed Book*, I, p. 475 ff; Wilson's, idem, p. 205; Battle, op. cit., p. 216.
9. Useful references on the demand for western lands in this early period, also on the speculators and the types of settlers: Dunaway, op. cit., Chs. X, XI; Clark, William, op. cit., Ch. IV, VI; Fletcher, op. cit., pp. 59-60. For a detailed view of the activities of a land speculator see, T. Kenneth Wood, "History of the Making of the West Branch-The Story of Samuel Wallis" in *Northumberland Proceedings*, pp. 56-60. A whole tract of land west of Fishing Creek from its source to its mouth was ordered surveyed in 1769. Gearhart, op. cit., p. 26.
10. Ballagh, James C., *The Land System, American Historical Association Reports*, 1877, pp. 112-113. Quoted by Fletcher, 1740-1840, p. 20-24. Clark, William, op. cit., pp. 73-75.
11. Clark, idem.; Dunaway, op. cit., pp. 95-96; Fletcher, op. cit., pp. 20-24. Also recall LeTort's letter, quoted above; Godcharles, op. cit., pp. 773-774.
12. Lightfoot, op. cit., pp. 177-181. These settlements must have been by squatters.

13. Dunaway, op. cit., pp. 131-132.
14. Deans, "Migration of the Connecticut Yankees to the West Branch," p. 38. Wallace, *Indians in Pennsylvania*, pp. 153-157; Battle, op. cit., p. 42.
15. Clark, *Pioneer Life in the New Purchase*, pp. 30-32. Godcharles, *Chronicles of Pennsylvania*, III, pp. 229-238.
16. Long lasting hostility was aroused between the two sets of settlers. See testimony of Fithian, quoted in *Northumberland Proceedings*, II, p. 6; Godcharles, *Chronicles of Pennsylvania*, pp. 673-675; 903-907.
17. For fuller accounts of these serious conflicts, consult Brewsters, *Pennsylvania and New York Frontier*, Ch. 23; Dunaway, op. cit., pp. 131-137.
18. Brewster, op. cit., Ch. XVIII, pp. 127 ff; Dunaway, op. cit., pp. 114-115; Wallace, op. cit., pp. 152-153.
19. Colonial Records, IX, pp. 583-584. Freeze, *History of Columbia County*, pp. 37-38.
20. Battle, op. cit., pp. 151-152; Hubbard, op. cit., p. 28.
21. References on McClure's decision, Battle, idem; Columbia County Register of Deeds, *Deed Book I*, pp. 2, 4. References on Espy, Battle, op. cit., p. 187; *Deed Book II*, p. 44.
22. Battle, op. cit., p. 152. Also refer to Lightfoot, *Northumberland Proceedings*, IX, p. 179; Freeze, op. cit., pp. 37-38.
23. Battle, op. cit., pp. 270-273.
24. Battle, op. cit., p. 270.
25. Battle, op. cit., p. 401.
26. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 177.
27. Eshelman, *History of Catawissa Friends' Meeting*, p. 6; Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 185; Theiss, "How the Quakers Came to Central Pennsylvania," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XXI, p. 69.
28. Eshelman, op. cit., p. 8; Rhoads, *History of Catawissa and Roaring Creek Quaker Meetings*, p. 15; Theiss, op. cit., pp. 67-70.
29. Eshelman, op. cit., p. 6; Theiss, op. cit., p. 69.
30. Rhoads, op. cit., p. 22; Eshelman, op. cit., pp. 4-5.
31. Rhoads, op. cit., p. 59; Eshelman, op. cit., pp. 4-5.
32. Battle, op. cit., p. 234.
33. Battle, op. cit., pp. 234-235; Gearhart, "Reuben Haines, Proprietor of Northumberland," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XI, pp. 67-94. This reference gives a picture of the land speculators operating here and elsewhere in the New Purchase. Eves paid 145 pounds for 1200 acres, which is at the rate of approximately twelve pounds per hundred acres. At the prevailing rates, the land would have cost five pounds per hundred acres when purchased from the Penns, the Proprietors.
34. Battle, op. cit., p. 273.
35. Battle, op. cit., p. 401.
36. Battle, op. cit., pp. 301, 299.
37. Battle, op. cit., p. 152.
38. Battle, op. cit., p. 185.
39. Montgomery, *Frontier Forts*, I, p. 369.
40. Battle, op. cit., p. 207.
41. Battle, op. cit., p. 234.
42. Battle, op. cit., p. 264.
43. Battle, op. cit., p. 234.
44. Battle, op. cit., p. 231, NOTE.

CHAPTER 2

The Revolution –
The Opening Years

At First the Revolution had Little Effect on the Frontiers

The outbreak of the Revolution was marked with fighting around Boston and in New England through 1775. Then in 1776 the New York and lower Hudson River valleys were attacked. The Patriot forces were defeated and compelled to flee across New Jersey and take refuge beyond the Delaware River in Pennsylvania. This situation prepared the way for Washington to take the offensive, win the victories of Trenton and Princeton at the close of the year, and recover parts of New Jersey. The year 1777 was marked by attempts of the British to divide the northern from the southern States by driving a line through them at the center, chiefly through New York. Philadelphia was captured which required the United States to move its capitol from that city to Lancaster, then across the Susquehanna River to York. The attempt to drive a dividing line through New York was defeated, chiefly at Saratoga at the lower end of Lake Champlain, but also just north of the Susquehanna lands in New York's Mohawk River Valley.

Which Side in the Revolution Would the Indians Take?

With the outbreak of the Revolution, the British solicited the help of the powerful Iroquois Confederation, while the Americans tried to keep them neutral. The British were able to argue that the Americans were few in comparison with the British whose numbers were as the sands of the lake shore; that their disobedience to the King deserved punishment from both whites and Indians; that the King was rich and would reward them; that his supply of rum was as plentiful as the water of Lake Ontario; that if the Indians assisted they would never lack for money or goods.[1] Each of the Indian chiefs was presented with a suit of clothes, a brass kettle, a gun, a tomahawk, scalping knife, gun powder and lead for bullets, and a piece of gold.[2] A bounty was also promised for each scalp.[3]

Four of the "nations," the Mohawks, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas, together with two of the Iroquois subject tribes, the Delawares and Shawnees, declared for the British. After the Americans secured the French Alliance, the hostility of the Iroquois was intensified on account of their long-standing enmity for the French. The Shawnees and Delawares remembered, with bitterness, their loss of the Susquehanna lands after they had been assigned to them. These disgruntled tribes probably hoped to recover them.[4] Two of the Iroquois "nations," the Tuscaroras and Oneidas, decided for the "Thirteen Fires," as the Americans were called. This action broke up the unity of the Iroquois Confederacy.[5]

The Coming of the War to the Susquehanna Region: The First Attacks

Early in 1778, information reached the Susquehanna regions of forces being collected in New York for an attack.[6] The western part of the State received the first blows, to be followed by attacks in the West Branch region and then on the North Branch. These came in the form of attacks on isolated homesteads, shooting of farmers in their fields, or of small parties of Indians waylaying travellers. Victims were killed and scalped. Prisoners were taken into captivity. Buildings were burned. In their hasty "hit and run" tactics, crops were often left.[7]
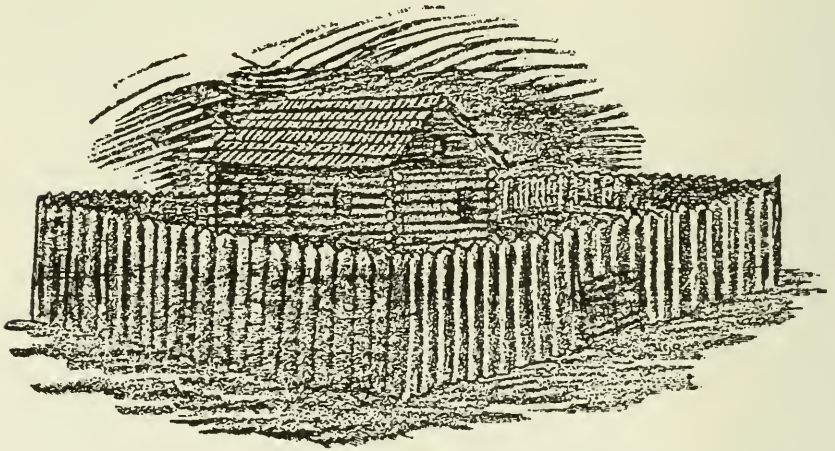
Fort Freeland was built in the summer of 1778 on Warrior Run, about four miles from modern Watsontown. To enclose its half acre area, over five hundred feet of closely set palisades, twelve feet high were required. It was built around a large two-story log house. Fort Jenkins probably resembled Fort Freeland.
Meginnis, *Otzinachson*, p. 611.

The Coming of the War to the Susquehanna Region: Forts Constructed

The first years of the Revolution passed with no attacks in the Susquehanna regions. Then in the spring of 1778, Joseph Salmon's cabin was burned at Cabin Run. He was able to persuade the Indians to liberate his wife and infant on his promise of accompanying them as a prisoner. After a year's captivity, he was released.[8]

Preparations were already underway to protect the settlers beginning about 1777 when the Indian attacks began. Forts were strengthened and new ones built. In our region, Fort Augusta, built twenty years previously at Sunbury, was strengthened. Forts in the Wyoming region and on the West Branch were also constructed. In our immediate region were Bosley's Mills, near modern Washingtonville, at the Forks of the Chillisquaque Creek;[9] Fort Montgomery, also called Fort Rice;[10] and Fort Freeland, on Warrior Run, about four miles east of Watsontown.[11] Fort Jenkins was erected probably in the winter of 1777-1778. A former Philadelphia merchant named Jenkins had previously settled and erected his house near the river a short distance below the mouth of Briar Creek. Several families, mostly now nameless, lived near by. The Jenkins homestead was surrounded by a stockade twelve feet high enclosing an area sixty by eighty feet, including the house, possibly a second building and shelter for a garrison of thirty and along with neighboring families.*[12]

Moses VanCampen

The construction of the next fort introduces Moses VanCampen whose military career is closely interwoven with the Revolutionary War in the upper Susquehanna valleys. He was also an excellent example of the indomitable soldiers and leaders in the frontier defense.

Moses VanCampen was born January 21, 1757, in Hunterdon County, N.J., near the Delaware River. His father, Cornelius VanCampen, like very many New Jersey people, became interested in the Susquehanna lands of Pennsylvania, which were made available by the New Purchase of 1768. He first purchased in the Wyoming region, but sold his holding when he learned of the threats of violence between the Pennsylvania and Connecticut settlers. He then purchased land on Fishing Creek about eight miles above its mouth, and moved there with his family in 1773.[13]

Early Training and Experience

Cornelius' son, Moses, secured training in both navigation and surveying, and also wide experience in hunting and other forms of outdoor life.[14] When grown to about five feet, ten inches, he had developed a

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*The site of this fort is now occupied by a farm house and is marked with a monument. It is just west of northern approach to the Interstate 80 bridge across the river from Mifflinville.

powerful physique and a constitution able to endure hardship, along with a quickness of intellect.[15] At the time of his appointment, he had gained some military experience in participating in an unsuccessful attempt to drive out the Connecticut settlers from Wyoming, 1775.[16] When the news of the opening of hostilities at Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill had been spread through the country and the efforts to enlist soldiers had followed, VanCampen joined the Continental army as ensign. James McClure, a local leader, knowing his experience, training, and abilities, represented to him the need of soldiers to protect the frontier.* He persuaded VanCampen to resign his commission and join the militia and protect the home area.[17] He first saw service under this enlistment on the West Branch of the Susquehanna at Reid's Fort, just below Great Island (near modern Lock Haven).

Fort Wheeler Built

Early in 1778, the Commandant for the military district of the upper Susquehanna region, Colonel Samuel Hunter, transferred VanCampen, now twenty-one years of age and a lieutenant. He ordered him to lead a detail of twenty young soldiers to the mouth of Fishing Creek and then follow up the stream three miles to a compact settlement located in that region and there build a fort for the reception of the inhabitants in case of an attack from the Indians.[18]

It was under these circumstances that VanCampen with his detail of soldiers, early in April, took up the problem of a fortification for this "compact" group of settlers. We do not know how many, but it must have been enough to justify such an undertaking. We know that the Salmons, the Aikmans, the VanCampens and the Wheelers were there.[19] The farm house of Isaiah Wheeler was chosen for fortifying. They worked with a will, and most probably had the help of the men of the settlement. Having started in April, the premises were converted into a defensible fortification before the end of May. From available information, the house was surrounded by a barricade able to accommodate the entire population of the settlement.** At a distance of about four

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*James McClure was appointed to the Committee of Safety for Wyoming Township in 1776 and 1777. His advice would undoubtedly have been influential with Van-Campen, not yet twenty years of age. McClure died early in the war. Carter, "Committee of Safety for Northumberland County," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XVIII, p. 45.

**The garrison was later withdrawn from Fort Wheeler after which it was garrisoned by men from the neighborhood. Fort Wheeler was never captured and endured as a protection of the neighborhood till the end of the war in 1783, *Frontier Forts*, p. 371. It was persistently called the mud fort, because, as one authority says, the logs were chinked with mud. This chinking could very well been added later after the first urgency of securing a basic fortification had been fulfilled, possible with wattle. Battle, idem.

perches (sixty-six feet) from the house, a barricade of sharpened stakes was constructed. Branches stuck in the ground were interwoven. The whole formed an almost impenetrable barrier.[20]

First Attack on Fort Wheeler

Barely was the construction of the fort sufficiently far advanced to make it defensible when one of the scouts sent out, came in in great haste to announce the advance of a large war party of Indians. VanCampen quickly posted his men in defense while the settlers scrambled to the fort with what few necessaries they could grab. The besiegers, thwarted in their attempted surprise, plundered the dwellings and other buildings and burned them. Unwilling to venture storming the fort, they kept a brisk rifle from sheltering trees at a distance until nightfall. The fire was returned. The defenders' supplies of powder and bullets were becoming low when darkness ended the firing.[21]

Two of VanCampen's men* volunteered to sneak through the besiegers' lines for help. Under the cover of darkness, these two courageous men were able to make their way through the lines, across the eight miles of largely wild country to Fort Jenkins; secure replenishing ammunition; and carry this heavy burden back to the fort before daylight and in time for the defenders to melt the lead into bullets in preparation for attack. The Indians apparently had had enough and had decamped shortly after nightfall, for, with the coming of morning, they had disappeared, leaving blood stains on the ground.[22]

Second Attack on Fort Wheeler

Again in June, a sentinel informed VanCampen of suspicious movements in some bushes. The Lieutenant's suspicions were aroused that an attack was impending. He, with ten of his best sharpshooters, concealed by a slight rise of ground, crept between the advancing stalkers and a number of women milking cows in their special stockade. VanCampen gave the signal by firing and killing one of the Indians, who happened to be their leader. The rest fled in panic from the riflemen's volley, which apparently found no further targets. The sudden and unannounced firing so close-by produced consternation among the milkers and milked. The women and cows fled in a wild confusion of screaming and bellowing, of overturned pails, and of spilled milk. Although it came to be a matter of

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*One was named Henry McHenry, the other name is unknown. Battle, op. cit., p. 185.

laughter afterwards, it was no joke at the time, especially for the women and girls trembling with fright.*23

Tories in our Region

We digress slightly from our general narrative to recount Van-Campen's next adventure. This arose out of conditions confronting the frontier rangers, such as VanCampen. Colonel Hunter ordered him to take a detail of men to arrest three known Tories dwelling in an abandoned settler's cabin in a wild section of the forest (the exact location cannot now be identified). VanCampen's party approached the cabin, after traveling all night, in the hopes of surprising the occupants. They were discovered and the inmates defied VanCampen's party with threats to blow out their brains if they advanced. Despite this threat, the door was forced by battering it open with a log. When the door yielded sufficient to permit entry, VanCampen rushed in, and in the nick of time brushed aside a rifle from his face as it was discharged. Although the bullet missed him, his face was peppered with powder burns, the scars from which he carried for the rest of his life. VanCampen wrestled his man to the ground. The others were likewise seized and made prisoners. They were marched off to higher authorities under guard of the soldiers with loaded rifles. VanCampen returned to general service.24

Attacks in Nearby Regions

While attacks at other places in the North Branch country were occurring, they were more numerous on the West Branch extending from close to Sunbury far up the river. There the settlements had been started earlier than on the North Branch, with the result that that region was more populous.25 All of these events amply fulfilled the warnings that the attacks were to endeavor to drive out the settlers completely. Attacks were made on small parties working in the fields, in homes, and on forts. The loss of settlers killed and others taken prisoner became more and more terrifying.

The Great Runaway

The rumors and warnings became more precise and definite. As an example, an escaped prisoner stated, "That the Nordring Indians are determined to Destroy both branches [of the river] this mon. [month]."26 In response, Colonel Hunter ordered the settlers to take refuge in the forts. Then as the situation became more critical, it was

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*The construction of two railroads across the area has altered the site of Fort Wheeler. One railroad has been removed. A high embankment supports the elevated tracks of the other. The Bloomsburg Sand and Gravel Company has removed completely a one-time large hill. The site of the fort is now occupied by a building of the last named company.

ordered that the settlements be abandoned.[27] Canoes were collected. Rafts were constructed. Many articles were hidden by being buried. Then they took flight down the river. We have an eyewitness account.

"I took my family safely to Sunbury, and came back in a keel-boat to secure my furniture. Just as I rounded a point above Derrstown, [modern Lewisburg], I met a whole convoy from the forts above. Such a sight I never saw in my life. Boats, canoes, hog troughs, rafts hastily made of dry sticks, every sort of floating articles had been put into requisition and were crowded with women, children, and plunder. [Plunder in this context, it is suggested, means merely belongings.] There were several hundred people in all. Whenever any obstruction occurred at a shoal or ripple, the women would leap into the water and put their shoulders to the boat or raft and launch it again into deep water. The men came down in single file on each side of the river, to guard the women and children. The whole convoy arrived safely at Sunbury, leaving the entire range of farms on the West Branch to ravages of the Indians."[28]

Wyoming Valley Invaded

These attacks on both the West Branch and North Branch settlements were thought to have been intended to distract attention from a major invasion. Forces made up of Tories, Indians, and some regular British soldiers, were gathering up the river in New York for an attack on Wyoming. The local attacks, it is inferred, were also intended to prevent the sending of help to the threatened area from the outside.[29] First, as in the Fishing Creek and West Branch areas, attacks, killings, scalpings, and persons taken into captivity occurred up river from Wyoming. Then an expedition composed of six hundred or more Seneca Indians with four hundred Tories under British officers, were reported advancing on Wyoming. Many were Tories from New York and Pennsylvania. Outlying points were attacked and reduced. Fugitives took refuge at Wyoming. Help was summoned from Salem and Huntington, and from Colonel Clingaman,[30] commanding the garrison at Fort Jenkins. Colonel Clingaman, who did not send help, felt his first responsibility was to defend his post. He also felt the summons came too late, as it did, for him to help. But he was accused of indifference, implying that the Pennsylvania elements were willing to have the Connecticut settlers driven out of Wyoming by the Indians.[31]

Wyoming Battle and Massacre

On July 3, 1778, the defenders were made up of 300 militia and briefly trained old men and boys. Under the rash insistence of Lazarus Stewart, the defenders marched out to meet the attackers. The enemy was in deployed positions and quickly out-maneuvered the defenders, who were

thrown into confusion and then into flight. Many of the men were killed, while fleeing. Officers died bravely leading their men. Fugitives taken prisoner, not killed at once, were killed in cold blood that night. The failure of the Tories and their British officers to prevent the killing of the prisoners helped embitter feelings against them for many years. Reportedly, 227 scalps were taken.[32]
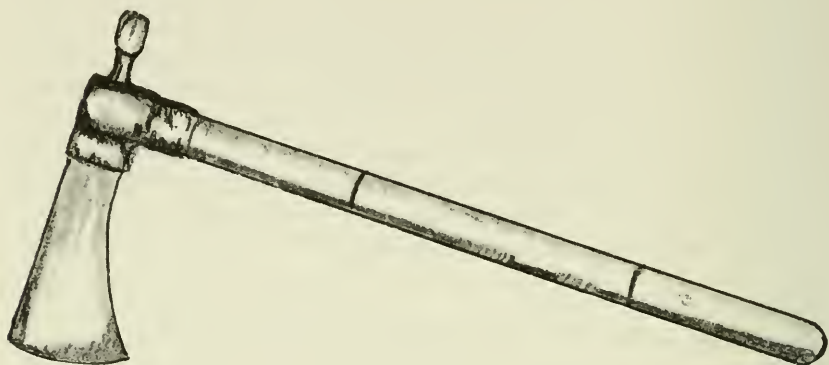
This form was of European manufacture after the Indians learned that it made a better instrument than their former stone-age weapons.

Flight of the Survivors

The remaining forts were surrendered. The non-combatants, women, children, and surviving men, what few there were, were to be protected, according to agreement. The homes were plundered, often removing some clothing from the wearers. The survivors fled in terror, mostly on foot, over the mountains and through the rugged wilderness and deep forest swamps, described as the "shades of death." As to the number perishing under the hardships experienced, no estimate is known, but hundreds were never seen again.[33] The rough, down river road was taken by some. Still, others found means of floating down the river. One of these was the newly widowed Mrs. Lazarus Stewart, who collected her belongings on a small raft supported by two canoes. She reached the home of her sister, the widow of Jame McClure, at Fishing Creek. The latter hastily gathered her belongings on a similar craft.[34] They both then floated down the river to the shelter of Fort Augusta. Over on Little Fishing Creek, a friendly Indian warned John Eves the day after the battle. He loaded what he could on his wagon and was able to make his way to Bosley's Mills on Chillisquaque Creek, by nightfall that same day. From there, he returned to his Delaware home.[35]

At Sunbury, the fugitives from the West Branch were joined with those from the North Branch. A prominent frontier leader, William Maclay, when writing from Paxtang, July 12, 1778, has left this word picture:

"I left Sunbury, and almost my whole property on Wednesday last. I never in my whole life saw such scenes of distress. The river and the roads leading down were covered with men, women, and children, fleeing for their lives, many without any property at all, and none who had not left the greater part behind. In short, Northumberland county is broken up. Colonel Hunter alone remained using his utmost endeavors to rally some of the inhabitants, and to make a stand, however short, against the enemy. I left him with very few, probably not more than a hundred men on whom he can depend. Wyoming is totally abandoned. Scarce a family remained between that place and Sunbury when I came away. The panic and flight has reached to this place, [Paxtang]. Many have moved even out of this township...For God's sake, for the sake of the county, let Colonel Hunter be reinforced at Sunbury. Send him but a single company, if you cannot do more...The miserable example of the Wyoming people, who have come down absolutely naked among us, has operated strongly and the cry has been, 'Let us move while we may, and let us carry some of our effects along with us'...Something ought to be done for the many miserable objects that crowd the banks of the river, especially those who fled from Wyoming. They are the people you know, I did not use to love, but now I most sincerely pity their distress..."[36]

VanCampen on Detached Service

While these stirring events were occurring at Wyoming, VanCampen had been sent on detached service. On his return he started toward Wyoming when news reached him that all was lost and that, if he continued, he could do nothing and that he would risk almost sure death or capture.[37] With this news, he turned back. A general policy of patrolling the frontier was adopted. In the latter part of the summer, VanCampen was placed in charge of a company of Lancaster militia men to scout the frontier. He led his men from the Knob Mountain region to the headwaters of Green Creek across to Little Fishing Creek, thence to Chillisquaque headwaters, the Muncy Hills to Muncy Creek, and then back-tracking to his command at Fort Wheeler with militia men taking quarters at the James McClure farm along the river. No Indian traces were found.[38]

The Americans Fight Back - Hartley's Expedition

Meanwhile, upwards of a thousand Continental line troops and militia were immediately ordered to our frontier. Wyoming was reoccupied and some of the settlers returned in August.[39] The frontier was patrolled. Early in September, a force of two hundred men under Colonel Hartley proceeded from Muncy up Lycoming Creek across the divide into the North Branch valley. They twice encountered Indians, killing ten or more. Four men of the expedition were killed. Queen Esther's Town and neighboring villages of the Indians were destroyed. They were in the region of Tioga Point, just south of the New York line. Returning, a brief stop was made at Wyoming, and the victims of the July massacre were buried. Half of the force was left as a garrison. The return to Sunbury with the remnant of the force was accomplished October 5. Three hundred miles of frontier had been traversed in three weeks![40]

Continuing Hostilities

Shortly after the return of the Hartley expedition, the whole region was again subjected to Indian warfare.[41] There had been much devastation, as we have seen. There had been general flight from the frontier, recall the Eves and McClure families, but there had been no general flight from the Fishing Creek or Catawissa area.

While measures were being taken to meet threats, numerous incidents reveal the conditions of the time. Early in August, Nathan Beach accompanied his father in returning to the latter's up-river holding. While attempting to harvest crops, Nathan was captured by the Indians, but was able to make his escape.[42] September 17, the Melick home below Espy was attacked. The family escaped to Fort Wheeler. Their home was plundered and burned. The Indians captured their pony and strapped a feather tick to it. Becoming frightened, the pony escaped and made its way to Fort Wheeler, thus restoring the tick to its owners.[43] On November 9, Wyoming was besieged and all the settlements down the North Branch, as far as Nescopeck were destroyed. It was feared that the whole line through New Jersey and Pennsylvania would be threatened if Wyoming were to fall.[44] Seventy Indians were seen advancing on Chillisquaque where some prisoners were captured.

Frontier Warfare Continued: Nathan Beach

The attacks continued into 1779. Nathan Beach had joined the garrison at Fort Jenkins in 1778 and continued his service into this year. He and other citizens joined in patrolling the frontier, during which time they had a number of skirmishes with the Indians.[45]

Late in April, Beach joined with the garrison in pursuing a party of thirty-five Indians, which had attacked three families, Ramsey, Farrow, and Dewey. Bartley Ramsey was killed and the others, about twenty,

were taken prisoner. On overtaking the Indians, a sharp engagement lasting about thirty minutes took place. The Indians escaped, but in the course of the flight the prisoners were able to elude their captors and make their way to the Fort. Five of the soldiers were wounded and four were killed. Houses were burned, cattle killed, and horses driven off. Authorities disagree as to the date. A letter of Colonel Hunter, Commandant at Sunbury, of April 27, places the date at "Sunday last."[46]

Continued Frontier Warfare

A few weeks later, May 17, across the river from Fort Jenkins, were several families, thought to be recent settlers. The Windbigler family had sent a son and daughter to Catawissa for supplies. In their absence, the other four members of the family were attacked and killed. The neighboring families were able to escape across the river to the Fort. The children returning, found themselves orphans with smoking embers where their home had been.[47]

Part of the American plan in 1778 was to attack the Iroquois Confederation in concerted expeditions. General Brodhead attacked from Western Pennsylvania and checked the Indian attack there, 1779.[48] Susquehanna valley was made the basis of one of the major campaigns of the Revolution.

Sullivan's Expedition

In July 1779, news of an expedition into the Indian country must have been carried to the frontier. A little later a flotilla of 134 boats, heavily laden with provisions and military supplies, was dragged and poled up the river past the settlements in our area. A strong expedition was being gathered and organized at Wilkes-Barre. Men and supplies also arrived from over the mountains from Easton. This expedition had been ordered by General Washington and placed under General Sullivan.

While this force was assembling, Fort Freeland was attacked.[49] It is thought that this was in order to turn the Wilkes-Barre force away from an attack up the river. After several men of the Fort Freeland garrison had been killed, the remaining twenty-one were captured.[50]

General Sullivan was not to be turned aside. With an overwhelming force, he advanced up the North Branch, and then on into the Seneca country beyond. He carefully avoided being ambushed. The Indians aided by the Tories and British were attacked near Newtown (modern Elmira) and soundly defeated.

Then the expedition advanced into the Indian villages of the Seneca country. These were deserted on the threat of American advance. These villages were made of well constructed houses and barns surrounded by fine grain fields and orchards, remarkably rich and productive. The buildings were burned, crops were destroyed, orchards cut down. The

destruction was complete. The survivors were compelled to flee to the British at Fort Niagara. The power of the Six Nations was seriously weakened. On the return trip, there were some skirmishes and some small losses. The expedition was back in Wilkes-Barre early in October.[51]

VanCampen's Part in the Sullivan Expedition

VanCampen was made quartermaster of Sullivan's expedition. He purchased provisions from settlers up and down the river. Two hundred and fourteen boats were required. Nathan Beach took employment as a boatman, steering one of the boats to Tioga Point, where he was discharged. The boats were propelled by polling. The horses, which they also used, made a single file extending six miles. VanCampen ascended the river with one of the boats and attended to the distribution of supplies. He gave an account of this work to the Commissary of the Army.[52] When finished with his quartermaster duties, VanCampen accepted service in scouting the enemy's positions, to the extent even of entering and scouting their camps at night and estimating their numbers from their campfires.[53] VanCampen was given command of twenty-six selected men, all including VanCampen being volunteers, to march before the main body of the advance, to discover any ambush. This the group did, with the loss of sixteen men and more wounded. When General Hand's brigade, leading the advance, encountered an ambush, a charge was made and the ambush was broken up. This was followed by the victorious battle of Newtown, which was the key to the whole successful expedition of General Sullivan. The capture and destruction of over forty Seneca villages and productive farms followed this victory.[54]

On the return from service VanCampen "was taken with camp fever" and spent the following winter recuperating at Fort Wheeler with his father.[55]

1. Hubbard, *Moses VanCampen*, pp. 30-31.
2. Hubbard, idem.
3. Hubbard, idem.
4. Wallace, Paul W., *Indians in Pennsylvania*, p. 158. Some valuable services were rendered to the Americans by these tribes, as are outlined in this reference.
5. Wallace, Paul W., idem. For aid given by Oneidas, see Hubbard, op. cit., p. 119.
6. Wallace, op. cit., p. 159.
7. Carter, "Indian Invasions of Old Northumberland," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XXVI, pp. 10 ff.
8. Battle, *History of Columbia County*, pp. 207-208.
9. Montgomery, *Frontier Forts*, I, pp. 374-375.
10. *Frontier Forts*, I, pp. 375 ff.
11. *Frontier Forts*, I, pp. 381 ff.
12. *Frontier Forts*, I, pp. 363, 367; Wallace, Virgil, "Fort Jenkins," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XII, pp. 103-104.
13. Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 1-3; Wagner, *Lieutenant Moses VanCampen*, pp. 52-53.

14. Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 5 ff.
15. Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 37-38.
16. Hubbard, op. cit., p. 20; Wagner, op. cit., p. 53.
17. Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 28-29.
18. Battle, op. cit., p. 185; *Frontier Forts*, I, p. 369; Wagner, op. cit., pp. 54-55 A.
19. Battle, idem; Bates, *History of Pennsylvania*, p. 52.
20. The author has written what seems the most probably description derived from differing, and possibly conflicting, sources. It is to be remembered that this fort was constructed under conditions of urgent need to provide protection in the shortest time possible. It is quite likely that the first construction was modified and strengthened in the six years that it served its purpose for regional protection. Battle, op. cit., p. 185; *Frontier Forts*, I, p. 369; Freeze, *History of Columbia County*, pp. 23-24; Hubbard, op. cit., p. 48.
21. Battle, idem; *Frontier Forts*, idem.
22. Battle, op. cit., pp. 55, 185; *Frontier Forts*, I, pp. 370-371; Freeze, op. cit., p. 24; Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 50-55.
23. *Frontier Forts*, I, op. cit., p. 371. Freeze, op. cit., pp. 24-25. Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 52-53.
24. Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 54 ff.
25. Carter, op. cit., XXVI, pp. 10-12.
26. Meginnis, *Otzinachson*, pp. 199-200; Munsell, *History of Luzerne, Lackawanna, and Wyoming Counties*, p. 51; Stewart, *History of Lycoming County*, p. 11 (Potter letter); Wallace, Paul A.W., op. cit., p. 159.
27. Meginnis, op. cit., pp. 216-218. Meginnis adds, "Shortly after the *Big Runaway* the attention of the savages was attracted to the memorable descent upon Wyoming, which took place the 3rd, of July, 1778."
28. Gutelius, "Robert Covenhoven, Revolutionary Scout"; article in *Northumberland Proceedings*, XIV, pp. 123-124.
29. Bradsby, *History of Luzerne County, Pennsylvania*, pp. 97 ff; Munsell, op. cit., p. 51.
30. Munsell; op. cit., p. 54.
31. Wallace, Virgil, op. cit., p. 106.
32. Dunaway, *A History of Pennsylvania*, p. 157; see also quotation from Colonel Stone, in Hubbard, op. cit., p. 74.
33. Bradsby, pp. 102-104, see special note on Tories, p. 104; Brewster, William, *Pennsylvania and New York Frontier*, Ch. 27; Munsell, op. cit., pp. 53-54; Wallace, Paul, op. cit., pp. 160 ff.
34. Battle, op. cit., p. 153. Bradsby, op. cit., p. 103.
35. Battle, op. cit., p. 237. For a more complete and vivid account of the Battle of Wyoming and its aftermath, consult Carmer, *The Susquehanna*, Chapter 10.
36. William Maclay, prominent leader in a letter of July 12, 1778, quoted in Gearhart, "Life of William Maclay," *Northumberland Proceedings*, II, p. 59; also quoted in by Godcharles, *Daily Stories in Pennsylvania*, pp. 461-462.
37. Hubbard, op. cit., p. 74.
38. Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 75 ff., 80-81.
39. Brewster, op. cit., p. 188.
40. Godcharles, "First Expedition Against the Indians of the Six Nations," *Northumberland Proceedings*, IV, pp. 3-35.
41. Battle, op. cit., p. 56.
42. *Frontier Forts*, I, p. 367.
43. Battle, op. cit., p. 185.
44. Battle, op. cit., p. 56.
45. *Frontier Forts*, I, p. 367.
46. Carter, op. cit., p. 19, (item 39); *Frontier Forts*, p. 367; Snyder, "Northumberland Militia," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XVIII, p. 61.
47. Carter, op. cit., XXVI, p. 19, (item 40); Battle, op. cit., p. 286.
48. Dunaway, op. cit., p. 159; Godcharles, op. cit., pp. 167-169.
49. *Frontier Forts*, I, pp. 365-66; Carter, op. cit., p. 19, (item 40).

50. Carter, op. cit., p. 20, (item 45).
51. Brewster, op. cit., Ch. 30; Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 94-95; 109 ff.; Wallace, Paul, op. cit., pp. 162-164.
52. Brewster, op. cit., pp. 200-202; Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 95-97.
53. Brewster, op. cit., Ch. 30; Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 99-105.
54. Brewster, idem; Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 107 ff; Wallace, Paul, op. cit., pp. 162-164.
55. Theiss, Lewis E., "Major Moses VanCampen," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XIV, p. 103.

Delaware Warfare

Wallace, *Indians in Pennsylvania*, p. 45; courtesy of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

CHAPTER 3

The Revolution –
The Closing Years

Sullivan's Limited Success

Sullivan's expedition, although highly successful, did not end the pattern of Indian hostilities: the stealthy attacks on isolated families or on workers in the fields; killings with scalpings; the burning of buildings; destruction of crops; prisoners taken for torture or permanent captivity. The Indian motives included desire for revenge; bounties paid by the British for scalps; desire on the part of the Delawares for the recapture of their lands. Despite these dangers there was some influx of settlers and the return of fugitives.[1]

Frontier Difficulties

Let us review the difficulties of frontier warfare. Settlers' cabins were far apart. Settlers themselves were rash to return to the unprotected frontier, but we must remember that such cabins were their only homes and that they had already invested hard work and savings in these locations. They knew that they must work their fields or face starvation. Settlers were slow to seek protection of their forts, forts which were inadequate at the best. Troops were too few to patrol adequately the widely extended frontier. Often arriving at a threatened location, they could only view the burning embers of a one time habitation and bury the mutilated bodies of those victims not taken into captivity. Soldiers enlisted for short terms were obviously not fully trained or experienced. They were also obviously anxious to return home to protect their families. Sentinels, guards, and scouts were inadequate and often were not even provided.

Soldiers' Pay

The pay of the soldiers, whether in the militia or in the regular Continental troops, was poor in comparison with the earnings of craftsmen making guns or other needed equipment, or with many other occupations. As an instance, it proved difficult to get volunteers for Sullivan's expedition because the boatmen's wages "were so superior." The pay was also poor in comparison with the prices which farmers could get for needed farm products, especially when such supplies were sold to the British armies for gold in comparison with the almost worthless Continental money.[2]

Special Difficulties

Moreover, Pennsylvania had special difficulties greater than those of many of the other States. The capital of the country was in Pennsylvania. Both the British and the American armies were in Pennsylvania much of the time. As the war progressed, the Americans came to have growing numbers of prisoners of war to care for. In various ways, all of these circumstances placed heavy burdens on the Pennsylvania government, especially so since a disproportionately large number of British prisoners was held in Pennsylvania.[3]

Yankee - Pennamite Hostilities

The hostile feelings between the Yankees and the Pennamites had by no means ended. This made cooperation difficult. It is probably true that certain persons interested in securing Wyoming lands from Pennsylvania were willing to have the Connecticut settlements destroyed, even if it should be by means of the cruel Indians. President Reed of the Pennsylvania government ordered that recruits going up the river to the Wyoming region should be made up of personnel from outside the State.

Tories

Patterning after the names of political parties in England at this time, the patriots might be associated with the Whigs of England, who opposed many of the government policies. Those loyal to English government were called Tories. Many Americans of all classes were opposed to the Revolution. Some Tories were passive in their opposition but others, a large number, actively opposed, joined the British armed forces, and fought actively against the Revolution. The result was that the war came to have the character of a bitter fratricidal war. An instance, probably an extreme one: After the Battle of Wyoming Patriot Henry Pensil, having thrown away his gun, came out of hiding to give himself up to his brother, Tory, John Pensil. Kneeling at his feet, he begged for his life, "You won't kill your brother, will you?" "As soon as look at you,"

replied John. Calling him a "Damned rebel," John shot him down, toma-hawked him, and took his scalp.[4]

The danger of the Tories was especially acute in the Susquehanna region. The attack that led to the Battle of Wyoming affords one example. It was chiefly an effort planned and carried out by the Seneca Indians, but it was accompanied by British soldiers and also numerous Tories, some of them former residents of the region.[5] There were pacifists, especially among the Quakers, some of whom also were Tories. References to these and other Tories will be made later in the course of the narrative.

The following excellent summary of local conditions is largely drawn from one of our basic references, J. H. Battle, *History of Columbia and Montour Counties*. Northumberland County was strangely divided in sentiment, Whig, Tory, Yankee, Pennamite, German, Scotch-Irish, Quaker, and English influence — all operating to interfere with general success. The general dislike of the Yankee settlers at Wyoming found fre-quent expressions in the official communications of the local authorities (recall the Maclay letter), with some people showing indifference or hostility to garrisoning the Wyoming areas. There was a lamentable lack of spirit among the pioneers. Bounties up to a thousand dollars were offered for scalps and fifteen hundred dollars for prisoners without any claims being submitted. (But refer to some of VanCampen's exploits and trophies.) Many lives were assumed to have been lost because the Wyoming settlements supplied troops who gave their services elsewhere when needed at home. Alleged deficiencies of the pioneer soldiers needed to be balanced against their duties to their families, their fear of famine, and their desire to salvage crops already planted. There was also the competition with other frontier communities in Pennsylvania for aid, with the implication that Northumberland had gotten more than its share, and that more local effort would need to be put forth.[6]

Continued Frontier Warfare

In the spring of 1780, the frontier settlers, or some of them, seemed to think that the danger of Indian attacks had been overcome by Sullivan's victorious expedition. It is true that the homes and fields of the Indians had been ruined, but their numbers had not been seriously reduced. It was reported to Pennsylvania's President Reed, at Harrisburg, that much gun fire had occurred at the headwaters of Fishing Creek and Muncy Creek in the fall of 1779 and early months of 1780. Later, these were to be connected with the attacks which took place in 1780. The general pro-cedure of the Indians was to come in large bodies from the New York region. When they reached the headwaters of the streams flowing into the Susquehanna, they divided into smaller parties to make attacks on isolated settlements.[7] In the spring and later months, our regions alone

were to be subjected to more than sixteen attacks and there is good reason to think that there were more that went unrecorded. The attacking parties seemed for the most part, to have been made up of Senecas with the motives of revenge and desire to acquire scalps for bounties. The Delawares were also involved with the additional motives for hostility as previously explained.

Local Attacks Renewed

Three incidents all occurred at about the same time. March 31, 1780, about two miles above Fort Jenkins, seven or eight prisoners were taken. Panic among the settlers was threatened.

The VanCampen Tragedy

Under the illusion of safety from Indian attacks, on March 30, 1780, a group of workers went out from the protection of Fort Wheeler. Their purposes were the rebuilding of their log cabin burned two years previously and to put in crops for the coming season. They divided into two parties. Cornelius VanCampen, with his older son, Moses, and a younger son went up the creek to the former's property. Cornelius' brother, with his young son, and a friend, a young man named Peter Pence, were located lower down on Fishing Creek. Their rifles were laid aside as the parties took up their work late in March on what must have been one of those inviting early spring days.

Actually, contrary to these inviting appearances, a large detached party of ten Indians surprised the Uncle's party, killing him and taking Pence and the boy prisoner. This was done without alarming the other VanCampens. The approach to them was stealthy, the surprise was complete. The father was suddenly transfixed with a spear. As he lay, the spear sticking up, his throat was cut and he was speedily scalped. The little boy by Moses cried out, "Father is killed!" at which he in turn was tomahawked to instant death. Now Moses was seized by two warriors. A third assailed him with a spear. There was violent thrust, avoided by Moses by a quick shrinking to the side, the spear passing through his outer clothing. Now VanCampen held himself erect. Another Indian joined the two holding VanCampen, presumably to protect him from further harm. His conduct having won their admiration, they desired to retain him as a prisoner. They started on their return journey home, having as prisoners, Moses from their last encounter, Peter Pence and the boy from the other party, and another boy named Rogers from a previous foray.

They proceeded up Fishing Creek, its tributary, Huntington, and then across into the valley of Hunlock's Creek. Here the Indians compelled VanCampen to stand in the open as a decoy near a settlement. The stratagem worked. A settler, Pike, was seized and compelled to lead the party

to his cabin where his wife and child were seized, stripped of all but their light garments. One savage seized the young child by the ankles and swung it around with obvious intention of dashing its brains against a tree. The infant boy screamed and the frantic mother, shrieking, endeavored to save it. At this a warrior, whom we will meet again in our accounts, interposed, restored her clothing, and on the mother's face painted red, a sign of safe conduct. He then pointed to the southeast and commanded, "Joggo, squaw" (go home). She made her way the many miles through rough country to Wyoming with her child. Her husband, Pike, was added to the group of prisoners, now two boys and three men. The horses were killed, and the party proceeded northwards toward the Iroquois country.[8]

As each day's journey took them farther into the Indian country, VanCampen formed the design of attempting an escape after killing their captors. Pence was willing, but Pike was fearful, and the boys too young to be heavily involved.
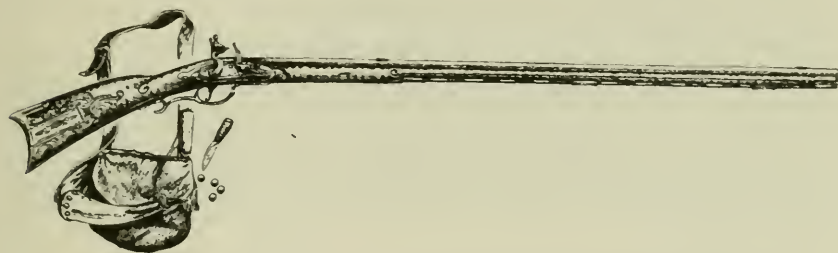
Pennsylvania Flint Lock Rifle, powder horn and bullet bag
Courtesy of Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

The Prisoner's Escape

Finally, after two more days of travel, they decided to make a try. This was probably near Wysox. While gathering firewood, opportunity was given to converse in snatches with a plan resulting, although Pike still proved timorous. This was despite their reminding him that it would be better to be killed in a fight for freedom than to be carried to the Indian country to be killed there by torture. After the camping chores had been finished and they had lain down for the night, having been bound, either one of the boys was able to secure a knife, or VanCampen had been able surreptitiously to slide his foot over one that an Indian unknowingly dropped. In the dead of night, but presumably there was some light from the camp fire, they were able to free each other. One of the Indians proved wakeful, and the timorous Pike failed in his part of the plan which was to kill three of the Indians with the guns. However, Pence and VanCampen plied the tomahawk and rifle on the sleeping

forms and were able to dispatch nine of the ten Indians. The last Indian had time to become fully awake and resisted, but not before VanCampen struck him a glancing blow in the neck. They clinched, the Indian still powerful, VanCampen blinded by blood from his antagonist's wound. VanCampen was able to protect himself from the Indian's knife, but could not prevent the latter's escape. This escaped Indian, years after in time of peace, with a deep scar in his neck, testified to this struggle with VanCampen. His name was Mohawk.

Since bounties of 600 pounds, although in continental currency, were offered for Indian scalps, they were taken. The scalps of friends and relatives were recovered and what booty would be useful was gathered. As soon as it was daylight they made their way to the North Branch River, embarked on a hurriedly constructed raft, which, however, soon collapsed under them, making them lose most of their supplies recently captured. They were confronted with the long journey back home on foot, with a snow covered mountain intervening, if they could not use the river. Again fortune favored them. Stealthily proceeding, they came in sight of another party of Indians in the distance, and an unguarded raft close by. This they seized and were out of reach of all but a few scattered and futile shots before they were discovered. With but few other trifling adventures, they reached Wyoming, and eventually Fort Jenkins. Here Mrs. VanCampen had taken refuge with the remnants of her family. The meeting with her son, given up for dead was, as we can imagine, one of mixed feelings of joy as well as of grief to be reminded afresh of her other bereavements.[9]

The Whitmoyer Attack [Whitmore]

Another tragic account is from Mary Whitmoyer, a survivor of an attack a short distance west of modern Jerseytown as she told it about twenty years later when living in the frontier cabin constructed by her husband. Henry Hoople, whom she had married after her release from captivity, had acquired uncleared land on the Ontario frontier. The scene as reconstructed is around the fire in front of their cabin.

"At night the children gathered around the glowing fire before the shanty and begged their parents for stories. 'Tell us about the massacre, Mother' . . . This was their favorite story, the most blood-curdling of them all. Mary would sit before the fire with a faraway look in her eyes as she began: 'Early Easter Morning of the year when I turned eleven was when it happened. (1780) All our family was still in bed except for those who had left for the Sugar Bush and my big brother, Phillip, who was kneeling beside the hearth trying to start the fire. Suddenly the cabin door bust open and there stood an Indian in warpaint, a tomahawk in his hand. Behind him
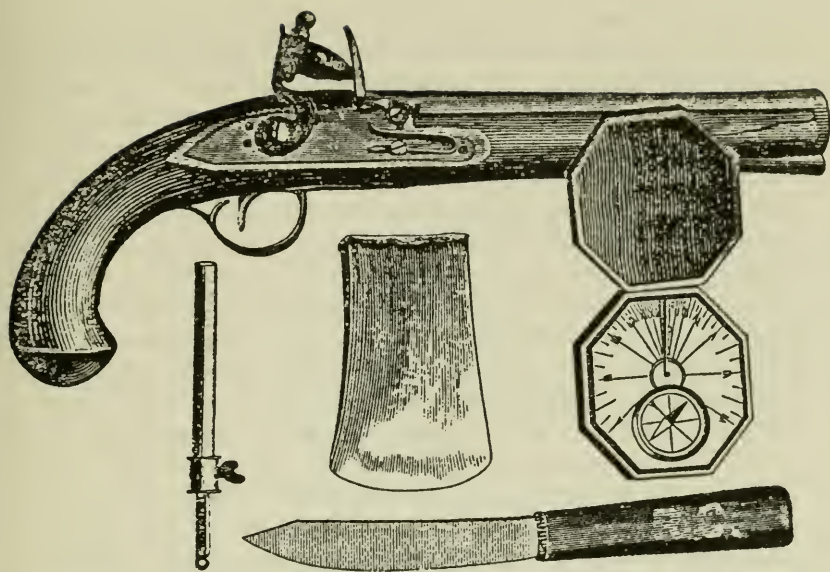
Armament carried by Robert Covenhoven, a noted frontier scout on the West Branch. Starting at the top and proceeding clockwise: a flint-lock pistol; a compass of French design with a sun dial attachment; and a gauge for measuring the powder charge for gun or pistol. At the center is pictured a tomahawk or hatchet, but lacking its wooden handle. A flint-lock rifle is pictured elsewhere.
Meginnis, *Otzinachson*, p. 620.

crowded others, Oneidas, Delawares, Senecas and a few ruffian whites from the Revolutionary Army, all armed and making threatening noises.

My father leapt from bed and reached for his musket but a shot through the open door laid him out dead on the floor. At the same instant the first Indian buried his hatchet in Phillip's head and a second did the same to my mother grabbing her by her long hair and scalping her. My big sister, Sally caught the baby as it fell from Mother's arms and rushed outside. I grabbed little Johnny and followed her as did also our brothers Peter and George. By this time all the ruffians were inside the cabin looting it. Then the place burst into flames and Indians, about twenty of them, swung us on to their horses and began to ride off.'

At this point in the story Mary always stopped, overcome by her emotions until one or other of the children prodded her to go on. 'What about the baby, Mother, tell

us about the baby.' The agonies of that dreadful day over twenty years before were still so vivid that it hurt Mary to speak of them and yet, by some queer contradiction, it soothed her aching heart to give them voice. She would continue:

'When a big Indian threw Sally onto his horse the baby in her arms was frightened and began to scream. He wrenched it away from her and holding it by one foot swung it around his head and dashed its brains out against a tree leaving the little body where it fell. Both Sally and I screamed and struggled to get off the horses and go to the baby but Sally's Indian clobbered her and mine dug a knife into my ribs so that the blood gushed out on my nightgown and we dared not struggle any more. They made it clear that the same thing would happen to us if we did not keep quiet for they feared that a rescue party would see the smoke and give them chase.'

'We rode three days into the setting sun to the place where the Alleghany flows westward towards the Ohio, to the land of the Delawares. They divided the prisoners on the second night when they separated and went their different ways . . . I don't know what happened to any of them.' "
(John and Mary, after seventy years, did find each other.)*

Threats in the Neighboring Regions Affect Our Area; The Destruction of Fort Jenkins

By 1779 most, if not all, the forts on the West Branch had been destroyed. This left Fort Augusta at Sunbury dangerously exposed to possible capture and loss of the military supplies stored there. To improve the defenses, Fort Rice was built late in 1779 or early 1780. Its location was on the headwaters of Chillisquaque Creek, about two miles above

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*This event, unrecorded at the time, would have been unknown to us if it had not been noted in Battle, op. cit., p. 264. It was recently confirmed by the genealogical researches of Elizabeth L. Hoople, who learned that she was a descendant of Mary Whitmoyer.

This story, somewhat abridged, is quoted from *The Hooples of Hoople's Creek*, pp. 34-36, 76-84, with the kind permission of the author and publisher, Elizabeth L. Hoople, 239 Broadway St., Streetsville, Ontario, Canada. It had been passed down by the descendants of the protagonist, Mary Whitmoyer, her Maiden name, to Elizabeth L. Hoople. There are anomalies in the story. One is that Senecas and Delawares, allied with the British, were in a foray with Revolutionary soldiers and the Oneida Indians, who had sided with the Patriots. A second anomaly is to have the Senecas and Delawares attacking the Whitmoyers, who were British sympathizers. These anomalies are of minor significance in the context of the convincing character of the story as a whole. The tragic killings in her family witnessed by this eleven year old girl in acute fear for her own life left her with indelible memories. See, Hoople, Elizabeth L., *The Hooples of Hoople's Creek*, Copyright, Canada, 1967.

modern Washingtonville. Limestone walls, two feet thick, enclosed a "never-failing" spring. There was a second floor and also an attic above it. It was one of the largest and strongest forts ever constructed in our regions. It is still standing.[10] Early in September, 1780, a force of Indians and British soldiers upwards of 250 attacked the fort. A vigorous defense was organized and the attackers were held off. Calls for help were sent out and relieving expeditions were dispatched. The garrison at Fort Jenkins was ordered to abandon its fort and go to the relief of Rice. The besiegers at Rice abandoned the attack. They divided into groups. One went east to the Fishing Creek region, around the end of Knob Mountain, and then toward the river. Finding Fort Jenkins deserted, they proceeded to destroy it and the buildings around it. With the work of destruction incomplete, they suddenly left. To explain this sudden departure, we must pick up some other threads of our story.[11]

Tories Among the Quakers

Settlements on Fishing Creek and at Catawissa remained occupied after these various tragedies when other settlements were abandoned. Was it because the Quakers, as was widely known, were pacifists? Were there Tories among the Quakers who gave aid and information to the enemy? It became revealed only in recent times that Samuel Wallis, a Quaker and prominent land owner on the West Branch, was giving aid and information to the British.[12] From the American point of view, why would suspected persons take refuge, as alleged, with the Quakers? Why had their settlements never been molested? In war time suspicions can be aroused on far less basis.

Considerable interchange of correspondence between the authorities about "treasonable practices" of the Tories in the Catawissa and Fishing Creek areas has been preserved. An expedition was ordered from the southeast to attack this settlement.[13] It was thought that information about this expedition reached the group attacking Fort Jenkins. Then these attackers immediately left, as noted above, and prepared to ambush this expedition under Captain Klader. The ambush was a complete surprise. Thirty, more or less, of the Klader expedition were killed. Three escaped, one was taken prisoner. This event has come to be known as the Sugarloaf massacre.[14] It was so called because it occurred near the Sugarloaf Mountain in Luzerne County.[15]

The Quakers Came in for Harrassment

Suspicions arose as to who spread information about this expedition. These suspicions arose in another connection. A community in the Roaring Creek Valley, not otherwise identified as to location or size, came under suspicion sufficiently serious to make the authorities feel that it should be investigated. VanCampen became a member of the militia sent

out for this purpose. He and a trusted companion, using the stratagem of Indian costume and staining exposed sections of their bodies to resemble Indians, infiltrated the community. They gathered enough information to justify arresting all the persons thus revealed. The suspects were turned over to higher authorities for further proceedings.[16]

Meanwhile, measures were taken against the suspected persons among the Quakers at Catawissa. April 9, 1780, shortly after the Van-Campen and Whitmoyer tragedies, Moses Roberts and Job Hughes were taken prisoners by several armed men from Sunbury without proof against them or without any witnesses to testify against them or without any charge against them. This was at the mouth of Catawissa Creek. They were taken to Sunbury and confined, where they "were persecuted" to some degree. They were then removed to Lancaster and confined there for upwards of a year without trial.[17] In June the wives of the men incarcerated, were turned out of their homes at Catawissa by armed men from Sunbury, their homes and possessions destroyed and four horses taken. The women and children, seven in all and one but five weeks old, were allowed to ride, but there was insufficient time to make bread before starting on a cross-country journey to the refuge of friends and relatives. They arrived there after "much fatigue." A committee of Friends from Philadelphia presented a petition respecting the plight of Roberts and Hughes to the Chief Justice, Thomas McKean. The judge would give no relief. His response was full of "bitterness and reviling." The release of the two prisoners finally occurred about March or April, 1781, with no additional facts available as to this incident or the eviction of families.[18]

VanCampen and Fort McClure

In the summer and fall of 1780, VanCampen was engaged in recruiting service and reorganizing his company. He was successively appointed ensign and then lieutenant. Early in 1781 he was ordered to take up the active duty of patrolling, with his reorganized company, the headwaters of the Muncy, Chillisquaque, and Little Fishing Creeks. This spring he stockaded the residence of Mrs. James McClure, which was thereafter called McClure's Fort.*[19] The stockade was large enough to afford protection for people of the neighborhood as well as a safe storage for supplies and headquarters for the patrolling soldiers. Not long after news was brought that a body of 300 Indians, far up the West Branch at Sinnemahoning, were hunting and laying in a store of provisions for descent on the settlements. Lieutenant VanCampen with four others were assigned from McClure's Fort to detached service to reconnoitre this

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*It is reported by the Fort McClure Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, that it occupied the exact site of the later home of Douglas Hughes, now preserved as the Fort McClure Homestead. *Frontier Forts*, p. 373.

menace. The group went out in Indian disguise. A large party of Indians was discovered. They were attacked by VanCampen's little force at night, effecting a complete surprise. Those of the enemy not killed were put to flight. From the booty captured, it was established that this party was just returning from a destructive foray in the Penn's Creek area.[20] No other incidents directly associated with McClure's Fort have been recorded, but there were traditions of lurking Indians with alarms and hurried flights.[21]

Last Indian Troubles

After the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown in 1781, negotiations for peace were entered upon with the final treaty being signed in 1783. The Indian attacks declined, with the brunt falling on our neighboring regions. Depredations did not end immediately, but dwindled away. The British assured that the Indians had been recalled, but some attacks continued, possibly because not all the Indians received the instructions, or because some of them could not resist the temptation to secure plunder.

In 1782, a family across the river from Catawissa was attacked by a party of Indians. The parents and two daughters were murdered. Three sons, on returning from Sunbury where they had gone to secure flour, discovered the tragedy.[22]

Again at Catawissa, a group of Indians occupied the site of a former Delaware Indian village. It came to be known as Lapackpitton's Town, after the name of the chief of the former Delaware town. Friction arose between the whites and the Indians. One white aroused the Indians' wrath by interfering with their fishing. He had to flee by wading across the river, then shallow. He could not swim but was able to make his way somehow through the deeper places to the safety of the opposite shore.[23]

An incident occurred during the last years of the war, which probably was illustrative of occasional happenings that can occur in disordered times of war. A soldier, Robert Lyon, was sent from Fort Augusta to Wyoming with a canoe load of stores. He secured his canoe at the mouth of Fishing Creek. Leaving his dog and gun in it, he went to see his affianced bride, daughter of Mr. Cooper, in the neighborhood. In his defenseless condition he was taken captive by Shenap, an Indian chief, and taken to Niagara. Here he was released by the interposition of a British officer, who, it turned out to be, was his brother. Back at Fishing Creek, suspicion was aroused against Cooper following the mysterious disappearance of Lyon. Cooper was arrested, and placed in a canoe to be taken to the Sunbury jail. A rifle belonging to one of the posse was accidentally dropped overboard. Cooper was accused of causing the loss. An altercation arose. One of the men hit Cooper in the head with a tomahawk resulting in his death some twenty days later. Lyon returned and later was able to establish Cooper's innocence. How the case further was

disposed of as well as the outcome of romance are not known.[24]

The last outrage was in 1785. A family of three, father, mother, and son, were murdered by a party of Indians on the "Mifflin Flats." They had pushed ahead of a party of immigrants.[25]

VanCampen's Last Services in the Revolution

In mid April, 1782, VanCampen was ordered to lead a party to investigate the killing of a certain settler in the Bald Eagle region, and to secure any of his property that might have escaped the tragedy. On reaching their destination, they were attacked by a party of eighty-five Indians. A few escaped, many were killed, and the rest taken prisoner.[26] After almost a year's captivity under the Indians at first, then under the British, with occasions in which his life was threatened, VanCampen was finally exchanged and resumed service.[27]

At this time VanCampen was assigned with a company of men in charge of the Wilkes-Barre fort. While on a scouting expedition, he captured a British officer, by name of Allan, journeying southward. It was established that the prisoner was actually an emissary from the Six Nations journeying to Philadelphia to arrange peace between Pennsylvania and the Six Nations. The prisoner was then freed by VanCampen, who warned him that he was so bitterly hated for the cruelty exercised on the frontier, that it would not be safe for him to travel alone. Van-Campen thwarted serious threats against Allan's life. He then broke camp and conducted the emissary far enough down the river for him to resume his journey alone in safety. Allan was able to complete his journey and with the result that peace was established.[28]

VanCampen and his company continued in the military service at Wilkes-Barre until November, when news was received that the terms of the peace had been ratified.[29] The company then disbanded and the soldiers returned to private life.[30]

1. Battle, *History of Columbia and Montour Counties*, pp. 57-58.
2. Clement, "Fort Augusta and the Sullivan Expedition," *Northumberland Proceedings*, V, p. 62.
3. Dunaway, *History of Pennsylvania*, pp. 155-156.
4. Carmer, *The Susquehanna*, p. 128.
5. Bradsby, *History of Luzerne County*, pp. 111-112; Godcharles, *Daily Stories of Pennsylvania*, p. 456; Munsell, *History of Luzerne Lackawanna and Wyoming Counties, Pa.*, pp. 51-52; Wallace, Paul, *Indians in Pennsylvania*, pp. 160-161.
6. Battle, op. cit., p. 58.
7. Letter of William Maclay to President Reed of Pennsylvania, quoted in Freeze, *History of Columbia County*, p. 25, April 2, 1780.
8. Carter, "Indian Incursions in Old Northumberland County During the Revolutionary War," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XXVI, p. 21, (item 51).
9. The main sources for the VanCampen incidents are: Hubbard's biography, Minard's Edition; Wagner, W. F., *Lieutenant Moses VanCampen, A Soldier of the American Revolution*, containing narratives of subject's activities and an exhaustive compilation of related and associated papers, 234 pages; Theiss, ed.,

"Major Moses VanCampen," an article in *Northumberland Proceedings*, XIV, pp. 98-114. This quotes an independent narrative by VanCampen published in 1845. Extensive quotations from one or more of these sources are found in other references listed. A large proportion of these references are basically from Van-Campen himself, so that the question of his credibility arises. His accounts are confirmed, with one exception, in all details where there is independent testimony. This one exception is in the respective parts played in the scuffle in which the prisoners killed guards and made their escape. The credibility of Pike, the one who in this case impugns VanCampen's story, had his own account impugned. Pike's later life was a rather disreputable one compared with Van-Campen's. VanCampen was repeatedly entrusted with delicate and dangerous missions as a soldier. In his later civic life he built up an enviable reputation of trustworthy service as a professional surveyor and as a public office holder. We have followed the example of other writers, notably W. F. Wagner, in trusting these basic sources.

VanCampen rose to the rank of Lieutenant in Revolutionary military service. Later he attained the rank of major in the local militia. These facts will account for the differing titles, respectively used at the earlier or later times.

Battle, op. cit., pp. 185; 207-209; 203-213 (this is a reference disparaging to VanCampen); Freeze, op. cit., pp. 22-29; 32-33 (this contains a defense of Van-Campen in comparison with a critic); *Frontier Forts*, I, 359-360; 369-372; Hubbard, *Moses VanCampen*, pp. 147 ff; Meginnis, *Otzinachson*, pp. 276-280; Wagner, *Lieutenant Moses VanCampen*; Wright, *Historical Sketches*, pp. 208-218 (this contains serious imputations as to VanCampen's credibility regarding certain aspects of his account of escape from their Indian captors).

10. *Frontier Forts*, I, pp. 376-377; Godcharles, op. cit., p. 615; *Penna. Archives*, VIII, p. 567. Sometimes this fort was called Montgomery. After the end of the war, Montgomery returned with his family. Since their buildings had all been burned by the Indians, the fort for a long time was used as the family residence. When a new residence was constructed later, the old fort was used for crops and farm tools. It is now showing signs of serious deterioration. It would seem to be a most worthy structure for historical preservation.

11. Bradsby, op. cit., p. 200; *Frontier Forts*, I, pp. 366-367; Godcharles, op. cit., pp. 614-616; *Penna. Archives*, idem.

12. Bakeless, *Turncoats, Traitors and Heros*, pp. 294-298. This reference supports the opinion held by many that some, at least of the Quakers were Tories; Bradsby, idem.

13. Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 182-185.

14. Bradsby, idem; Hubbard, op. cit., p. 185.

15. Bradsby, op. cit., pp. 200 ff; Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 185-190. It is not to be confused with Sugarloaf Township in northern Columbia County.

16. The only authority for this incident is Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 190-195. It is consistent with the incident recorded by Eshelman, *A History of Catawissa Friends' Meeting*, p. 9.

17. Eshelman, op. cit., pp. 9-11.

18. Eshelman, idem. Two or three other Quakers who had been imprisoned about the same time are not recorded in the minutes. This was because having taken the oaths of allegiance to the Patriot cause, these persons were dropped from the Meeting. Quakers disapprove of oaths. The result is that their situation is not recorded in the official minutes of the Meeting.

19. Battle, op. cit., p. 153; Freeze, op. cit., p. 22; *Frontier Forts*, I, p. 373.

20. Freeze, op. cit., p. 23, quoting President Reed's letter, September 8, 1781.

21. *Frontier Forts*, I, p. 373.

22. Battle, op. cit., pp. 273-274.

23. Battle, op. cit., p. 273.

24. Battle, op. cit., p. 153.

25. Battle, op. cit., p. 286. For anyone who wishes to read further of the period in which the Pennsylvania-New York frontier in the 1600's and 1700's was wrested

from the Indians, probably the best account is Brewster, *The Pennsylvania and New York Frontier, History From 1720 to the Close of the Revolution*. The tenseness and dangers of the times are vivid, the Indian leaders and spokesmen come alive in their travels and conferences, in their speeches and negotiations.

26. Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 210 ff. The chapter from which this citation is taken plus the following chapters, SVII to XX inclusive, give many interesting sidelights on soldiers' experiences during the Revolution which, however, are not directly connected with our history. Also see Theiss, op. cit., p. 110; Wagner, op. cit., pp. 79-81.
27. Hubbard, op. cit., p. 267.
28. Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 267-270.
29. Hubbard, op. cit., p. 270; Theiss, op. cit., p. 114.
30. Hubbard, idem; Theiss, idem.
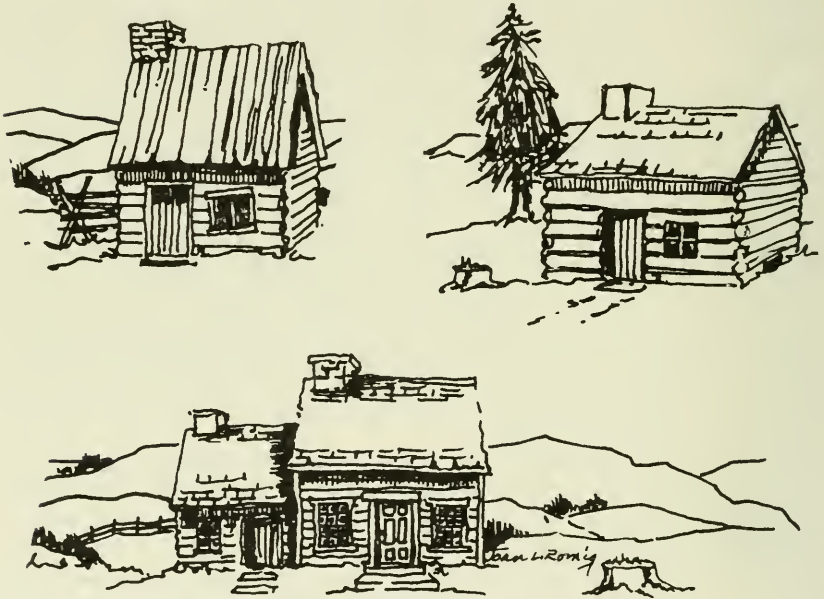
Study of Log dwellings

Cabins and log houses, when first built, were in stump-studded fields, surrounded by dense woodlands. The nearest neighbor was probably a long distance away, possibly miles away. The first cabins were composed of the straightest logs procurable. They were notched at the ends so that they would fit together alternately along the intersecting walls so as to make a secure structure. The later structures were composed of squared logs which were more secure and were called log houses. The cabins were for more temporary shelter. The houses were used for many years. Some, which were later covered by protective sheathing, are still in use.

Artist and researcher, Joan L. Romig; also Clyde R. Luchs' studies.

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CHAPTER 4

Pioneer Settlements Resumed
After the War for Independence

Obstructions to Settlements Removed

It should be recalled that during the Revolution migrations to the lands of the New Purchase were much reduced but never completely ended. Numbers of settlers survived the violence of frontier warfare by fleeing to their previous home lands. Most of these returned sooner or later after the emergency flights. The scattered and imperfect records of that confused time indicate that a few were able to remain throughout the war. The harvesting of crops that had already been planted and which represented the settlers' entire wealth, must have been a strong inducement to return. Finally, with the peace with Great Britain and the Indians, the fear of hostilities subsided and the migration to the frontier was resumed.[1]

Difficulties of Travel

Conditions of travel changed slowly from those experienced by the first explorers. One of these early travelers left this record: "The forest is so dense that for a day the sun could not be seen and so thick that you could not see twenty feet before. The path, too, was so bad that horses were stuck and had to be extricated from bogs and at other points it lay full of trees that had been blown down by the wind and heaped so high that we were at a loss to know whether to turn to the right or to the left...." This was recorded in 1745.[2] Even as late as 1795, a visiting Frenchman reported that the road along our North Branch of the Susquehanna was always in the woods, monotonous, and without any view.[3] When these towering trees provided shade, the traveling was most pleasant.[4]

At first the only "highways" were the Indians' trails, merely footpaths about a foot and a half wide, at places worn to a foot in depth.[5] They made a complex pattern which led with remarkable directness to the various destinations of the users.[6] Indian messengers along these paths may have covered a hundred miles in a day.[7]

When traversing the mountains, steep and narrow trails, often rocky, were especially hazardous. They were even more so when hemmed in by cliffs on one side and a sheer drop on the other, or when the deep and crusted snow made for insecure footing for man and horse.[8]

Other travelers encountered were generally friendly. This includes the Indians, until their hostility had been aroused. Even when the troubles resulted in war, there were numerous instances of friendly Indians helping the settlers.[9]

As settlers took up their land holdings, their first conditions were primitive. The following summarized account of a missionary, Rev. Frederick A. Muhlenberg, in June, 1771, gives a revealing insight into conditions of travel immediately following the New Purchase:

....At 2 o'clock we reached the Susquehanna a few miles below Shamokin (now called Sunbury), having come over the lofty Mahanoy Mountains. No one lives on this side of the river. There is a house on the other side. We began to shout [for help in crossing], then used all kinds of signals, hanging a shirt on a pole, but to no avail. The river here is fully a mile wide and so deep and full of rocks at the bottom that it can very seldom be forded. Just as we were about to try wading, we saw a canoe start out from the far side. Two girls, really only children, rowed across. [That it was "rowed" shows that the canoe was a dug-out canoe.] Since the horses could not be led by anyone in the canoe, the two men removed their outer clothing and rode across bareback, [with, it is presumed, the baggage taken in the canoe.] The horses fell a number of times on account of the rocks and at places the riders were compelled to swim the horses.

The houses in this vicinity could hardly be more wretched: without chimney, floor, no divisions into rooms, little more than a man's height, covered with strips of bark. Whoever travels here carries his bed, i.e., his blanket with him. This serves as a coat, overcoat, saddle, trough for his horse, and last of all as a bed.[10]

However deep and extensive the forests were, the traveler could expect to find breaks in them. Indian cabins might be found, abandoned when their builders moved to a new site to find new hunting areas after their cultivated lands declined in productiveness.[11] Also when the New Purchase was made, the Indians were expected to depart, thus leaving

habitations. Clearings made by the fur traders would be found. There would have been shelters for the traders themselves and also for their trade goods or for the furs taken in trade.[12] Huts of previous travelers might be available. A one-night lean-to, constructed by a previous traveler, might be utilized. Lacking this, one could be constructed of fir boughs covered with strips of bark. Often times at night, there was nothing to do but to bed down on evergreen boughs freshly cut, the dark sky studded with stars for the ceiling. Rain might just have to be endured. The minimal comforts provided by such shelters were further reduced by the infestation of insects.[13] Not only were there mosquitoes, but lice and fleas, mentioned again and again by travelers, made repose possible only for those whose weariness was so great that they could not be denied their sleep.[14]

Food had necessarily to be carried along, although additional supplies might be secured from game, maybe a deer or a bear, turkeys, and also from the streams abounding with fish. Rattlesnake meat was reported as being delicious. Maybe more meat than a previous traveler could eat would be left hanging from a bough for those following, or preserved in the water of an ice-cold spring. Occasionally one might encounter travelers who would share their surplus. In season, wild fruits or nuts might be enjoyed.[15]

Travel and Transportation

Gradually, pack horses brought about a widening of the trails. Those leading northwest from Lancaster, Reading, or Easton had numerous mountains to cross. When going up or down steep or rocky trails or along narrow cliffs these trails were very hazardous, especially for pack horses with heavy loads.[16]

Pack horses were of necessity widely used in bringing the settlers to their frontier properties. They continued to be the basic form for transportation of freight for many years. The many workers who gained their livelihood from the employment afforded, resisted the construction of improved roads which allowed heavy wagon traffic. Many men engaged heavily in the business employing extensive trains of horses. Two men would attend the train, one in front with a bell on the lead horse, the other man in the rear, keeping all in line, each horse tethered by a leading strap to the horse in front. Regular pack saddles were provided. The loads might be as much as 250 pounds. Where ponies were found to be more useful for narrow, steep, and twisting trails, the loads were 180 to 200 pounds. Freighting by this means was expensive. A ton freighted by this method from Philadelphia to Erie in 1784 cost $250. Thus with slow and toilsome step, the caravan would wind its course across hill and dale,

bearing its burdens, braving severe storms or summer showers, and often streams converted to raging torrents. At such times it would be necessary to wait until the waters subsided. One party late in August, 1770, noted fording the Susquehanna in the vicinity of Catawissa with the water "scarce belly deep of our horses." This same party was able to have its heavy things taken over in a canoe of a settler at that place. Such occasional boat or canoe facilities gradually led to regular ferry services. Horses or cattle might be tethered to the boat and compelled to swim.[17]

Pack horses were used by many of the first settlers, but probably not with as many horses in a train as are shown in this picture. Also, before trails became wider, ponies were preferred as being suited to narrow trails. This form of freight transportation was used for many years, or until turnpikes and improved roads became generally available.

William H. Shank, *Indian Trails to Super Highways*, p. 18, with permission of the author. See also: Battle, *History of Columbia and Montour Counties*, p. 248; Bradsby, *History of Montour County*, p. 21.

Trails were gradually widened into roads for wagon traffic. This was mostly after the Revolution, but references to wagon traffic are found for the earlier years.[18] Often the roads were not much better than paths, full of stumps, stones, deep with dust in the summer, quagmires of mud in spring and fall.[19]

Revived Interest in Susquehanna Lands

We have evidence of revived interest in the Susquehanna lands even before the end of the Revolution. After peace had been secured, the building up of settlements was resumed. Also, additional settlers came, some in the 1780's, but with increasing numbers in the 1790's.

Shifting of Travel Routes

There was also a shifting of routes. The earlier practice of journeying to Harrisburg was not in a direct line, and it incurred laborious boat trips against the current when using the river. Settlers from the southeast began coming more directly to Bear Gap and then to Catawissa along a route which must have been close to that of Pennsylvania 487. Still more directly from the Schuykill River Valley, a route for a long time has crossed Little Mountain and then led to Catawissa along the southern slope of Catawissa Mountain. These roads, tending to converge on Catawissa brought settlers to that community and also to others that were to grow in the immediate region. This route is represented very closely by routes Pennsylvania #42, to Legislative #19087, 1905.

At Catawissa it seems that many Quakers had never left their homes during the war.[20] Those who had fled from the harassment or who were forced to leave, returned to restore their ruined buildings and neglected fields.[21]

The growth of the community was promoted when William Hughes bought a tract of land, ninety-two and a quarter acres, in what is now the central part of Catawissa. The most attractive part he laid out into lots with main streets and side streets. This became the basic street pattern of the town, still followed.[22] At first his town was called Hughesburg, but later the old name of Catawissa came to be attached to it. A study of the records shows that he was able to sell his lots at about three times their proportionate cost to him. Settlers came.

Thus early Catawissa became a leader in growth. The first store between Wyoming and Sunbury was established, date not known, to be followed by others. Later, when a boat began to ply between Catawissa and points on the North and West Branches, Catawissa became an important and well-known point.

At first the Quakers shared in this growth. They advanced in population sufficiently to build the Catawissa Meeting House by 1790,[23] and to have their group recognized as a Monthly Meeting in 1796, as noted in Chapter One.[24]

Catawissa became the center for the growth of the Quaker movement in central Pennsylvania. It seemed to be a helper in the building up of a group at Roaring Creek, (Slabtown), near which the Roaring Creek Meeting House was built in 1796[25] Its first Monthly Meeting was held in 1814.[26]

Catawissa Quaker Meeting House - Erected 1789 or 1790.

Rhoads, *History of Catawissa and Roaring Creek Quaker Meetings*, with permission of the Willard R. Rhoads Estate.

Decline of Quaker Strength

The Catawissa Monthly Meeting gave help in meetings started at Berwick, Shamokin (Bear Gap), and at Fishing Creek (Millville,*) and at more distant places up the West Branch.[27]

After these encouraging developments, beginning shortly after 1800, large numbers of Quakers migrated to the Province of Ontario, with a few others going to Ohio. With no records of causes, we can only make inferences. It seems unlikely that the harassments during the Revolution, which were severe for some people, were the cause, for those were twenty or more years in the past. The remembrance of them may have strengthened other causes. The Quakers who had had Tory leanings would have had no difficulty in renewing their allegiance to the British crown. The Quakers may have been disappointed in the fertility of the Catawissa lands.

The Quakers, however, were no more immune to the "land fever" that was sweeping the country than were people of other religious faiths.

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*In some contexts for these early times the term Fishing Creek means "Millville", as in this case. In another context it means the land in the vicinity of the confluence of this creek with the river. For the period between 1789 and 1797 Fishing Creek Township extended from the Fishing Creek itself to the Luzerne County Line. Battle, op. cit., p. 219; Freeze, *History of Columbia County*, p. 55.

It was this "fever" that had brought them to the Catawissa region twenty years earlier. They also desired to acquire frontier lands at low prices, to bring them under cultivation, and then to improve them with the necessary buildings for comfortable homes for future enjoyment, or to sell them at a fine profit. The accounts of new land in Ontario, to be had for low prices, it is inferred, was the major cause for this Quaker emigration. Whatever the causes, the Quaker population at Catawissa declined.[28]

Most of the Quakers seemed to have left Catawissa. Departures from Roaring Creek were later and the numbers were smaller. The Catawissa Meeting was "laid down" (given up) in 1808, and Roaring Creek in 1828. Both areas declined in Quaker population.[29]

Quaker Heritage

The Catawissa Meeting lingered as a subordinate branch of stronger meetings elsewhere. It continued till about 1903.[30] Many people there and elsewhere still carry the names of the earnest and diligent people. Their successors on the land were enabled to have the benefit of woodlands reduced to cultivation of sturdy houses already built. Two venerable log meeting houses with their associated burying grounds are mute but eloquent reminders of these pioneers. Names perpetuated by descendents of these early founders include: Hayhurst, Jackson, Knappenbergs, Lloyds, Mears, Shoemakers, Watsons, and Willitts.[31]

Others Took the Place of the Quakers

The task of continuing the building of civilized communities in our county was left for others to take up. In the southern half of our county, settlers from the southeastern counties and of German stock predominated, although other groups were represented. At Catawissa, with the Quakers who were left and others who came in to take their places, the community continued to grow. Catawissa continued to be a leading community of the region.

Settlements South of Catawissa

In the northern valley of the Roaring Creek, land patents were secured from the Proprietors as soon as any part of the County. The first settlers were the Quakers in the vicinity of the Quaker Meeting House still standing near the village of Slabtown, often referred to as Roaring Creek. As in the case of Catawissa, most of the Quaker settlers were succeeded by others, mostly Germans.[32]

Settlements in the Upper Catawissa Creek Valley

Up the Catawissa Creek, there were undoubtedly local paths since developed into roads. Legislative Route 19104 leads to attractive farm lands. Beyond the Mainville Gap, between Catawissa and Nescopeck

Mountains, lie both hill and bottom lands which attracted interest of speculators and settlers as early as any place in the county. Isaac and Margaretta John settled on their purchase of 300 acres in 1772. They occupied a one-story log cabin, whose door was in the roof and reached by a ladder from the outside. "It seems almost incredible, but it is a well attested fact that a family of ten children was brought up in this house."[33] In the dangerous summer of 1778,* they were twice compelled to leave their farm. By 1808, three (and possibly more) families had settled in the Maine Township region.

Only two attempts were made at settlement beyond the Mainville Gap. One settler, Alexander McCauley, fled from threatening dangers and the other, Andrew Harger, was abducted by the Indians, and held captive for a year. He finally escaped after a year's captivity.[34]

Settlements up the River from Catawissa

Catawissa also came to be a point of departure for settlers who wished to reach the attractive flat lands across from the site of Fort Jenkins. We have already recounted tragedies from Indian attacks, showing that there must have been settlers there. The records show that they gained access from Catawissa and Mainville using routes now followed by Legislative Routes 19021 and 19016 and finally, to the flats by Route 34, by modern Mifflinville.[35]

The early settlers came from New Jersey's western county of Warren. Family names included are: Aten, Angle, Bowman, Brown, Creasy, Gruver, Kern, Kirkendall, and Koder. Later, German elements from Berks were added: Hartzels, Mensingers, Mostellers, and Zimmermans.[36]

In 1794, John Kunchel and William Rittenhouse laid out a town, and gave it the name of Mifflinsburg, later changed to Mifflinville, after Thomas Mifflin, Pennsylvania's governor at that time. Its location was about thirty miles from Wilkes-Barre up-river on the northeast and the same distance from Sunbury down river on the southwest. In anticipation that this favorable location would eventually make their town a county seat for a new county, these two planners made a street plan on a very liberal scale. The two main streets were made 132 feet wide. An acre of ground was reserved for public buildings. What might have been a central public square was never realized in that form. With the failure of the town to attract settlers, the proprietors lost interest and failed "to exercise any supervision over (the town's) affairs. Many lots were occupied and improved without any formal purchase, and are held to this day, (in 1887) with no tenure save the right of possession."[37]

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*It was in this summer when the Indian attacks became more intense and the Battle of Wyoming took place.
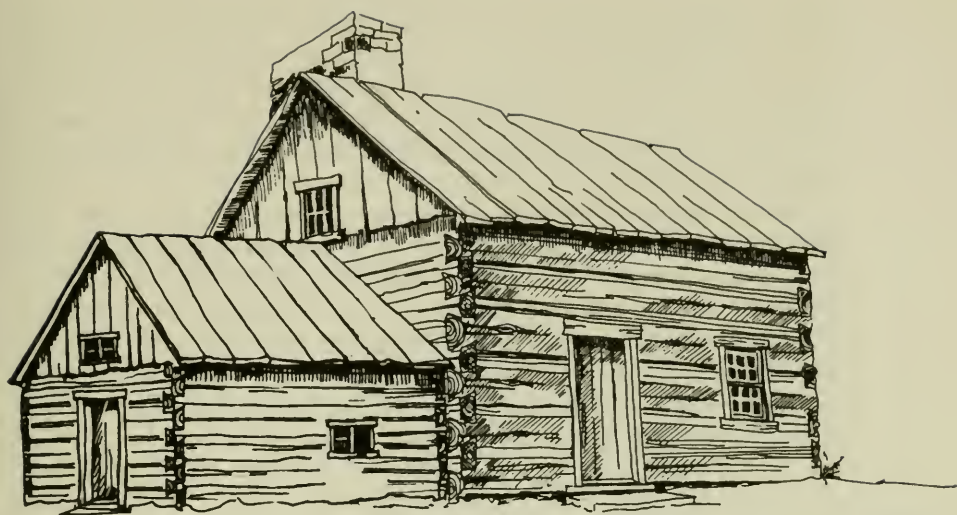
"1788" Rupert Log Building. Joan L. Romig 1976

The log house constructed by Leonard Rupert in 1788 comprised three rooms instead of the usual one in a log structure. It was considered a marvel of frontier architecture and was lived in for thirty years. Later it served for many years for farm purposes. The main part is still standing, 1976, but seriously deteriorated.

From the part still standing with evidence of the part previously removed, and from records available, the artist has made the above drawing. It shows how the building probably looked just after it was finished with its squared logs still showing the bright colors of freshly hewn timber. The original roof was probably composed of wooden shingles, three feet long.

Battle, History of Columbia and Montour Counties, p. 261.

Beginnings at Rupert

In 1788, Leonard Rupert and family with their household goods, migrated from the city of Reading, up through the Schuykill River Valley, using the road from the south east from Reading to Catawissa, across Little Mountain previously noted. From there the journey up the eastern bank of the river continued to a place about the same as now occupied by the railroad bridge. Here they were confronted with the necessity of crossing the river. Two canoes (they must have been dugout canoes) were placed a short distance from each other. One wagon was

allotted for a pair of canoes, the wheels on one side in one canoe, and the wheels of the other side in the other. A place for the rowers was devised in the middle under the wagon. The record is that the wagons, and later, the rest of the equipment plus the people, were landed on the opposite shore, just below the mouth of Fishing Creek. A rude log cabin, presumably left by a squatter, was found and lived in until a more suitable house could be constructed.[38]

Leonard Rupert was the first permanent settler in what was to be Montour township. A valley opened up at Rupert and continued in a generally western direction. About 1800, other settlers entered this valley using the route which Rupert had marked out. Michael Bright, his father-in-law was one. Others who followed were predominately Germans, leading to Dutch Valley as the name that was adopted. These settlers included families with the names of Blecker, Dietterich, Frey, Hittle, Lazarus, Leiby, and Tucker.[39]

The Hemlock Creek Valley

Just below the built-up section of Bloomsburg, and on the opposite side of Fishing Creek, a small stream enters. It is called Hemlock Creek. Its valley leads into a rich and varied country. Some of its riches in farm land and in timber, especially Hemlock, were made apparent at an early day. Some of its mineral wealth was not to be made known until later.

Elisha Barton, born in Virginia in 1742, came to the Hemlock Creek region about 1781. He acquired a large tract stretching from the confluence of the two creeks to the vicinity of modern Buckhorn, a distance of over three miles.[40] Settling on the land, he and his wife lived in their wagon until their cabin was completed.[41]

Peter Brugler entered this region about 1788 or 1789 and acquired a tract of about 600 acres extending from Frosty Valley to the Dall.* A tradition is recorded that Brugler killed an Indian who was attempting to stalk him. 1788 or 1789 seems to the writer, a long time after the war for such an incident to have happened.[42]

Other families, chiefly German, were to follow within a few years: Applemans, Ohls, Hartmans, Neyharts, Whitenights, Leidys, Girtons, Menningers, Merles, Grubers, Yocums, and Haucks. Coming from the southeast, Berks and Northampton Counties, and from neighboring regions of New Jersey, they used a route across Broad Mountain to the vicinity of Nescopeck Creek, to be more fully described later.[43]

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*This popular name is a corruption of the name given by the German settlers Liebensthal, pronounced as though spelled, lee-bens-tall. It might be translated as *Lovely Vale*.

Further Attempts at Settlement in the Bloomsburg Region

Up the river from Catawissa, at the mouth of Fishing Creek and beyond, lay lands which were mostly level or gently sloping, lands which eventually would make up Bloomsburg. We have noted previously that they were attractive to James McClure who had encamped there as early as 1769. He purchased 300 acres in 1772. Before the Revolution he was joined by a number of others, chiefly Quakers, who hoped to build up a Quaker Community in this area, similar to the one down the river at Catawissa. Others joined this little group of residents, all living on land which would eventually become part of Bloomsburg, but not necessarily the built-up part. Included in this number were: John Doan, the Claytons, Coopers, Kinneys, and Evan Owen, all on nearby lands. At the "Point," where Fishing Creek flows into the river, Samuel Boone, another Quaker from Exeter Township in Northampton County, purchased 400 acres. He was to give his name also to the important Boone's Dam. Evan Owen, a Quaker of Welsh descent, purchased several tracts of land, on one of which, as the records show, he had a residence, undoubtedly a log cabin, in 1771. His main residence, however, was in Philadelphia.

Evan Owen Leaves the Lower Fishing Creek Area

Evan Owen did not remain. Perhaps he felt that the Fishing Creek lands were too swampy, which they were at places. Perhaps he was concerned about the developing hostilities between the Yankee forces at Wyoming and the Pennamite forces of the Pennsylvania Proprietorial government. Whatever the case, he gradually divested himself of his Fishing Creek properties and turned his interest to the area in the vicinity of the Nescopeck "falls," actually rapids, Also, he had grander prospects in mind than bringing a single farm under cultivation and establishing a homestead.[44] Owen, with a companion, John Doan, explored and surveyed lands between Briar Creek and the Summer Hills, and also extensively in the Nescopeck Creek region. (At some time he had acquired the knowledge of surveying.) "Historians estimate that he must have been in the region for several weeks, camping in the woods at night and surveying during the day." This is stated to have been in 1780, the year of the VanCampen and other tragedies! Eventually, he became a real estate dealer, possessing about three thousand acres of land, the equivalent of over four square miles. In 1787 Owen chose the section of his holdings on the north side of the River at the Nescopeck Rapids as the site of a town he was planning.[45]

Owen Lays Out a Town

In 1783, Owen purchased land for his projected town of Owensburg. (sometimes written Owensville).

Evan Owen surveyed and laid out Oak, Vine, Mulberry, Market, Pine, Chestnut, Walnut, and Butternut Streets, with ten lots, generally on each block fronting Front, Second, and Third Street; seventeen blocks in all with some additional ones not quite so long. Additional lots were laid out on the river front, and others where the land configuration called for a different arrangement. This system extended only to Third Street. Generally these lots, with exceptions as indicated, were 49½' frontage and a depth of 181½'. These were the town lots or inlots. North of Third Street were the outlots, generally 247½' frontage by 412' in depth, equivalent to about two acres. Everyone who bought a town lot, received an outlot free. This outlot must have contained virgin timber.[47] It would also be a source of firewood,[48] and later useful for pasturage — who didn't keep a cow in those days? It would become a place for garden projects with eventual sale as the demand for land would increase. Certainly it would be advantageous to buy one of Evan Owen's town lots, and secure one outlot besides.[49] This system of inlots and outlots was widely prevalent in New England, but does not seem to have been much used in Pennsylvania. It was followed nowhere else in our county.

Land Prices in Berwick

We do not have figures stating how much Owen paid for the tract of land that he laid out. Other tracts being sold at that time suggest a price level of $200 for 100 acres. In selling off his lots, in several of what seem like representative cases, Owen secured thirty dollars for each combination of one town lot and one outlot.[50]

Other Inducements to Buy Lots in Owensburg

Owen, as further inducement for purchase in his town of Owensburg, offered free land for any religious group, on which it could erect its meeting house.[51] It must have been highly satisfactory to Owen when he and his wife, both Quakers, in 1810, were able to give to "the Society of People called Friends", two town lots and part of one outlot for a meeting house, school house, and burying ground.[52]

During all these years since 1771, Evan Owen had continued to maintain his residence in support of his family in the Philadelphia region. He was noted as being a member of one or another Quaker Meeting there, and of the local militia. Even after laying out of the town, he continued to maintain his Philadelphia residence.

Owen's Real Estate Activities

Evidence indicates that Owen was busily selling his lands and inducing settlers to come to his town of Owensburg.[53] In fact, for the rest of his life, his chief activity seemed to be selling off lots in his town or tracts from his other extensive holdings. It is said that Owen traveled

through the country from Berwick to Philadelphia selling lots to pioneers. But the lots did not seem to sell rapidly. It seems that up to 1789 or 1790, there were very few people living there.

The lack of good roads retarded the early settling of the town. The necessary goods had to be brought into the settlement from Philadelphia to Middletown or Harrisburg by land and thence by boats up the river to Berwick and on to Wyoming. The Executive Council in Philadelphia realized that if this part of the country was to be opened for settlement, better transportation facilities would have to be made. Evan Owen was a surveyor as well as Proprietor of Berwick.[54]

A Road was Constructed from Lehigh to Nescopeck

On the assumption that the man most interested in developing a road would be the fittest to be employed to execute the work, Evan Owen was appointed to explore, survey, and mark out the best public route and then superintended the construction of the road. Evan Owen was able to report the completion of this road in 1790.[55] After the completion of the road, it was not long until the town began to grow.[56]

Evan Owen, himself, moved with his family in 1793 or 1794.[57]

Berwick's Name

John Brown and Robert Brown each are noted as buying lots in 1795, and were recorded as having built the first houses, with Owen next.[58]

Mrs. Robert Brown was born in Berwick-On-The-Tweed, just north of the shire of Northumberland in England. She was able to influence Evan Owen to change the name to Berwick in honor of her birthplace.

Evan Owen a Leading Citizen

Besides being proprietor, Owen was a leading citizen. For nearly thirty years he filled several different public offices with dignity, respect to himself, and satisfaction to his fellow citizens. He also made donations to different religious societies.[59]

While attention has been given to events and developments in the Berwick and Catawissa regions, consideration should be given to what was happening in other places.

Moses VanCampen Returns to Fishing Creek Region

On his return from military service, in 1783, VanCampen married Margaret McClure, daughter of James McClure, an early settler of the Fishing Creek region, as noted in Chapter 2. He took up the management of Widow McClure's farm, located on the river front of what was to be Bloomsburg. Later in 1789, he moved with his family to the Briar Creek region. It is inferred that he made substantial improvements on this land. He sold this land when a good opportunity offered, and moved with his

family, now grown to include five daughters, to western New York in 1795, where attractive lands were being opened up.[60] VanCampen's residence in Briar Creek probably made it possible for him to acquire sufficient capital for an advantageous purchase of attractive lands elsewhere. Hubbard's account also records that VanCampen gave a plot to an "evangelical society," when it had completed a building on it.[61]

A quotation from our source is interesting in its own right, but is also instructive of the journeys of settlers to the frontiers of that time.

> The journey from Briar Creek to Almond [the New York destination] must of necessity have been attended with many interesting, and quite likely some exciting incidents, involving as it did, the poling up the Chemung and Canisteo rivers of flat bottomed boats or arks, laden with their household effects and other property which they needed to make a start with in the "new country" to which they were going.
>
> Of a necessity it must have been laborious, annoying, and attended with more or less danger; and the five little girls, the eldest eleven years of age and the youngest a babe in its mother's arms, certainly afforded sufficient objects for maternal concern and anxiety.[62]

It is not within the scope of this work to review VanCampen's career in his new environment except to say that he came to be a trusted surveyor, to receive responsibilities of Justice of the Peace, and other public office, to become a major in the militia, and the recipient of high civic honors.*[63]

Regions of the Future Townships of North and South Centre

Frederick Hill in 1792 purchased the site of the ruined Fort Jenkins. He erected a house and used it as a hotel, the first in the limits of the County. Travel so increased up and down the river road on which his hotel was located that in 1799 Abram Miller constructed another. Being half way between Bloomsburg and Berwick, it came to be called the Half-Way House. Other families were added to the region of what was to be North Centre Township and South Centre Township. Henry Hidlay definitely settled in the northern part. John Hoffman, Nehemiah, Hutton, and James Cauley, and others not identified settled in the general area.[64]

Slow Growth in the Lower Fishing Creek Area

Growth in the area that was to be Bloomsburg was slow. It is in the opinion of the writer, based on geographical considerations and histori-

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*It was at this time that VanCampen joined the post-war reorganization of the militia. He was elected major by an almost unanimous vote. Thereafter he was known as Major. Hubbard, op. cit., p. 181.

cal factors, that the overland traffic routes diverted traffic to the higher land north of the river properties. An Indian path, called the Great Warriors Path, coming up the river valley to the outskirts of the lower Fishing Creek region used this higher land north of that bordering the river. By 1800 this path had grown into a road better than average for the time.[65] Where this road turned southward (now East Street) the Fishing Creek Path branched off to the northeast (modern Lightstreet Road). We, of course, must envision a winding path along these levels, necessarily such in order to cross two rivulets, one near Market Street, and the other between modern Iron and East Streets, and to avoid other natural obstacles which once must have been here and there. The site must have seemed most attractive to a would-be town planner.

Ludwig Eyer, as agent,* laid out a town on a plat of land** belonging to John Adam Oyer. This plat provided for ninety-six lots between modern Iron Street and the East and West Streets; and between Front Street (later to be called First Street) on the north and Third Street on the south. A distinctive feature of his plan was to have a central open square,· called Market Square. Numerous other communities in Pennsylvania have this feature, but it is found no where else in Columbia County.

The Name of Bloomsburg

Bloom Township was set off from Briar Creek Township in 1798.[66] The township, it has been stated, was named for Samuel Bloom, a county commissioner for Northumberland County, of which our area was a part at that time.[67] He was not county commissioner until 1813, fifteen years later, so the township could not have been named for him as

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*The spelling of this name in German is Euer, but the pronunciation is equivalent to the English pronunciation of Oyer. All real estate records for this name spell the name Oyer. On the tombstone in Old Rosemont Cemetery in Bloomsburg, the spelling is Eyer. Since the family seems to have preferred Eyer, and the founder's name has come to be popularly rendered as Eyer, this form will be used in this book.

**The history of this parcel of land is interesting, especially so since it has been misstated elsewhere. This land, 92 acres, was granted to Henry Allshouse in 1773 by the proprietors. The rate for such purchases was five pounds per 100 acres. In 1795, Allshouse sold it to Henry Dildine for 178 pounds; Dildine sold it to Ludwig Eyer for 400 pounds in 1796, and Ludwig Eyer sold it to John Adam Oyer on June 5, 1802 for 580 pounds. It was the northern third of this plot which Ludwig Eyer laid out in the 96 lots noted above. Duy, *Atlas of Bloomsburg*, p. 7.

A few sales taken at random suggest that the prices were around thirty to fifty dollars a lot. One lot with a house (it must have been a log house) sold for 100 pounds. This was roughly equal to five hundred dollars for a lot "improved" with a house.

John Adam Oyer, after buying the land from Ludwig Eyer, made Eyer his agent both for laying out the land and selling lots in the Bloomsburg region. John Adam Oyer, a school teacher in the Northampton County area, sold some of his Bloomsburg lots in the Northampton area. He sold a tract of three lots at the very favorable price of sixty dollars to the union (combined) congregations of the Lutherans and Reformed churches for a church buiilding and burying ground. This site is now occupied by the Bloomsburg Middle School. See Columbia County Deed Book II.

county commissioner.[68] Thus the source of the name *Bloom* for this township is unsolved. Documents establish that Ludwig Oyer (Eyer) used the name Bloomsburgh when he laid out the town in 1802.[69] No convincing reason for his choice of this name has been found. Certain settlers coming from the vicinity of Bloomsbury, N.J., may have suggested this name or one similar to it. That the names *Oyerstown* or *Eyerstaetel* (Oyers little village) were used for a number of years seems clearly established, but they could never have been the official names. The name spelled *Bloomsburgh* was used for only a few years, when the current form, without the final h, became established.[70]

Upper Fishing Creek Settlements: Knob Mountain

An early mention of the Knob Mountain region is in connection with the attack and killing of a family living at the foot of Knob Mountain in 1780.[71] About the same time also, the Indian captors of VanCampen came across a party of four men making maple sugar along Huntington Creek. When fired upon by the Indians, the fire was returned and the Indians abandoned further attack.[72]

About 1785, Abraham Kline led a large party of incoming settlers. It consisted of his wife, "a family of grown sons, some of whom were married and accompanied by their families."[73] Coming from New Jersey, the party had crossed Broad Mountain, then had gone on to Berwick, thence westward to the Fishing Creek Valley. "Following its course northward they cut their way through the almost impenetrable wood at Light Street," where there was only a single house, the farthest northern settlement in the valley. They established their first encampment on land previously occupied by the Indians, but since altered and washed away by successive floods. At first they lived in their wagons and a tent. An important source of food was milk from the cows that they had brought. It is observed that it was a very common practice to bring cows with the incoming settlers. It is to be further observed that they, like other settlers, depended on wild game and fish. "Lin-trees" were felled and the leaves used for cattle forage, both as "grass and hay." The first cabin was constructed that summer, with other members of the group adding theirs in the summers following.

Other first settlers were the Whites, Parks, and Culps from New Jersey; the Rantz, VanHorns, Netenbachs, and Wereman families from Berks and Northampton Counties; and Samuel Staddon from Lancaster County. Ludwig Herring and the Vance and Patterson families conclude the known settlers on or before 1800. Other owners of land north of Fishing Creek were the families of Cutts, Montgomery, Razor, Uengling. South of Fishing Creek were the Jones, Christy, Peters, Randalls, and Abner Kline families.[74]

In the late 1780's, a group of Neighbors in Northampton County became interested in securing new lands. John Godhard, of English descent, had lost his wife and was left with a "large family of daughters", just how many is not stated. Philip Hess became a son-in-law. Granddaughters, with their husbands, Philip Hess, Christian Laubach, Exekial Cole, and John Kile were brought into the family association. All were living in Williams or Forks Townships, near the confluence of the Lehigh and Delaware Rivers. Philip Fritz desired a change from a confining business that had impaired his health. William Hess, with a family of twelve sons and six daughters living on unproductive acres, seemed also in need of a change of homestead from the "dry acres" that he cultivated. Godhard sold his farm and invested the proceeds in a tract of land at the headwaters of Fishing Creek. From whom he made the purchase and how he learned about the land is not clear. The whole group of interested persons prudently decided to investigate the region before moving to it.

Accordingly, a party was made up in whole or in part of those mentioned, William and Benjamin Coleman and Matthias Rhone, also joined. They journeyed and explored minutely, the stream from mouth to source.[75] Prospectors for new land regularly studied the soil. Luxuriant forests, especially pine, oak, or black walnut, were always considered indications of deep, rich soils.[76] Good farm land would also need to be well watered, but not swampy. Although it was at a distance from the main travel routes, the verdict was favorable. To have made a choice for such a distant place, suggests a need for an attempted explanation. None of the roads at that time were very good. It was not a very serious disadvantage not to be close to one of the used roads. Farm life for the pioneer was isolated along Susquehanna, the upper part of the Roaring Creek, or any other place. The pioneer had to anticipate, to a large degree, a self-sufficient existence. If the land seemed productive, that was the main criterion.

On or about 1792, migration took place. We have not a picture, but assume that it would have shown an impressive cavalcade, probably of wagons with some pack horses. Roads, of sorts, were available from Easton to Nescopeck, then to Fishing Creek, and up its valley.

On the way to the Lightstreet vicinity, their route may well have taken them past some of the settlements in the Cabin Run — West Briar Creek region. Alexander Aikman had returned near the end of the war. Others returned or new settlers came. Benjamin Fowler, a former prisoner from the British Army, settled in the region, but not before he married his affianced bride, a member of another family by the same name, who were among the new entrants.[77] Others of the "compact settlement"

that had justified the construction of Fort Wheeler in 1778 must have been in the vicinity.

A few houses were passed at Lightstreet, and Abraham Kline's settlement at Knob Mountain. Daniel McHenry was already at what was to be Stillwater. Arrived at their destination, William Hess took land extending four miles up Coles Creek, to North Mountain. His sons, along with a number of others, settled in the general region. These early settlers included families with the following names: Bird, Cole, Harrington, Hartman, Hess, Kile, Laubach, Robbins, Seward, and Shultz. Many of these are still prominent among the north county residents.[78]

The experiences of a group of settlers at Berwick reflect the hazards and hardships generally to be undergone by pioneers. About 1795,[79] James and Robert Brown were induced by Owen to settle on his land at Owensburg, not yet named Berwick. After the usual hardship of an overland journey, the party reached Catawissa. From that point to the Nescopeck Falls canoes were required. This reference to canoes, along with other references, indicates that dugout canoes were available here for hire at this time.*

After the burdensome journey, probably by poling fourteen or fifteen miles against the current in the river, a launching was affected at the foot of the bluff, later marked as the termination of Market Street. The household goods and meagre supply of provisions were toilsomely carried up the steep Indian path, then existing, and deposited at the crest. They were attempting a brief rest from this ardous toil, when a sudden shower came upon them before their goods could be protected. At the prospect of passing the night without shelter or protection for their belongings, the women broke down into weeping. We can imagine that the men felt like it.[80]

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*Leonard Ruperts's party, for instance, in 1788, as narrated above also had to use canoes.

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1. Fort Wheeler was maintained to the end of the war, and Fort McClure was constructed near the end of the war and maintained until its end, both for the protection of settlers in the region: *Frontier Forts*, I, pp. 369-373 ff.
2. "Spangenberg's Journey to Onondaga, 1745" quoted by Snyder, "The Great Shamokin Path," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XIV, p. 21 (June 10): Wallace, *Indian Paths*, p. 3.
3. Duc de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, *Journey in the United States, 1795*, I, pp. 139-140, [*Voyage dan les Etats-Unis d'Amerique*].
4. Wallace, Paul, *Indian Paths*, quoting McClure, and Schoepf, p. 2; Wallace, "Indian Trails," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XVIII, p. 22.
5. Dunaway, *History of Pennsylvania*, pp. 243-244; Where well worn paths were wide enough for two to walk abreast. Snyder, "Muhlenberg's Journal," *Northumberland Proceedings*, IX, p. 215; Wallace, *Historic Indian Paths*, p. 10.
6. Wallace, *Indian Paths*, p. 2.
7. Brewster, *Pennsylvania and New York Frontier*, pp. 5-6.

8. Rev. John Ettwein's Journal, quoted by Snyder, "Great Shamokin Path," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XIV, p. 28, (July 8).
9. Instances have been given in the course of our narrative.
10. Snyder, C.F., "Muhlenberg's Journal," *Northumberland Proceedings*, IX, pp. 219-222. As late as 1795, the inhabitants of Berwick are described as living in "huts." Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, idem.
11. Snyder, C.F., op. cit., p. 214. Snyder quoting "Conrad Weiser's Journey to Onondago," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XIV, pp. 15-16.
12. Snyder, "The Great Shamokin Path," quoting John Bartram, *Northumberland Proceedings*, XIV, pp. 17-18; Wallace, quoting Rev. David McClure in his diary September 7, 1772, *Indian Paths*, p. 2.
13. Lightfoot, T. Montgomery, "Benjamin Lightfoot's Trip to Tankhannick," *Northumberland Proceedings*, IX, p. 178; Wallace, op. cit., pp. 7-8. The account of the migration of the Palatine Germans from the Schoharie Valley of New York to the Swatara Creek in the year 1723 gives a good description of a long distance migration through four hundred miles of unsettled country. Carter, "The Palatine Migration," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XX, pp. 1-33. David McClure wrote in 1772, quoted by Wallace, "Indian Highways of Pennsylvania," in *The Settler*, III, pp. 118-119, April, 1965.
14. Bartram's observations quoted in Snyder, op. cit., p. 16, (7th), p. 18, (12th), Ettwein's Journal, op. cit., p. 28, July 19; Wallace, *Indian Paths*....p. 7; Wallace, "Indian Highways of Pennsylvania," pp. 118-119.
15. The various pestering insects are mentioned in many places. One example is "Philip Vickers Fithian's Journal," *Northumberland Proceedings*, VIII, p. 51.
16. Snyder, C.F., "Muhlenberg's Journal," op. cit., pp. 214-215; Bradsby, *History of Montour Counties*, p. 21...from Battle, *History of Columbia and Montour Counties*, Pa.
17. Lightfoot, op. cit., IX, pp. 178-179; Snyder, C.F., idem., p. 220.
18. Fithian preached from a wagon at Warrior Run, 1775. Wood, "Fithian's Journal," *Northumberland Proceedings*, VIII, p. 57. Fithian also noted a well-beaten wagon road on West Branch, op. cit., p. 60. Fithian also noted a wagon load of goods on way to Fishing Creek, July 19, 1775, quoted by Clark, in "Pioneer Life in the New Purchase," *Northumberland Proceedings*, VII, p. 35. Wagons were used in the Great Runaway on the West Branch and by John Eves at Little Fishing Creek.
19. Clark, op. cit., p. 35.
20. Battle, *History of Columbia and Montour Counties*, p. 274.
21. Eshelman, *A History of Catawissa Friends' Meeting*, pp. 11-12.
22. Rhoads, *History of the Catawissa Quaker Meeting*, pp. 16 ff.
23. Rhoads, op. cit., p. 32.
24. Rhoads, op. cit., p. 22.
25. Rhoads, op. cit., p. 33.
26. Rhoads, op. cit., p. 29.
27. Theiss, "How the Quakers Came to Central Pennsylvania," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XXI, p. 71.
28. Rhoads, op. cit., p. 27; Theiss, op. cit., p. 27.
29. Eshelman, op. cit., p. 18; Rhoads, op. cit., pp. 27, 44.
30. Rhoads, op. cit., pp. 30-54.
31. Battle, op. cit., p. 274.
32. Battle, op. cit., p. 294 ff.; ibid. 301 ff.
33. Battle, op. cit., p. 292.
34. Battle, op. cit., p. 293 f.
35. Battle, op. cit., p. 286.
36. Battle, op. cit., pp. 286-287.
37. Battle, op. cit., p. 288.
38. Battle, op. cit., p. 261.
39. Battle, op. cit., p. 262.
40. Beers, *Columbia and Montour Counties, Pennsylvania*, pp. 762-763.

41. Beers, op. cit., p. 763.
42. Battle, op. cit., p. 256.
43. Battle, op. cit., p. 257.
44. Battle, op. cit., p. 191; Beers, op. cit., p. 151.
45. Bevilaqua, *The Story of Berwick*, sct. "Owen Buys Land."
46. Bishop, "Life of Evan Owen," paper no. 10 in *W.P.A.* Series, volume *Indian Lore and Early Settlers.*
47. Bevilaqua, op. cit., "Plot of Berwick."
48. Fenstermacher, *Souvenior Booklet & Program, Berwicks' 175th Anniversary*, p. 13.
49. *Columbia County Deed Book.*
50. *Columbia County Deed Book*, I.
51. Fenstermacher, idem., p. 13.
52. Eshelman, op. cit., p. 21.
53. Bishop, op. cit., p. 112.
54. Bishop, idem.
55. Bishop, op. cit., p. 113-114.
56. Bishop, idem.
57. Bishop, op. cit., p. 115.
58. *Columbia County Deed Book*, I. Bevilaqua, op. cit., sct., "John and Robert Brown Settle Here."
59. Bevilaqua, op. cit., sct., "Founder Lays Out Town."
60. Battle, op. cit., p. 193; Fenstermacher, op. cit., p. 53.
61. Freeze, *History of Columbia County, Pennsylvania*, p. 23; Hubbard, *Life & Adventures of Moses VanCampen*, p. 272.
62. Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 272-273.
63. Hubbard, op. cit., pp. 284-294.
64. Battle, op. cit., p. 210.
65. Rouchefoucauld-Liancourt, ibid.
66. Freeze, op. cit., p. 55.
67. Battle, op. cit., p. 160, footnote; Fisher, "Township Names of Old Northumberland County," *Northumberland Proceedings*, VIII, p. 243.
68. Fisher, idem.; Snyder, C.F., "Township Names of Old Northumberland" in *Northumberland Proceedings*, VIII, p. 242-243.
69. *Columbia County Deed Books.*
70. Battle, idem.
71. Battle, op. cit., p. 247.
72. Battle, op. cit., p. 208.
73. Battle, op. cit., p. 249.
74. Battle, op. cit., pp. 248-249.
75. Battle, op. cit., p. 225.
76. Battle, op. cit., pp. 225-226.
77. Battle, op. cit., p. 210.
78. Battle, op. cit., p. 225.
79. The earliest sale of lots in Berwick to the Browns was in 1795.
80. Battle, p. 192; Deed Book I, p. 379.
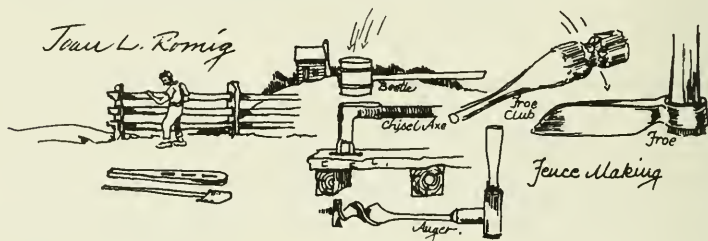
Fence making tools.

CHAPTER 5

The Columbia County Region
in the Early Eighteen Hundreds

Our Region in 1795

A French traveler, Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, journeyed through our region in the spring of 1795. We quote from parts of his description:

> The road to Berwick is always in the woods, and, as a result, without any view. The houses are very poor, some cows wandering at some distance from the houses; some sheep also in the woods, but closer to the houses.

> We stopped at the township of Fishing Creek* [this township took in most of the later Briar Creek and Center Townships] to refresh our horses at Abraham Miller's [the location is near modern Lime Ridge]; he is a farmer, has a tavern and store. His farm is 300 acres of which seventy are almost cleared; he adds yearly from 12 to 15 acres to his cleared land; but with some trouble, workers are not found easily; they are paid 3½ shillings a day independent of their food estimated at about 1 shilling 6 pence a day. [This wage was somewhat higher than the average for the time, approximately equivalent to twenty pounds or $100 per year.[1]]

> Here, as in almost all the places we have already gone through it costs three dollars an acre to clear the roots and underbrush in the cleared fields. They pay five shillings a day to the workers employed in this operation and they feed them.

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*Fishing Creek Township at this time took in that part of Northumberland County north of the Susquehanna and east of Little Fishing Creek.

It is here that we used for the first time maple sugar which we found to be excellent. Abraham Miller sells six barrels of sugar a year for which he pays 13 pence a pound and which he sells at 15. He does not sell brown sugar from the islands except at 14. (He gets from Philadelphia all the merchandise for his store. It comes overland by cart to Catawissa, passes to the Susquehanna and arrives at Fishing Creek. The price of the transport had been until last spring a dollar a mile; it has since been augmented by a quarter.)

Berwick and Approaches

Fields sell at 8 to 10 dollars with some clearing; the ones covered entirely with woods two to three dollars. (I interpret this to mean price per acre.) Houses are rare and miserable. They get more numerous as one nears Berwick, a village which is the chief place of the township built on the bank of the river in a rather pretty place a little more open than the other places.

This village is composed of about twenty ugly houses in which one couldn't find an egg for our supper; but there was some milk. The beds were rather clean, the stables good, the oats and hay excellent and when one travels by horse one consoles oneself of not being entirely well off, provided that the horses have all that they need. The masters of the inn where we were are young and have only established themselves; they are good and obliging; their house is of wood and is half built; their property is composed of 24 acres of which they cultivate ten, the rest has not yet been attacked by the axe. The price of these lands with the beginning of clearing is at Berwick 12 dollars. Those entirely uncleared are from one dollar and a half to two dollars.

The inhabitants of Berwick, who have huts which we found on our way today, are a mixture of English, from the country of Wales, Germans, Flemish, Scotch. The present emigration comes generally from the Jerseys, all seem poor, are badly dressed but their appearance of strength and health show that they are well nourished and overcomes their appearance of poverty. The number of children is enormous in proportion to the number of houses.[2]

How Large were Our Communities about 1800?

The reference in the above quotation to the number of children shows that by 1795 there were numerous families living in Berwick and vicinity. We have some evidence of the sizes of other areas.

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Shown above is an artist's imaginative reconstruction of a pioneer's homestead in the second or third season. The first constricted clearing in the dense forest has been enlarged to an area of several fields. The latter are shown still studded with stumps. These are the remains of the trees which provided the logs for the house and out buildings, the worm fencing, and the bridge with its corduroy flooring, and also fuel for cooking and heating. The log chimney indicates the fireplace inside.

The work of extending the cleared fields and the planting of crops is shown in the background.

Typically, there would have been chickens in this picture, hidden behind the cabin. The growing crops, the cow and calf, and the sow and piglets show that the fear of famine has been removed. Surplus crops and livestock also show the means of acquiring through purchase or barter, conveniences from the nearby town or distant city. These are signs of growing prosperity. One indication is the glass in the window.

Surely, the mother with infant in her arms can look forward to greater conveniences and comforts. The father has a growing farm with economic security assured for himself and his family.

From Munsell, History of Luzerne, Lackawanna, and Luzerne Counties, p. 42.

In the region where the village of Briar Creek was to grow up, settlers arrived about 1793. They came from Bethel, Northampton County. Having come in a group, they gave each other mutual aid in the task of clearing land and constructing the first cabins. The cabin of John Freas consisted of one living room with an additional room used as a stable. According to the best evidence available, a brick and stone structure was
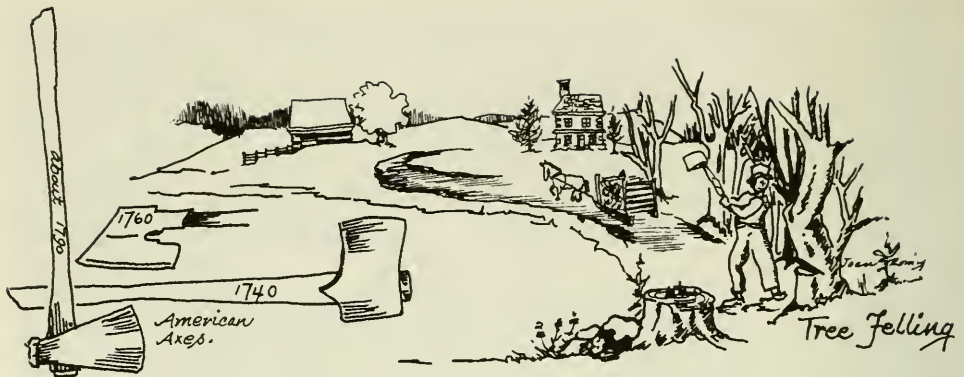
The frontiersman ax was a most important tool. The artist has shown the earlier forms. The modern ax, not shown, is lighter than these. The ax was kept sharp and the user became skillful.
Joan L. Romig

built to replace this first log cabin on this site by 1802. This was the first of such a structure in the region. These first settlers included the family names of Freas, Bowman, Hutton, Rittenhouse, Cauley, and Mack.[3]

In passing through the future site of Bloomsburg, Rochefoucauld-Liancourt found nothing worthy of comment. His road, undoubtedly following the old Great Warrior's Path, would have taken his party north of the river settlements of the McClures, Boones, and their neighbors. These settlers mostly had remained through the Revolutionary troubles. When Ludwig Eyer laid out the Town of Bloomsburg in 1802, there were only two buildings in the platted area. One was a deserted log hovel with a clapboard roof and a chimney, also of logs. This was at the south side of Second Street below Market. Chamberlain's Hotel, at the corner of Second Street and Miller Alley, was of frame construction and two stories high. This would have been one of the first buildings not of log in the whole county.[4] In fact, one reference leads one to conclude that practically all houses in Columbia County as late as 1800 were of log construction.[5]

There is evidence of the presence of other buildings outside the streets Ludwig Eyer had planned. The Episcopalians had a building on the west side of the road leading from Esquire Barton's residence to Berwick, a road to be identified with modern East Street. The Lutherans and Reformeds in the neighborhood had arrangements to use this church building. These three religious groups give evidence of a considerable number of families. Soon other new families arrived and houses were erected. Bloomsburg was soon to become as thickly settled as any other part of

the region. The first land purchasers included Abram Grotz, C. C. Marr, Christopher Kahler, and Philip Mehrling. Soon Daniel Snyder and John Cleman were to buy land nearby.[6]

Catawissa

Catawissa was recorded as having forty-five houses, one of stone in 1801. This fact establishes it as the largest community in the region, with an estimated population of 200.[7] The farming population nearby seems not to have increased markedly.[8]

Roaring Creek Valley

To the south in Roaring Creek Valley the considerable number of Quakers who had come earlier, did not remain, as noted previously. Their places had been filled by others, who were chiefly Germans. About 1798 a grist and saw mill was built by Samuel Cherington, for Thomas Linville. A mill has existed at the site ever since. The early houses which grew up around were built with slabs, presumably for siding, from the sawed logs. The predominance of this form of building material gave it the name of Slabtown, which has persisted, although the United States Government assigned, for a time, the name Roaring Creek for the Post Office that was early established there.[9]

Franklin Township

Settlements planned as early as 1783, on the side of the Susquehanna opposite to the mouth of Roaring Creek, were given up when the site was overflowed by the flood of that year. The interest of settlers was transferred to the area south of the river and centered around the Parr's and Pensyl's Mills. Here, as elsewhere, the Quakers were the first settlers, but were succeeded by Germans.[10]

Rupert and Dutch Valley

The settlers who followed Leonard Rupert and continued into the Dutch Valley part of Montour Township seemed to have no substantial increase for some time after the opening of the new century.

Hemlock

Similarly, the first settlers in Hemlock did not immediately have additional neighbors in the early years of the century.

Mifflin

There seems to have been a route, probably an old Indian path, up the river from Catawissa but back somewhat along the hills. Settlers used

this path to Mifflin, as noted in the previous chapter.* The outlying farming land in the vicinity at first attracted settlers and the projected town of Mifflinsburg did not build up rapidly. In fact, at first, generally most of the towns built up more slowly than the surrounding farm land. We can infer that these outlying areas would need to have enough population to call for the services provided by town dwellers.[11]

Nescopeck

Farther up the river, the above path led to Nescopeck, actually in Luzerne County, and the site of a long established Indian town. In Indian times and since, this site has been closely associated with the regions north of the river, later to be known as Berwick and Briar Creek. In 1796, thirty-one taxables were reported in Nescopeck village. This can be interpreted as thirty six families, and a population of a hundred or more.[12]

Knob Mountain Region

North up the valleys of Fishing Creek, the traveler of that time, it would seem from available evidence, would have found widely separated pioneers' log buildings and patches of cleared land in the process of being expanded into fields. On Fishing Creek, a few miles from Bloomsburg, centered more or less closely around the former Fort Wheeler and the settlement formerly called "compact," were a number of families. They were the Wheelers, and other names previously mentioned and probably still others whose names have not come down to us. Farther up the Creek at Knob Mountain were Abram Kline and the settlers associated with him. Continuing up the Creek, the traveler would have missed the Dodder family up Huntington Creek to the east near its confluence with Pine Creek and close to modern Jonestown. Up the main stream was Daniel McHenry and family. The Dodders had settled in 1786 and the McHenrys in 1784.[13]

Benton

The general region of what was to be Benton Township was reported to have fifteen or sixteen families in 1799, which would indicate a population of about seventy-five or eighty.[14]

North Mountain

At the headwaters of Fishing Creek near North Mountain was the considerable settlement of the members of the Godhard group previously described.

Sugarloaf is described, in 1800, as consisting of the Cole, Fritz, Hess,

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*This route is now represented, it is inferred, by Legislative Route 19020.

Laubach, and Robbins families and must, by 1800, have approached a population of seventy-five to one hundred persons.[15]

Greenwood Valley Region

John Eves and his family, after fleeing the county on the Indian threat at the time of the attack on Wyoming, remained at his Delaware home through the Revolution. It seems that the scattered settlers nearby in Greenwood Valley or the valley of Green Creek had also left the region at that time of danger. In 1786 or 1787 the settlement of Greenwood Valley was again begun. Eves returned to find his buildings a mass of charred ruins and the fields overgrown with bushes in the eight or nine years of absence. He and his family went to work to restore their holdings and to the work of building a community. Among those who settled nearby were the families of Lundy, Link, and Rich. To the Green Creek Valley, at the east, with their families came the four Mather brothers, Joshua Robbins, Archibald Patterson, and George and William McMichael.[16]

The Jerseytown Region

The neighbors who had fled after the tragic Whitmoyer attack in 1778, recounted previously, returned that autumn. Settlement was resumed. The Billhimes found their former home site occupied by a squatter, who refused to move, a situation far from uncommon on the frontier. The Billhimes then took up a new location on Spruce Run. Daniel Welliver was accompanied by three cousins, John, Adam, and Christopher Welliver. John took up the site of the devastated Whitmoyer home. Adam occupied the site of the future Jerseytown. The others settled nearby. This early period of settlement indicates that this region was among the first to be settled. William Pegg, in 1785, extended the area of settlement by taking up land two miles distant of the Chillisquaque. From 1785 through the following years there was a steady growth of settlers. The family names added, in addition to those mentioned, include Hodge, Smith, Kitchen, and McCollum. John Funston started a store in 1791 and around it a village grew up. It was close to an old Indian village on the crest of the ridge dividing the waters of the Chillisquaque and Little Fishing Creeks. Lewis Schuyler, a Revolutionary veteran, came in 1794. The predominance of settlers from New Jersey, and especially Sussex County, led to the name Jerseytown for this village. By 1800 there were at least fifteen families settled in this general area.[17]

With these vague indications of the size of communities, chiefly how small they were, the census figures of 1800 will help in gaining more accurate comprehension of the population of the whole area that was to be our county.

1800 Population of the General Region That Was to Become Columbia County

Data from the United States Census, 1800

Townships	Population
Bloom	806
Greenwood	663
Fishing Creek	419
Briar Creek	545
Catawissa	1,315
Mifflin	450
Hemlock and Montour*	302

total estimate of population for the area to be Columbia County   5,000

In 1800, our area was part of Northumberland County. The six townships listed above plus the areas of the two townships to be set up later, Hemlock and Montour, represent approximately, but only approximately, the area that was later to be Columbia County. Furthermore, the number of townships has grown from the initial six, to twenty-four and the boundaries of these townships have been so altered that they have little relationship in size to the present townships. The names suggest, however, general regions and, therefore, are useful.

To summarize the population distribution in the first decade of the Nineteenth Century: The Quakers who at first had predominated in Catawissa and the surrounding region, especially at the south, had largely left, or were soon to do so. Only a few families remained. Here they had been replaced by Germans, mostly from Berks County, but many also direct from the fatherland. The Welsh were also represented in the Locust Township area. Conyngham Township, at the extreme south, received practically no settlers until the middle of the century. In the larger section of the county, north of the North Branch of the Susquehanna River, many Germans were to be found, especially in what were to be Hemlock and Montour Townships. Protestants, however, drawn largely from New Jersey, were the sources of most of the settlers of this region. The attempts of Connecticut to control and colonize the Wyoming Valley brought many settlers to the Luzerne townships on the east, some of whom were to settle along our northeastern borders.**

*Hemlock and Montour Townships were part of Mahoning Township, which was later to become part of Montour County. We have estimated the 1800 population of these two areas that were to be set up as Columbia County townships at a later time. They are estimated at numbers that will give our total in round numbers.

**A part of Berwick laid out by Evan Owen, was found to be in Salem Township. This accounts for the fact that part of the built-up section of Berwick, from Front Street north is in Salem Township of Luzerne County.

From Indian Trails to Improved Roads

Any marked expansion of settlements and their supplies could not come until roads made regular wagon traffic possible. These came quite early.

Even before the Revolution, the Great Shamokin Path up the West Branch had become a good wagon road. And up the North Branch, the Great Warriors' Path through our region had been similarly improved as shown by this record of July, 1775: "Two wagons, with Goods, Cattle, Women, Tools & C., went through Town [Northumberland] to Day from East-Jersey, on their Way to Fishing Creek [probably meaning Fishing Creek region] up this River, where they are to settle; rapid, most rapid is the growth of this Country."[18]

The Centre Turnpike

In 1770, the Centre Turnpike from Pottsville to Fort Augusta was opened. Its route passed through Ashland, Mt. Carmel, and Bear Gap. The latter place gave access to the Roaring Creek Valley and a southern entrance to Catawissa and other parts of our region. Pennsylvania Routes 487 and 54 currently follow this general route.[19]

The Lehigh-Nescopeck Highway

Strong interest arose for a road from the valley of the Lehigh River to the Nescopeck region. Such a desire was expressed by the up-river sections, Wilkes-Barre and surrounding areas. The Berwick-Nescopeck area also felt keenly the need of such a road to attract settlers and promote the commerce of those already there. The only route for the necessary supplies was from Philadelphia to Middletown, on the lower Susquehanna, by land, and thence by boats up the river to Berwick or Wyoming. Not only was it roundabout but it incurred the laborious and time consuming labor of poling the boats against the current.

Evan Owen, the proprietor of Berwick, was actively promoting the sale of lands to persons living in the Philadelphia region. He was living in the Philadelphia region at that time for this purpose, and was also close to the seat of government, where he was in a position to make his influence felt with the Executive Council.* It was also known that Owen was a trained surveyor. It was further noted that he was an intelligent man and one in whom the public reposed great confidence. He also was known to own a tract of land at the mouth of the Nescopeck, but with "no intermediate" interest. A strong recommendation was made for a direct road to Nescopeck and that Evan Owen be placed in charge.

*At that time the executive power of Pennsylvania was exercised by this Executive Council.

Quoting further from the recommendation; "He therefore in pursuing his own interest will seek the shortest & best route; and is so solicitous to have the work done that he has consented to undertake the trust; and as the public grant will probably be insufficient for opening a good road he will perform duty of Commissioner and Surveyor gratis"[20] exclusive of expenses. Owen was given the commission. He was able to report its completion in 1790.

After this improvement, the immigration to and through this Nescopeck "gateway" increased. Much of the immigration for the northern and eastern part of the county came by this route.[21]

Catawissa - Mifflinville - Nescopeck

It has already been noted that there was a route along the south side of the river, starting at Catawissa and leading to Mifflin and Nescopeck. It had early been used by settlers as noted formerly. The completion of the Nescopeck-Lehigh road led from Hughesburg (Catawissa) to Mifflinsburg (Mifflinville) and thence to Nescopeck and provided that it would be fifty feet wide. The latter provision indicates that the court considered it of especial important.[22]

The Reading Road

One of the most valuable improvements made by the Quakers of the Roaring Creek Valley was the opening of a road to the southeast. In May, 1789, seventeen residents petitioned the court to order the opening of a road which was probably to be the first surveyed road in the valley. Beginning in Mill Street, Catawissa, it followed local township roads past the former Tank School, and skirted the slopes of the Catawissa Mountain. Continuing along the southern spur, practically identically with modern Pennsylvania Legislative Route 19005, it skirted Millgrove, crossed Little Mountain to Ashland, and thence it linked up with an existing road through the Schuylkill River Valley to Reading and Philadelphia. It was almost immediately named the "Reading Road." It was more than a road to those cities. At Philadelphia it connected with the boats bringing settlers, mostly German, but some English, almost directly from Europe to the Roaring Creek Valley. "Fortunate indeed, was Roaring Creek Valley in having a road leading directly to Reading and Philadelphia at such an early date."[23]

Access Roads at the Northwest

At the northwestern section of the future county of Columbia, the first contacts were by means of routes from the West Branch. John Eves in 1769 was guided from the region of modern Milton eastward to a long established east and west trail. By this, he was able to reach his destination at modern Millville through the valley of the Chillisquaque Creek,

and then across the divide into the Little Fishing Creek Valley.

Eves, on one of his first journeys, cut a road from the mouth of the Chillisquaque Creek. The reference is not clear as to whether the road was cut for the whole distance or merely far enough to give access to the Indian trail. Eves' later journeys, and those of his immediate followers, used this approach. This trail continued at the east. After skirting the Mount Pleasant Hills on the south and going through the Green Creek valley, it reached the Knob Mountain vicinity. It then divided toward the east into two forks.

One fork of this route at the north continued along the northern slopes of Huntington Mountain to give eventual contact with the Wyoming Valley at Shickshinny. The other fork continued along the southern slopes of Lee Mountain to give access to the river at Berwick-Nescopeck. Many of the later settlers in the Jerseytown area, including the Billhime-Welliver settlers when they returned in 1780, used this Nescopeck route. This route has been almost exactly followed by the branch of the Penn Central Railroad between the West Branch and Berwick.

There was no direct north and south road to the river in the Bloomsburg vicinity until 1798, when a road south across the Mount Pleasant Hills was provided. At times of high water, both Green and Little Fishing Creeks had provided means of floating lumber to the down-river mills at Harrisburg and Marietta.

At a later date, Jerseytown was to become crossroads of two roads; one from Bloomsburg to Muncy, and the other from Berwick to Milton.[24]

Pioneer Life

The first pioneers in loneliness and danger, carved out their homesteads from the wild frontier and laid the first foundations for their better homes, the cleared fields, and the thriving communities that were to develop later. In pioneer life, almost all the needs for living were met by the pioneers themselves from resources immediately available or near at hand. The abundant game and fish provided food; the first crude structures gave shelter, but neither could be depended on to fill the people's needs for extended periods or during the bitter cold of the winters, which must be prepared for.

Planning the Journey to the Frontier

It will be helpful to construct an imaginative story of a pioneer group who planned in 1788 to go to the distant frontier valley near the Susquehanna River, in what was then the far west. We will take typical incidents and descriptions, all of which actually happened or applied at one time or another, and put them together as they might have been experienced by a migrating group.

Caspar and Hannah were a young couple with two boys and an infant. They had learned from a neighbor, whose son had migrated previously, about the cheapness of the land on the frontier. Caspar had been a farm worker and he thought, as many others did, that if he could get land on the frontier he could, with hard work, establish himself and have a better life. Hannah agreed with him. Hannah and he were both raised on farms where work was tough in those days and did not shrink from the anticipation of hard work on their own land.

Need of Money

They would need money. The 100 acres of land cost $150.[25] They would also have to buy equipment, pack horses - probably three, oxen perhaps, a plowshare, some garden tools or their metal parts, and certainly an ax and a gun. Hannah's parents gave her a heifer. Other livestock might have had to be omitted in expectation of securing it later. Much of this would, of course, cost money, especially the land.

Expenses might be incurred on the trip, for instance, being ferried across a stream. Caspar had saved up some money and his father promised to lend him some more.

The Group Made a Cavalcade

They would start as early in the spring as possible so that before the cold bitter weather of the following winter would come, they would have a house constructed, and food laid in so that they could survive. When the group started, it made a cavalcade with Caspar in front, holding an ax and rifle in one hand and the leading strap of the first pack horse in the other hand.

Although their baggage had been reduced to the necessities, the little caravan was loaded. The first horse carried two large hampers, one on either side suspended from its back, each packed with bedding. Out of the top of one peeked the head of the infant. Following the first horse were two others, each attached to the one in front by a leading strap. On the second horse was packed a store of provisions, plough irons, and agricultural tools. The third horse had another pack; it carried table furniture and cooking utensils with other things not visible. Hannah followed at the rear carrying a loaf of bread in one hand, and the rim of a spinning wheel in the other. The two boys each had a small bundle and the older one was leading a cow, with the younger one helping.

The Journey

At first, they traveled through the settled countryside. The way became more difficult as they advanced farther into the wilds. Finally, they had to follow Indian trails, threading the deep forest, fording streams, and climbing the difficult mountains. Here is where the ax would be

needed as they came across broken branches of trees, or even whole trees fallen across the paths. The party might also come across chances to kill wild game where the gun would be highly useful. They camped along the way, finding at times a used shelter or abandoned cabin — it might have been an Indian's, a squatter's, or a settler's. They might just bed down in the open on hemlock boughs after having cared for the forage for their horses.

Other migrating groups were made up differently; some with skimpier supplies and equipment, others with more of both. Some forms of livestock could be driven along with the group. Older children would be used to help. When roads were widened sufficiently to accommodate wagons, the equipment could become extensive. Cows and oxen might be made to carry a share of the burdens as well as pulling the wagons. Recall the two wagons with goods, cattle, women, tools and other baggage at Northumberland in 1775, as previously noted.[26]

As an actual example, we tell about Daniel McHenry who purchased a tract of land above modern Stillwater. He visited his purchase in 1783, carrying with him a gun, ax, hoe, and provisions to last six weeks. The gun was always useful for shooting game along the way for food, as well as affording protection. Arrived at his holding, he cleared a plot of land and planted hills of Indian corn. McHenry removed his family from their temporary home in Milton to their new home the following year. Here in 1785 was born John McHenry, the first white child born north of Knob Mountain. From this account it appears clearly that the pioneer needed to be hunter, lumberman, and farmer.[27]

Building the Settler's Cabin

The first comers to a region were under the necessity of building their homes in the isolation of the wilds. Some minimum shelter, an overhanging ledge, a lean-to against a bank, might serve for a time, but a cabin was required for survival through the cold winter to be expected.

Caspar and Hannah were fortunate enough to come to an area where there were neighbors to welcome them. They were assured of aid in constructing their log cabin. It would be in the form of a house raising, or a neighborhood "bee," also called a "frolic."

In preparation, logs would have been cut to lengths suitable for a cabin sixteen or more feet square. It was seldom very much larger, because the larger the cabin, the heavier and longer the logs would need to be. On the day of the "bee," all the families in the community would gather. The men would organize into teams with friendly rivalry. The logs, if not already properly notched, would be notched so as to fit in place. Provision for sawing the door opening and window openings would be made and the chimney planned. A stone chimney might have been built at that time, but usually only stone for a fireplace would be

laid, with logs laid in place to make the flue for a chimney. This flue would be plastered with a lining of clay two or three inches thick. With a fire lit, this clay would bake as hard as brick, thus a fireplace and chimney were provided. Meanwhile, the women with equally jolly teamwork, would be providing the hearty dinner for all. And we can imagine the older children honored to be able to help. The younger ones might be helping to some extent, and probably getting in the way with their play to some extent.[28]

The Settler's Cabin Description

When the day was over, the couple had an enclosed shelter. It would have a dirt floor which would soon be tramped hard. Glass for the window openings would come later as would a deer skin to hang at the door opening. These and other facilities could be added through the summer along with other work. A bed would be fashioned out of saplings laid in one corner of the floor, three corners of the bed supported by the walls and the fourth by a wooden prop. When additional saplings for bed slats were placed and the whole covered with evergreen boughs, and maybe a tick filled with dried leaves, a welcome for bone-tired workers was provided. A loft under the eaves would be where younger members might climb a ladder to get their rest on a bed made up on the loft floor. Until these make-shift beds were installed, persons would take their rest on the floor. It might have been a long time before the dirt floor was improved in some cases. When there were guests, the sleeping conditions might be very crowded. One traveler records twenty odd people with cats and dogs sleeping in a space twenty feet square.[29]

The first cottage of the Johns in the Catawissa Creek region was a story and a half in size, had no door, and was entered by means of a ladder through an entrance in the roof. The record further says, "It seems almost incredible, but a family of ten children was brought up in this house...."[30] For the general run of these cabins, tables and shelves would be attached later to the walls. Three legged stools would be made. Logs flattened on one side and laid on the dirt so as to provide a reasonably level and smooth floor would be also added later. It would be a puncheon floor.[31]

The Log House

Later a house of logs, as distinguished from a log cabin, might be built. It was constructed of squared logs carefully dovetailed at each corner. It was larger inside, usually, with two rooms and a stairway to the attic as an extra sleeping room instead of a loft. The floors were of puncheons, well laid. The fireplace was a permanent stone structure. A log house was usually the second house built and might be lived in for years. Two Quakers Meeting Houses, one at Catawissa and the other at

Newlin, were built in the late 1790's. They are still standing and could be made livable now.[32]

In 1788 at Rupert, Leonard Rupert built on his land an improved log house that was considered a marvel of frontier architecture. It comprised three rooms instead of a single apartment, and was occupied for thirty years. It was then used as a farm building, with a portion surviving to the present, 1975.[33]

Food from the Wilds

From random samplings of available evidence, we learn of the abundance of game in the early days. There were bears and wolves in large numbers. Deer were more plentiful than sheep at a later time. These records are from various regions of our County.[34]

Early travelers as well as the pioneer settlers planned on these resources for food. Deer were plentiful and became a staple of diet. Venison besides being eaten while fresh, was "jerked," that is, its meat was dried over a slow fire and thus preserved. This practice was especially useful for long journeys.

Bears

Bears were especially dangerous. They often killed the pioneer's pigs for their own food. It frequently happened that the bear would return to a partially eaten carcass for another meal. The pioneers taking advantage of this trait set a trap near this former kill. The bear, when trapped, struggled to free itself until weakened, then the pioneer was able to substitute bear meat for the pork he had lost. Bears were plentiful and were hunted. Bear meat was about as common on the frontier as was pork at a later day. At Berwick every bear killed was taken before Justice of the Peace Owen to be divided among the families.[35] Bears might weigh from 300 to 400 pounds. Besides their food value, bear skin robes were especially valued. A large amount of oil was rendered from the fat which was useful in cooking and for lighting the cabins.[36]

Turkeys

Turkeys were widely distributed throughout our area and were easily killed. They were hunted ruthlessly and at one time they were in danger of extinction. A grown bird might weigh thirty to forty pounds.[37]

Wild Pigeons

The most important meat producing bird in the early days, however, was the passenger pigeon.

Wild pigeons came at certain seasons of the year, especially nesting time, in flocks so large that we of the later day can scarcely believe this to have been possible. An eye-witness from the nearby Wilkes-Barre region

had this record: "The whole heavens were dark with them, the cloud on wing continuing to pass for over an hour or more and cloud succeeding cloud. There were not millions but myriads....Towns [nests] were built by them for five or six miles in length along the Meshoppen — every branch or bough of every tree holding a rude nest." In a Berwick newspaper item in 1840, we can read: "We have never seen such a quantity of pigeons as were flying about our place. The greater portion of our townsmen were engaged in pursuit of them, none returned without their hands full. Mr. F. Nicely succeeding in shooting 80. He fired twice into one flock and killed 37. Beat that you who can." Often the masses were so thick on the branches that they could be clubbed to death. For the pioneer such plentiful and easily secured food was a welcome addition to their diet and a resource for barter in a nearby town. At a later time, the extermination of the passenger pigeon was completed by market hunters slaughtering them and sending them salted to the cities by the ton.[38]

Shad and Other Fish

In the earlier days, great masses of shad swam up the Susquehanna, and other north-east coast rivers also. They sought the small headwaters to spawn. From the very first, the pioneers learned from the Indians to net shad. Early in the spring, it has been told that watchers reported the coming of the shad in great masses like a sparkling wave crest advancing up the river.

At many places, they relieved the pioneers from the fear of starvation. Soon, nets were placed and the shad were obtained in quantities almost unbelievable in later times. Fisheries were established as early as 1780, and were an important resource for fifty years. The season began about the latter part of March and continued until June. Two hauls per day was the rule, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The flatboats used were about twenty-feet long and eighteen inches wide, provided with two stout oars near the bow. Two men were required at each oar, another paid out the net, 600 to 1,000 feet in length, with two others staying on shore to adjust the other end of the net. At some fisheries, two nets were used. Nine thousand fish were reported in one haul. The price of shad in 1800 was six dollars per hundred, but dropped rapidly when the market became glutted. At such times the fish by the wagon load might be spread on fields for fertilizer. This was the case one time at the Boone Fishery near Bloomsburg. Beginning with Catawissa fisheries, up stream, in order, were the Boone's, Kinney's, Hendershott's, Kuder's, Whitney's, Creveling's, Miller's, with others at Berwick and farther up stream. People came from all points to buy shad. For barter exchange they brought corn, meat, peach cider, whiskey, and

metheglin.*

Shad might also be caught with hook and line. No bait was needed. It was sufficient to throw in one's line with a large, three-pronged, barbed hook. One would pull in a shad almost every time.

Streams generally were also teaming with other fish: catfish, sturgeon, bass, perch.[39]

Honey Bees

Bees were not native to America. They were brought by the colonists. They soon escaped from the hives and have spread throughout the country. Wild bees were to be found in hollow trees. A hollow tree would be chopped down and made to yield fifty to seventy-five pounds of honey, sometimes more. The farmer's hive might yield forty pounds. When the honey was stored in tubs, it would granulate at the bottom and provide sweetening for all purposes.[40]

Maple Syrup and Maple Sugar

Very early, the settlers learned from the Indians how to make maple syrup and maple sugar. Farmers might tap from 200 to 300 trees yearly, from which they would make 500 to 1,000 pounds a year.

These two products were the main forms of sweetening in the earlier years. These figures apply to settlers after they had become well settled. Maple sugar and honey provided products for sale or barter. Note that Abram Miller at Limeridge as early as 1795 was selling fifteen barrels of maple sugar per year at fifteen pence per pound.[41]

Wild Animals

The early settlers remarked on the howls of wolves and the screams of panthers. They were both destructive to the family's livestock. This is also true of the wildcats and foxes, although less so. The pioneers were compelled to construct high enclosures, around which fires were kept burning all night as protection for their herds.

Panthers were afraid of dogs, but could overpower a hog or a calf and carry it off without a struggle. An early settler in Sugarloaf Township lost a cow to a panther. On finding the partially eaten carcass, a trap was set and the animal caught. This depredation had taken place in Luzerne County. The wounded animal was dragged on a makeshift yoke a mile and half until the party reached Columbia County. Then the animal was killed. By this expedient the owner was able to say it was killed in Columbia County and secure the bounty, $10, for the kill.

Wolves or panthers would seldom attack humans, but this was not universally true. There are traditions of attacks on men, women, and

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*Metheglin, a fermented drink made from honey and water.

children. They made the night hideous with their howls and screeches, and swarmed around the settlements during winter when hunger drove them out of the mountains. At butchering time they prowled around the houses and barns, attracted by the scent of blood. At such times it was not safe to leave the house at night.[42]

Destruction of Wild Game and Fish

Systems of bounties and intensive hunting have brought about the extinction of wolves and panthers. Wildcats are practically exterminated. Foxes still roam the woods. Rattle snakes, a serious hazard for early settlers, are also still with us.[43]

Various products such as leather and salt meat became articles of commerce. Market hunters came in to the regions and their operations added to articles of commerce, as well as hastened the eventual extinction or severe reduction of valuable species. Wasteful and over-fishing brought severe reductions in all species.

The early years of the pioneers were the hardest. This was especially true of the first year. The new settlers worked under the fear of famine. Often it was barely avoided.

Such was the case of the Peter Yohes at Mifflin, who, before their first crop had matured, were "reduced to the last extremity for food...." Yohes journeyed by canoe to Wilkes-Barre to get a bag of corn for the family's provisions.[44]

Levy Aikman gathered his first harvest at Briar Creek and put it in charge of his son in a canoe, in order to take it to a mill in Sunbury and have it ground into flour. Young Aikman made the journey, a crust of bread his only food. Reaching the river landing nearest his home at nightfall, he stopped at the Webbs, hoping to get a meal. "Mrs. Webb would have gladly given him supper, but there was no food in their home. He shared the contents of his sack with several others before he reached home the next day."[45] One wonders what there was left for the Aikmans.

A settler named Henry with his wife planted an acre of potatoes about 1780, where modern Lightstreet was to grow. They were compelled to dig these potatoes out of the ground for food, and when they were exhausted, they depended on wild potatoes, possibly artichokes, for food.[46]

The Fowler family, newly arrived at Briar Creek, found two of three families so destitute that they shared their supplies of grain. Eventually all were so close to starvation that they survived only be depending on wild game and dried apples.[47]

Increase of Farm Products

As the pioneers enlarged their clearings from year to year, their harvest gradually increased in size and the danger of famine declined. In

pioneer times many people adopted the Indian method of grinding their grain. This was to place small amounts in a hollowed-out, saucer-like rock, and then pound it and grind it with another stone held in the hand, usually the wife's hand. This method, by mortar and pestle, was slow and produced a coarse product. Grist mills were early in demand and grew up first in Wilkes-Barre and Sunbury.
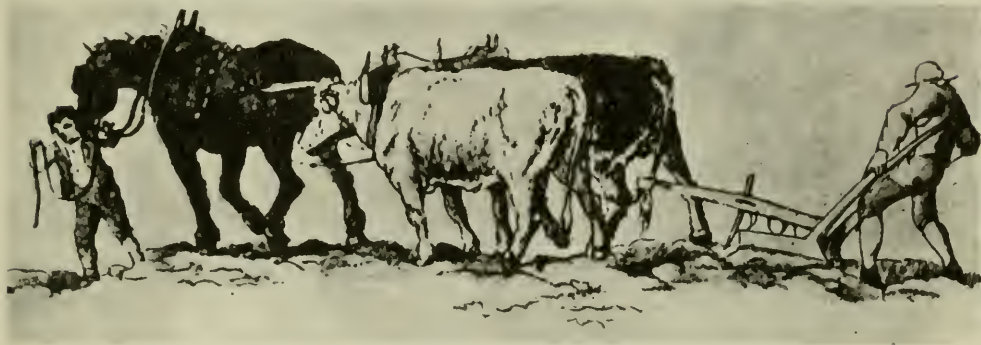
Pioneer tools were heavy, crude, and required long hours of back-breaking toil.
Yale University Press

Journeys to Distant Mills

In 1788 at Knob Mountain, Abram Kline had been able to accummulate sufficient grain for a trip to Sunbury. A pack train of several horses was used to carry the grain to the river. Here it was transferred to river transport, either a flatboat or raft. The record does not specify, but we must infer the return trip by poling the twenty miles or so up current and then the completion of the trip by pack horse.[48] Andrew Creveling, at Espy, regularly loaded fifteen bushels of grain on a canoe for a trip to a Sunbury mill. It was placed in charge of his sons, how many is not indicated, who propelled the canoe by poles to Sunbury and return. Canoe, unless otherwise stated, in our area means dugout canoe. They might be of varying size.[49] The canoe of the Crevelings carried only fifteen bushels. This was almost as much as a two-horse wagon is recorded as having hauled over the rough roads of the time.[50] Some canoes were much larger. Ellis Hughes in 1770 at Catawissa was commissioned to build one out of a pine log, to be forty feet long, three and a half feet wide and eighteen inches deep.[51] Some dugout canoes were large enough to carry 100 to 150 bushels. These are figures from the Schuylkill and Delaware rivers. Whether ones that large were ever used on the Susquehanna, the author is unable to state.[52]
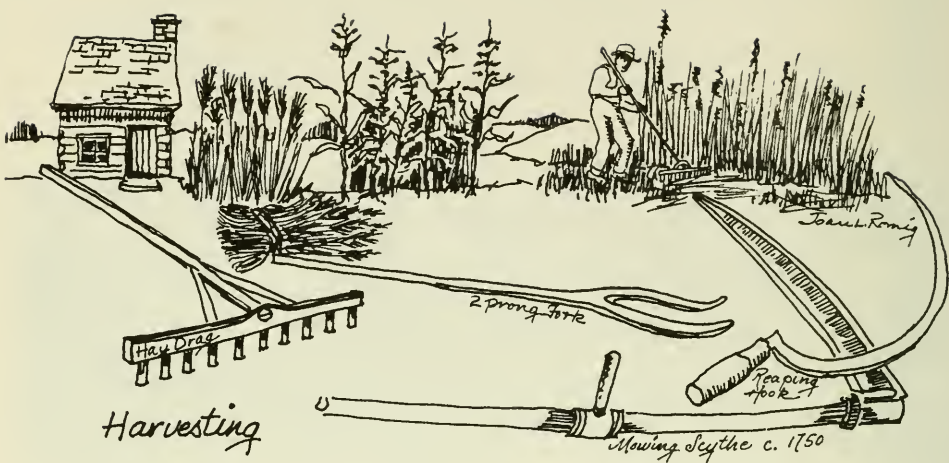
Farm utensils. The hay drag [rake], wooden fork; mowing scythe, and reaping hook [sickle]. The latter was used in a field where the stumps were too close for mowing with a scythe.

Local Mills Were Built

Trips with harvested grain to Wilkes-Barre or Sunbury were laborious, time-consuming and dangerous. This need led to the construction of mills in our region. One of the first mills was built at Catawissa by some Quakers as early as 1774. It had an undershot water wheel for power and was frequently out of repair and was given up after a few years. In 1789 Jonathan Shoemaker constructed a larger mill at about the site of the later paper mill. It at once received patronage from many miles around. In 1801 Christian Brobst erected another larger mill a short distance above the Shoemaker. These mills made Catawissa an early leader of industry in the County.

In the fifteen or twenty years after the Revolution, mills were widely built throughout the county. In the Roaring Creek Valley were Cleaver Mill at the mouth of Roaring Creek (1789); the Behm Mill on Deer Lick Run at Newlin (1801); Charles Hughes' Mill on the later site of Stony Brook Park; the Slabtown Mill (1789); the Nathan Lee Mill, later called the Snyder Mill (1798). The first mills on Fishing Creek were on its upper

tributaries. It is inferred that lower Fishing Creek, the largest creek in the county, incurred engineering problems more difficult than on the smaller streams. These early mills included: the Pepper Mill, the owner named Pepper, on Hemlock Creek above Buckhorn (1802); the Swartout Mill on the main creek, a short distance below Coles Creek; the Exekial Cole Mill on Coles Creek (1795), stated to be the first mill in northern Columbia County; a mill given the name of a later owner, Norton Cole, on West Creek (1800). John Eves constructed his mill on Little Fishing Creek shortly after 1778. The Brown Mill on Ten Mile Run was in Mifflin Township (1778). The Rittenhouse Mill was built on the forks of Briar Creek (1800).

Usually the original practice of the mills was to take the farmer's grain and change it to flour, with the coarser products sifted out to make feed for livestock. This was done by making the grain pass between two horizontal millstones, the one revolving on top of the other, with the grain entering at the center and coming out as the finished product at the outer edge.

The need for converting tree trunks to beams and planks and boards brought about the addition of machinery for sawing. The machinery added to the grist mill was a thick saw which was made to move in a cumbrous up-and-down way, which reduced the logs as they were pushed through to the necessary timber forms. Slow? Yes. But faster than two men could reduce a log to dimension lumber, where one man stood on a log placed over a pit and pulled on one end of the saw, while his team-mate stood in the pit and pulled on the other end of the saw. On Spruce Run, at an early date, David Masters built the only water powered mill in Madison Township. It was at first a sawmill and later converted to other operations.[53]

According to tradition, a mill was operated on Cabin Run, grinding livestock feed and plaster. It is of frequent mention that other mills also ground plaster. At about this time, it had been discovered that dust from gypsum rock, the main ingredient of plaster, was also a fertilizer that seemed to produce almost magic effects for crops, especially clover. It soon came into great demand. Plaster rock was imported from New York and many mills throughout the country made the "grinding of plaster" one of their main activities.[54]

Cold winters were an especial hazard for mills run by water power. Nathan Lee's Mill, above Slabtown, froze up one winter. Thinking to thaw out the ice-bound water wheel, he burned some dry straw next to the wheel. The fire speedily spread and destroyed his mill and the stock of grain stored in it.

Thomas Linville's mill, farther down Roaring Creek from Nathan Lee's Mill, early went into the business of sawing logs for planks. The outside slabs were used to build many of the houses in the neighborhood.

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Merchants and Merchandising

In 1795 Abram Miller at Lime Ridge was getting merchandise from Philadelphia. It was transported to Catawissa by cart, thence to his store. The charge was a dollar and a quarter per mile.[55]

The first store in Jerseytown was established by John Funston. Funston and his neighbors customarily joined in sending their wheat and other products annually to Reading and there obtained a supply of products for the ensuing season. The son, Thomas, in charge one season, bought six wool hats and found that they had a ready market on return. This led the father to start supplying the neighbors with goods. In other words, he started a store. In a similar way, it can be inferred that others started merchandising.

The early mills at Catawissa, a ferry, and the existence of boat traffic on the North and West branches from Catawissa, led to early stores in that community. Apparently the first one between Sunbury and Wyoming, exact date unknown, was established by Isaiah Hughes. He was followed by Joseph Heister. A third merchant, John Clark, at an early date, was journeying to Philadelphia on horseback to make his annual purchase of goods, when the bridle of the horse was seized in darkness by a would-be robber. Clark pulled out his spectacle case which snapped, alarming the horse which reared out of the robber's grasp and carried Clark to safety.

Berwick's first store was that of John Jones in 1800. Philip Mehrling sometime after, opened the first store in Bloomsburg.[56]

Traffic and Commerce

In order to secure the necessary means to pay for the manufactured or other goods from the cities, the pioneers needed to send products from the frontier for exchange. Many of these products have been noted in telling about pioneer life: salt meat from domestic or wild animals, salted shad, honey, and maple sugar. Lumber in rafts or in the form of arks or durham boats was to be part of our commerce at a later date, whether it had started before 1800 is not clear from the records. Tanned leather, furs, dried fruit, and some lumber products - especially for making barrels - were also articles of commerce. And soon loads or cargoes of grain made up increasingly large amounts for city markets.[57]

Transportation was by pack train to some extent. Wagons, however, were coming to be used to a greater extent as improved roads extended farther into the frontier. For example, Squire Hutchison drove a wagon load of wheat to Easton in 1810.[58]

A record of 1804 shows that there were 664 arks, rafts, and boats which went down the river, loaded with an estimated 100,000 bushels of wheat and other produce. Some additional tonnage may be inferred from our region, although it was probably not as far advanced as the Wyom-

ing region.[59] Rafts were made up of lumber which itself would be sold with their cargoes. Arks were great cumbersome boats, some of which were later to be made at Bloomsburg by William McKelvy and John Barton. They were seventy feet long, although this was not necessarily a standard length. An ark had a capacity of possibly fifty tons. Cumbersome, navigated only downstream - it was also hazardous - one in three being lost on the rocks or other perils of navigation.[60] In its construction, some 10,000 board feet of lumber was required.

Durham boats were first developed along the Delaware River and were so useful that they spread to other Pennsylvania river systems. They were shipped like over size dugout canoes, but had wide running boards attached on the outsides. Here men propelled a boat by pushing and setting poles as they walked from bow to stern and then in continuous cycle starting again at the bow. When the current was favorable, the boats floated with it. Sails were used when the wind was favorable. These boats were 60 feet long, 8 feet wide, and 2 feet deep, and flat bottomed. Loaded with 15 tons, they drew 20 inches of water.[61]

Religious Developments Among the Germans

The Quaker settlements at Catawissa, Roaring Creek, Millville, Berwick, and Bloomsburg have been told about in the previous chapter. The German settlers who `followed were chiefly either Lutherans or Reformeds. The latter were often known as German Presbyterians, but better described as followers of the religious leader, Zwingli. Many of these groups brought with them, catechisms, hymn books, manuals of devotion, with which they could keep their religion alive, often in neighborhood gatherings. The "ground was thus prepared" for the work of missionaries and itinerant preachers.

A Lutheran church was established as early as 1795 at Catawissa. Others established were: Briar Creek in 1805, Locust in 1808, Mifflin and Hemlock in 1810, and Orange in 1812. In many cases, if not all, the Lutherans and Reformeds, while both were weak in numbers, established union churches. They alternated in using the same church building, occasionally one pastor would alternate in faithfully using his own church's ritual one Sunday, and that of the other congregation on the other Sunday, with both groups amicably uniting in bearing the expenses and attending whichever service was being observed on a given Sunday. This was a widespread practice in Pennsylvania. As an example the more detailed history of the Bloomsburg groups is interesting.

Before 1800, the Lutherans, Reformeds, and Episcopalians had some form of agreement to use a church building constructed by the Episcopalians. This agreement came to an end when the Reformeds on one occasion were locked out, the circumstances not fully known. For some time, the Reformeds attempted services two miles distant near the con-

fluence of Little Fishing Creek with the main stream. The Lutherans were, for some reason, also without a place of worship. The two congregations joined in acquiring the property now occupied by the Bloomsburg Middle School, on which they constructed a log church and provided for a common burying ground. This amicable agreement was to continue for fifty years.[62]

Protestant Episcopal Churches

St. Paul's Parish of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Bloomsburg is its oldest religious organization. Under the leadership of the Rev. Caleb Hopkins, a crude log building was constructed on the west side of the road leading from the house of Esquire Elisha Barton, to Berwick. By this description the location must have been on modern East Street, in what was informally called Hopkinsville.

This church had no fireplace, but was heated by means of a charcoal fire in a rude grating placed in front of the chancel, the rector's face frequently obscured by smoke. One wonders about the carbon-monoxide. It was during this first period that the Episcopal Church welcomed generally other religious faiths also. Thus following the pattern of union churches.[63]

As noted above, this was discontinued for reasons not entirely clear. This church organization has continued in Bloomsburg until the present.

There seems to have been a rudimentary organization of the Berwick-Episcopalians as early as 1804, but no record of services until 1870. At an early date, exactly when is not known, there was an Episcopal congregation at Jerseytown. The group that settled under the leadership of Mr. Godhard, an Episcopalian, was to establish St. Gabriel's Protestant Episcopal Church in the far northern reaches of the county in 1812. This church group has been maintained to the present, with the assistance of its neighboring churches in Bloomsburg and Berwick.

Education - The First Schools

The Pennsylvania Constitution of 1790 provided for the establishment of schools. The laws of 1802 and 1804 provided for the opening of schools. For the distant frontiers along the Susquehanna, however, there are no records of school openings in response to this legislation.

The Quakers were probably the first to open schools. In 1798 in Greenwood, probably meaning Millville, Elizabeth Eves conducted a school in a room partitioned off for school purposes from their regular Meeting House. The children of the vicinity were accommodated. In the eastern end of this township the first school was situated on the farm of Joseph Gerard.[64]

In Locust Township the first school was established by Quakers soon after their coming near the site of their later Meeting House built in 1796.

It was continued for a dozen years or more. One of its first teachers was William Hughes, presumably the William Hughes who had earlier laid out Catawissa.[65]

Just how the schools were supported, whether by the Quaker organization or by subscription, is not clear.

Subscription Schools

Schools were sometimes opened on the initiative of persons more or less qualified. More frequently, it seems, concerned parents, secured a minister, or another person with some degree of education to open a school. The parents joined in paying some kind of stipend, usually supplemented by lodging and boarding at parents' homes, on a schedule called "boarding around." Children of needy parents may have been accepted, although the records are silent on this matter. Many of the schools were held in private homes. Buildings were provided later.

School Houses

When buildings came to be built, the furnishings of these "temples of knowledge," were meager. The seats were puncheons with peg legs. The heat in winter time might be from a large opened-mouth fireplace. The doorway was made especially wide to allow the pupils, at noontime, to roll in log replenishments for the fire. Pot-bellied stoves came later. The pupils stood up at desks lining the walls under the small windows. A tin cup and bucket of water completed the furnishings.[66]

The Schools - Descriptions

A record from early Berwick suggests what may have been the first educational equipment, typical of what was to be reached in times still early. The books were a speller, almost surely Webster's, and a Bible testament. Other books, less standardized, were probably representative of the books available. They included an arithmetic, and a reader, i. e., a book of selected readings to give good reading material, widen the students' horizons of information, and develop skill in reading. A geography, a grammer, and an atlas might have been added later. Books were usually passed down from older brothers or sisters, and became well worn in the process.[67] Under these circumstances, the teacher could anticipate that he would need to adapt to a wide variety of books used by various pupils, who themselves differed widely in age and degrees of educational achievement.

The teachers usually were drawn from families of the neighborhood, and though sometimes of limited capacity, were sober, earnest and religious instructors.[68]

In addition to schools mentioned above, other subscription schools came into existence quite early. At Zaners, above Forks, Christopher Pealer started a school in 1790, but continued his trade as a weaver. Others were started in this neighborhood; Henry Hess at Stillwater, and Jonanathan Colley at Pealertown, both at an early date.[69] The first recorded school at Berwick was taught by Isaac Holloway about 1800.[70] Previous to that a traveler passing through Berwick in 1795, wrote in his diary, "We found near Owens a school for little girls, which by the smallness of the building and the crowd which came out of it to see us resembled an ant hill."[71] In 1805, a market house was erected in the center of what was later to be Market Street. It was supported on large wooden piers and the space beneath was given over to the storage of wagons and the "protection of horses." The main floor was used for town meetings, elections, and for church purposes. It was also used for many years as a school. The lighting was provided by small green glass "bull's-eyes" which gave very little light and almost completely prevented ventilation.[72]

At Bloomsburg by 1802, George Vance taught a school on the site of the Episcopal Church. It was called the English School, apparently in distinction from the German School, opened about the same time by Ludwig Eyer. Other subscription schools were opened soon after. David Jones, in 1794, opened a school in Mifflin in a building called a "hut."[73] Isaac Young opened a school in Benton village in 1799, and another was known to have existed in Jerseytown by the same date.[74] A school was opened on the road from Buckhorn to Frosty Valley by 1801, and in the same year a stone church was constructed by the Methodists near Fowlersville.[75] It had a large room partitioned off for school purposes. The McIntyre school in Locust township was taught by Martin Stuck also in the 1800's.[76] A school was located in Espy as early as 1805.[77] There was also an early school in Sugarloaf on the site of St. Gabriel's Church.

Crafts and Occupations - Leather Workers

Following the Revolution the great influx of settlers to our area brought many trades of specialized occupations as well as laborers. As one reads a list of these occupations, he can see the pioneer's life and environment being improved in many ways. Further, the listing of callings is itself suggestive of the growth of towns as craftsmen took up their residence in these beginning points of commercial exchange.

The tanner was an early occupation in all communities, and also valued by the Indians. According to tradition, a settler named Hartman was tanning hides for the Indians in the vicinity of Catawissa before the Revolution.[78]

Daniel Snyder at Bloomsburg and another Snyder, John, no relation to Daniel, at Berwick, were early tanners and each built up reputation as fine businessmen and became leaders in their respective communities.[79]

Leather was necessary in the time of horse drawn vehicles. The harness was made from leather. It was also necessary for the saddles when almost all distant travel was by horseback. The rougher clothing for men and footwear for all, either shoes or moccasins, were made of leather. The traveling shoemaker called on the pioneer families to repair their shoes or make new ones, staying until all of a given family's needs were met. He might take his pay partly from food and lodging, and partly from hides accummulated from the family's livestock, and partly from pelts of wild animals. These he could barter for tanned leather. He might have received some money which, however, was scarce on the frontier.

Leather was also the material from which many kinds of containers were made. The tanner and the leather workers could be sure that their services would be needed on the frontier. Tanners and leather workers were among the first craftsmen to settle on the frontier.[80]
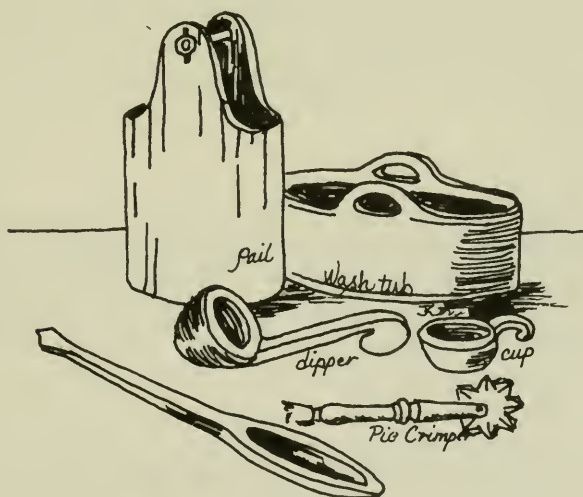
Tools and containers on the frontier were largely made of wood. The making of containers: barrels, tubs, buckets, was the work of the cooper. Where they must be exposed to heat, as the pie crimper, the local blacksmith would have been the craftsman to make such parts.
Joan L. Romig, artist.

Workers in Wood

The bark of hemlock and oak trees was needed by the local tanners and also sent to the cities.[81] The frontier age was an age of wood. Wood was plentiful, the needs were great. Saw mills have been mentioned earlier. Barrels and kegs were needed on the frontier to contain products sent to the city. They were needed in the cities to send products to the frontier. The curved wooden members to make the sides of these containers, staves and other pieces to make the tops and bottoms, the headings, had to be made with great exactitude in order to be watertight. The craftsman, who made these containers, was a cooper. The pieces to be fitted together and sent to the city in "knocked-down" form, provided an extensive product of commerce as well as for sale locally. Collectively they were called cooperage. The cooper also made tubs and buckets, also widely needed. Soon the resident, instead of sitting on a three-legged stool with seat made from the flat side of a slab, wanted a better chair. The chair maker was also an early craftsman. He also undoubtedly made other furniture which would class him as a cabinet maker.[82]

The pioneer himself might devise other articles or he might secure them from a craftsman, more or less specialized: hay and straw forks and rakes, wooden trenchers for plates,* wooden spoons and ladles, wooden churns. The pioneer probably brought with him the metal cutting part of a plow, the plowshare, but the heavy wooden parts were constructed at the destination.

Wood Ashes

Wood ashes were derived in large amounts from home cooking fires and those for heating. Large amounts were also derived in clearing the land by burning trees and brush. Wood ashes were the source of potash and pearl ash, valuable for making soap, and for that reason an article of commerce; light in weight and of considerable monetary value.[83]

Pioneer Home Life

The pioneer homemaker had a cabin not much more than eighteen by twenty-four feet in which to make the family home. Some were smaller. The preparing of the food at the fireplace, the servicing of it, and the cleaning up afterwards were all done in this room. The sleeping of everyone, even the wayfaring guests was crowded into this space with little or no privacy in preparing for slumber. From pegs on the walls hung the garments, ones not in use, or those divested while owners slept. Hanging from the loft rafters near the fireplace were long drying poles. In appro-

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*A good trencherman was a hearty eater.
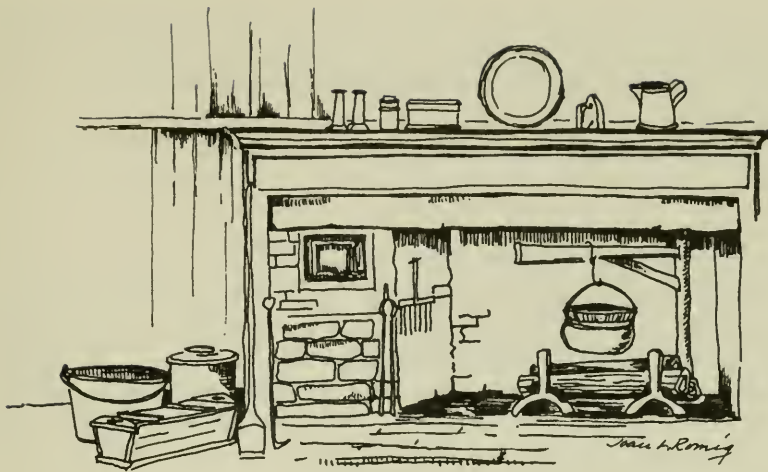
An improved fireplace, as pictured above, would have come later than the first cabin. The mantle would have held some utensils with the owner's rifle hung above the powder horn and bullet bag nearby. Other articles pictured are: andirons, a metal crane with kettle hanging beneath, tongs, toaster, dough tray, bread shovel, poker. The small door high on the masonry opened to gain access to the oven, heated by hot coals, which were removed when oven heated and the dough for baking placed in it to be baked by the retained heat. Most of the metal utensils were produced by the local blacksmith.
Joan L. Romig

priate seasons could be found hanging from them, cut apples or other fruits for drying, strings of sausage, the product of cold weather butchering, rings of pumpkins, seed corn, bunches of medicinal herbs, and possibly other things just to get them out of the way.

Places were found for articles of furniture, possibly crowded around. Other articles or implements which indicate the homemaker's work were also to be found. The cooking equipment has been mentioned previously. The spinning wheel or wheels were placed so as to be used at opportune times. In the evenings, and possibly also on rainy days or the cold winter days, the whole family might be centered around the fire. While the mother spun, the father might have been shaping wood implement handles or splitting short sections of logs into shingles. The fashioning of nails from iron bars heated over the fireplace, also according to tradition, might have been carried on by the husband.[84]

Laundry work was performed outside in pleasant weather. Water was heated in the fireplace or, if carried on outside, over an open fire. Mother and the older children carried the pails of water from the spring or brook.

The cabin was necessarily near such a supply, if not, a well would have been dug. Bathing water was heated in the same way, with the bath taken from the bucket in sponge manner, with possibly the children placed in the tub.[85]

The Travelers' Home When Away From Home

In 1771 a missionary gave a description, somewhat condensed, of his experiences near modern Selinsgrove. In the evening, just as his party was about to retire, three Irish families arrived. The owner, Caspar Reed, would gladly have sent them away, but it would have been a "violation of the laws nations." Furthermore, there was neither house nor hut within six miles. Reed kept a hotel, dispensed whiskey or brandy, and was required to furnish everyone asking for it, six feet in length and a foot and a half in width, on the floor of his house and also on request, something to eat. After considerable confusion, all retired to rest.

Twenty odd people, cats and dogs, occupied a sleeping space in a room twenty feet square. This traveler found in the morning that he was infested with insects. He reported that he could not tell whether the shirt was white or black, it was so full of insects.[86]

In Berwick, Rochefoucauld-Liancourt reported that in 1795: "The masters of the inns where we were are young and have only established themselves; they are good and obliging; their house is of wood and is half built; the beds were rather clean, the stables good and the oats and hay excellent..."

John Brown erected a hotel in Berwick in 1804. It was noted for its cleanliness and neatness.[87] There were other hotels, taverns, or public houses at or near the site of Fort Jenkins. One owned by Frederick Hill was established by 1792.[88]

Rochefoucauld-Liancourt mentions the hotel of Abram Miller near the site of Fort Jenkins, as existing in 1795. When the Sunbury-Wilkes Barre stage coach line was established there, hotels came to have a fine reputation.[89]

Several hotels were established early in Bloomsburg. "John Chamberlain was a tavern-keeper at the time when every guest was expected to spend at least sixpence at the bar for the privilege of passing the night, with such comforts as the bare floor of the public room afforded. His establishment was a two-story frame building at the northeast corner of Second and Center Streets."[90]

Sometime before 1804, a log tavern was established at Slabtown.[91] No other hotels or public houses were known to have been established until later years.

Ending of Pioneering

In the rudimentary municipalities of Catawissa, Berwick, Bloomsburg, including possibly also Briar Creek and Jerseytown, a variety of specialized craftsmen were available. Teachers of sorts and clergymen, some itinerant, served the communities. Hotels also were springing up. Within the next decade or so, more durable buildings were to arise. Farther up the stream valleys, the margin between the developing settlements and the untouched wilderness was to advance farther and farther into the wilds. But with communities and their services distant by a matter of hours instead of journeys of days to Philadelphia, even these pioneer settlers did not have the problems of isolation of the first pioneers in the region. We can say for these first comers, the pioneer problems were ended or made less acute. Their pioneering period was drawing to an end.

1. Dunaway, *A History of Pennsylvania*, p. 210.
2. Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, *Journey in the United States of America*, pp. 136-140.
3. Battle, *History of Columbia and Montour Counties*, p. 193.
4. Battle, *History of Columbia and Montour Counties*, p. 154; Clark, "Pioneer Life in the New Purchase," *Northumberland Proceedings*, VII, pp. 14-19.
5. Clark, Chester D., "Pioneer Life in the New Purchase," *Northumberland Proceedings*, VII, p. 25.
6. Battle, op. cit., p. 154.
7. Beers, *Columbia and Montour Counties*, p. 189.
8. Battle, op. cit., p. 299; Beers, op. cit., p. 262.
9. Battle, op. cit., p. 304.
10. Battle, op. cit., p. 285; Beers, op. cit., p. 231.
11. Battle, op. cit., p. 287.
12. Bradsby, *History of Luzerne County*, pp. 608-612. Munsell, *History of Luzerne, Lackawanna, and Wyoming Counties*, p. 323.
13. Battle, op. cit., p. 220.
14. Freeze, *History of Columbia County*, p. 118.
15. Battle, op. cit., pp. 224-226; The authority for this estimate is a rather ambiguous reference in Battle, op. cit., p. 226, from which this conservative estimate has been made.
16. Battle, op. cit., pp. 237-238.
17. Battle, op. cit., p. 265.
18. Fithian's Journal, quoted by Wood, "Philip Vickers Fithian's Journal," *Northumberland Proceedings*, VIII, p. 60. See also, a note by Fithian quoted by Clark, op. cit. The amount of wagon traffic up the North Branch shows there must have been passable roads by that time. See especially, quotation from Fithian's Journal, Clark, Chester, *Northumberland Proceedings*, VII, p. 35.
19. Clark, Chester, op. cit., pp. 35-36; "Early Roads of County" *Northumberland Proceedings*, V, p. 112.
20. Letter of Thomas Pickering to the Executive Council, April 5, 1787, quoted by Clark, "Early Roads of Northumberland County," *Northumberland Proceedings*, V, pp. 110-111.
21. Bishop, "Life of Evan Owen," W.P.A. Papers, file *Indian Lore and Early Settlers*, pp. 112-114, (6-8); Clark, op. cit., V, pp. 109-112.
22. Clark, op. cit., p. 112.
23. Battle, op. cit., p. 299; Rhodes, *History of the Catawissa and Roaring Creek Quaker Meetings*, p. 23.

24. Battle, op. cit., p. 266.
25. This estimate is based on Berwick land prices at this time. Rochefoucauld-Liancourt.
26. Battle, op. cit., p. 261, Clark, *"Pioneer Life in the New Purchase," Northumberland Proceedings* VII, p. 18.
27. Battle, op. cit., p. 220.
28. Battle, op. cit., p. 193; Clark, op. cit., VII, pp. 40-41; Fletcher, op. cit., pp. 375-376, 439-440; Interview with Clyde R. Luchs, special student of the log structure.
29. Muhlenberg, *Northumberland Proceedings*, IX; Fithian, notes lack of privacy when all ages and sexes slept in the common room, *Northumberland Proceedings*, VIII, pp. 59-60. For local custom at Berwick, Battle, op. cit., p. 193.
30. Battle, op. cit., p. 292.
31. Fletcher, idem.
32. Luchs, idem; Rhoads, op. cit., pp. 32-33.
33. Battle, op. cit., p. 261.
34. Battle, op. cit., pp. 226, 384, 412, 416, 496. John McHenry at Sugarloaf and Dan McHenry at Stillwater, were especially noted hunters. Battle, op. cit., p. 227.
35. Battle, op. cit., p. 193.
36. Fletcher, op. cit., pp. 68-69.
37. Fletcher, op. cit., p. 69.
38. Fletcher, op. cit., pp. 69-70. Family tradition.
39. Barton, "The Susquehanna Shad"; Barton, *History of Columbia County*; Battle, op. cit., pp. 187, 275; Fletcher, op. cit., pp. 70-71.
40. Fletcher, op. cit., p. 407.
41. Fletcher, op. cit., p. 406. Recall that when the Whitmoyer massacre occurred, some of the older children had left for a maple grove to extract maple sap. Battle, op. cit., p. 264.
42. Battle, op. cit., p. 226; Fletcher, op. cit., p. 72.
43. Fletcher, op. cit., pp. 71-73.
44. Battle, op. cit., p. 287.
45. Battle, op. cit., pp. 185-186.
46. Battle, op. cit., p. 185; Clark, William, *Farms and Farmers*, p. 29.
47. Battle, op. cit., p. 417.
48. Battle, op. cit., p. 248.
49. Battle, op. cit., p. 416.
50. Battle, op. cit., p. 395.
51. Lightfoot, "Benjamin Lightfoot and His Account of An Expedition to 'Tankhannick' in the Year 1770," *Northumberland Proceedings*, IX, p. 185. See also Fletcher, op. cit., p. 238.
52. Fletcher, op. cit., p. 238.
53. Battle, op. cit., p. 530.
54. Comprehensive account, written about 1930: White, Hiester, V., "The Grist Mills of Columbia County," was published 1974 in the *Leaflet Series of the Columbia County Historical Society*, vol. I, nos. 2, 3, 4.
55. Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, op. cit., pp. 136-140. Also see supra Rochefoucauld-Liancourt's account.
56. Beers, op. cit., p. 150.
57. Fletcher, op. cit., p. 213.
58. Battle, op. cit., p. 362.
59. Clark, Chester, *Northumberland Proceedings*, VII, pp. 36-37.
60. Fletcher, op. cit., pp. 240-241; Battle, op. cit., p. 156; Hendrick B. Wright, *Historical Sketches of Plymouth, Luzerne Co., Penna.*, pp. 320-321.
61. Fletcher, op. cit., p. 239; Munsell, op. cit., p. 90.
62. The official records of both churches have been used. They are not identical but tend to confirm each other. Additional: Battle, op. cit., p. 103; Beers, op. cit., pp. 141-142; Anniversary program of each church, 1957, *St. Matthew Lutheran Church, 1957*, pp. 5-6; Barton, *History of Trinity Church, 1958.*
63. Beers, op. cit., p. 139. Battle, op. cit., p. 174.

64. Battle, op. cit., p. 241. Beers, op. cit., p. 237.
65. Beers, op. cit., pp. 227-228.
66. Battle, op. cit., p. 189. Beers, op. cit., p. 94.
67. Battle, op. cit., p. 189. Beers, op. cit., p. 95.
68. Beers, op. cit., p. 94.
69. Beers, op. cit., p. 231.
70. Battle, op. cit., p. 202.
71. Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, op. cit.
72. Battle, op. cit., p. 193. Beers, op. cit., p. 150.
73. Beers, op. cit., p. 252.
74. Battle, op. cit., p. 232,266.
75. Battle, op. cit., pp. 202-203. Beers, op. cit., p. 220.
76. Battle, op. cit., p. 283.
77. Battle, op. cit., p. 189.
78. Battle, op. cit., p. 401.
79. Battle, op. cit., pp. 197, 362.
80. Fletcher, op. cit., pp. 413, 416.
81. Fletcher, op. cit., p. 320.
82. Fletcher, op. cit., p. 328.
83. Fletcher, op. cit., p. 329. Clark, William, op. cit., p. 80-81.
84. Battle, op. cit., pp. 99, 193.
85. Beers, op. cit., p. 150.
86. Snyder, "Charles Fisher Journal of Frederick A-C. Muhlenberg," *Northumberland Proceedings*, IX, p. 221.
87. Browns hotel according to Bates was the First in Berwick which is inconsistent with Rochefoucauld-Liancourt's record from 1795.
88. Beers, op. cit., p. 221.
89. Battle, op. cit., pp. 210-211.
90. Battle, op. cit., p. 154.
91. Battle, op. cit., p. 304.

This form of shelter was often used by whites, traders, settlers, and other travelers. One might be found constructed previously and made to do for a one-night's shelter.

William H. Shank, *Indian Trails to Super Highways*, p. 8, with permission of the author.

Artist's conception, based on sources, of an early freighting wagon on a corduroy road. Such a road was constructed over soft ground. Logs were laid crosswise over these swampy places.

Reference, Shank, *From Indian Trails to Super Highways* - with permission.

Epilogue

Our Area Part of Northumberland County

When Northumberland County was erected back in 1772, there were only few and widely scattered settlements in the upper Susquehanna Valleys at the confluence of the North and West Branches and extending up these branches to the limits of settlement. The West Branch area and that of Wyoming to the north east were more thickly settled than the part that was to be Columbia County. During the periods of the first settlements of the War for Independence, and of the post-Revolutionary settlements our area was part of Northumberland County.

New Counties Needed

In order to transact official business at the county seat, a journey to Sunbury was required. From Danville or Washingtonville the distance was twelve to twenty miles. From the far reaches of Briar Creek or North Mountain journeys estimated at forty to fifty miles were required on foot or horseback over the rudimentary routes of the time. By 1810 the combined areas of what are now Montour and Columbia Counties from available evidence had increased by an estimated forty percent or more.*

The regions west from Lewisburg and Selinsgrove, and east from Danville with their increasing populations, were soon demanding a more convenient division and a county seat closer at hand. Sunbury interests were opposed to further division and were able to block it for a number of years. The towns in the new county or counties to be created, could not agree among themselves where the county seat or county seats were to be located. This conflict prevented further division until the groups which were later to constitute Union County, west of the West Branch, and those to be in the later Columbia County, joined forces and succeeded in establishing new counties.

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*The changing of township lines and the carving of new townships out of those existing make exact comparable figures impossible, but a gain of forty percent is both reasonable and conservative for the decade 1800 to 1810. U. S. Census for 1810.

Advantages to a Town That Became County Seat

In the case of Columbia County, Danville was very definitely forging ahead of all the towns between Sunbury and Wilkes-Barre. To become a county seat was a most attractive possibility for any town. The Judge and other county officers would live there or use hotel accommodations. Lawyers would take up their residence there. Owners of real estate, the town founders such as Evan Owen, Ludwig Eyer, William Hughes, George Espy, Christian Kunchel and William Rittenhouse, or their heirs and followers, could anticipate selling more lots and at higher prices. In fact, Kunchel and Rittenhouse in 1794, noting that their property was midway between two county seats already established, Wilkes-Barre and Sunbury, thought it was almost sure that their town, Mifflinville, would become a county seat.

Leading Advocates for a New County

William and Daniel Montgomery were among leaders in securing the creation of Columbia County, along with Leonard Rupert and others.* These persons worked for the new county and also to bring the new county seat to his hometown respectively.

Erection of New Counties

Berwick, Bloomsburg, and Danville were not so obviously the choices in 1813 as they would seem to us more than a century later. Catawissa, Mifflinville, Washington (Washingtonville), Jerseytown also came in for consideration. Not one of them was more than a small collection of scattered log cabins. Here and there a slightly larger construction, charitably called a hotel, was to be found. In 1813 the act creating a new county was passed, along with the creation of the companion county, Union, to the west. Patriotic fervor of the war times led to the naming. The name, Union, was given to the western county. Inspired by the then very popular song, "Hail Columbia," the name Columbia was assigned to the eastern county. The boundaries of Columbia extended on the west to the West Branch of the Susquehanna, excluding, however, the region near the town of Northumberland (Point Township). Otherwise the area was much the same as the present combined territories of Columbia and Montour counties.

Three "discreet and disinterested persons, not resident in the counties of Northumberland, Union, or Columbia," were appointed to fix the site of the county seat of Columbia County, "as near the geographical center as the situation will admit." At the meeting called for this purpose, one of

*Danville is named for the former meaning Dan's ville.

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the three was absent, who, tradition states, favored Bloomsburg. The two members present gave the decision to Danville.

Why Were the Boundary Lines Shifted Back and Forth?

The act which assigned substantially the territories of Turbot and Chillisquaque Townships to the new county met with great opposition from their residents, and shortly after, those townships were reassigned to Northumberland County. The effect of this was that Danville, far from the geographical center of the county when created, was now more conspicuously than ever, at one edge rather than at the center of the county. But by 1816 what are now substantially Limestone and Liberty Townships were restored to Columbia, reducing in some measure the charge that Danville was not central.

Long standing dissatisfaction with this decision was created. It was not solved for thirty years. The story of the struggle to overcome this decision, however, lies beyond the scope of this work.[1]

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1. This account is largely drawn from Barton, *History of Columbia County*, pp. 69-70 and Battle, op. cit., pp. 65-69. See also: Beers, *Columbia and Montour Counties*, chap. X; Barton, *Columbia County and Its County Seats*, paper published in the Bloomsburg Morning Press, Oct. 1952. Copies available at the Bloomsburg Public Library and library of the Columbia County Historical Society.

This path in neighboring Ricketts' Glen Park suggests appearance of Indian trails.
photo by author

Interesting Origins of
Some Local Names

Bloomsburg and Bloom
See Chapter 4, p. 61.

Briar Creek Borough and Township
From the Indian name, Kawanishoning, the meaning is not known. As a conjecture, the English name may be a translation of the Indian, "briar" or "sweet-briar." It is sometimes spelled Caunshanank.
Snyder, "Township Names of Old Northumberland County," *Northumberland Proceedings*, VIII, pp. 226-227; Freeze, *History of Columbia County*, p. 48.

Catawissa
The best theory is that it is derived from Ganawese, a name applied to the Conoy Indian tribe, some of whom retired here after leaving Lancaster County. The preferred meaning is "pure water." A less likely meaning is "growing fat." Before 1756 there was an Indian town located here called Lapachpeton's Town. This name is repeated in some deeds identifying the transfer of land.
Snyder, op. cit., p. 212.

Chillisquaque
This is the name of the chief town of the Shawnees, once located at the mouth of the creek of the same name. This name is found in various similar forms. One is in Ohio, Chill-i-co-the, once the capital of Ohio. Three other locations were in Ohio, others in Illinois, Iowa and Missouri, marking successive migrations of the Shawnees. It meant in the Shawnee language "man made perfect" referring to the right of this clan to rule their tribe. To refer to it as chilly-sqawk "has always seemed a cheap pun...."
Snyder, op. cit., p. 213.

Fishing Creek

The name is a translation of the Indian name, Namescesepong (Delaware Indian language) meaning "fish stream" or "it tastes fishy."

Snyder, op. cit., p. 226.

Huntington

Samuel Huntington was at one time or another the Governor of Connecticut, Signer of the Declaration of Independence and President of the Continental Congress. The Connecticut influence in our region is perpetuated by the name of a mountain, a creek tributary to Fishing Creek, a neighboring township in Luzerne County, and the town of Huntington Mills.

Freeze, op. cit., p. 48; Munsell, *History of Luzerne, Lackawanna, and Wyoming Counties*, p. 296; Bradsby, *History of Luzerne County*, Pa. p. 584. Martin & Gelber, New Dictionary of American History, p. 296.

Montour

The name, Montour, is borne by a neighboring county and also by various other places: Montoursville in Lycoming County, Montour Township in Columbia County, Montour Ridge from Briar Creek west to the West Branch of the Susquehanna. The founder of the family was a "Madame Montour." According to best available evidence, which is meager and conflicting, she was of mixed French and Indian descent. She was well educated, and later captured by the Seneca Indians, by whom she was adopted. She later married a Seneca, who took her name. She became the mother of two daughters and one son, Andrew. She was early widowed. She came to be a matriarch, influential with Indians and widely respected as a counselor and interpreter in relations with the English and French. She was loyal to the English. Her son, Andrew Montour, was also attached to the English and an influential leader.

Bennett, "Madame Montour," *Northumberland Proceedings*, XIII, pp. 29 ff; Freeze, *History of Columbia County*, pp. 195-205; Gearhart, "Notable Women of Northumberland Co.," *Northumberland Proceedings*, V, pp. 220-221.

Muncy

This name is derived from the Munsee division of the Delaware Indians. It is remembered in the names of Muncy, Muncy Creek, Muncy Hills.

Snyder, op. cit., p. 215.

Nescopeck

This was the name of an old Delaware Indian village and probably of the Susquehannocks before them. The modern village of the same name is located on this site in Luzerne County. Nescopeck Mountain extends from Black Creek in Luzerne County to Mainville in Columbia County.

Bradsby, *History of Luzerne Co.*, p. 608; Freeze, op. cit., p. 54.

Ralpho

This township is located in Northumberland County and is part of the Southern Area, Columbia County School District. The name is probably derived from Rapho (sic), County Donegal, Ireland via settlers coming through Rapho (sic) Township, Lancaster County.

Snyder, 'The Names of Present Day Townships of Northumberland County," *Northumberland Proceedings*, p. 248.

Roaring Creek

The Indian name was Popemetung. The series of falls and rapids near its confluence with the North Branch of the Susquehanna is presumed to have given rise to the name of which Roaring Creek is the translation. The name is applied to a valley, creek and township and occasionally to the village of Slabtown.

Freeze, op. cit., p. 47.

Salem Township

Part of the town laid out by Evan Owen was found to be in Salem Township, Luzerne County. The whole township is part of the Berwick Area School District. The name is derived from the Town of Salem, Connecticut.

Bradsby, op. cit., p. 642.`

Shamokin

The name originally applied to the whole area within fifteen miles of the confluence of the North and West Branches of the Susquehanna. Later the name was successively applied to the Indian, white trading post, then to the little settlement at that place. When Northumberland County was erected in 1772, the County seat was placed at this point, but the name was changed to Sunbury. The creek continued to bear the name Shamokin. The coal mining community twenty miles or so up this stream, at a later time, adopted the name. A probable meaning is the place where the chief lives.

Snyder, "Old Northumberland," pp. 202 ff.

Wyoming

This name is derived from the Delaware Indian name. At one time it applied to the whole region as far southwest as Bloomsburg. The rendering of the Indian name is M'cheowami, "extensive flats" or M'cheoweami-sipu, "the river of the extensive flats."

Snyder, op. cit., pp. 210-211.

Modern district lines locate historic sites.

Forts - □
1. Wheeler
2. Jenkins
3. McClure

Indian Villages - ▲
1. Oskohary-Lapchpitton town. Conoy and Delaware village 1728-54
2 & 3. Delaware Villages
4. Unnamed Village

NORTH MTS

West Creek

Green Creek

Greenwood Valley

HILL

Mud Path

Delaware Path

Wyoming

Spruce Run

Chillisquaque Valley

Chillisquaque Creek

Wyoming Path

To Bosley Fort Mills

Fishing Creek

W. Branch Fishing Creek

HUNTINGTON MT.

Huntington Creek

LEE MT.

Cabin Run

KNOB MT.

North Branch Susquehanna River

North Branch

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On paths and roads, routes between fixed points are necessarily somewhat conjectural . . .

Southern boundary of Conn. claim, about at the mouth of Fishing Creek

KEY
TO
COLUMBIA CO.

MOUNTAIN RANGES

VALLEYS

Original Arthur Clay Map
Historic data by Perry D. Morrison

Montour Ridge
Frosty Valley
Warrior T.
Dutch Valley
Montour Hills
North Branch Susquehanna River
Catawissa Path
S. Branch
Roaring Creek
Roaring Creek
Roaring Creek Valley
N. Branch
Roaring Creek
CATAWISSA MT.
Catawissa Creek
NESCOPECK MT.
Scotch Valley
Indian Path
McCAULEY MT.
Beaver Valley
BUCK MT.
LITTLE MT.
BIG MT.
RED RIDGE
LOCUST MT.

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Bibliographical Notes

A History of Columbia and Montour Counties, Pennsylvania, edited by J. H. Battle; published by A. Warner & Co., 1887; John Morris Company, Printers. This is an invaluable work, although subject occasionally to correction or supplementing. It is actually three books in one, each with its own individual pagination. First comes an excellent, summary history of Pennsylvania: Part I, *History of Pennsylvania*, by Samuel P. Bates. It is cited as Bates, *History of Pennsylvania*.

Part II, *History of Columbia and Montour Counties, Pennsylvania*, J. H. Battle, Editor. This part, however, does not include the history of Montour County, which follows in Part III. It is cited generally as Battle, ed., *History of Columbia and Montour Counties*, although occasionally the brief form of Battle, *History of Columbia County*, may be used inadvertently.

Part III, *History of Montour County*, by H. C. Bradsby. Cited as Bradsby, *History of Montour County*.

The Northumberland Historical Society has published twenty-six volumes of *Proceedings* containing articles and papers generally with high standards of scholarship. These constitute an invaluable treasury of local historical information, which has been drawn on extensively for this work. Notations are in the form of author's name, title of the article, *Northumberland Proceedings*, volume and page.

In the late 1930's the Works Progress Administration through its Writers' Project for Columbia County, produced thirty-six volumes of articles and abstracts, some of which are of great value. Sets of these collections are at libraries of Bloomsburg State College, Andruss Library, the Berwick Public Library, the Bloomsburg Public Library, the Library of the Columbia County Historical Society. Citations are made to author, title of article, paper number in particular collection identified by volume title, W. P. A. Series.

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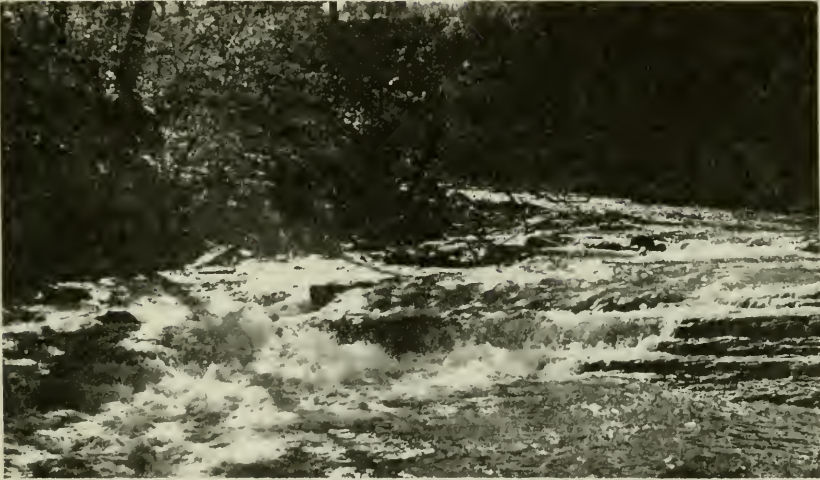
The rugged rapids in this stream suggest its name of Roaring Creek.
photo by author

Gleanings from the Author's Card File

Connecticut Claim

In earlier times, the forty-first parallel of latitude, the southern boundary of the Connecticut claim, was thought to be at the mouth of Fishing Creek. Recent surveys have shown it to be about a mile farther north. The map on pages 108 and 109 shows it approximately at what was considered the earlier location in colonial days.

Floods

The early settlers were plagued with floods. The earliest recorded were in 1744, 1758, 1772. No record of the high water marks have been found. It should be noted that about 1772, Evan Owen began disposing of his properties in the Fishing Creek area and transferred his interests to the Nescopeck Falls region. In October of 1787 there were several days of incessant rain. "The water rose rapidly and swept all before it." Several persons were drowned near modern Rupert. Northumberland and Sunbury were overflowed and there was much loss of life. The fields of pumpkins up-river were flooded and the pumpkins were carried down in such great numbers that it was called "the great pumpkin flood". The next great flood was in 1800. The record stresses that the floods up to this time had been fourteen years apart. So when another record tells about a flood about 1784 that rose to "unprecedented heights" we are forced to conclude that this must have been the pumpkin flood. It was this flood, whichever the date it was, which led the Cleavers to abandon their plans for settling on the north side of the river and instead choose the higher land on the south side. They became the founding settlers of Franklin Township, as previously recounted.

Battle, *History of Columbia and Montour Counties*, p. 285; Bradsby, *History of Montour County*, p. 95.

Presbyterian Beginnings

Henry Hidlay in 1796 donated an acre of land to the trustees of the Briar Creek Presbyterian society for a house of worship, which was constructed shortly after.

Battle, *History of Columbia County*, p. 212.

Law and Order

Our area was part of Northumberland County with the County Seat at Sunbury from 1772 until 1913. In the Quarter Sessions Docket for 1780, Spring Term, p. 185, we can read: "Larceny, True Bill. Elizabeth Wild, a true bill To receive 15 lashes on her bare back, Oct. 2, next." Other entries are to be found. This is the only case of a woman being made to suffer. The phrase, "well laid on", usually occurring in the sentence of the judge, does not seem to have been used in this case.

Land Rush

On the third of April, 1768, the first day possible following the New Purchase at Fort Stanwix, two thousand applications for land surveys were made.

Bradsby, *History of Montour County*, p. 18.

Prior to 1768, Indians had permitted no invasion by whites of these lands except by traders, trappers, and hunters.

Trades and Occupations

How did the town people earn their living in the early towns? A list of crafts and occupations at Berwick in the early 1800's should be representative of the occupations in these towns generally. The list includes: tailor, chair-maker, tinner, carpenters, cooper, blacksmith, cloth dyer, butcher, weaver, cabinet-maker, saddler, wheel-wright, milliner, gunsmiths, silver smith.

Battle, *History of Columbia County*, p. 197.

Inflation

Alexander Aikman about 1780, sold 600 acres of land for Continental currency. It became so depreciated that it equaled in value a mere thirty yards of tow cloth, a course, low value type of fabric.

Battle, *History of Columbia and Montour Counties*, p. 412.

Phillip Maus of Philadelphia, later a settler in neighboring Danville, expended large sums of his own gold coin for raw materials with which he manufactured clothing for the army. He took his payment in Continental currency, which eventually became valueless. Baskets of this currency were in the family's collection for years, according to a record of 1887.

Bradsby, *History of Montour County*, p. 13.

Colophon