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Creek of the Indians by Bruce A. Hunt

☆☆☆☆

### MEETINGS, 1976-1977

#### LYCOMING COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

March 23, 1977, 6:30 p.m.

Dinner meeting at Eldred Township Fire Hall, Warrensville. Dr. Homer T. Rosenberger will speak on "Highlights in the History of the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad."

April 21, 1977, 8:00 p.m.

Annual meeting. Dr. Loring B. Priest will speak on the subject, "The Continuing Bicentennial."

☆☆☆☆

### LIFE MEMBERS

The following are Life Members of our Historical Society:

Dr. June E. Baskin	Miss Elizabeth C. Kackenmeister
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March 24, 1977

Dear Members:

As we approach the end of this fiscal year, it is my pleasure to report to you some of the activities and achievements of our Society and Museum.

The monthly meetings of the Society have been well attended which is evidence of the interest of our members and a compliment to Dr. Loring Priest and his program committee for their selection of topics and speakers.

By the end of our fiscal year, March 31, some 14,000 persons will have visited the Museum. Many of these were students in the elementary and secondary schools of the County. Our Museum Director, Mr. Andrew Grugan, not only conducts tours of the Museum but also arranges presentations and displays on special topics related to the school curriculum.

Currently on display for the general public are original prints of Currier and Ives and a railroad exhibit which was arranged to coincide with Dr. Homer T. Rosenberger's speech on the history of the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad at the annual dinner of the Society.

The lumber gallery of the Museum has received nationwide publicity through the inclusion of a photograph and description of this exhibit in a publication of the Georgia-Pacific Historical Museum, Portland, Oregon. Entitled "Displays and Exhibits in the U. S. and Canada," it lists and describes a total of 72 lumber museums and displays. This recognition was well deserved since our lumber gallery is very complete and well arranged.

The annual meeting and election of officers of the Society will be held in the Museum at 8:00 p.m., Thursday, April 21, 1977. Dr. Loring Priest will speak on "The Continuing Bicentennial," reminding us that not all of the important events in the birth of our nation occurred in 1776.

We are presently engaged in promoting with The Greater Williamsport Community Arts Council a concert by the world-famous Columbus Boychoir at the Williamsport Area High School at eight o'clock Sunday evening, May 22, 1977.

Proceeds from this major musical event will be shared by our two organizations. It is important that our members enthusiastically support this project as a means of much needed additional income for our Society. Our present sources of support through memberships and various grants are inadequate, and we must use other efforts if we are to continue to operate as an important cultural and educational asset for our area.

For myself, personally, and for the members of the Board of Governors, I wish to express appreciation to our staff, professional and volunteer, and to all of you for your continuing interest and support.

Sincerely yours,  
Robert D. Smink, *President*  
Lycoming County Historical  
Society

## RAFTING DAYS ON THE LOYALSOCK

By Fred M. Rogers

(Paper read before the Lycoming Historical Society in 1928 and published in Lycoming Historical Society Publications, No. 8)

The subject covered by the title of this paper is one very interesting to the writer, who had just enough of the excitement, hard work and hardships of The Rafting Days on the Loyalsock, to make it so.

The rafting days date back to about 1830--possibly some years before then: and they came into existence because the old Loyalsock was the only Highway to the Sea at that time.

If the fact that the men of those days, who must have been unaccustomed to such ruggedness as they found on the Loyalsock, attempted such a dangerous and laborious business is amazing, it must be remembered that the men who "carried on" on the Loyalsock were the old sturdy pioneers on that stream and their descendants. To say they knew real hardships and had real grit, manliness and courage, is putting it very mildly.

And those of them who knew the crooked, rocky, rugged course of the Loyalsock, with its bars, narrow channels, and sharp right-angle turns so as competently to steer or pilot the regular size rafts on the stream had, in addition to grit, courage and manliness, plenty of good active brain cells and quick insights.

There are but very few men left who know the conditions on the Loyalsock which made the rafting days possible; and who know the approximate locations of the saw-mills that manufactured the lumber from which the rafts were constructed. More than likely there are but few historical data on the subject preserved on file for the benefit of the coming generations.

That this paper may accomplish its purpose of recording conditions that will never return, the writer must link up with the Rafting Days, the Lumbering and Log Floating Days. A knowledge of the

latter is necessary to an understanding of the former. The mills and rafting will be taken up first--later something of that which is known of the Log Floaters will be added.

First: It was the lumbermen and saw-mills that gave rise to rafting, and the Bird, Rogers, Molyneux, Brown and Little families, all early settlers, faced and conquered the complicated conditions involved in getting lumber to market over the Loyalsock.

There were numerous saw-mills on the Loyalsock in the early times and the location of the principal ones as nearly as it is possible to give it today, follows:

Three at Millview, on the Little Loyalsock, near Forksville--one on the Huckell farm at Forksville and one near the covered bridge at Forksville<sup>1</sup>--one a half-mile below Forksville--two at the Brown farm, about three miles below Forksville--one on the Bryan farm, across the Loyalsock from the Brown farm--two near the old splash dam, four miles below Forksville--one at the mouth of Elk Creek, on the Loyalsock--one near Biddle's Dam at Hillsgrove--two at Lippencott's and Huckell's farms, below Hillsgrove--one on the Lewis farm below Hillsgrove--one on the Scaife farm, above Barbours Mills--one at Barbours Mills--three at Bear Creek and vicinity--Day's Mill, below Barbours Mills--one at Stryker's known as Stryker's Mill--one at or near Woolever's Dam, known as Miller's Mill--one at the mouth of Wallis' Run--and one at Slabtown or Loyalsockville.

These mills, together with others that were erected from time to time along

<sup>1</sup>According to other statements one of these was on or near the Benjamin Little Farm. (Ed.)

the Loyalsock and its vicinity, produced the lumber in Rafting Days on the Loyalsock.

The lumber from some of the mills was rafted at the mills, but in many instances the mills not being on the stream, it had to be hauled on wagons and sleds for several miles over rough, stony and rugged roads. This necessitated handling the same material several times; all very hard work.

The chief points from which the rafts were taken were Millview, Forksville, Benjamin Little farm, Charles Brown farm, the Point near the mouth of Elk Creek, Hillsgrove, Lippencott farm, Scaife's farm, Barbours Mills, Stryker's, Miller's Dam and Slabtown. And a few other points on the Loyalsock towards the end of the rafting days.

The construction of the rafts was no easy task, as they had to be built of sufficient strength to withstand the wrenching and rough going on the course of the Loyalsock. The ordinary raft was from eighty to one hundred feet in length--sixteen feet in width and one and a half feet in depth and it was pinned and boomed for a rough voyage on the Loyalsock and the River.<sup>1</sup>

The raft was manned by a first and second steersman and a first and second pilot; and was run with oars at the front and rear ends. These oars were stems, about twenty feet long, usually made from small hemlock trees, seasoned; to each was spiked a tapering plank from fourteen to sixteen feet long, the oar being balanced so as to work to the best advantage.

After the rafts were in shape to move, the cabin had to be furnished with sleeping and cooking equipment and provisioned. The raftsmen were good feeders and demanded good sleeping quarters as they were very active, often starting from the mouth of the Loyalsock at Montoursville at 2:00 a.m., hiking to near Forksville and returning on a raft to Montoursville on the same day.<sup>2</sup> Some-

times these men made these trips daily for ten days at a stretch.

In early times the raftsmen depended on the Spring rains and snow for the water on which to run their rafts, but later on, when the water was not high enough to run them on the natural rafting water, they used the water stored by the splash dam about four miles below Forksville.

Two splashes could be used for rafting purposes daily. Each splash would raise the water on the Loyalsock about three feet and the rafts running on the splashes could reach the landing at Montoursville twice each day, providing they did not "get fast" on the way down.

<sup>1</sup> *On bigger waters the rafts were larger. John H. Chatham in "Rafting Days in Pennsylvania" reports the average raft made up about Lock Haven to have been 150 to 300 feet long by 24 feet wide. The largest brought down in the early days seems to have been 320 feet long with timbers in it 115 feet in length. On the Delaware there is record of rafts made up of 16 foot lengths which were 148 feet wide by 160 feet long; 25 courses of boards deep, containing 180,000 feet of lumber and loaded with shingles and produce! The pilots of the big rafts with crews of 15 or 20 men referred to the creek argosies as "puprafts." (Ed.)*

<sup>2</sup> *The distance from Montoursville to Hillsgrove is about twenty-five miles; from Hillsgrove to Forksville possibly an additional nine. Mr. Rogers, in conversation, told me that when the men were doing this prodigious daily task, they, for the most part, did not come all the way to Forksville, but boarded rafts at the School House or Covered Bridge several miles down the creek towards Hillsgrove. He also outlined their day as follows--Leave Montoursville 2:00 a.m., arrive Covered Bridge 8 or 9 a.m., leave Covered Bridge on raft 9 or 9:30 a.m., arrive Montoursville on raft about dusk--say, at that time of year 4 or 5:00 p.m. In their tramp from Montoursville to the Covered Bridge, they followed the Creek road. (Ed.)*

Some Springs there was but little water on which to run the rafts and it was a real hardship to the raftmen. At such times they either had to repin and regrab the raft and run it in the Fall, or draw the lumber from the water in the late Fall or Winter.<sup>1</sup>

The rafts were often loaded with lumber, five thousand feet to the raft, and in such cases a raft would contain about thirty thousand feet of lumber.<sup>2</sup>

Some years the raftmen would run a few thousand feet, in other years several hundred thousand feet. And they would join their rafts when they reached the river and run them as a fleet, separating them when they came to the river dams and running them as sleds.

Some of the raftmen who did not know the river secured the services of regular river steersmen and pilots; but most of the Loyalsock raftmen, who were the leading men in the business, ran their own rafts on the river.

The excitement and kick which the raftmen received when running the Loyalsock was what they liked and what they never forgot. Many of them turned back when they had finished running the rafts to Montoursville as river rafting was not as interesting and exciting as rafting on the Loyalsock. Other men in such cases took the rafts down the Susquehanna.

When the raftmen landed for the day they would relate the day's events and their experiences of other days on the Loyalsock; usually continuing these talks far into the night and until near their breakfast time, which was about 2 a.m. After such performances they would often, as I said before, start to hike thirty miles up the Loyalsock in mud often a foot deep, then board a raft and land it in Montoursville about dark. And they would make these trips each day as long as rafting water continued, which was sometimes nearly a week.

<sup>1</sup> *Mr. Rogers explains, "repinning and regrubbing," as follows: "In building rafts to run over the Loyalsock and the River the courses of lumber built into the raft were pinned together with pins or grubs. Lines of these pins or grubs were placed but a few feet apart for the full length of*

*the raft, on both sides and across both ends, to hold it, the raft, together. Then runners were placed on the bottom of the raft so that it would pass over the rocks and logs like a sled.*

*"Several of these runners were placed on the bottom of the raft, the full length of the raft, and these runners were also pinned or grubbed to the bottom of the raft. If the water in the creek did not rise sufficiently high to run the rafts, and the rafts remained in the water till the next spring, the pins or grubs would rot, so that the raft had to be re-pinned or re-grubbed if it was to make the trip the next rafting season.*

*"These pins and grubs were made of very tough, hard wood as they were put to hard strains in running over dams and rocks on their way to the river."*

*The "grubs" or "grub-stakes" to which Mr. Rogers refers ran from the bottom of the raft to the top platform where binders were winched down and fastened to the grubs. This explanation is made as the terms "grub" and "grubbing" have sometimes been used for poles passing through loose holes in the raft and pressed against the bottom of the stream either to aid in steering or to stop the raft when it was desired to tie up to a bank. When the grubs were cut from saplings part of the root was left on to prevent it being drawn through the hole in the runner; and of course the root part would rot easily.*

*The best description of how a raft was built and the best glossary of rafting terms is in "Rafting Days in Pennsylvania," a series of papers edited by J. Herbert Walker, with a "Foreword" by Henry W. Shoemaker; Times-Tribune Co., Altoona, Pa. 1922 (Ed.)*

<sup>2</sup> *I quote from a letter from Mr. Rogers, giving more details: "The rafts were of different widths and lengths but were from 14 to 16 feet wide and from 80 to 125 feet long, depending on the lengths of the pieces of lumber that were built into the rafts. They were built in platforms or sections; and these platforms were connected with good, strong binders; the lengths and widths of the platforms determined the lengths and widths of the rafts as it took from 6 to 10 or 12 platforms to make up the length of the raft." (Ed.)*

The writer had just such an experience in company with thirty or forty men--keeping up the hikes for several days at a time, and thoroughly enjoying the work and excitement. But not the blistered feet and the rough, muddy roads in those hot Spring days in the good old not so long ago.

### *The Itinerary of A Trip*

On boarding a raft on the Little Loyalsock<sup>1</sup> above Forksville, at Millview, you would soon learn that the Little Loyalsock is not the rough roaring stream that you find the Big Loyalsock is. Once on the latter, however, the excitement begins as you are soon at the Gulf,<sup>2</sup> a sharp, rocky turn in the stream; then a short, rapid run brings you to the Dye Kettle, another sharp rock turn. Here the dye kettle, now at the Rogers' homestead, was pulled from a deep hole and again used for years at the woolen factory owned by the late John Osler and his descendants.

After passing the Dye Kettle, about two miles below Forksville, you reach the Benny Little Landing on the Little farm--then George's Rocks, a wild spot on the stream, and the Big Dam is reached just below George's Rocks, which is four miles below Forksville, a dangerous spot and one where rafts have met with rough experiences.

The old Cape Dam site is soon passed and you are headed straight for the rocks in one of the sharpest right-angle turns on the Loyalsock, which is commonly known as Figgles' Turn;<sup>3</sup> and the Turn is rightly named as it gives the raftmen the figgles<sup>4</sup> when they face it on a raft, with an excitable pilot.

It was in this Turn that the writer nearly succumbed to the figgles when the pilot put the raft straight into the rocks. The front end of the raft attempted to climb the rocks and succeeded in doing so for some thirty feet up; the middle of the raft sank beneath the water up to my ears and the rear of the raft ran out of the stream onto dry land. Rogers stuck to

the ship up to his ears in April ice water, but was not excited; John W. Rogers shouted to Rogers to take to the mountain.

Then the raft slid off the rocks and the middle of the raft came to the surface with Rogers still hanging on. The front end swung about into deep water and then pulled the rear end from the dry land. Then the raft was boarded by the steersmen and pilot who had put the raft into the hill and rocks, all of whom had deserted the ship a few moments before.

We lost our front oar, as it was knocked to pieces on the rocks, but managed to get the raft near to the shore and snubbed it until the lost oar was replaced.

Rogers received plenty of excitement--a good wetting in real ice water--and was none the worse for the experience. But he was never caught on any other raft with that pilot again.

After passing Figgles' Turn and Red Rocks,<sup>5</sup> the running is fairly good to Uncle Ben's Landing, which was at the covered bridge which spans the Loyalsock about five miles below Forksville.

Passing School-House Point just below Uncle Ben's Landing and Green's Turn near the Wheeler Green farm, we reach Biddle's Dam. Then Biddle's Turn and then the Ketchall below the Dam. This is a very dangerous section of the Loyalsock and one that caused raftmen much trouble until they understood the conditions.

<sup>1</sup> *The main stream above the Forks was too rough for rafts. (Ed.)*

<sup>2</sup> *There is another spot, called "The Gulf," below the mouth of the Ogdonia. (Ed.)*

<sup>3</sup> *Named after a man by the name of Figgles who was there drowned. (Ed.)*

<sup>4</sup> *Dialectic English for "figgets." (Ed.)*

<sup>5</sup> *There are two pools on the Loyalsock called "Red Rocks," the one here mentioned and another lower down, opposite Farragut. Mr. Zimmerman has photographed the lower Red Rocks for this book. (Ed.)*

While passing over Biddle's Dam the writer was knocked from one side of the raft to the other by an oar stem in the hands of an excitable pilot, and, unconscious, was slipping into the mad, boiling water, head first, when he was caught by one foot by the pilot, and brought on the raft. He was out of commission and going through that funny experience of seeing great numbers of little stars. He also suffered with a sore head for a month.

The experience happened the same day on the same trip with the same pilot who gave me the bath at Figgles' Turn, and the little stars were in plain view most of the way to Montoursville. Yet there was a kick in the experiences of that day taking everything into consideration--the pilot, the cold bath, and the little stars--not to be forgotten.

The Ketchall, a long pool, Lippen-cott's Dam, Huckell's Dam just above the mouth of the Ogdonia, Cold Watch at the Moses Lewis farm, Burrow's Dam at the narrows below the bit farm formerly owned by the Lewis brothers near the County Line, Ted's Root, where Ted Elder jumped from his raft on a root in the stream and remained there through the night--Sandy Bottom, a spot known to most people who travel the road up the Loyalsock--Scaife's Dam just below Sandy Bottom--the Mud Pot--Plunkett's Creek Turn--Degan's Dam below Barbour's Mills--Lewis' Turn<sup>1</sup>--Day's or Blair's Dam above Pine Island<sup>2</sup> and Cove Dam just below Pine Island--the Bread and Dinner Rock--the Long Reach--Wool-ever's, sometimes called Miller's Dam--Old Watch--and Shore Acres<sup>3</sup> were all landmarks well known to the raftmen. They were not considered dangerous but care had to be exercised all the time when running this section of the Loyalsock on account of logs getting under the rafts. Often the rafts landed high and dry on some bar in the stream.

Old Watch near the Emery Cottage is dangerous at all times as the stream changes from year to year and new bars and channels appear above the Watch. To a raftman a full history of it would be interesting.

After passing Old Watch--Crooked Riffle--Wallis's Run--Mountain Eddy--Big-Eddy Riffle, where the Indians shot at the settlers crossing the Loyalsock--Axe Factory Riffle, named on account of an axe factory being erected and operated near this riffle, and the Slabtown<sup>4</sup> Bridge, we soon reach the Old Sow.

This rapid or riffle received its name from a large, sharp-edged rock which, covered with but a few inches of water when rafting time was on, lies in the sharp turn, only a few feet from the mountain.<sup>5</sup> It caught many rafts, most of which had to be cut apart before they could be freed. It was impossible to free an entire raft from the rocks once it had fastened upon them.

Careful raftmen, unless they had received satisfactory information, usually tied up before running danger spots and examined the bars and channels. And those who happened to land their rafts on the Old Sow, often remained there for the day and sometimes over night. Nor, as I said before, were they ever able to get their rafts free from the rocks without dismembering them. And the men whose raft was riding the Old Sow always received cheers from those who passed without being caught. It is recalled that Uncle Reuben Rogers made it his business to always give the raft that was stuck in the stream a bunt with his raft and thus try to free the raft.

<sup>1</sup> *Or Riffle. There are two Lewis' Riffles, the other being below Cold Watch. (Ed.)*

<sup>2</sup> *There is some dispute about this island and its name. It has been suggested that Pine Island is an earlier name for Birch Island. (Ed.)*

<sup>3</sup> *Shore Acres is a modern name. Mountain Pool is the correct one. (Ed.)*

<sup>4</sup> *Loyalsockville is the official name--it was called Slabtown because of the number of "slabs" cut by the mills from the logs that collected in the pool and on the banks. (Ed.)*

<sup>5</sup> *Mr. Jerome Lundy, who was with the party when the photograph used in the illustration was taken, stated that the channel in the foreground to the right was not there in rafting days. It was cut by one of the later floods.*

Lower down, the Yellow Jackets,<sup>1</sup> rightly named, were always a source of trouble and anxiety to the raftmen. They consisted of several bars in the riffle that were changing every year and sometimes several times a year during the rafting season. None of the men who piloted the rafts were sure of escaping the bars, and during the rafting season rafts were stranded on the bars.

Sometimes a raft would catch on one bar, twist and go nearly broadside through the Yellow Jackets. Such running was exciting and made the raftmen's eyes snap; and it gave them something to talk about and to tell the boys and old men back home when they returned.

When logs were being floated on the Loyalsock and running thickly, the Yellow Jackets were often so choked up with logs jamming on the bars and channels that there seemed to be no way through them. Many times a raft would climb upon the logs and out of the water for the greater part of its length.

Once when running with experienced raftmen, the writer was on a raft that hit one of those log jams in the stream, and on looking back saw the steersman, who was a really portly man, down on the raft with his heels and head in the air. The raft had jolted him off his balance, while the oar stem hit him in the mouth, cutting his lips badly and rendering him partially unconscious. One laughed even though the incident was serious to a man over sixty who weighed two hundred and fifty pounds.

Below the Yellow Jackets, the Loyalsock was not as dangerous and menacing to the raftmen as above, and they usually "rested on their oars" to some extent and talked over the troubles they had had in those darn Yellow Jackets, at the Old Sow, or at Figgles' Turn, and other interesting and dangerous places on the way down from the landing.

It must not be forgotten that every trip on the Old Loyalsock on a raft was a contest with the conditions on the stream and the writer has had the cold chills creep down his spine more than once when passing Figgles' Turn, Biddle's

Dam, Old Watch, the Yellow Jackets, and other dangerous places on the trip. It was most interesting to the men who had just passed through these bad places to look back and see how the next craft came through them.

Most of the raftmen were always ready to help their fellows when in trouble and would often tie up and go to where the other fellow was fast, remaining with him until he was free from his trouble whatever it might be.

The water marks<sup>2</sup> on the Loyalsock below Slabtown were for the purpose of locating the position of the raftmen on their trips, and Hayes' Dam, Red Rocks, Lyons Bar, Broad Riffle, sometimes called Duck Riffle; Alum Rocks, the mouth of Mill Creek, and Lloyd's Dam<sup>3</sup> were the points in the order named, with Montoursville as the goal, to be reached by the raftman with his raft in good condition and ready for the river trip--providing the lumber was not sold at Montoursville.

All the spots that the writer has named are still vivid in the minds of the old raftmen who are always ready to talk over rafting days on the Loyalsock and to relate their narrow escapes from drowning and other accidents.

<sup>1</sup> *Mr. Rogers, relying on the elder Mr. Rogers and Mr. Saddler, placed the "Yellow Jackets" between Loyalsockville and the Old Sow. Mr. Jerome Lundy, a resident, I think, for almost ninety years of Loyalsockville, and an authority hardly to be questioned, positively located them for the photographing party as below Red Rocks; Mr. Lundy's location was confirmed by Dr. Charles Lose and Mr. Bryant, Mr. Lundy's location has been accepted for this publication.*

*The Yellow Jackets received its name because the riffle was always choppy, turbulent and yellowish in color. "It looks like a swarm of yellow jackets," said someone. (Ed.)*

<sup>2</sup> *Mr. Rogers explains: "Water marks were trees, rocks or buildings near the shore of the Loyalsock. They were used by but few of the raftmen." (Ed.)*

<sup>3</sup> *Lloyd's Dam--the dam just above the end of the old Starr Island Park. (Ed.)*

### Log Floating

The log floaters made rafting very dangerous for the raftmen after they began their drives on the Big and Little Loyalsock about the year 1870. They continued to drive logs on the two Loyalsocks for 20 years and until the greater part of the hemlock was taken from the upper Loyalsock and its tributaries.

The logs were usually stocked during the Fall and Winter by men with teams or by the use of log slides and roll-ways down the mountains and through the gorges to points on the banks of the streams. This "stocking" was a hard and risky business. Few men were able to make any profit on their jobs, and as in all other businesses, the success of the jobber depended on the faithfulness of the men who did the work.

The expense of cutting and stocking the logs was often more than the first cost of the logs in the woods and driving them to the mouth of the Loyalsock was a body killer.

As for the men employed in floating the logs, few reached their homes with any of the hard earned cash that they received when they finished their drives. But there were some interesting characters among the men employed on the drives. Some of the men were very daring; and one man the writer knew, Sandy Murdock, was exceptionally daring.

He was called "Sandy" and it was his job to break the jamb when the logs were started on the drive. At one time when he was breaking the main jamb where the logs were stocked, about three miles below Forksville, he had to run some distance after he had loosened the key-log, to get from under the high bank of logs above him; but in making this run, on logs arranged for him to get out of the way, he slipped and a bank of logs covered him in fifteen feet of water. The big timbers forced him to the bottom of the stream head foremost. There his head covered with a red cap, stuck in the sand on the bottom of the stream.

The men watching him saw him covered with the logs; but shortly after he disappeared from sight, he appeared from between the logs uninjured. His first remark, after shaking the water from his throat and nostrils was, "I've lost the d.... red cap!"

During the same year the writer was standing in a cabin near the end of the slide crossing the Brown farm near Forksville and Sandy was standing by joking with the men and three of us boys, when of a sudden a large log came through the cabin at about the heights of a man's head, taking both ends of the cabin out, and cutting off a birch sapling after it had passed through the cabin.

Directly after the log had passed, Sandy turned about quickly and remarked, "That d.... log nearly knocked my red cap from my red head." He was not thinking of how it might have taken his red head. He was utterly fearless and a striking character among the logmen.

Ransom and Meylert were the first log drivers on the Loyalsock. They drove out of Mill Creek below LaPorte and from points on the Loyalsock above the mouth of Mill Creek.

A man by the name of Fisher was the next log driver, who drove from below LaPorte and on the Loyalsock. He carried on his business for several years.

Craig and Blanchard, large operators for those days, drove logs on the Loyalsock from near LaPorte and Ringdale. They endeavored to drive their logs on the river but after driving them in the river they learned they could not drive below Sunbury without a charter. They suffered a loss of about sixty million feet of lumber-logs.

Robert McEwan, a native of Williamsport, who has lived in the city for a long time, drove logs on the Loyalsock for years from above and below Forksville and on both Big and Little Loyalsock.

The Emery Lumber Company also drove logs on the Loyalsock. This company and Robert McEwan drove logs on the Loyalsock during the later years of the rafting days and were the last to drive logs on the Loyalsock.

### *Raftmen and Wages*

The names of some of the raftmen will no doubt be of interest to some of you. Most of these men, however, did not attempt to run the river.

Moses Rogers, Reuben Rogers and Jonathan were the earliest raftmen on the Loyalsock and the river.

William and John Brown, Thomas, Joseph and Henry Molyneux were the early raftmen on the Loyalsock.

S. S. Rogers, J. K. Bird, John Saddler, Thomas Rogers, Joseph Rogers, Jonathan Rogers, Charles Snell, Richard Biddle, John G. Wright, John Lambert, Henry and Richard McBride, George Plotts, Benjamin Plotts, Augustus Lippencott, William, Isaac and John W. Rogers, Samuel and Elbert Bryan, John G. and John S. Brown, John Webster, John and Wheeler Plotts, were among the men who rafted after the early pioneers.

Henry Molyneux, Saddler S. Rogers, Jonathan Rogers, Charles Snell, Benjamin Plotts and John Plotts were among the later raftmen who ran both the river and the Loyalsock.

The saw-mills of the early rafting times cut from 100,000 to 300,000 feet of lumber annually, mostly with the up and down saw.

The lumber after being rafted on the river as far down as Marietta, brought from \$5 to \$6 a thousand feet, but in later years it brought \$8, \$10 and \$12 per thousand feet.

The expense of rafting was considerable, the pilots receiving \$5 and \$3.75 per day; and the steersmen receiving \$4

and \$2.75 per day. For business men of these times, it is exceedingly difficult to figure how profits were made in lumbering in the early rafting days. Indeed if we go over the list of lumbermen of the Loyalsock, we shall find very few who did make profits in the business. But we must yield them admiration for their bravery and determination in attempting such a hazardous business. One thing is certain, the early lumbermen knew the real cost and value of the almighty dollar.

### *Rafting Itinerary*

From Millview on the Little Sock Down  
the Main Creek to the West Branch  
of the Susquehanna

(NOTE: This itinerary was compiled from the manuscripts of Mr. Rogers, Dr. Lose and the map of Mr. Bruce A. Hunt. In identifying the "local names" of the turns, eddies, dams and riffles, the authors, cartographer and editor had the assistance of Mr. John W. Rogers, Mr. Saddler, Mr. Elmer D. Hunt, Mr. Jerome Lundy, Mr. Daniel Sweely, Mr. William H. Bryan, Mr. A. F. Zimmerman, Mr. Harold A. Neece and Dr. Charles W. Youngman. Of the majority of the dams listed no vestige remains. In the lumber cutting days, the "chutes" at the dams were just about wide enough to permit the passage of the rafts. (Ed.)

Millview  
Forksville and the Big Loyalsock Creek  
Gulf  
Dye Kettle (two miles below Forksville)  
Benjamin Little's Landing  
Mouth of Scar Run  
Mouth of Ketchum Run  
George's Rocks (four miles  
below Forksville)  
Big Dam  
Cape Dam  
Figgles' Turn  
Red Rocks  
Uncle Ben's Landing (at Covered  
Bridge five miles below Forksville)  
School-House Point  
Green's Turn (near Wheeler Green Farm)

Mouth of Slab Run  
Mouth of Mill Creek  
Biddle's Dam  
Biddle's Turn  
Ketchall  
Mouth of Elk Creek  
Hillsgrove  
Mouth of Dry Run  
Lippencott's Dam  
Huckell's Dam  
Mouth of the Ogdonia Creek  
The Gulf  
Cold Watch (at Moses Lewis' Farm)  
Lewis' Riffle  
Burrow's Dam  
Ted's Roots  
Sandy Bottom (County Line)  
Scaife's Dam and Riffle  
Mud Pot  
Plunkett's Creek Mouth and Turn  
Barbours and Mouth of Big Bear Creek  
Degan's Riffle and Buffalo Rock  
Lewis' Turn and Riffle  
Hess' Point  
Day's or Blair's Dam  
The Cove and Cove Dam  
Birch Island  
Bread and Dinner Rock  
Long Beach--Pilot's Rock at  
head of Reach

Mouth of Bar Bottom  
Mouth of Little Bear Creek  
Mouth of Dry Run  
Woolever's Dam (sometimes called  
Miller's Dam)  
Old Watch (near Emery Cabin)  
Crooked Riffle  
Grass Flats  
Mouth of Wallis' Run  
Mountain Eddy or Pool (in recent years  
sometimes called Shore Acres)  
Big Eddy Riffle  
Axe Factory Riffle  
Slabtown Bridge (Loyalsockville)  
Old Sow  
Hayes' Dam  
Red Rocks  
Yellow Jackets  
Lyon's Bar  
Broad, or Duck, Riffle  
Alum Rocks  
Mouth of Mill Creek  
Lloyd's Dam (above Starr Island Park)  
Montoursville  
State Dam (near Reading railroad  
crossing)  
Mouth of Loyalsock

### *Principal Saw Mills*

Millview  
Forksville  
Benjamin Little Farm  
Charles Brown Farm  
Point  
Hillsgrove

Lippencott's Farm  
Scaife's Farm  
Barbours Mills  
Miller's Dam  
Slabtown (Loyalsockville)

## THE SIREN

(Story of Loyalsock Mountain)

There seemed to be an unwarranted number of rafting accidents at Loyalsock Riffles, some of them fraught with loss of life. It was certainly not the worst place on the river by any means, at least to pilots who could successfully navigate Conewago Falls, with its drop of seventy feet in the mile, year after year, to say nothing of the chutes in Muncy and Shamokin dams, yet would go to destruction in the shallows of Loyalsock. There was one explanation which found many followers, and which was as so many rafts had tied up at Lock Haven or Williamsport on their way, that the raftsmen had imbibed too freely, and were not in the proper trim when they hit their first obstacle. But this could not hold good when numerous rafts, manned by church members fresh from the throes of protracted meetings, went down with the same alacrity as those piloted by crews "outside the fold"; it behooved investigators to learn the probable reasons from the raftsmen themselves. But the rafting fraternity was clannish and close-mouthed, as reticent about their mishaps as their triumphs, with their own revenges and rewards, and it was only when practically the "last raft" had gone that the old pilots became communicative. Then were heard many interesting reminiscences of the river.

There was one old gentleman who had rafted for over half a century, and who knew the Susquehanna from the mouth of Moshannon to the dead waters of Marietta as a nun knows her beads, that was able to explain why so many rafts split up at Loyalsock. He did not profess to believe the story in its entirety, but without it the constant wrecks would be shrouded in the profoundest mystery. Once when the grand old gentleman was in a particularly communicative mood and was seated in his favorite easy-chair on his comfortable piazza in the shadow of the Round Top, he told the story of the rafts that went to pieces over the Riffles of Loyalsock. It seemed there

never was so much as a dog-raft or a dug-out wrecked there in the early days of rafting; the river had been run safely from Karthaus to Harrisburg for ten years before the trouble began. Then all of a sudden there was a change; it took a hardy pilot to get through in safety until he learned the secret of the danger. Once aware of this, he took particular care not to duplicate his loss, which sometimes had mounted up even into human lives. As was generally the case with untoward happenings in those days, and in these for that matter, if we only took trouble to inquire, man's avarice and sin and supernatural retribution were the "cause and effect" of these rafting tragedies.

To go back to the first elements of the story, let it be stated again that the Indians did not leave the Bald Eagle Mountain country suddenly, nor any other part of the State. After they had been whipped into being peaceable citizens, they were familiar figures in the market places of the towns, around the old public-houses and ferries, and their tents and shanties loomed along many a river bank. Gradually only did they become less, they went quietly and unobtrusively, until no one was shocked when they were seen no more.

The negro of today is going through a similar transition, he is seen filling fewer positions than ten or twenty years ago, he is dropping out of his familiar haunts, he is becoming less obtrusive, he is on the wane. Fifty years from now people will listen with amazement at tales of the plenitude of negroes in the last years of the nineteenth century; he will have followed the Indian into shadowy oblivion.

There was a single family of Mingo Indians, tradition had it they came from the Southern part of the State, who lived a short distance below the present location of the summer resort known as Sylvan Dell. They were not the only interesting denizens of that spot; Tim

Murphy the famous sharp-shooter of the Revolution spent his last days there. But to be exact, Tim's cabin stood an eighth of a mile further up stream, where there was quite a respectable sized flat for his garden. The Indians' shanty was perched at the apex where the flat and the mountain side come together. It looked, from a distance, like an oriole's nest, literally hanging over the river. The Indian head of the family went by the name of Powderhorn, not a very pretty, but yet a serviceable cognomen. About the time they adopted trousers and stove-pipe hats, the redskins began anglicizing their names. In their last phase in Pennsylvania history we read of Johnnyhocks, Little Johnny Brokenstraw, Bob Sunday, Billy Frozen Stone, Hotbread, and Powderhorn.

But the story of Powderhorn concerns us most at present. He was the last of his generation, his father and mother had been butchered by whites on the Yellow Breeches Creek, his brothers and sisters grew to maturity only to die of some pestilence which decimated their kind on the banks of the Juniata. Powderhorn himself had suffered from the horrible disease, but survived it minus hair and teeth and plus a palsied leg. It was hard for him to hunt, so he cultivated a taste for basket-making. He married on the Juniata, and drifted North with his bride and built her the hanging nest in that neck of woods below the Sylvan Dell. He became an attendant at the first markets in Williamsport, where he found ready sale for his wares and in addition did chores for the farmers and housewives. To see an Indian today at a Williamsport market would draw a crowd, but that is because the last aborigine has gone. In those days there were supposed to be Indians, they caused no more consternation than when a bull moose from the North Woods is strung up in front of a butcher's stall.

In due course of time Powderhorn accumulated a family; it consisted of eight girls and a boy. The boy was a sickly specimen, early ticketed for the Happy Hunting Ground without stop, but the girls seemed full of health, were

lithe, graceful, good-looking. There was one, the flower of the flock, in whom was centered all the good points of generations behind. Powderhorn and his squaw Maggie Sue, she was named after two rich Scotch-Irish women near whose home her parents once tented, both wanted an attractive name for this most winsome of their daughters. They called her after a flowering plant, the roots of which they had both hunted and loved as modern children love candy, Sweet Cicely. The young girl developed to be sweeter than her name and her parents in their homely way were sometimes sorry they had not chosen a name more imposing. Perhaps as they grew older they forgot the taste of their early sweetmeat. Socially the lonely Indian family were quite by themselves, as much so as a parrot in a flock of sparrows. The good looks of the Indians girls, especially Sweet Cicely, made considerable of an impression on the few young white men of the neighborhood, but as the girls had no wild inclinations, they made no efforts to be civil to them. The oldest girl, when she was twenty-six, in the Warrior's Run Sunday School one morning told her teacher that she had never had a sweetheart. The white girls looked at her amazed, as she was far prettier than any of them.

Once, by a chance, an Indian youth appeared on the scene. He came from the reservation about fifteen miles north of Warren and did farm work for old Ezra McGrady who lived across the river from Powderhorn's retreat. He was a fine appearing young fellow, about twenty years of age, and grown to a height a couple of inches over six feet. He called himself Wild William Winters and boasted of a relationship to the venerable Chief Cornplant. Having the choice, he selected Sweet Cicely as the object of his admiration and soon was genuinely in love with her and she with him. He was her first admirer, her first love, her first kiss, all was so new and fresh; her embraces did not cast the shadow of some other man who had been there before. She was happy in not being able to measure his intensity with some one else, to compare his kisses and hand clasps

with one who had gone before. The ecstasy of the first love is life's grandest elation; but how few have experienced it are aware of its value.

There was a pathway which led from the home of Powderhorn along the river bank; it ran about ten feet above the water and was shaded by venerable red-birches, buttonwoods, elms and hemlocks. Wildflowers and many colored birds, sweet scents and sweet songs, made it a paradise for strayers. The path terminated at a narrow, rocky ledge which was often used as a seat by the lovers. On the warmer evenings Sweet Cicely sat there and waited until Wild William, his work at McGrady's done, would cross the river in his canoe and court her on the ledge. When it was time to go home he would accompany her up the path to the cabin, and then return to his canoe, skimming across the moonlit waters like a savage warrior of old. Often as she waited Sweet Cicely would sing. She had a sweet voice and picked up many of the ancient Indian refrains and, coming from the South she sang the earliest version of that bewitching piece, "Wild roved an Indian girl, bright Alfarata." It was an entrancing sight to see her sitting there, with her pretty feet dangling over the ledge, singing her love-warmed songs, while her lover sped to her side in his canoe. It was a bit of primeval life restored; if it could only have lasted.

During the Spring floods rafts would drift by the lovers' rookery; when they were together they waved to the raftsmen, just as modern folk salute a passing express train. All was good-natured, simple, harmless. Occasionally at dusk when Sweet Cicely was waiting for her lover, rafts would pass, but they were belated craft, looking for comfortable eddies to tie up for the night. The young girl never waved to the raftsmen when she was alone and few noticed her when the sun was gone. They swept by like wild geese hunting their night-marsh. But sometimes as they passed she would catch herself in the midst of some song, though in minor key, and would check herself instantly fearing that the watermen might think she was singing to attract them. She sang

because she was happy, and one ought to be allowed happiness even when strangers are present.

One night when the river was falling fast, she had permitted herself to burst into song; it seemed a late hour and late from rivermen's standards for any rafts to pass; the time slipped quicker when she sang until Wild William came. They had been house-cleaning at McGrady's and the young redman being man of all work was detained in consequence. Sweet Cicely expected this, but he seemed uncommonly long in coming. As she looked up and down stream with her eager lover-like glances, she noticed a raft approaching. The pilot, a black figure against the silvery tone of the dusk, stood motionless at his steering-oar. He was alone; a pile of buffalo robes on the centre of the raft showed where he slept. Where the rest of his crew were was a mystery; maybe they had mutinied at some tavern, Sweet Cicely conjectured. She was so interested by this apparition of the lone raftsmen that she forgot to stop singing. The night wind springing up bore the strains of "Still sweeps the River on" to the ears of the silent man. His alert glance showed that a young slender girl was watching him and her singing was probably meant for him. Quick as a flash he threw his weight against the oar and headed the raft towards shore. It was a perilous place to tie up, but he was willing to risk it. When the front logs snubbed rock bank, he leaped on land and tied the raft to some of the sturdiest red-birches. Then he clambered up the rocky cliff to where Sweet Cicely was seated, with her feet dangling over the ledge. He moved so rapidly, she was still singing when he stood beside her. She was not frightened, it was not dark, any minute she might see Wild William's canoe launched in the current. What did the stranger want, his conduct was inexplicable. He did not lose time in showing her, as he sat down and put his arm, as strong as an iron girder, around her slender waist, and began addressing her in names of endearment. The girl tried to free herself, calling out "Let go, let go, let go, you," but the stranger only held her more tightly. "let go or I'll scream

for help" was her next note of warning. At this he put both arms about her and tried to push her over on her back. That was the limit of endurance, she screamed lustily, all the vigor of her Indian lungs was asserted. The man, angered to a point where self-control was gone, released his hold from her waist with one hand and grasped her throat to silence her. He had a stronger grip than he realized, so used to bending his heavy oaken oar against resolute currents; the girl miraculously to him, became still. He looked down on her as a panther would on sickly fawn; the purple pink of her complexion was now a blue grey, the color of twilight before it dies. Some instinct of self-preservation, such as every animal possesses, caused him to turn his eyes across the river. A canoe, with two men in it, was being launched. He looked again at the limp form before him; he had evidently killed the girl, he must make his escape. But how was he to do it? On one side was the river, with the canoe of the avengers now in mid-stream, on the other rose the stiff forbidding height of the Bald Eagle Mountain. It was a perilous climb at dark, but he must go that way, as the heavy timber would protect him from any bullets they sent after him.

Abandoning money, robes, provisions, he started up the mountain, speeding with the giant strides of fear and self-protection. The canoe which contained Wild William, and another young Indian named Bully Elkhorn, who had come to hostler at McGrady's farm reached the shore below the ledge, and the young men clambered to where Sweet Cicely lay. She was not dead yet, every possible effort was made to revive her, but as the last streak of light vanished from the sky, she died; and they stood before death in the darkness, with the sound of the river rippling below them.

Wild William could feel the marks of the brute's thumb in her slender neck. He must have broken her windpipe. He was too stoical to cry; he belonged to a vanishing race, death was the principal event to them, what else was there but death. "That's pretty tough," said Bully

Elkhorn sympathetically, as he had sized up the situation, "come to meet your sweetheart only to find her murdered." "That raftsmen did it, but we couldn't have stopped him, as we had no guns, and he was gone before our canoe touched shore." Taking the fragile corpse in their arms, the young men, straight and tragic looking, and never speaking a word, stalked up the path, the scene of so many happy strolls in the past, to the cabin of poor old Powderhorn.

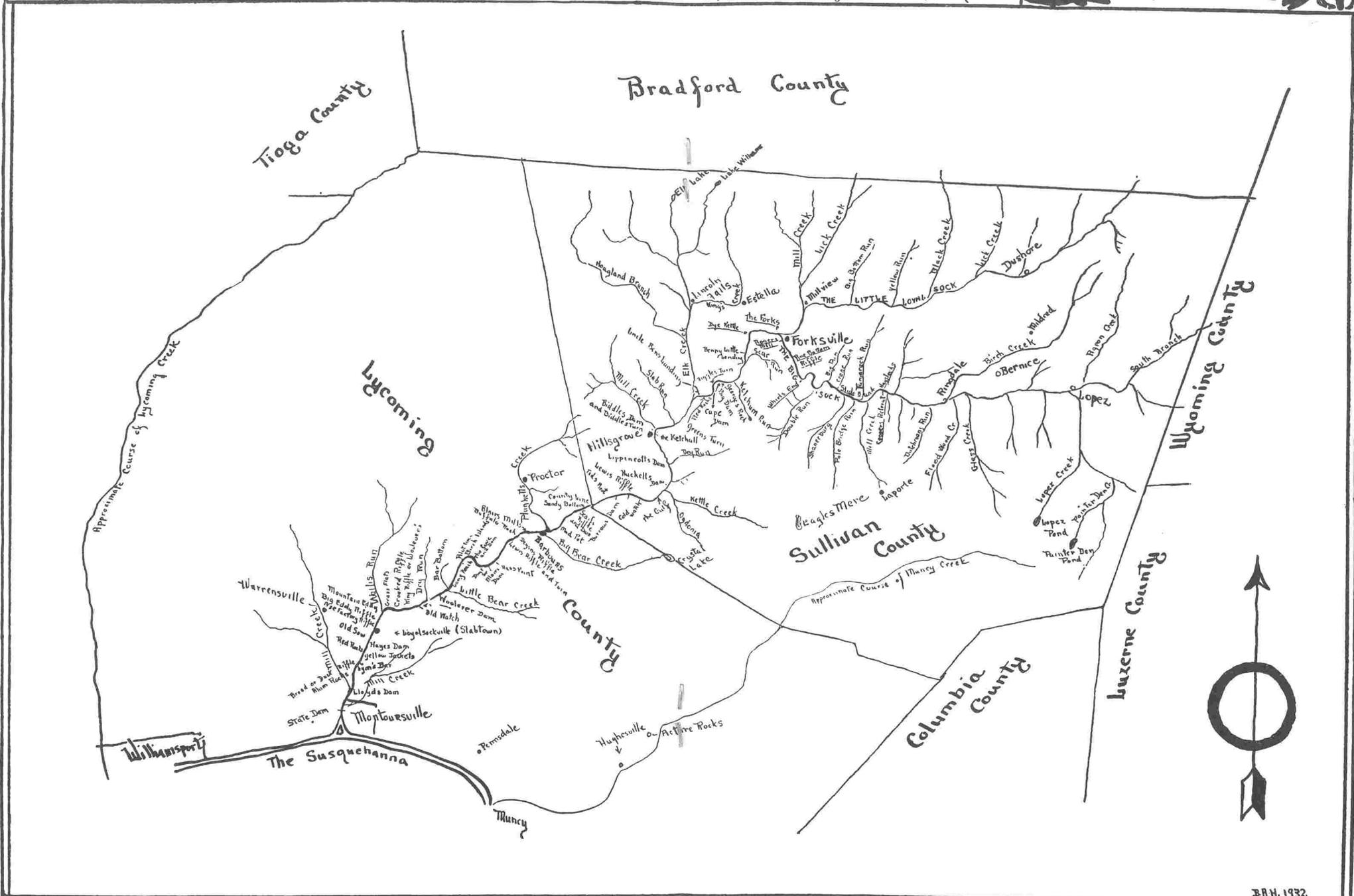
It appeared so bleak and forlorn looking out through the night, it was just a shade darker than the gloom, as the hearts of the household would be in a few minutes. The little shaggy watchdog, a sort of mongrel descendant of the true Indian dogs, barked moodily, as they drew near. He saw that something was amiss. Wild William knocked on the door, and it was almost instantly opened by Powderhorn. "What's wrong," he stammered, "I had a feeling something was going to happen, I couldn't get to sleep." He need not have inquired, his second glance showed Sweet Cicely lying limp in Bully Elkhorn's arms.

Wild William explained the story as briefly as possible, and then the body was borne inside. The next morning old Powderhorn tramped to Williamsport and tried to give the account of his daughter's death at the Courthouse. But the officials plainly regarded the Indians as outside the law; he could not get a listening ear. He was so insistent that something be done that the sheriff, to be rid of him, intimated that unless he dropped the subject and left town, he would send down and arrest Wild William and charge him with the crime, and lock up Bully Elkhorn and the old man as witnesses. Convinced of the futility of obtaining justice, he returned home, and that night helped bury the remains of his beloved daughter in a patch of rich earth. They planted sunflower seeds on the grave.

Powderhorn was never the same after Sweet Cicely had gone. He would not go to Williamsport again, as he imagined everyone else was as unjust as the Courthouse officials. He limped more than usual, and complained of headaches and



Sketch Map of the  
**LOYALSOCK CREEK — the LAWI-SAQUICK or MIDDLE CREEK** of the Indians  
 Together With its Tributaries and Place Names — Mainly in the Counties of Sullivan and Lycoming —



B.A.H. 1932

The Distances May Be Estimated From the Fact that the Airline Distance From Williamsport to the Headwaters of Either Branch is Approximately Fifty Miles ~ ~ ~

backaches. He often said he would like to get away. In this wish he was supported by the rest of his family. The happy days were no more.

After harvest Wild William and Bully Elkhorn, who had tried to trail the murderer during their leisure moments and became discouraged, decided to go back to the reservation on the Alleghany. When they confided this to Powderhorn, he said he would go along and take his family. So early in September "they gathered up their tents like the Arabs and silently stole away." Years afterwards rumor had it that Wild William's wound had healed sufficiently to marry another of Powderhorn's daughters, while Bully Elkhorn had married the oldest girl, whose first love affair came to her at thirty.

But the shadowy essence of the ill-used Indians remained along Loyalsock mountain, at least the spiritual part of one of them. In the springtime when belated rafts swept down the river in search of cozy eddies, the clear, pure notes of a young girl's voice were heard from high on a ledge above the stream. Hearing them for the first time, they were so liquid, so exquisite, so far-reaching, many a pilot let go his oar, and the uneven current would bump the raft on the sharp rocks or send it wobbling into shore. There would be a rending of thongs, a bending of bolts, a ravelling of ropes, shouts, curses, thumps and bangs; the raft, mistress of the tide but a few moments before, would be floating in all directions like so much flotsam and jetsam. Sometimes pilot or helpers would fall between logs and have their necks broken or be drowned in the maelstrom. And above the crash of breaking timbers and seething waters would come the clear, flutelike echoes of a young girl's voice. Even those who had gone through these perils and escaped with life and limb would be sorely tempted to look and listen the next time they heard it.

Who she was, and what she was, this Siren of the West Branch, must be explained. She could not be human, she sang as if divine. No one dared stop to investigate; it was fatal to even

listen. But old Ezra McGrady from his point of vantage across the river began to do some thinking about the matter. He had already formed an opinion of what caused so many wrecks when one night a stranger stopped for supper and asked him, incidentally, if he knew what had become of the Indian family who used to live on the opposite shore. The man had been drinking, so his tongue ran freely; there was something about him which stamped him as a raftsmen. By deft questioning McGrady learned his name and his experiences on the river before he sent him on his way. "Some just fate sent him here," muttered the old man, as he turned about after lighting the stranger to the pike with his lantern. "Indian or not, that girl will be avenged." The next time a party of raftsmen stopped at his house, it had become quite a resort for them on their long walks to their homes, he whispered to them the story of the strange singer with the fatal voice, and who her murderer had been. "Mum's the word, by the saints above," they all said with right hands raised. "We'll send that girl's spirit into peace, even if she was an Indian."

Who could forget that rugged circle as they stood in the hallway in the candle-light! One night, the following Spring, just as the last streaks of light were passing from the sky, another fatal rafting accident occurred at the Loyalsock Riffles. A well-known pilot from the new county of Clinton, respected and prosperous, was knocked off his raft by the bow of another raft which had been trailing close behind. He was horribly mangled by logs and rocks, so much so that it was decided to inter his remains on the flat near the deserted Indian cabin. As they threw the sods over him, this human chuck-steak, the crowd around seemed to hear high up on the mountain, the sweet notes of a girl singing, "Fleeting years have borne away the voice of Alfarata." The men nudged one another, bared their heads and listened. It was the last time that anyone ever heard the Siren.

*Taken from: "Tales of the Bald Eagle Mountains" by Henry W. Shoemaker, 1912.*

## MICHAEL ROSS, FOUNDER OF WILLIAMSPORT

By Craig Weaver

*(This paper was prepared during the Fall, 1976, Semester at Lycoming College as a research project to fulfill the requirements of an internship in American History.)*

A recent donation to the Lycoming County Historical Society contained a large number of books and papers which belonged to Michael Ross or his descendants.<sup>1</sup> Michael Ross was the founder and proprietor of Williamsport. He easily fits the image of the "great American dream." He raised himself from rags to riches in a relatively short period of time. Because records have not hitherto been available his story is little known, but hopefully the combination of what has been known and these new records will provide a composite history of an early prominent man of this area.

Michael Ross was born July 12, 1759. He was of Scottish origin, but his exact place of birth is uncertain. The first trace of him in the United States is found sometime around 1772, when he and his mother were living in Philadelphia. On April 11 of that year they entered the service of Samuel Wallis at Muncy.

Samuel Wallis was one of the wealthiest landowners in the area. His stone house at Hall's Station stood where it still stands today; then only a few hundred yards from Fort Muncy. As Wallis was involved in elements of our local history such as the American Revolution and the Great Runaway, it is likely that his young indentured servant became somehow involved also.

The indentureship lasted for seven years, and for most of that time Michael resided at the Wallis house. He concluded his employment in 1779 at the age of 20, and became a surveyor. Wallis apparently liked Ross because at the conclusion of the indenture, he gave him high recommendations and 100 acres of land. This marked Michael's start in life.<sup>2</sup>

Ross quickly became a successful surveyor. He also farmed and on quite a large scale. It is obvious he had much

ambition because he also dealt in land, merchandise, and other commodities of the country such as lumber, grains, and whiskey.<sup>3</sup> Land emerged out of these various activities and pursuits as his largest interest and asset. He acquired the land slowly, picking up only small plots periodically and adding to his holdings until he eventually owned several hundred acres on both sides of the Susquehanna River. Much of the accumulated land later fell into the boundaries of the city of Williamsport.

The original deed for the tract of land "Virginia," which now comprises center city Williamsport, passed through several hands before Ross bought it. George Gibson originally surveyed and obtained it on April 3, 1769. He held it a very short period of time, conveying it to Matthias Slough in 1770. Slough held it for 18 years and on May 22, 1788, conveyed the tract to William Winter. Michael Ross came into possession of it on April 1, 1793.

The deed spelled out the exact borders and although today the landmarks are lost, they are interesting because this formed the "backbone of Williamsport." ... "Begin at an Ash on the Susquehanna, then north 300 perches along the land of Robert Galbraith and Phoenix Pickly to a post. Then east 176 perches to a post at the said river. Then up some 192 perches to the beginning."<sup>4</sup> Today, this comprises an area from Penn Street to Hepburn Street, and north as far as Wyoming Street. The southern boundary is obviously the Susquehanna River. In the past some scholars have disputed Ross's ownership of this land, but the original deed signed by Governor Mifflin established beyond doubt the authenticity of his ownership of the plot. This document is now in the permanent collection of the Lycoming County Historical Society.

The documents reveal another series of land transactions which appear complex but are very important in further showing how Ross accumulated the land base for Williamsport. About 320 acres of land at the mouth of the Loyalsock Creek was surveyed unto Benjamin Lands on November 4, 1769. The Orphan's Court later ordered this land, called "The Square," which bordered "Virginia" to be returned to Margaret Duncan and her children. Apparently as soon as the transaction from Lands to Duncan took place, Mrs. Duncan turned the land over to Ross, because his signature appears at the bottom of the deed.

Similarly, Phoenix Pickly whose land also bordered "Virginia," became involved in the "Duncan Deal." His land, called "Content" was situated above the Loyalsock and contained 323 acres. This land was also returned to Margaret Duncan in April, 1770. Ross also signed this agreement indicating that it too was apparently turned over to him.

A deed dated 1796 conveying land from William Bailey to Michael Ross was also part of the ruling of the Orphan's Court. Mrs. Bailey was one of Duncan's daughters. The deed said there had been a previous agreement between Bailey and William Benjamin, but before a transaction could take place, Benjamin had made an agreement with Michael Ross. This previous agreement dated February 23, 1795, said Benjamin would... "grant bargain and sell him, Ross, one equal, individual half part of the land aforesaid." (land belonging to the Baileys). Four months later he granted Ross the remaining equal, individual half part. As a result of all this bargaining, the Baileys simply bypassed William Benjamin and granted the land directly to Ross. It contained 288 acres and bordered land that Ross already owned. Ross signed this agreement no less than three times.

Ross continued to expand his ownings throughout his life. A bond between Ross and Samuel Kendall dated April 8, 1815 states... "Know all men by these present, that I Michael Ross am

held firmly bound unto Samuel Kendall... and state a final sum of \$1,000.00 lawful money to be paid." Another document in the collection soon cleared up the mystery of the bond. Also dated April 8, 1815 is a deed for land owned by Samuel Kendall to be transferred to Michael Ross. This plot, "Greenfield," contained 42 acres. It is interesting to note that one of the previous owners was Paul Weitzel, mentioned previously for owning land that bordered "Virginia."

These general land transactions, with the exception of the one in 1815, consolidated by 1795-96 the area that emerged as Williamsport. The land constituted the East End of what is now the town. Ross resided in a log house near modern-day Fourth Street, between Academy and Basin Streets. About 1800 he erected a brick dwelling at a spot at the north corner of East Third and Basin Streets. This is where he died.

In the first days of Williamsport, there were no cemeteries and Ross permitted the dead to be buried in a field at the southwest corner of East Third and Penn Streets. However, after the town was laid out, he set aside the old Pine Street burying grounds located where City Hall now stands. Michael and members of his family were buried there, but eventually the cemetery was removed and they had to be reinterred.

Peter Vanderbelt, who was married to Ross's daughter, took charge of reintering his body. He had the graves of all members of the Ross family in the neglected graveyard opened and after gathering together all of the bones that he could find, placed them in a soap box. He then wheeled them in a wheelbarrow to a cemetery, now the Williamsport Cemetery located on Washington Boulevard. The headstones were erected there, which is where Michael Ross still rests.<sup>5</sup>

A book that belonged to Michael Ross and later to Peter Vanderbelt carried the inscription... "In 1865 Godfrey Hess had a brick house on Fourth Street somewhere in the area of Railway

Street. In his cellar was discovered the bones of old Miss Margaret Ross and old Mrs. Elizabeth Corsons." These remains were also taken by Peter Vanderbelt to the cemetery. "They were buried between the feet of Michael Ross and Ann Ross in the afore cemetery, done by me out of the kind respect for the family." This claim was signed by Peter Vanderbelt. The two ladies mentioned are Michael's mother and mother-in-law. This document means that there are two people's remains in the cemetery that have been hitherto unknown. They are not recorded in the cemetery records, which date from 1865. Apparently the only record made of this reinterment was the signed statement Peter Vanderbelt made in the book cited above.

One of Ross's greatest accomplishments was the founding of Williamsport. He supervised the surveying for the entire town which was laid out primarily on his ground. His plan was to subdivide Williamsport's intended site by straight and spacious lots, intersecting each other at right angles. By reserving valuable portions of the land for public use, he evidenced a "far-reaching comprehensiveness of thought which has ever since exerted an important and beneficial influence upon the subsequent history."<sup>6</sup> In keeping with this plan Ross generously donated the grounds for the erection of the public buildings. He also surely understood that no taxes had to be paid on land that was set aside for public use.

Williamsport's original limits, as defined by Ross, embraced "All that portion of the present city (1873) included between the river on the south and North Alley on the north; and between Academy Street on the east and West Street on the west."<sup>7</sup> It was his practical and good sense as well as his liberal nature that enabled him to avoid one mistake that was frequently made by proprietors of small towns: narrowness of streets. Adequate street width was one element that was included in his original plan and was carried out by his successors.<sup>8</sup>

There is some evidence to suggest that strings were pulled in the naming of Williamsport as the County Seat. A document dated September 24, 1795, and signed by five men declared that Michael Ross's farm would be the best place for the seat of justice in Lycoming County. This suggests political intrusion since courts were already being held at the prospering Jaysburg (Newberry), while Williamsport had only one log building. The signers of the document recommending Ross's farm are, respectfully, John Hall, Francis Nicholls, Alexander Scott, John Edir, and William Elliot. The prominent historian John Meginness tells us that there was a bitter fight over the naming of the county seat.<sup>9</sup>

These as well as other isolated facts, such that the county commissioners kept their offices in Jaysburg until nearly 1800, tend to suggest that more of a battle took place than is now realized. On June 4, 1789, John Kidd, the prothonotary, wrote to the governor asking if he could remain situated at Jaysburg for another year. It was written with the hope that the decision of the commissioners who selected the Ross site might be set aside, so Jaysburg could then be chosen. The governor replied that it was the language used at the creation of the county, which clearly says that the report "shall be final," which kept him from reversing the decision. "Had not this positive language been used, it is probable that Jaysburg would have triumphed in the end."<sup>10</sup>

On April 14, 1795, Mr. William Hepburn presented to the governor, for his approbation, five bills, one of which proposed the division of "part of the county of Northumberland into a separate county."<sup>11</sup> Section VII of the bill read:

The governor be authorized, and he is hereby required to appoint five commissioners, which shall meet at the town of Northumberland on the first Monday of next September and proceed to view and determine upon the most eligible and proper spot for erecting the public buildings for the said county; and make their report

into the office of the secretary of this commonwealth, on or before the first day of October--which report so made shall be final, and shall fix and determine the spot for the seat of justice.<sup>12</sup>

William Hepburn was a prosperous citizen of this area who was the State Senator. He also happened to own land that bordered Ross's farm. The bill, which was drafted by Hepburn, carries implications that are no longer recognized. The question in part was one of a political coalition between Senator Hepburn and Governor Mifflin. It is not positively known what influences were brought to bear on the commissioners, but several sources implied it was done for favors, such as lots in the new town for themselves or their friends.

Further research shows that perhaps Hepburn had even more than these political ties. William Hepburn served as an officer in the Pennsylvania Militia. As a captain in the Fourth Battalion, with 45 men under him, he acquired many associates and connections. Listed in Captain Hepburn's company in 1778, was ensign John Hall.<sup>13</sup> This is extremely significant because he is one of the commissioners that later selected Ross's farm. This establishes an important tie between Hepburn and Hall.

Not in the same regiment, but also listed as an officer in the militia was Second Lieutenant Francis Nicholls. Nicholls' name also appeared as one of the commissioners. Nicholls was later appointed a Lieutenant Colonel, making him well known to those of rank in the Pennsylvania Militia.

It is also conceivable that Hepburn could have used his land and business associates to exert some of his influence. Another of the signers was Alexander Scott. A letter to him from Thomas Cooper, a commissioner in Luzerne County, is the only reference to Scott in the Pennsylvania Archives. It concerned a large land deal in the Wilkes-Barre area, proving that Scott was someone of substance who had dealt with land in the past. No direct tie could be found linking Scott to Hepburn, but it is apparent that Alexander Scott dealt

with land and had previously served on a committee dealing with land.

Another land speculator of this time can be linked directly to Hepburn and Ross. Samuel Wallis, whom Ross served for seven years, was one of the largest landowners in the entire region. At one time he owned 7,000 acres ranging from Muncy to Williamsport. Wallis can be linked to the scheme in several ways.

Some of this material concerning a coalition is innuendo and speculation, but some concrete evidence has been found. A document<sup>14</sup> concerning the settling of the estate of Wallis, revealed that John Hall, another of the "Williamsport" commissioners, received land in Muncy Township that belonged to Wallis. This in itself is no indication that foul play occurred. It is used basically to show that the two were acquainted and that Hall did acquire some of the Wallis land. It is also interesting to note that a plot of land that Wallis owned in Center County adjoined land that was owned by William Elliott, another of the commissioners. This provides another direct tie between an appointed commissioner and one who had been intimately associated with Ross. Admittedly, some of this may be "fishing," but it does show that some of the key people were directly or indirectly associated with each other. Perhaps the future will bring new material or a better understanding of these interesting relationships and events.

One unanswered question remains and that question has been a persistent one: Who is Williamsport named after? There has been considerable debate over this question for many years. R. H. Hepburn wrote in the Sun Gazette in 1922 that the town was unquestionably named after his ancestor William Hepburn. However, the great historian John Meginness had his doubts. He once said that he knew there were unwritten and unspoken facts, but he could not define them. The long debate can now be settled. On the first page of an oblong leather book now in the possession of the Lycoming County Historical Museum, Ross penned these words: "I name the borough of Williamsport for my son William, born January 22, 1795."

### Footnotes

1. A complete description of the documents from which this essay is based is found on page 12.
2. Meginness, John F., History of Montoursville, Pennsylvania, From the Earliest Times to the Present. Weekly Globe, Montoursville, Pennsylvania, 1898.
3. Ibid.
4. A perch is an 18th century land measurement equalling about one rod or approximately 16 feet.
5. Clark, James, The Life and Times of William Fisher Packer. Presented to the Lycoming County Historical Society, 1929.
6. Blair, W. C. and McMath, J. B., Condensed History of Williamsport, Williamsport, Pennsylvania, 1873.
7. Lloyd, Thomas W., History of Lycoming County Pennsylvania. Topeka, Indianapolis, 1929.
8. Ibid.
9. Meginness, John F., Lycoming County: Its Organization and Condensed History. Williamsport, Pennsylvania, 1873.
10. Now and Then. Muncy Historical Society, Volume 13.
11. Journal of the Pennsylvania Senate. April through December, 1795.
12. Pennsylvania Laws, 1795. Chapter MCMCCCXXIII. Fifth Legislative Assembly.
13. Pennsylvania Archives. Second Series.
14. Primary source found at the Lycoming County Historical Society.

### Documents

- Deed for the tract of land "Virginia."
- Power of Attorney: William Winter to Michael Ross.
- Article of Agreement between William Winter and Michael Ross, concerns future sales of "Virginia."
- Land agreement between Matthias Slough and William Winter. Also mentioned is a later conveyance to Michael Ross. 1786.
- Deed showing location of Phoenise Pickly's land.
- Bond between Michael Ross and Samuel Kendall.
- Deed. Samuel Kendall to Michael Ross for "Greenfield."
- Deed from William Bailey to Michael Ross. 1796.
- Deed specifying that land belonging to Benjamin Lands had to be granted to Margaret Duncan as per order of the Orphan's Court. This document is signed by Michael Ross.
- Agreement for 288 acres made by Benjamin Lands to Michael Ross. 1795.
- A letter to Ross, written for Jacob Boyer to William Cutler.
- Personal drawings and letters of Thomas Bennett.
- Document showing Benjamin Lands acquired land above the mouth of the Loyalsock in Berks County containing 321 acres, called "The Square." 1769. This was later given to Margaret Duncan.
- Document showing "Content" which belonged to Phoenise Pickly had to be turned over to Margaret Duncan. Ross later acquired this as his signature appears at the bottom.

Books

Leather book that once belonged to Michael Ross. Contains genealogy in his handwriting.

Book that belonged to Michael Ross. This contains his statement that Williamsport was named after his son William, born January 22, 1795.

Pocketbook that belonged to Peter Vanderbelt, Jr. Indicated that he bought it from his father, and it is highly possible that it had been Michael Ross's.

Pocketbook containing receipts of Thomas Bennett and the obituary of Ann Ross Higgins.

Handwritten book of Peter Vanderbelt. 1798 through 1807.

Book belonging to Ellen Vanderbelt.

The school exercise book of Elizabeth Ross (Michael's daughter) 1800. From a school at Pine Creek. John Norris was the teacher. Contained mostly mathematical rules, but also included a variety of recipes.

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Pennsylvania Archives. Series I, Volume XII.

Pennsylvania Archives. Series II, All Volumes.

Pennsylvania Laws. Fifth Legislative General Assembly. Commenced December 2, 1794, ended April 20, 1795.

Votes and Proceedings of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. Proceedings from April, 1795 through December, 1795.

Williamsport Gazette and Bulletin. Thursday, March 6, 1890.

Williamsport Sun Gazette. December, 1922.

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**THE PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS OF LYCOMING COUNTY**

(Continuation)

By Warren L. Marsh

*Rev. Joseph Painter, D. D.*

Joseph Painter, the son of Jacob and Deborah Painter, was born May 21, 1799, in Solebury Township, Bucks County, Penna. He commenced his studies at the Amwell Academy, New Jersey, and entered the sophomore class in Union College, Schenectady September 22, 1819, where he graduated in July, 1822. The two years following his graduation were spent in Danville, Penna., in the family of Rev. Isaac Grier, teaching at an academy, and studying theology privately under the direction of Rev. John B. Patterson.

On the 17th of November, 1824, he married Miss Hannah, fourth daughter of Rev. John S. Vredenburg, pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church in Somerville, New Jersey, and granddaughter of Rev. James Caldwell, who was inhumanely murdered by a drunken Hessian sentinel at Elizabethtown Point, New Jersey, November 24th, 1781.

Mr. Painter was taken under the care of the Presbytery of Northumberland October 7, 1823, where on April 21, 1824, he was examined in Exegesis and homily, Latin, Greek, the sciences, and systematic theology. On April 19, 1825, at a meeting held in the Warrior Run Church, he was, on application of the Lycoming Church, appointed to supply that church until the next stated meeting. On the 7th of October, 1825, at Milton, he accepted a call for his pastoral services from the Lycoming Church, at Newberry, on a salary of \$500.00, and he was installed November 23, 1825.

Dr. Painter represented the Presbytery of Northumberland in the General Assemblies of 1827, 1828, and 1832. He was then a very young man to have such high honors conferred on him. In April of 1828 we find a resolution in the minutes of Presbytery requesting "the Moderator to preach in Mr. Painter's

congregation, and address the people on the subject of his ministerial support." The Moderator that year was the Rev. George Junkin who acted so prominent a part in the Crisis, or proceedings, of the General Assembly that resulted in the division of the Church into New and Old School. The pastoral relation existing between Dr. Painter and the Lycoming Church was dissolved April 20, 1831, because the congregation failed to pay him enough out of his small salary to enable him to live. Between April, 1831, and March, 1834, he labored in the churches of White Deer, Warrior Run, and Peniel, as stated supply.

His wife died after a two weeks' illness on December 4, 1833, leaving him with a family of four children, the eldest about six and one-half years old. She was buried in the cemetery at Warrior Run Church, where her tombstone may be seen.

His reasons for severing his pastoral relations with the Newberry Church incidentally appear in a correspondence between him and Dr. George Junkin. As a preacher and pastor he was greatly beloved, the congregation was united and prosperous, but they neglected to pay him the salary which they had promised, and he could not live on promises. On the back of the call from the Lycoming Church, promising him \$500.00, the following endorsement was found: "October 1st, 1833. Due on this call, \$850, with interest."

On the 13th of February, 1839, he was united in marriage with Miss Mary Ann Irvin of Pittsburgh. This happy relation was continued through his life. In the summer of 1865 he accidentally fell downstairs, which seriously injured him. In the winter of 1872 he was attacked by paralysis, and in May, 1873, he had a second attack, which caused

his death on the 1st of June, 1873, in the 75th year of his life.

At the April, 1828, meeting of Presbytery, Mr. Painter read a history of the Lycoming congregation, which he was directed to record in the beginning of the sessional records of that church as amended. This was in obedience to a resolution of Presbytery, at a former meeting, requiring all pastors to write and record the history of their respective congregations. Mr. Painter seems to have been the only member who complied with the requirement, yet his history cannot now be found.

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*Rev. Danniell Montgomery Barber*

Rev. Danniell Barber was born in Derry, Columbia (now Montour) County, Penna., March 16, 1800. His parents were Phineas and Anne Barber. He pursued his preparatory studies under the direction of Hon. Robert C. Grier, one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of the United States, and David Kirkpatrick, D. D. In October of 1821 he married Miss Sarah Moorehead, by whom he had seven children. In the fall of the same year he entered Washington College, Penna., where he graduated in 1824 (Sept.).

On the 20th of April, 1826, he was taken under the care of the Presbytery of Northumberland and pursued his theological studies partly in private under the instruction of Rev. John B. Patterson and partly in the Theological Seminary in Princeton. On the 19th of April, 1827, he was licensed to preach the Gospel. On the 21st of November, 1827, he was ordained as an evangelist and as a missionary on the Sinnemahoning Creek and the headwaters of the West Branch of the Susquehanna.

In April, 1833, he bade farewell to the missionary field in which he had labored so faithfully and successfully, and now devoted one-half of his time to the Great Island congregation (following in the footsteps of Mr. Isaac Grier who

had resigned in 1828) and the other half to the congregation in Williamsport (First Presbyterian Church) as their first pastor. In April, 1836, he received a unanimous call from the congregation in Newton, New Jersey, which he accepted.

In 1838, Rev. J. P. Hudson, who had been serving the Bloomsburg church, received a call to the First Presbyterian Church of Williamsport. The Rev. Mr. Toby followed Mr. Hudson at Bloomsburg, and he was later succeeded by the Rev. D. M. Barber, a popular preacher and a useful man. Mr. Barber had established a boarding school for young ladies at his farm above Washingtonville.

Mr. Barber, together with Mr. Grier, later resigned their respective pastorates of the Pine Creek church in the spring of 1851, following which Mr. Barber had a pastorate at the Lycoming, or Newberry, church from 1851 until 1861. At the commencement of the war in 1861 he became deeply interested in the state of the country. He became a chaplain in the army where he served faithfully nearly a year until his health failed and he was obliged to resign and return home. After his health was restored, he entered the army again under the direction of the Christian Commission.

The Rev. D. M. Barber, a native of this interior section of Pennsylvania, was a man of a decidedly positive character and a forcible preacher with more than ordinary intellectual ability. He was possessed of good social qualities and was a genial companion. His first wife having died in December, 1859, he was married a second time on the 10th of October, 1864, to Miss Elizabeth Shannon, with whom he lived happily a little more than one year, and who with four children by his previous marriage remained to mourn his loss. Rev. Barber died of congestion of the liver at his residence, near Milton, the evening of October 30, 1865, in his 66th year. He was buried in the old Derry Church burying ground, in the neighborhood of which he had grown to manhood, and where his ancestors and most of his immediate family rest.

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*Rev. Phineas Barbour Marr*

Rev. Marr, following preparatory courses at the Milton Academy, entered Jefferson College, where he completed a full course of study in that institution and was graduated in 1831. He studied theology in Princeton Seminary, and was licensed by the Presbytery of Northumberland in the fall of 1833 at Williamsport, Penna.

His trial exercises, especially his popular sermons, were so acceptable to the people that the congregation of Williamsport immediately secured his ministerial services for one year as their stated supply. In the meantime, a unanimous call was extended to him by the congregation of Lewisburg, where he was ordained and installed as pastor in November, 1834.

On October 26, 1835, he married Miss Mary, daughter of the late Alexander Graham, Esq., of Lewisburg. He was pastor of the Lewisburg church for 18 years. He was suddenly taken sick on Saturday morning, January 24th, and on the morning of January 27th, 1874, he sweetly slept in Jesus, aged 66 years.

On Thursday, January 29, 1874, his remains were followed from his late residence by mourning friends in a long procession to the Lewisburg Presbyterian Church. The funeral exercises were conducted by members of Presbytery and by clergymen residing in the town. The body was then consigned to its last resting place on earth in the Lewisburg cemetery.

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*Rev. John Paris Hudson*

Rev. Hudson, the son of Charles and Mary Paris Hudson (of English and Huguenot ancestry) was born at Beverly Manor near Staunton, Va., March 14, 1804. His life was a beautiful and useful one, combining brilliant gifts with varied and extensive culture. At the age of 16 years he professed a hope in Christ

and united with the Bethel Presbyterian Church, Augusta Co., Va.

He was prepared at the Staunton Academy for the junior class in Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Va. At the close of his junior year in college he was elected Professor of Mathematics in Staunton Academy, which he filled for one year. In April, 1824, he returned to college, entered the senior class, and was graduated with classical honors April 18, 1825. Immediately after graduation he was appointed Professor of Languages, and remained a member of the faculty for four years from 1825 to 1829.

Mr. Hudson entered Princeton Theological Seminary July 2, 1829. After a year's residence there his health failed and he was persuaded by Dr. Alexander to accept a situation as Principal of Union Academy at Snow Hill, Ind., for a year. He was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Presbytery of Lexington at Harrisonburg, Va., October 30, 1830, and was graduated in the full three-year course at Princeton Theological Seminary on September 24, 1832.

Having received an invitation to the church at Bloomsburg, Pa., in November, 1832, he was ordained by the Presbytery of Lexington at Lexington, Va., April 2, 1833, and united with the Presbytery of Northumberland on October 1, 1833. He served the church at Bloomsburg as pastor for 6 years (1832 to 1838), when he accepted a call from, and was installed pastor of, the First Presbyterian Church of Williamsport, Penna., where he remained until 1841.

Later serving several other churches, in August of 1870 he removed to Williamsport to take charge of the City High School, of which he was principal 1870-1871.

Mr. Hudson was married on February 13, 1838, to Miss Hetty Bryson, youngest daughter of Rev. John and Jane (Montgomery) Bryson, of Warrior Run. Mrs. Hudson died at Williamsport, Penna., February 25, 1876. On January

24, 1890, at his residence in Williamsport, Penna., after a few days of illness from influenza, in the calm assurance of faith, he entered the rest that remaineth to the people of God.

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*Rev. James William Phillips*

Mr. Phillips, the first pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Williamsport, Penna., was born at Winchester, Virginia, May 16, 1804. Following graduation from Columbian University (now George Washington University), Washington, D. C., in 1831, he married Miss Evelina Margaret Windle on May 13, 1834, at Winchester, Va. She died April 20, 1871.

He received his theological training at the Union Theological Seminary of Virginia from 1831 to 1833, and was licensed by the Winchester Presbytery on October 21, 1833. He was ordained as evangelist by this presbytery on April 27, 1835, and was missionary for this presbytery until 1836. He was Pastor at Corydon, Indiana, from 1836 to 1837, and from 1837 until 1860 Mr. Phillips was listed as a member of the New School Division. He served as pastor of Cook's Creek and Harrisonburg, Winchester Presbytery (N. S.), Va., from 1837 until 1840.

James William Phillips was received into the Presbytery of Harrisburg (New School), Penna., on May 19, 1840, at Winchester. He is first mentioned as a supply for the Northumberland Church "for the 2nd Sabbath in June" (1840). He had a pastorate at Mount Joy, Penna., from May 19, 1840, until April 14, 1841.

After public notice, the congregation of the Second Presbyterian Church of Williamsport, Penna., convened for the purpose of considering the election of a pastor on February 15, 1841. The Rev. F. D. Harris of the Third Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, Pa., being present, he was invited to act as Moderator of the meeting. As has always been the custom, the meeting was opened with prayer and singing. J. B. Hall was chosen

Secretary and the Moderator, Rev. Harris, addressed the meeting on the subject of the importance and solemnity of the transaction in which they were about to engage, after which the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

"Resolved, that this meeting now proceed to the election, by ballot, of a pastor for this church. (The ballots being counted, it appeared that the Rev. James W. Phillips of Mount Joy, Lancaster County, Pa., was unanimously elected.) Whereupon it was:

"Resolved, that a call be regularly prepared to the Rev. James W. Phillips for his pastoral services to this church.

"Resolved, that the elders of this church be appointed a committee to prosecute this call for the services of the Rev. James W. Phillips in behalf of this church and congregation before the Presbytery of Harrisburg.

"Resolved, that the above committee be authorized to guarantee in behalf of the congregation to the Rev. James W. Phillips, for his support while continuing the pastor of this church, the sum of seven hundred dollars (\$700.00) annually, to be paid in regular quarterly instalments.

"Resolved, that the sum of seven hundred dollars be inserted in the call of the Rev. James W. Phillips as his annual and regular salary.

"Resolved, that the Elders of the church be appointed a committee to make application to the Philadelphia Agency of the American Home Missionary Society for aid in the support of the pastor of this congregation.

"Resolved, that the minutes of this meeting be signed by the moderator and secretary, and entered upon the records of the Session of this church.

"On motion, the meeting adjourned. Closed with prayer."

On May 15, 1841, it was resolved unanimously that the salary of the Rev. James W. Phillips would commence on the 1st day of April, 1841. That this small struggling group of people who made up this new church had many hardships is taken for granted. Of the work of Mr. Phillips we know very little except what can be gleaned from statistical records and the fact that the first church edifice was built.

At the May 16th, 1846, meeting of the Presbytery of Harrisburg at York, Penna., Mr. Phillips was elected a principal commissioner to the next General Assembly (New School). At this same meeting he presented a request to leave Williamsport, and it was resolved to adjourn to meet in Williamsport on Saturday, June 20, 1846, at 8 P.M., and that the congregation be cited to show cause, if any, why he should not leave. These presbytery minutes were signed by James W. Phillips, Stated Clerk.

We quote from the minutes of the Harrisburg Presbytery dated June 20, 1846: "Presbytery of Harrisburg, to which this church is attached, met at this place (Second Presbyterian Church, Williamsport, Pa.) according to adjournment, and was called to order by the moderator with prayer and singing. Present were Rev. John Patton and Rev. Franklin D. Harris, ministers, and John B. Hall, Elder. A quorum not being present, it was impossible to do anything presbyterially, yet the circumstances of the case seemed in our opinion to render it necessary that we should hear the reply of the Second Presbyterian Church of Williamsport to the resignation of the Rev. James W. Phillips, their pastor, laid before Presbytery at their last stated meeting, May 16, 1846, at York, Penna.

"The congregation having acceded to his request and the stated public preaching of the word having been suspended, and the pulpit being thus virtually vacant, it was resolved that the fact should be publicly announced on the following sabbath from the pulpit."

At the meeting of the Harrisburg Presbytery which met at Northumberland on April 10, 1847, Rev. Phillips' resignation from Williamsport was officially accepted.

The next mention of Mr. Phillips is from the minutes of the Otsego (N. Y.) Presbytery meeting at Laurens, N. Y., January 12 and 13th, 1847: "The Rev. James W. Phillips of the Harrisburg Presbytery, being present, was invited to sit as a corresponding member." On the 13th he preached the opening sermon to Presbytery from Acts 9: 31. In the report for the year ending January, 1847, Mr. Phillips is listed as Stated Supply for the Milford (N. Y.) Church, that church having 65 members.

From the minutes of Otsego Presbytery meeting at Fly Creek, June 8, 1847, it is recorded that James W. Phillips was present as minister of the Milford church. Later the same day "Rev. James W. Phillips was received as a member of this Presbytery by letter of dismission and recommendation from the Presbytery of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania." Mr. Phillips served as pastor at Milford, N. Y., from 1846 to 1850 and from 1851 to 1853 -- serving a number of these years at a salary of only \$400.00 per year. The year between 1850 and 1851 he was pastor of Holland Patent, Oneida County, Pa. The records of Otsego Presbytery state:

"Resolved, that inasmuch as the notice of the dismission of the Rev. J. W. Phillips to the Presbytery of Utica has been accidentally omitted in the records of the Presbytery, it be now, and hereby is, recorded."

The above is from the minutes of Otsego Presbytery dated January 14, 1851, showing the fact that he had gone to Holland Patent. On January 13, 1852, "Rev. James W. Phillips presented a letter of dismission from the Presbytery of Utica to this body and was received." The second session with the Otsego Presbytery was again with the Milford, N. Y., church at a salary of \$470.00 per year -- the church having 72 members.

It is interesting to note that Rev. Phillips was a frequent choice of Clerk at the meetings of the Otsego Presbytery, and many of the manuscripts and records are in his handwriting and signed by him. On February 16, 1853, "The Stated Clerk was authorized to give a letter of dismissal to Brother J. W. Phillips to the Presbytery of Northern Missouri, if he should call for it before the next stated meeting of the Presbytery. Mr. Phillips is last noted in the records of Otsego Presbytery on August 17, 1853, as being absent from a meeting held at Cooperstown, N. Y.

Although there seemed to be no recording of Mr. Phillips' actually leaving the Otsego Presbytery, he is listed in

May of 1853 as Pastor of the Hannibal, Mo., church (First) under the Presbytery of North Missouri, Synod of Missouri. Mr. Phillips remained with the First Presbyterian Church at Hannibal, Mo., from 1853 until 1860.

Following the pastorate in Missouri, Rev. Phillips is recorded as Stated Supply at Marion and Enterprise, North Mississippi, from 1860 to 1864 under the Presbyterian Church, U. S. Following this, he served as Stated Supply at Demopolis, Livingston, and Bladen Springs, Alabama, from 1866 to 1875.

The Rev. James William Phillips died at Demopolis, Alabama, May 9, 1875.



*(The following tale written by T. Kenneth Wood was found in the Archives of the Museum.)*

How simple were the pleasures of that day, and how few were the pretty things that graced their home.

Grandmother Dimm evidently was a very quick-witted person from the following anecdote related by Mr. Dimm:

"Dr. Kottoe, an early pioneer physician, was one day making a professional call on Mrs. Dimm. It was the day of blood-letting, blisters, blue mass, and evidently, household fleas. It is indeed said to have been a period when fleas were familiar inmates of the houses of our first families, and no more of a disgrace than the housefly or mosquito of today. In fact, it is a question whether the housefly is not a far more dangerous guest and will some day be properly ashamed of.

Whether the prevalence of the fleas was due to the proximity of the woods, the log houses, or the cramped quarters for man and beast, I know not, and shall not attempt to analyze here.

The story goes that during the visit of the doctor, Mrs. Dimm suddenly felt a vicious bite of a little denizen and proceeded to go after it vigorously. Her antics attracted the attention of the doctor, who mildly inquired, 'Mrs. Dimm, why don't you catch him?' And her answer was, quick as a flash, 'Doctor, if you will put a blister on his leg so he cannot jump, I will catch him.' "

This little tale of a grandmother's wit and art has descended through two generations, trifling though it seems to our present day sense of values.

## GENEALOGICAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN THE MUSEUM

Our Archives Department has genealogical information on file concerning the families listed below. The archives may be used during regular Museum visiting hours. If help is needed, contact Miss Gladys Tozier, archivist, at 322-4020.

Abbott, John	King, Lt. William
Adlum, John	Kurley, Sephrony
Anderson, Robert	Lamade, Dietrick
Anthony	Laudenschlager, Jeremiah
Armstrong, William H.	Little, John Wesley
Ash, Ivan	Long, Catherine
Aten, Mary	Long, Dr. Samuel
Beck, Jacob	Machette, William Markwood
Benner, General Philip	Mahaffey
Bennett	Manavalle, Pierre
Bowles, Major Fred	Maneval and ancestral lines
Brady, Captain Samuel	Maynard, Judge John W.
Brucklacher, Daniel	McMinn, Joseph H.
Burrows, (Borrows)	Meginness, John F.
Burrows, General John	Miller, George (Muller)
Crawford, John K.	Milnor
Culver, Eber	Montgomery, Robert
Danneberg, Auguste	Munson, Cyrus LaRue
Davidson, Dr. Asher	Ott, George F., and others
Duitch, John George	Packer, Asa
Ecroyd, James	Packer, Hon. William Fisher
English	Pastorius, Francis Daniel
Faber, Willis H.	Patterson, Benjamin
Faber	Pott, Johannes, and others
Fisher, Mahlon Leonard	Pratt, Frank A.
Foulke (Ffookes, James)	Quigel
Freytag (or Freitag), George	Quigley, Clara Helen
Funston, John	Reichard
Gage, Catherine B.	Ritter, Dr. Ella
Gillie, Jean B.	Roesen, Severin
Good, John (the miller)	Rohrbach
Gosline, Jacob	St. Clair, Major General Arthur
Green	Sebring
Grove, Peter	Sharpless, Jack
Hammond, Frances Brady	Sheffer, Susan
Hardt, Johann	Sloan, John
Harris, Abram W.	Smith, Catherine
Hart, Hiram A. and Mary	Smith, Peter
Hartman, Jacob	Stevens, Thaddeus
Hays, John, Jane, etc.	Stiber
Heilman, William Clifford	Stoever, Johann Casper
Heinle	Stoever, Reverend John
Hensler, Charles	Straub
Herdic, Peter	Sutton, Amariah, Arad, and John
Hollingsworth, Valentine	Thiele, Karoline
Hower, George	Thomas, "Iron" John
Hubble, Richard	Tinsman
Kelly, Samuel	Walker, Benjamin
Kiess, Jacob	Wayne, Anthony
Kindig, Charles D. and Ellen	Weaver, Levi

Williamson, Charles  
Willner, Wilhemine  
Winter, William  
Work, William  
Yingling, Christian  
Zahn  
Zercher

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*Pamphlets:*

"Revolutionary Soldiers Buried in Sunbury, Pa." by Heber G. Gearhart, Sunbury 1925. (Sketches of the lives of forty-four Revolutionary heroes.)  
"Some Early Lawrenceville Lawyers" by Hon. Horace B. Packer, Tioga County, 1914. (Hon. John B. Gibson, James B. Knox, John C. Knox, John W. Maynard, Norman H. Purple, James Ryon, John W. Ryon.

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*Books*

"Almy Family"  
Eisenhart, John Franklin (family)  
Gernhardt, Heinrich (and his descendants)  
General Society of the War of 1812, Philadelphia, 1908. (Register of Membership)  
Kiess, Edgar R. - Memorial Address - 1931

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"Mahaffey Descendants" - (1600-1914)  
Neel, Gregg Livingstone  
"Rohrbach Genealogy"  
"Sebring Collections" - 1975  
Updegraff, Thomas (1774-1857)

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*Other Sources:*

Rev. Jacob Alberts - Register of Deaths - Hanover, Pa. 1837.  
Washington Boulevard Cemetery Records  
Marriage License Docket No. 1, 1885-6  
Will Books of Lycoming County  
Early Township Records

*Note:* In addition to the above material, the following could be used by people who are interested in genealogy:  
A number of Civil War muster rolls dealing with Lycoming County and Pennsylvania.  
Record books of the Reno Post G.A.R.  
Books on loan from the City of Williamsport, including some cemetery records.

## FORK MOUNTAIN

(Written about 1900 by Millard Fillmore Case, uncle of Mrs. Melvin Goldy.)

We are standing on the heights sublime,  
Where few have ever dared to climb,  
And looking on the works of time,  
The Mountains.

We are looking down the mountains steep,  
On Pine Creek where the mullens sleep  
And where the alligators creep,  
The fountain.

And down there near the tunnel,  
We can see old Michael Bonnel,  
With his bottles and his funnel,  
He is frisky.

He calls in men of every station,  
Men of every tribe and nation,  
To them he deals out Damnation,  
Called whiskey.

While the mother sick in bed,  
He robs the children of their bread,  
Or wherewith they should be fed,  
Old story.

But when we are thirsty we will bring,  
Cold water from the Mountain Spring,  
And as we drink it we will sing,  
Oh, Glory.

Recent research has revealed the fact that the watercolor painting of Michael Ross reproduced on the cover of the Spring, 1977, Journal was painted about 1810 by Jacob Maentel, an itinerant Pennsylvania painter. The original painting is a recent donation to the Museum by Dr. and Mrs. H. L. Tonkin.