Early Days In Rostraver

AN INFORMAL HISTORY OF ROSTRAVER TOWNSHIP, WESTMORELAND COUNTY, PA.

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FOREWORD

In an ever changing world everything material grows old and eventually passes away. It is the things of the spirit that endure and give reverence for the past, purpose for the present, and hope for the future. Old Concord School has been dedicated as a shrine, and this little history has been written, therefore, that those who remember earlier days in Rostraver may recall and appreciate over again the sturdy and ethical spirit of their forefathers, and that those who are younger may realize that here in their native township the best of our American ideals animated the early settlers who set a standard for democratic living worthy to be followed now and in the future.

Besides the particular acknowledgments made within the book the authors gratefully give credit to the various people of the township and elsewhere who generously helped with information concerning their ancestors, family histories, original land grants, early mills, and pioneer methods of farming and homemaking.

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CHAPTER ONE

DESCRIPTION OF THE REGION

Rostraver Township was first occupied by the white man during the French and Indian War (1754-1763). The region was originally a great wooded area covered with the finest of our native forest trees, such as giant oaks, beeches, walnuts, maples, and elms, with enough evergreens to give beauty to the landscape in winter. To the early settlers the forests were a liability, and vast quantities of the finest hardwood trees were cut down, rolled into heaps, and burned to make way for cleared fields. One pioneer described the process of clearing the land by stating that during the winter season the men and boys cut all the trees of a fair sized area, felling them into a jumbled heap. They were let lie to be dried in the sun and wind until conditions were right, and then fires were started all around the tract. The resulting fire would burn for many days, and the red glow of it could be seen for miles at night.

More often, however, the first method of clearing the land was to girdle the trees, thus killing them where they stood. Corn, pumpkins, beans, etc., were planted among the dead trees and yielded abundantly in the rich forest soil. As time permitted the dead trees were cut and burned. This region is rolling, and as each settler's tract was cleared in part, but retained also a great deal of forest, it must have been a most picturesque pioneer district which grew into the beautiful and prosperous agricultural community

of some seventy-five years ago with its beautiful streams, large farms, and substantial stone, brick, and frame houses or remodeled log ones, some of which are still in existence today.

With the loss of the forests — by far too many of them — and the industrial development of the region a good deal of the natural beauty has been sacrificed. Fortunately today pride in their homes and community has caused the people of the township to compensate somewhat for the loss of such natural beauties by helping nature to make their surroundings attractive with well kept farms, homes, and gardens. The network of improved roads, too, has been attracting new settlers to the township from the surrounding towns who also take pride in their homes and gardens. New visitors to the township are most agreeably surprised, so soon after turning away from the Monongahela river with the noisy mills which line its banks, to find themselves in a quiet, serene country distrct with dairy or beef cattle grazing on the hills, colorful strip farming, well kept orchards, and from its higher spots most beautiful views to delight their eyes.

CHAPTER TWO

INDIAN LORE

When the white men first came into this region there were no permanent Indian towns or villages in what is now Rostraver Township. The area was claimed by the Mingoes, one of the Iroquois nations, as part of their hunting grounds. However, it was more used by the Delawares and Shawnees who had been driven by the white man into this section from eastern Pennsylvania. These Indians had permanent places of abode along the Monongahela, Youghiogheny and Allegheny rivers. The nearest of these was a Shawnee town, Sewickley, at the mouth of the Sewickley Creek on the Youghiogheny river about one mile from West Newton. The Mingoes and other Iroquois Indians claimed this entire region as part of their hunting grounds and travelled over the Mingo Trail and the Warrior Trail to fight their traditional enemies, the Cherokees and Catawbas who lived in the southern Appalachian region. The Warrior Trail led more to the westward into West Virginia and Kentucky while the Mingo Trail was a more direct route to the southern region.

There is material proof that some ancient peoples had occupied this section at some distant time as there are no less than nine permanent Indian camp sites or forts within the present boundaries of Rostraver Township. They were called Indian forts by the early settlers as evidence found indicated that they had been some kind of fortification. This conclusion was based

on tracing their outlines by a ridge of earth two or three feet high which formed an enclosure. These enclosures ranged in size from one-fourth to several acres in area. Numerous Indian artifacts consisting of arrowheads, stone hatchets, broken pottery, bone needles, etc., were found within these enclosures, and in many cases Indian graves were found near. Stone and masonry work was not used in these forts but the presence of abundant decayed wood leads to the conclusion that wooden stockades formed a protecting wall.

The location of these old Indian Forts is as follows:

Shepler — On Shepler Hill
Rankin — Near Route 71, Rankin Farm
Peters — Peters Farm near Youghiogheny River
Irons — Gibsonton
Ft. Hill — Near Fellsburg
Nicholls — William Nicholls Farm
Speers — Mouth of Speers Run
Jones — On hill above Mazzei Farm
Manown — Lower end of Monessen

Some of these sites are on hill tops, Shepler — 1,416 feet, being the highest point in Rostraver Township. Others are near the rivers and some were near strong flowing springs. There are also other locations that were places of habitation as artifacts of various kinds have been found in many places in the township.

The Indians found here by the white men knew nothing of the builders of these forts and certain evidence indicated that several hundred years had passed since they had been occupied, as giant walnut trees three to four hundred years old were found

growing on some of the embankments amid the well decayed logs of trees which had preceded them. In many cases the location of these forts was first indicated to the settlers by the location of these groves of giant walnut and wild cherry trees while the surrounding forest was usually of oak and beech. Numerous clam shells were also found in and near these places. The pieces of sun dried pottery found were made from clay mixed with crushed clam shells. Skeletons dug up indicated these Indians were of average size and some were persons six to seven feet tall. Historians have advanced different theories as to who these ancients were. Some believe they were the Alligewi, a very primitive people, who are believed to have occupied this region at an early time. Others think they were a race of mound builders, a numerous people who built huge mounds in many parts of the Ohio valley. The type of stone weapons used and the finding of some small mounds favors rather strongly this latter belief. Perhaps, we shall never know who they were or what became of them. Were they conquered by a stronger or better armed enemy? Did they die of some pestilence like the black plague or similar dread disease? Or did they migrate to some other region?

Regardless of the fate of these early inhabitants of Rostraver, we do know that they once lived here in considerable numbers and that they could have left us an interesting account of their way of life had they been able to record permanently their history.

CHAPTER THREE

ORIGIN OF THE NAME ROSTRAVER

The name of the township has an interesting origin. It has been traced back to Rostrevor, a village in County Down, Ireland. So busy were these early settlers, and so occupied with immediate and practical things, that though they probably named their new community Rostrevor out of affection for the native village of some of them, they neglected to leave to posterity any record of having done so. The settlers probably spelled it according to sound and so it is Rostraver. We know for sure that at least one pioneer family — the McClains — came from County Down, Ireland. Before this little history was written, Mr. Carter made inquiry concerning this village of Rostrevor, County Down, Ireland, and the following most interesting letter was the result.

"Applecroft"
Rostrevor
County Down
Northern Ireland
June 14th, 1949

Dear Mr. Carter:

Your letter has been handed to me and I want to say how very interested I am to learn that there is another spot on the earth named for my native village of Rostrevor. I have great pleasure in giving you some of the history and legend of the neighborhood as a background for your pageant.

The name—spelt Rosetrevor—is first traced in a document of 1618—a conveyance of land from the ancient Irish owners —the Magennis family—to Edward Trevor, a Welsh settler. As Trevor had married Miss Rose Ussher, daughter of the

archbishop of Armagh, I hold that the village was named Rose Trevor from this connection. Others say that it may have been called Rostrevor from an Irish word meaning "a wooded point" in association with the name Trevor. You can choose which you like, but I like the romantic origin.

Rostrevor is a small village of about eight hundred inhabitants. It is regarded as one of the most beautiful villages in Ireland. The pictures I am sending you give you no real idea of its beauty as austerity has had its effect on the post-card business, and the views are not so well turned out as they might be. The Trevors were natives of Brynkinalt in Denbighshire, North Wales, where the present head of the

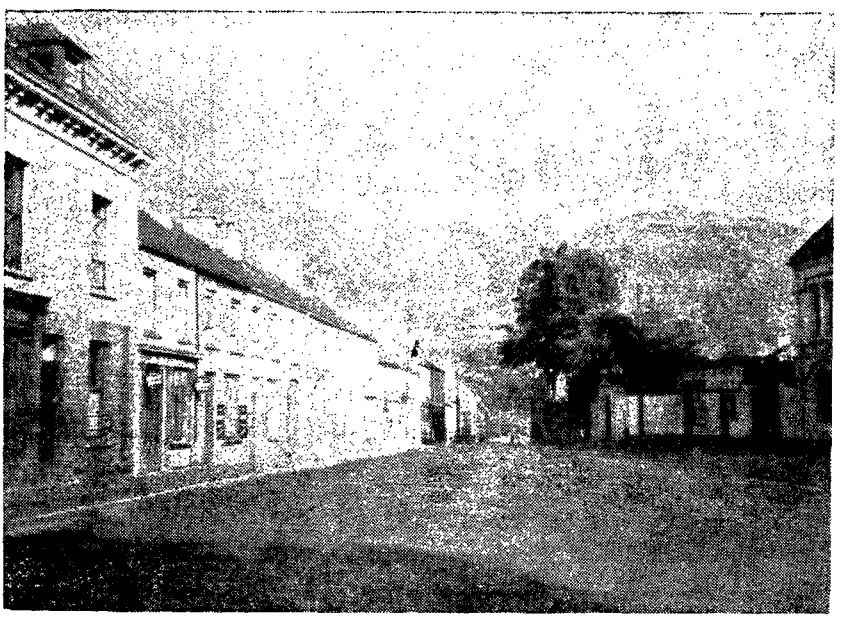


Photo by Jack Hanna

Looking Down Bridge Street, Rostrevor, Ireland

family—Lord Trevor lives. Sir Edward Trevor, having bought the lands of Rostrevor and neighborhood from Magennis settled here, and when Cromwell's Rebellion broke out, the Trevors favoured the Royalist cause. Edward's son, Marcus, or Mark, fought with the Royalist Forces at the famous

battle of Marston Moor and wounded Oliver Cromwell in the throat. When the Monarchy was restored, Mark Trevor was created Baron Rosetrevor and Viscount Dungannon. The title died with his grandson, who died at Almanya in Spain, where he was fighting as an officer in the British Army. Subsequently, the family was united in marriage with the Hills—a famous County Down family—and are known as Hill-Trevors.

The village consists of three streets in the shape of a cross and another street which runs parallel with the Main street.

The Southern Mourne Mountains do literally "run down to the sea" at Rostrevor where they have their feet in the waters of Carlingford Lough.

The lough is about four miles wide at its widest and narrows as it runs northward to Newry. On the other shore we have the Carlingford Mountains (in Eire). The lough is the boundary between Ulster, or Norther Ireland, and Eire, now to be known as the Republic of Ireland. The scenery in the locality is very beautiful—mountain and woodland, wooded glen and a shingle beach. A small stream—the Yellow Water —flows down from the highlands behind and crosses the Main street (Bridge Street) where it is spanned by the Old Bridge.

The Fairy Glen with its water fall known as the "Salmon Leap" is on the banks of this stream close to the village. Modern villagers do not believe in fairies anymore, but many of the older people and even farmer people on the mountain farms still believe in the "wee folk" and are careful not to offend them! Finn MacCemhail (pronounced McCool) has associations with the locality. He was one of Ulster's heroes.

No doubt he was a real character away back in the misty past, but so many mythical tales and legends have clustered around him that no trace of the real man can be found. There is on a hill about nine hundred feet above Rostrevor a huge stone weighing about forty tons, deposited there by glacial action. The story is told that Finn threw this stone across from the Carlingford Mountain at an invading Scottish giant! The effort was too much for poor Finn and his

form is pointed out stretched along the Carlingford Mountain! In very ancient times the district was known as Glen Sheckis "Glen of the Fairy Hills" and later as Kilbroney because St. Bronach—a female Saint who had been converted by St. Patrick—founded a community in the Glen. There is a faint shadow of foundation for the belief that Bronach was Patrick's girl-friend! She was supposed to be the daughter of the Irish chief for whom Patrick herded cattle and sheep on Slemish Mountain in Antrim, and they were children together. The Protestant Church in the village, the Church of St. Bronach, and the foundation of the Parish date back to the Sixth century.

Photo by Jack Hanna

Bridge Approach to Rostrevor Village, Ireland

The lands formerly owned by the Trevors were acquired in the early 18th century by a branch of the Ross family, and it was Rostrevor, born General Robert Ross, who led the land force in the American War of 1812. He burned the public buildings in Washington and the returning Americans

found some white paint in the basement of the Presidential residence and used it to remove the marks of Ross's fire. It was from this circumstance that the White House got this name. Ross was killed subsequently, and his family were given the privilege of calling themselves Ross of Bladensburg in honour of his exploits there. There are members of the family known by this name still living in the village.

"The Star Spangled Banner" was inspired by the gallant defence of the fort in the river by American forces just after the Sack of Washington. There is an imposing monument standing outside the village to the memory of Ross.

I have tried to give you an outline of village history, but, of course, it is very sketchy. If there is any point in which you are specially interested, please do not hesitate to write to me. I will only be too delighted to help you.

We had thousands of American soldiers stationed here during the war and they were most popular with the village people. The house that was formerly the home of the Ross family has been empty for some years, and some of the troops were stationed there. I used to ask them did General Robert Ross never appear to them to apologize for what he did to Washington! I don't think he ever did!

We had a Rostrevor poet of a past generation who wrote a really fine poem on an incident in the Irish Sea when Paul Jones—the founder of your navy—was chased by a British Man-o-War but escaped. I will copy out the lines for you if you are interested.

I am very anxious to know if there are any descendants of the original founders of your township—I mean those who come from this village—remaining. If not, do you know any of their names. I would be so interested to learn something about them.

Now, I hope you will let me have a copy of your local paper with an account of your pageant or some details about it when it comes off. I should like to mention it in our local paper here. I do a little newspaper work. With every good wish,

Yours v. Sincerely
(Miss) Louie M. Cunningham

CHAPTER FOUR

CHARACTER AND BACKGROUND OF THE EARLY SETTLERS

From Boucher's volume of the "The Old and New Westmoreland," published in 1918, we learn that the early settlers of our township were a hardy, thrifty, and industrious group. There is abundant evidence that most of them had strong characters and convictions, with reverence toward God, and had come to Western Pennsylvania with the desire to found homes and a stable community in which to prosper and raise families.

A few came directly from Europe, but far the greater number from the East or from Maryland or Virginia. They did not come to hunt and fish and to seek adventure. Generally they had left better homes in the East, but were willing to endure all manner of hardships for a few years with the hope of abundance later on. They learned very soon to love their new homes and to fight for and defend them, as we have seen in the Revolutionary War, as though they were palaces. However rough the land, however small the clearing, or however rude the log cabin of the settler, it was his own. Because he owned it himself, he was willing to defend it against the world if necessary. "To be a freeholder," said James G. Blaine in his eulogy of President Garfield, "has been the patent and passport of self respect with the Anglo-Saxon race ever since Horsa and Hengist landed on the shores of Britain". The Old World background of the

early Rostraver settlers with few exceptions was the British Isles, but there were more from Ireland than from Scotland and England. The comparatively few from Germany were evidently of the same mind as the others in coming here to live.

In "The Monongahela of Old," or "Historical Sketches of South Western Pennsylvania," the author, James Veech, has the following to say about the character of these early settlers: "They were patient under toil and privation, yet impatient of restraint. They were comparatively poor is possessions that engender pride, but rich in expedients for substantial comforts. They were fearless of danger, and yet feared their God. They were extravagant in the noisy sports of the chase, the raising, the harvest, and the husking, but frugal of all the means of quiet fireside enjoyment. Strong in their likes and dislikes, their attachments were inviolable but their resentments dreadful. Yet amid all this rudeness and horror of legal restraints, persons and property were generally more secure and female chastity more sacred than even now (1892). And there were less of those petty trespasses which now annoy neighbors, and of those malicious tale tellings which now set neighborhoods in an uproar. The people of that day were governed less by law than by public opinion. Their capital, their stock in trade, as well as their personal security, depended much more upon the amount of esteem and confidence conferred upon them by their neighbors than upon their ability to drive a hard bargain or make a show of superior wealth and equipage. They lived more directly under the sway of the original elements of the social compact —mutual aid and dependence. In spite of their divers-

ity of Old World background and religious sentiment, there existed more unity, more *esprit du corps,* and less segregation into classes than now (1892). What they lacked in refinement was more than compensated for by their abundant hospitality. The newcomer or the stranger was always welcomed to their homes and given assistance, for they had themselves been strangers in a strange land. If to resent an injury or an insult was in them an ever present failing, there was just as constantly absent from their breasts that cold selfishness which is too apt to seize upon men in more advanced society, and which generally chills and dries up the social virtues to their very fountains. The men of that day sought to be a law unto themselves, but were of too lofty a spirit to be actors in the low kennels of modern chicanery. Their word was their bond —its seal their honor—its penalty the fear of social degradation."

Though the author of the above was referring to the settlers of the whole of Western Pennsylvania, his delineation seems to fit our own Rostraver settlers exceedingly well.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE JOURNEY WEST AND EARLY LIVING CONDITIONS

Whether they came directly from Europe, or from farther east in this country, as stated before, for the most part the settlers had left good homes there and had had schooling. This accounts for the fact that, after the acquisition of land, what they most desired was neighbors. They were eager to form a community or join one in which they could share social, religious, and civic privileges and responsibilities. A natural outcome of such ideals was their almost immediate concern about establishing churches and schools.

Quite a few of the settlers, especially those from Maryland and Virginia, brought their negro slaves with them. After these slaves were set free by a state law in 1782, it was for their children and grandchildren that the colored school known as Pleasant Green was built near what is now Pricedale, around which they lived. That little settlement is still a colored community and its church is still called Pleasant Green.

Bond slaves were also common among the settlers, for in those days many who wished to emigrate from Europe, and particularly from the British Isles, who did not possess passage money became indentured servants, or slaves, to the more prosperous emigrants, and thus had to work perhaps four or five years for the man to whom they were bound by indenture for only board and keep. They were not necessarily lower class people, therefore, although the term slave always

suggests inferiority. "The Monongahela of Old" gives a list of nineteen such servants, also called inmates, among the township settlers.

There were, of course, differences in financial standing among these pioneers, and also a good deal of class consciousness since they had come from Europe where class distinctions were at their strongest or from colonies farther east or south where Old World customs prevailed longest. The nature of pioneering, however, with its very necessary cooperation among neighbors greatly facilitated democratic feeling. They were all involved in the same privations and thus were compelled to adopt similar personal and domestic practices. On the whole, those who were superior in character and in educational background, as well as those of most means, became the leaders in shaping the destiny of the people of the new township.

The story of the coming of any family or group of families over the mountains and the settlement of the same is very similar to that of all the others, for conditions affecting travel and facilities for it were about equal regardless of the means of those concerned. Those who came were nearly all young. Often a young bachelor came across the mountans, located a tract of land, cleared part of it, and sometimes even built a house within a year. Late in the fall he would return to his former home to get married, and early in the spring set out with his young wife for their new home. He usually had a horse on which she rode and on which was also carried a few indispensable household goods which could not be purchased or made here in those early times. Sometimes a well-to-do young pioneer had two horses. In that case one was furnished

with a packsaddle, by means of which they brought perhaps three hundred pounds of household goods and utensils. In any case they brought a frying pan, a pot, a few pewter dishes, a few knives and forks, and an axe and a mattock for clearing the land. They generally brought some bedding material, though this often consisted almost entirely of skins of animals killed on the way or procured after their arrival. They brought always garden seeds and a few dried herbs to last them until new ones could be raised. Seed corn and other grain for sowing were always kept at the nearest garrison for the benefit of the settlement and especially the newcomers.

The young settler himself usually walked all the way and carried a rifle on his shoulder, which he was almost certain to need on the journey and must have in this new country. They carried also a few pounds of hardbaked bread, and usually he was fortunate enough to shoot a deer, wild turkeys, or other small game, which supplied them with food for their two or three weeks' journey over the mountains and through the wilderness. Often they traveled for days without a sign of human habitation, but if they passed near a settler's house, no matter how humble and crowded, they were taken in and warmly welcomed.

The long journey was generally undertaken in the spring when sleeping outside was neither dangerous nor very inconvenient. They were, moreover, often going to a settlement where they were expected by relatives, friends, or at least acquaintances, and while on the journey had much to look forward to with pleasure. Then there was always the lure of adventure and new surroundings to excite them. In case the

community for which they were bound was entirely new, they formed a company among their neighobrs in the East or South, made the journey together, and settled near each other.

If the young pioneer had his house ready, as we have said before, he and his wife could take immediate possession. Otherwise the newcomers were taken in by friends until a cabin could be "raised". In building homes cooperation was essential, and it was most cheerfully and often gaily entered upon by the whole community. The one building the home would cut and hew the timber, and perhaps a neighbor would help him or lend him an ox team to draw the hewn logs to the place selected for his house. Then came the raising, which was a great event in a pioneer neighborhood. The whole community assembled and often put up a log house in a single day. Sometimes they even cut and hewed the logs and erected the house between sunup and sundown, for there was no eight hour day in vogue then. A house fifteen by thirty feet, having two rooms below and one above, was a very fair-sized one for that period. On the day of the raising the older people each had a "dram" before they began work, for at that time whisky was supposed to be indispensable in almost every well regulated community. It was the task of the young women who attended to prepare the noon meal. The young men, who proudly showed their strength by lifting logs into place, though roughly dressed, and often half hunters and half farmers, were nevertheless looked upon favorably by the prettiest girls.

Boucher in his "Old and New Westmoreland" thus describes an old time raising: "The raising was gov-

erned by rules which greatly facilitated the work. The men were divided into two equal companies; and, after the military order of the day, each chose a captain. The logs were pushed up on slides at the sides and ends of the house, and the party which could most rapidly put its logs in place was the victorious one. When the log was at its proper height, it was notched at the end to fit on the log underneath it and thus held firmly in the house. The man who notched the ends of the logs was called a 'corner man', and there were four of these, one at each corner. A sharp axe, a true eye, and a strong arm were the requisites of a corner man. Had he these qualifications, he could very quickly notch each log to fit on the log below and cut its upper side to fit the triangular notch of the next log. He must also keep his corner plumb, and this required more care than we might think. He was a very important man in a new house-building community. While he was doing this notching, those on the ground were moving the next log up the slides to its final position. A good corner man must also have the last log finished and in place by the time the next log arrived so that he would not keep the men waiting, but if he did keep them waiting sometimes in the morning when the logs did not have to be raised very high, later in the day he could often indulge in the sarcasm of calling for logs, for each succeeding log had to be raised about a foot higher. The average log, when green, would weigh about fifteen hundred pounds, and it was not an easy matter to hoist it ten or fifteen feet with the limited appliances of that day."

As we have said, the average house was about fifteen by thirty feet. It was usually eight or nine feet

to the top of the first story, but except in the more pretentious dwellings the second story was usually not more than four or five feet high at the eaves. This second story was rarely finished. It was termed the loft and reached more often by a ladder or by wooden pins driven into the logs than by a staircase. On the rafters in the loft the household frequently hung pieces of smoked meat, all kinds of herbs for medicine, and clothing not in use. On the floor nuts were often spread out to dry.

The sides and ends of the houses were generally built of logs of equal length, making no provision for doors or windows. The openings for these were made afterwards by sawing through the logs. Sometimes the chimney was built in the centre with a fireplace on each side, but this was the exception rather than the rule. The pioneer in his hurry usually had the chimney at one side or end and frequently on the outside. In the latter case an opening was made through the logs for the fireplace. Chimneys were usually built of stone and mortar, but occasionally one was constructed of small pieces of wood laid in mortar sufficiently thick to protect its walls from the sparks of the fire. Previous to 1800 the windows were of greased paper unless the settler could afford to have glass transported from the East. Glass was first manufactured in Pittsburgh in 1791, but it was long after that before it came into general use for making windows.

The roofs were made of clapboards, that is, board-like pieces split from logs with straight grain. These clapboards were much larger and thicker than the split shingles that came into use later. The floor of the first story in most primitive cabins was made of

clay; that of the second story, if it had a floor, was of clapboards like the roof. After the clay floor came the puncheon floor, which was made of logs split in the center with the flat side up. With little dressing these split surfaces made a comparatively level and a very solid floor.

Above the fireplace, which had usually an opening big enough for a log of six feet to be rolled into it, were hung the rifle, bullet pouch, and powder horn of the owner, and often there was a little roughly built shelf on which the good man kept his tobacco.

The door or doors had wooden hinges. The latch was a short bar of wood on the inside, and from it upward through a small hole in the door passed the latchstring, which could be drawn in—a simple way of locking the door. From this simple contrivance has come the expression of welcome and hospitality, "The latchstring is out." Even the houses in Pittsburgh, which at that time were the best in the western country, were no better than those just described. In 1774 there was but one house in Pittsburgh with a shingle roof, and it was pointed out as a marvel in improvement and an evidence of great enterprise around the "fork of the Ohio". Dr. James Power, who preached in Western Pennsylvania during the Revolution, said that years after he had come here there was not a brick, stone, or frame house within the limits of his congregation, and his charge included nearly all the territory which is now Westmoreland County.

The furniture of that day was nearly all homemade. The neighbors often spent the day after the raising of the house helping the owner make the essential furniture. They made usually a clapboard table sup-

ported by four round legs set in auger holes, and constructed some three-legged stools in the same manner. Wooden pins stuck in the walls at the back of the house supported some clapboard shelves to hold the scanty table ware brought over the mountains, and the wooden bowls, trenchers, and noggins made in the community. If wooden bowls were scarce, gourds and hardshelled squashes took their places. Some of the older people can perhaps remember the long-handled gourd dippers, and it's very likely that the children in Old Concord School drank from one which they dipped into a heavy wooden pail.

The homemade beds of these very earliest settlers were primitive in the extreme. In "The History of the Presbyterian Church of Western Pennsylvania" they are described as follows: "A single fork, placed with its lower end in a hole in the floor and its upper end fastened to the joist, served for a bedstead by placing a pole in the fork with one end through a crack in the wall. The front pole was crossed by a shorter one within the fork with its outer end through another crack. From the first pole through a crack between the logs of the end of the house the boards were put on which formed the bottom of the bed. Sometimes other poles were pinned to the fork a little distance above these for the purpose of supporting the front and foot of the bed, while the walls were the support of its back and head. A few pegs around the walls upon which could be hung the coats of the women and the hunting shirts of the men, and two small forks or buck's horns fastened to the joists for the rifle and shot pouch of the master of the house (mentioned before as being over the fireplace) completed the carpenter work".

CHAPTER SIX

HOME INDUSTRIES

These early settlers were busy people. According to "Old and New Westmoreland" by Boucher, it is safe to say that up to the time of the Civil War, and indeed for a few years afterwards, the products of Rostraver were almost entirely agricultural, but agriculture then took so much more man power than now because of the primitive ways by which the work had to be done.

The land itself, covered with dead trees or stumps, was much more difficult to cultivate than when thoroughly cleared. The farmers had rude wooden plows, but harrows were scarce. To make the plowed ground mellow they often dragged a thorn or other tree with projecting branches over it. Corn was always the first and most essential crop. It was largely used for bread by the housewife and by hunters and travelers in the form of johnny-cake, which because it was used by travelers was originally journey-cake. It was also used for cornmeal mush, or Indian pudding as it was called in New England. Hominy, too, was a staple of the early settler's diet. And, of course, it was needed in great quantities for feeding the farm animals. Every farmer raised potatoes also. The difficulties of this early farming were partly offset by the natural productivity of the virgin soil, and the insect pests of today were almost unknown in those days.

Grain was cut with the sickle until the cradle was invented in about 1830. With the sickle a strong man

could cut from one to two acres of wheat, oats, or rye in a day, and with the cradle he could almost double that amount. To rake each man's swaths into sheaves and bind them with straw bands usually took two men. Since a really successful threshing machine was not invented until 1834, this same man power had to be used to thresh the grain with flails, though this work was usually a winter job and not done under pressure as the reaping often was. Sometimes, too, the barn floor was swept clean of straw and chaff, and the grain was threshed partly by having horses tramp back and forth over the loosened sheaves. The flail would have to be used somewhat on grain thus threshed, before it would be ready for the winnowing machine, or windmill as it was called in this country, a machine turned with a crank, which got rid of the surplus chaff. Older people of this generation can doubtless remember as children riding the horses back and forth in the same way over timothy hay to thresh out timothy seed for sowing.

Grass was cut with the scythe until 1812, when the mowing machine was invented. The strongest man could cut from one to two acres a day, but again it took man power to scatter, rake, load the hay on wagons, and finally pitch it to the mow or stack. The horse drawn rake did not come into use until shortly before the Civil War. Even wagons were very scarce at first, and the hay was hauled on a rude sled or dragged with a grapevine, used instead of the rope of later days. A comparatively large pile, or "hay-cock," weighing perhaps several hundred pounds, could be dragged to barn or stack by putting the vine around it and hitching a horse or ox to it.

The transition from reaping by means of the sickle, through the various stages of invention represented by the cradle, the reaper, and the binder, to the combine, is an amazing story of the progress made in two hundred years. The evolution of threshing from the time of the flail and the windmill, through the ground threshers, operated by horses; the separator, run at first by a stationary engine, and still hauled from place to place by horses, the improved separator and its traction engine; to the combine, where the reaping and threshing came together in one machine, as two streams converge to form a broader smoother one, has finally revolutionized legitimate farming.

Prior to 1790 there was scarcely a market for any farm produce, and each farmer was content if he could raise enough to live on from year to year, improve his lands, and perhaps increase his livestock and his tilled acreage. The farmer who took his produce on flat boats to Pittsburgh was an exception. With the coming of distilleries, however, there was a market for rye, and when the iron industry started, it made a market for horses, cattle, oats, and corn.

As we have said before, these tillers of the soil were busy people, for to what we know as farming the pioneer added a whole "string" of home industries that were then necessary for comfortable living. Since there were not even small village stores at first, clothing and bedding, as well as meat, salt, sugar, soap, medicines, etc., had to be manufactured or procured by each household for itself. A farmstead had to be as nearly as possible self-supporting and self-sufficient in producing food and the comforts of life. Goods which were impossible of farm manufacture such as

needles, pins, clocks, watches, knives, books, tinware, and sometimes woodenware, laces, and ribbons were bought from the peddlers, who came once or twice a year through the outlying or farm districts all over America in Colonial and Revolutionary War times. They traveled sometimes on horseback, but more often on foot, and were quite as welcome for their news as for the articles which they carried in packs on their backs. Such peddlers were common long after the village stores came, and with the passing of the last of them not over fifty years ago, went one of our picturesque links with our country's past.

From necessity our early settlers were clothed almost entirely in homespun garments of linen or wool, or a mixture of both called linsey-woolsey. Flax culture is so far removed from this generation, that a description of how it was grown and the manner in which it was turned into linen thread should be interesting to us. Its use in the making of textile fabrics is much older than that of wool.

Boucher thus describes it in his history: "Flax is a fibrous plant, from the bark of which all linen is made. It will grow readily in any soil, but will grow best on loose ground. The seed is so small that a gallon of it would sow about two acres of ground. It grows about two and a half feet high and bears a pretty blue blossom. A field of it when in full bloom was most attractive to the eye. When ripe it was pulled up by the roots and dried on the ground in small shocks like wheat. The seeds were easily removed by threshing it with a flail. The stem itself was very brittle when dry, and the bark of the stem was very tough, and so when bent rapidly or broken on a crude

machine called a flax break, the bark remained whole, while the brittle stems were reduced to small pieces which were easily separated from the fibre. Finer parts of the fibre, or bark, could be spun into linen, and the coarser part was made into a fabric called tow. This separation was accomplished by drawing it lengthwise over a "hackle" which was a small piece of wood set with numerous iron spikes projecting about four inches. This caught the rough material and allowed the finer fibre to be drawn through. Then the housewife spun it into thread on a spinning-wheel propelled by a treadle tramped by one foot. Spinning-wheels may yet be seen in many houses, preserved as mementos of the spinning-age.

Spinning in the 1700's was not confined to the pioneer woman of the West. Women of the East of high class families who could afford imported linens were glad to spin and knit and weave. Mary Ball, the mother of Washington, could do all three. Looms were rather expensive, and only about one settler's family in twelve could afford one, though every family had one or more spinning-wheels. The neighbor who had a loom took in weaving and generally retained part of the woven fabric for his services. The fabric made of tow or linen was very durable, but not warm enough for cold weather, so the mixture of wool and linen known as linsey-woolsey was woven in great quantities. Much of the spinning and weaving was done by the flickering light of tallow dips, since there were so many other tasks to occupy the pioneer women during the day.

Wool was prepared for home spinning by carding, which was done by two hand cards which looked not

unlike the curry combs used on horses. It could then be spun and woven like linen or tow. It was difficult, however, to keep sheep in those early days because the forests were full of wolves and bears, and foxes too would destroy the young lambs. As the country grew older, these animals disappeared, and many sheep were kept in Rostraver, but wool carding by hand was abandoned as there was a Carding Mill on the farm which is now owned by David Scholl, situated on Route 71 between Sweeney's Restaurant and the Willow Brook Golf Club. Mr. Scholl is still using the mill as a barn, and has just razed the old mill house which was built of brick. In the pasture bordering Route 71 can still be seen the grass covered remains of the mill race, for at first it was run by water from a dam across Route 51 from the Jesse Smith farmhouse. It was next run as a tread mill, and finally by steam. Miss Ella Flanagan, on whose farm Sweeney's Restaurant stands, can remember when the mill was in operation.

At a later date there were wool factories run by water power, accessible to Rostraver, and the work they did was not expensive. Still later these factories colored wool and their weavers made it into blankets of red or blue, and white, some of which may yet be preserved as heirlooms among the older families. However, we can safely assume that the earliest settlers in Rostraver for about thirty or forty years spun and wove their cloth by hand.

Skins were also used for clothing in the very early days, Indian fashion. In winter men working much outdoors wore caps made of coon skins, and buckskin trousers were worn by men in all ranks of life. They

often wore hunting shirts too of doe or buck skin that were attractive to look at and very durable. The very well-to-do men for dress wore shoes with buckles, knee breeches, and blue coats with brass butttons. But the cloth in these was not of home manufacture, but had to come from the East by packhorse train. The average man who wore shoes at all in summer wore moccasin-like, soft soled shoes made at home, and in winter heavy leather boots, or shoes crudely fashioned with heavy home knit wool stockings.

Women wore short dresses of linsey-woolsey in the summer, some of which were colored with dyes made from leaves and berries. In winter they wore wool. On special occasions they wore beaver hats much like those so commonly worn by frontier men for dress everywhere in colonial times. For ordinary occasions they wore fringed silk handkerchiefs ever their heads. Many went barefoot in summer while at their work, and sometimes even attended church without shoes. In winter they wore moccasins. It was forty years after the earliest settlement here before silk dresses began to be worn even occasionally. Calico and other cottons did not come into use until after the Revolution.

For their meat supply they depended mainly on their trusty rifles. Every settler was expected to know how to handle a gun. The forests were full of game. The most dangerous of the animals were the black and brown bears, which were especially common here where the cavernous rocks in the river hills and the deep ravines afforded them good dens and hiding places. Their meat much resembled pork, and the pioneer invariably laid in a supply of it in the late fall and winter, preserving it much as pork is now cured.

There was also an abundance of deer. Dozens were shot in a single year by one pioneer, who hunted only in his leisure hours. Jerked venison such as the Indians prepared was common among the early white men. Small game such as wild turkey, pheasant, quail, and squirrel was also exceedingly plentiful. Moreover, both the Youghiogheny and the Monongahela and also the various creeks abounded in fish.

Getting salt was the greatest problem in those days. The settler could not produce it, and neither he nor his stock could do without it. Of course, he knew where the deer licks were, but getting even a little bit there was a slow process. At first it had to be brought here on packhorses from Hagerstown, Maryland, or from Philadelphia. The commonest way to get it was to send a train of packhorses east laden with skins and furs and have it returned laden with salt. In 1790 a barrel of salt was worth twenty bushels of wheat. By 1800 salt from the inexhaustible salt wells of Kentucky was brought by boat up the Ohio to Pittsburgh. It then became cheaper; yet in 1806 Kentucky salt was selling in Pittsburgh for fourteen dollars a barrel. Both Congress and the State Legislature passed measures to better the salt supply. In 1776 a large amount of salt was found secreted by Tory merchants in Philadelphia, which was confiscated immediately and distributed among the counties of the state. In 1778 the Legislature purchased a large quantity for free distribution, and also passed a law prohibiting anyone from having a monopoly in the salt trade. Our pioneers sent flour east on packhorses to trade for salt. Some of the first whisky distilled in Western Pennsylvania was sent by boat to Kentucky to be traded for salt.

Even as late as 1820 farmer boys went east for salt. A horse could carry two hundred and fifty pounds of salt besides its boy rider. The speed of travel was about twenty-five miles per day. The boys looked forward all year to the trip in the fall when they could be spared from the farm work. When they returned, they were veritable young heroes who were asked to tell of their sight seeing trip.

Another necessary industry of the farmstead was boiling the sap of the sugar maple to make syrup and sugar. The Indians had used the sap of the walnut tree as well as that of the maple. The latter produced a very dark colored, but very sweet syrup or sugar. There is very good authority for believing that maple sugar and syrup making, still common in America and as near here as Somerset County, was taught to the settlers by the Indians. The settlers, of course, made them only for home consumption, but doing that was another thing that kept them busy.

Soap also was made at home. Mr. David Scholl tells us that his grandfather had a large flag stone with a circular groove in it into which a barrel was fitted which held wood ashes from which primitive lye was made. Water from this barrel, which was covered, seeped through the ashes into the groove, and another groove led from the circular one to the edge of the flag stone through which it ran and dropped into an iron pot as lye. With such lye our early Rostraver housewives made their soap. They boiled their tallow or other fat with water and lye, in a great kettle outdoors usually, until the lye "ate up the grease" and the mixture became soap.

This lye had another use in pioneer days. Hominy,

which we have mentioned before, was made from hulled corn. The grains of corn were soaked in a weak lye solution. This caused the kernels to puff up. The skins came off and floated to the top of the liquid. After the kernels were washed, they were ready to be cooked. Hominy was boiled or fried and usually served with meat. It was a favorite dish in those days.

Making sufficient candles for a family was no small task. The most primitive kind which our early settlers mostly used was the tallow dip. It was made by dipping a wick of sufficient length into melted tallow again and again until it was sufficiently thick to supply fuel for a fair sized flame. By the 1800's candle molds were used, which made a larger as well as a much more sightly candle.

Fortunately Rostraver's woods, like all others in Western Pennsylvania, were full of wild fruits such as strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, wild grapes, plums, servesberries (sarvisberries), etc. They were much better flavored and more luscious than today since the forest is gone. These were of great advantage to the people for they provided a welcome change in a rather monotonous diet. Not only were they delicious to eat in season, but the housewives dried many of them as well as apples for use out of season as stewed fruit, or in pies, etc.

Cooking itself in those days was so different from now that a brief description of it may not be out of place here. It is safe to say that there were no cooking stoves in Rostraver until the eighteen hundreds. The fireplace was supplied with a crane by means of which an iron pot or kettle could be swung around over the fire. So important was this cooking arrange-

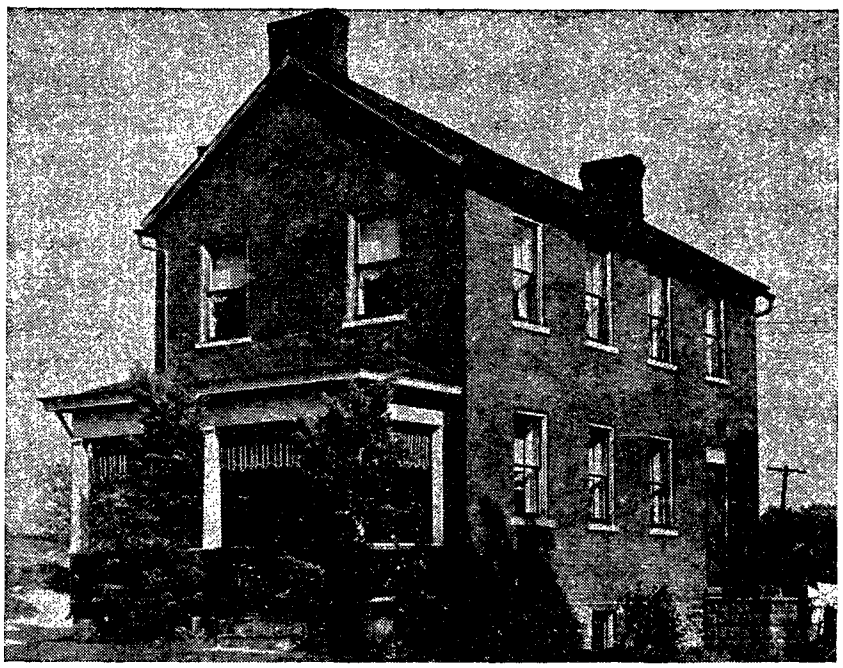
ment, that one of the very early household ceremonies was the "Hanging of the Crane". Prints of W. L. Taylor's painting by that title were very popular some fifty years ago, after it was seen in the "Ladies Home Journal". Meat was boiled in the pot or kettle or roasted on spits or boiled by pushing it on sticks and holding them over the fire as we still do sometimes at picnics. Frying was done by placing the pan on the hot hearthstone or directly on the hot coals. Bread was baked in a Dutch oven placed before the fire and turned at intervals, or banked with hot coals if the fire was low. With the use of coal for heating and the passing of the wood fire, the "out" oven came into use. It was beehive in shape, built of brick or clay like those very common in European villages, with the difference that in Colonial America nearly every farmstead had its own. Wood was burned in the oven, then raked out, and pies, puddings, etc., baked while it was hottest, followed by big loaves of bread as the heat became more moderate.

There were always a few women in a community who knew how to grow and cure herbs for simple remedies, and they shared their knowledge with others. Such patent drugs as there were in those times could often be bought from the peddler on his visits to the community.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE EARLY VILLAGE

Next to the farmer, the millright was the most essential member of the community, and mills were usually the starting points for our earliest villages and post offices when the latter were established. The pioneer had to go to the mill perhaps more frequently



Daily Independent Photo

Last Rostraver Post Office

than any other place. There he waited for his grist to be ground and took his flour home with him, the miller having first taken his share as toll for grinding it.

It was natural for a blacksmith to locate his forge near by. He could thus shoe the horses while the grist was being ground. When the day of the storekeeper arrived, he, too, found the vicinity of the mill the best place to open up a little storeroom in his house, filled with such goods as the pioneer needed, but could not make for himself. The post office of Rostraver was situated on what is now Plummer McKenery's farm on Route 51. Indeed, the house in which Mr. McKenery lives was once the store and post office. Mrs. Betsy Thistlewaite kept the store for a time, and the last people to keep the post office were Mr. McKenery's grand-parents, Mr. and Mrs. Plummer Smith, since the farm was then their home. Just a stone's throw from the post office, between the site of the present barn and Route 51, was the blacksmith's shop of which James Hixenbaugh was the smith for years. The farm borders one arm of Cedar Creek, and a short distance down the creek proper, where just the right location for convenient use of its water power was found, was the Cedar Creek Mill. It was built on land now owned by the Pittsburgh Coal Company. There are stones there today which evidently are the remains of either the mill itself or the mill house.

The following from Boucher's "Old and New Westmoreland" gives a remarkably vivid and informing picture of the mill of the seventeen hundreds and the early eighteen hundreds: "The first mills, run by waterpower, were operated by a water-wheel known as the tub mill-wheel, which frequently gave its name to the stream (such as Tub Mill Run) which turned it. The tub mill-wheel was in a round enclosure that resembled a large tub. The water falling on it made

it revolve, and thus the perpendicular shaft to which it was fastened was turned and by gearing made the mill stones revolve, or ran a saw as the case might be. This wheel gave place to the paddle wheel, the undershot one, and finally the overshot wheel which was regarded as the greatest improvement possible. Whether the mill was log, frame, stone, or brick, the first story walls were almost always of stone in order to bear the weight of the grinding stones and machinery."

Mills in those days were hospitable places. In the office of the mill there was nearly always an open fireplace, where the farmers could gather to chat with each other and with the miller while their grain was being ground, and children often played around among the grain sacks in the mill or watched the water from the mill race turn the big water wheel. The Cedar Creek Mill was one of three that were within the confines of what is now Rostraver Township. It was operated for a time by William Patterson, the grandfather of A. Guy Patterson, and the last man to run it was James Goodman, at least fifty years ago.

A short distance up Cedar Creek was Old Concord School, and later Concord Methodist Church and the new Concord School. Thus the community around the Rostraver Post Office, whether it was ever termed a village or not, had all the earmarks of one. The old school house was used for a time as a store after the new Concord School was built.

The mill known as Paul's Mill was built on Sawmill Run in what is known as Coal Hollow on land now owned by Harry Wilhelm of Pittsburgh, along Route 71 between the home of Harry H. Markle (just

below the bridge over the Run) and the intersection of Route 71 and Route 31, about a mile from West Newton. The old stone house now occupied by Jesse Schwab may have been the mill house, or it could have been built of stone from the walls of the mill itself.

The third mill was at Webster. For an account of it Miss Margaret Perkins, now of 1108 Braddock Avenue, Swissvale, has graciously permitted us to quote from "A History of Webster Village," written by her sister, Miss Emma Perkins (now deceased), on the occasion of the opening of the Webster-Donora bridge, December 4, 1908:

"The land on which the Webster Grist Mill now stands came from a grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania of one hundred and seventy-five acres on July 6, 1796, to Peter Rothwell, who a few days later deeded the same to James Collet. The land was bounded by the lands of George Martin, Benjamin Fell and Andrew Beazell, James Bruce and the Monongahela River. A part of this boundary land remains yet in the hands of heirs of George and Joshua Martin. Land deals moved quickly in these early days, for in six more days, on July 15, 1796, James Collet sold eighty-one acres to David Ryal. The longest side of this tract faced the Monongahela River, and on this the older part of the village of Webster stands.

"About thirteen years later, April 4, 1809, David Ryal and wife conveyed their holdings to Jesse Davis, who built the farmhouse, which is still standing. The river bottom was his orchard. The house was two stories, built of logs, and later became the home of the Rev. Irwin Sansom, a pioneer Methodist minister of this West of the Alleghenies region. About 1830 to

1832 the farming population 'took in hand' to have a grist mill and saw mill. Jesse Davis sold a small part of his eighty-one acres to Thomas Van Hook, who owned and operated the water race. Joseph Finley, Justice of the Peace, gave material aid in this, both as to money loans and labor. His son, Thomas G. Finley, born in 1820, remembers a log house on his father's farm being torn down and the logs hauled by him, then a lad about twelve years old, to build a house on the north side of the run, in which the men who built the mill lived, cooked, and slept. They were John Montgomery and brother and John Pollock, who later owned the mill. John Montgomery's sons worked fifty years later when the mill was rebuilt. A man named Wallace built the stone work and the stack, which still stands. There is an interesting tradition regarding the scaffolding breaking down and leaving him on top of the stack until a difficult rescue was effected.

"In connection with the grist mill there was a saw mill run by the same power, and later gun stocks were made here. The timber of the region was good and stout, for when in 1881 this building was torn down and rebuilt, many of these hewn timbers were undecayed after fifty years of service."

Miss Perkins's father, A. A. Perkins, bought the mill in 1865 and operated it until his death in 1911. For two more years his daughters operated it. They were the last to "run" it as a genuine flour mill. William Laub, who bought it from them in 1913 and kept it until 1945, ground feed, etc. Mrs. Amelia Carson, Mr. Laub's daughter, now owns the building. S. C. Stahl of near Irwin owns the machinery, and Edgar

Overand runs it as a distributing center for feed, etc., but does no grinding.

The town itself was laid out by Matthew and Ephraim Beazell in 1833 and named in honor of the great orator and statesman, Daniel Webster, then at the zenith of his power. It was for a long time the largest town in Rostraver, and is one of the oldest coal towns on the Monongahela. Here too, Samuel Walker built the first steamboat operated on this river, and for many years the town was noted for building steamboats for use on the Ohio as well as the Monongahela.

Over on the Youghiogheny also, almost from the founding of West Newton (also called Robbstown for a time from the name of the man who laid it out as a town in 1796) until the National Road was built in 1820, there was a great deal of shipping to Pittsburgh. It was at first carried on by keel boats, but when slack water dams were built as far up the river as West Newton, travel by steamboat was also extensive. The first steamboat to ply the Youghiogheny was the "Tom Shriber." When floods swept away the dams, they were not rebuilt.

In those days travel on Rostraver's two rivers must have been a great treat to the settlers because of the picturesque valleys of these rivers, which were as yet unspoiled by the coal and other industries that make the valleys so busy today, and, we regret to say, have too little regard for the beauty of the region. Here and there the travelers then saw at a break in the river hills a small coal mine or smoke rising from a saw mill, or waved to the people at one of the little settlements at a ferry. For the rest, only nature in all its pristine loveliness met their eyes. On the river

hills were the finest forest trees and in the spring beautiful flowering ones such as red bud and dogwood, and in the level stretches fields of grain or pasture land, or orchards and gardens around the log houses of the farmers. No river valley in the United States surpassed that of the Youghiogheny in the variety of its native trees and wild flowers. Even today botanists from all over the country still haunt its banks around Ohiopyle, which is situated at a picturesque falls in the river south of here in Fayette County.

CHAPTER EIGHT

PIONEER FAMILIES

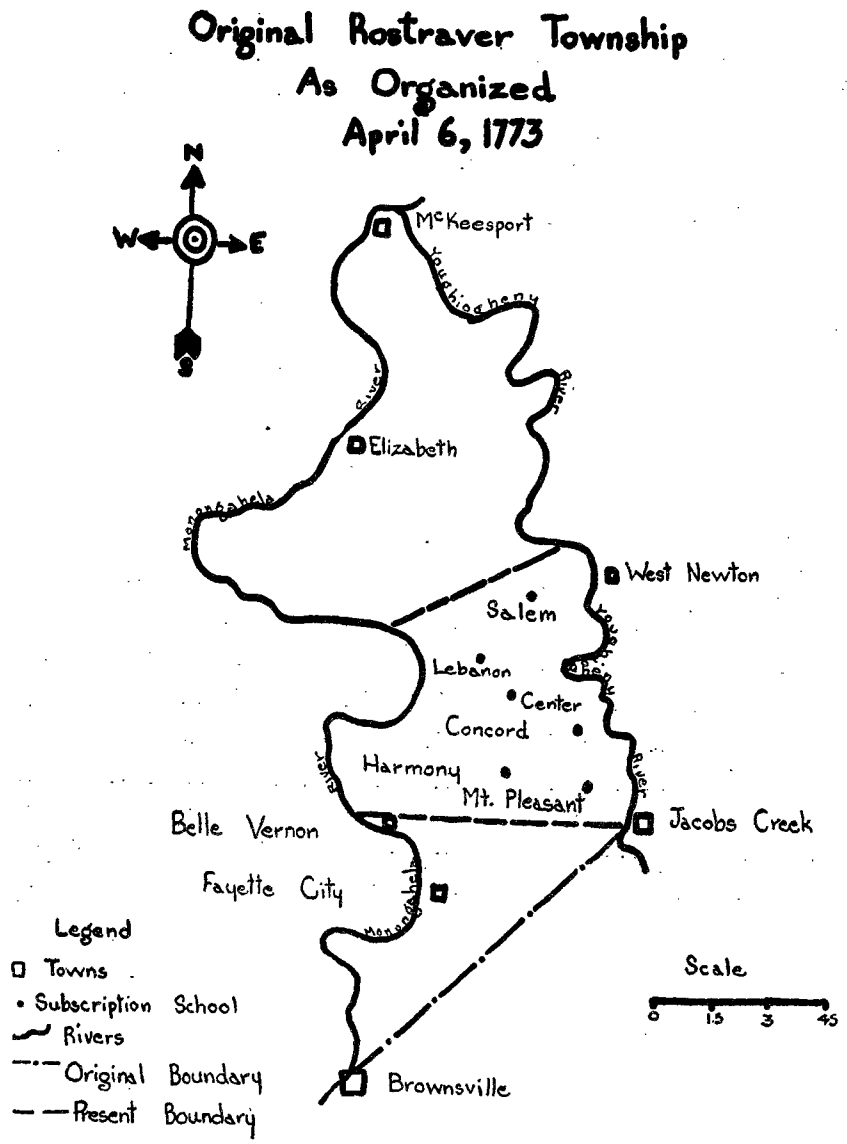
As we said before, the first settlers came during the French and Indian War. According to George Dallas Albert's "History of Westmoreland County", the first actual settler was Isaac Hill, who came from Winchester (now Westminster), Carroll County, Maryland, in 1754. He was only eighteen years old, but he took up a large tract of land in the southwestern part of what is now the township that first year, and with the assistance of his negro slave, who accompanied him, built a cabin thereon. Lewis S. Blackburn of Belle Vernon, a direct descendant of the Hill family, gives the location of the cabin as directly across the road from the residence of Thomas Moody on Route 71, near Altier's Dairy Bar. First settler Hill and his negro companion lived by hunting and fishing. They frequently raided the great flocks of wild turkeys which roosted in and about Turkey Hollow. It is interesting to note that this name still clings to the valley opening upon the Monongahela River just above Webster. They lived in this log cabin about a year, but were forced to go back over the mountains for safety as the French had stirred up the Indians to make war on the English settlers. However, after the war was over, Isaac returned to his holdings accompanied by his father, mother, and other settlers. The father, Joseph Hill, later served seven years in the Revolutionary War. Sometimes Joseph Hill is mentioned as the first settler instead of his son Isaac.

After the Hills the next settler was George Weddell,

who came with his family from Hagerstown, Maryland, in 1758. This family settled in the northeastern part of the township and built a frontier stockade which they called Fort Weddell. It was in the vicinity of the Robertson farm which is on Route 31 about two and one half miles from West Newton. The remains of the fort and the original house of the Weddells are both gone, but the old family burying ground, just over the hill from the Robertson farm, still marks the settlement for us today. Many descendants of this family still live in Western Pennsylvania.

So attractive was this region between the Youghiogheny and the Monongahela, that no sooner were the French driven from Fort Duquesne, renamed Fort Pitt by the victorious English in 1758, than settlers came in such numbers that the district was organized as a township as a part of Bedford County as early as 1771. On July 16 of that year the Court of General Quarter Sessions of Bedford County appointed township officers to serve in Rostraver Township. When Westmoreland County was organized on April 6, 1773, Rostraver became one of its original townships and its boundaries were: Beginning at the mouth of Jacob's Creek and running down the Youghiogheny to where it joins the Monongahela, thence up the Monongahela to the mouth of Redstone Creek, and thence with a straight line to the beginning. It was later reduced to its present size when Fayette and Allegheny counties were created.

In writing of our earliest settlers and the land they occupied, we have limited the account to those who came before eighteen hundred, and with the means available for research have done our best to be as



Drawing by Adolph Kobe

accurate as possible and to include as many as the records and the family descendants could furnish.

Matthew Beazell, one of the few of our early settlers born in Germany, had emigrated to America in about 1760 and with his wife, whom he had met and married on shipboard, settled in Berkeley County, Virginia. In 1773 he brought his family and settled in Rostraver. The tract of land he purchased in 1775 contained two hundred and ninety acres which was in the vicinity of what is now Fellsburg and Webster. In fact the Beazell land extended to the mill site in Webster. Matthew's son, William married Rebecca Fell, daughter of Benjamin Fell, another of the early settlers in this part of the township, and a very distinguished one.

Benjamin Fell came to Rostraver from Bucks County in 1783. His descent has been traced back to John and Margaret Fell who were members of the Friends' Meeting at Woodhall, County of Cumberland, England. "Longlands", the ancestral home of the Fells, was situated near Carlisle, the county seat of Cumberland County, England. The family had emigrated to America in 1704, settling in Bucks County. Prior to moving to Western Pennsylvania, Benjamin Fell had been prominent in both church and state. He took a decided stand in the cause of liberty, was a member of one of the first Conventions that assembled at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, and was an intimate friend of Washington. The first Methodist sermon heard in the township was preached in his house, which for a number of years was headquarters of that church. He gave the ground on which the Fells Methodist Episcopal Church, which took its

name from the donor, was built in 1792. The site of the original home of Benjamin Fell is now the farm owned by Bert Larson which lies across the road from Fells Church. It was originally a very large tract, some six hundred acres. Adjoining it is a farm now owned by William Seighman, which was the Peter Fell farm, and a part of the original tract. There are still many descendants of the Beazell and Fell families in Western Pennsylvania, and they have reason to be proud of their forefathers.

The Budd family, consisting of Joseph Budd, Sr., and his two brothers, Conklin and Joshua, came from Somerset County, New Jersey, before the Revolutionary War. Conklin soon went elsewhere, but Joseph and Joshua became large landowners at the ferry named for them on the Youghiogheny just south of West Newton. Joseph Budd, Sr., gave the land for the Salem Baptist Church and for the cemetery attached to it, and he assisted Nathaniel Hayden, David Davis, and others in erecting the church in 1792. When the Budds came the Indians were not all gone, and the only settlement between their ferry and General Simrall's ferry (now West Newton) was one solitary cabin. There are still many descendants of the pioneer Budds in the township. All emigration to the West, which a few years after the Budds came had become very great, had to pass over either Budd's or Simerall's ferry, or else take a flat boat at the latter place. Among these emigrants some strangers from the East for a time occupied a cabin near Budd's ferry. They were rather prepossessing in manner and agreeable in their intercourse with the settlers, but seemed to have no business other than hunting and fishing. After the

death of Woods, one of their number, they all left immediately. After their departure all manner of apparatus for counterfeiting was found secreted on the premises, and it turned out that these people who had had their rendezvous here were the greatest band of counterfeiters in the country. They had fled from New York to escape the officers, and, hid in the hills of a new settlement, pursued their schemes unmolested.

In an account of the settlers in Rostraver we must not forget Colonel Edward Cook. Although his home and part of his grant of land are now in Fayette County, it was all in Rostraver Township, Bedford County at first. The Colonel, who was born in 1738, was of English descent, but his family had come to America and were settled in Lancaster County as early as 1720. We first hear of Edward Cook as an inhabitant of the village of Fort Pitt in 1760. He had undoubtedly come to Fort Pitt in the spirit of advenure or to explore the "western country" for he was only twenty-two years old then. There is a story current among his descendants that he had visited the "Forks" in 1769 and selected as a place to settle, the beautiful region now known as Rehoboth valley. At any rate in 1770 he came with his wife to make his home here. In addition to the tract of about two hundred acres which he settled on first, which still belongs to his descendants, the Joseph Cook heirs, he later patented or purchased many more acres in Rehoboth valley and also some lying on the Monongahela river below Fayette City, formerly Cookstown, the site of which he also owned. At his death he had close to one thousand acres. In 1772 he began building a

stone house (now the home of Robert Cook, whose children are the sixth generation from Edward) which was not completed until 1776. This house is certainly one of the oldest, if not the oldest, stone house in Western Pennsylvania.

It was built of our native limestone and its timbers and woodwork were all hardwood, mostly walnut. No wonder it still stands today. Like others of the settlers, Edward Cook had slaves at first, but they were gradually freed under the abolition law of 1782. His title, Colonel, came from his being sub-lieutenant for Westmoreland County in 1777 and again in 1780, and Commander of a battalion of rangers for frontier defense in 1781. He was a patriotic and distinguished citizen, active in county, state, and church affairs. There is a little book on his life written by Alexander Guffey, which sets forth his services to his country in some detail.

The Cunningham family is of Scotch-Irish descent. James Cunningham, the first of the family that we hear of in Rostraver, came here in 1784 from Lancaster County, where his father had settled in 1725. James owned some four hundred or more acres of land. The original log house on it stood in the yard near the present house on the Patterson Cunningham farm on Route 981, now occupied by Mrs. Lulu Fisher and Miss Minnie Cunningham, great, great granddaughters of James. His holdings included besides this farm, the farms of Mrs. Henry Cunningham, Mrs. Elizabeth Nusser, and John Matty. There is very good evidence that the George Kizman farm and perhaps the one owned by Harry Miller were a part of his tract. He served in the Navy in the Revolutionary

War. He had a distillery on his farm where the people often met to discuss the grievances that resulted in the Whiskey Insurrection in 1794. His son Robert, born in 1790, served in the War of 1812 and was badly wounded, but lived to be eighty-four years of age. There are many direct descendants of this family in the township.

The founder and first pastor of the Rehoboth Presbyterian Church, the oldest church in the township, the Rev. James Finley, was born in County Armagh, Ireland, in 1725. He was the owner of four hundred acres of land in Rostraver, Rehoboth Church standing near the center of the tract. The stone house across the highway opposite the church, now owned by the George Hudak family, is supposed to be the original home, or the site of the home he occupied. At his death in 1795 he left several children whose numerous descendants are still found scattered throughout the township. His name is still held in great reverence here.

Miss Ella M. Flanagan, upon whose farm Sweeney's Restaurant stands at the intersection of Routes 51 and 71, is the last of her family which was also a pioneer one. Her grandfather, Patrick Flanagan, was born in Ireland in 1776, where he lived until he was eighteen years of age, when he crossed the ocean and came to Western Pennsylvania. He became a contractor on the "Old Pike" between Uniontown and Brownsville and then decided to become a farmer and settled here. The original Flanagan tract included what is now the Russell Hellein farm as well as the farm on which Miss Flanagan still lives. His son, James, became a Presbyterian minister and served his

church in that capacity for many years. His son, John C., Miss Flanagan's father, spent his life farming and stock raising. He was a very able and public spirited citizen, holding many offices in the townshp and devoted to his church.

The Household family came originally from Norfolkshire, England. Their tract of land in Rostraver, however, came into possession of the family from the maternal grandfather of William Household (born in 1833), Ebenezer Walker. The latter was of Welsh descent and came to Rostraver from Virginia, where his family had settled before the Revolutionary War. He married Mary Bruce, a descendant of the royal Bruces of Scotland. He cleared the land now known as the Old Household Place and built a log house which was later replaced by the substantial brick house which is still standing. To reach the homestead one takes the Port Royal road at Concord Methodist Church on Route 51 and follows it to its intersection with the Cedar Creek road on which the farm is situated. It is now owned by Mrs. Jacob Peters. The Households were lovers of learning and travel. William Household, mentioned above, not only traveled all over the United States, but also visited the British Isles and most of the countries of Western Europe. His great granddaughters, Lavina and Patricia Jean Smith (daughters of James L. Smith) are the fifth generation from Ebenezer Walker to reside in the township. They are likewise the fifth generation from the first William Household we know of, of Norfolkshire, England.

The Houseman family, according to George Dallas Albert's "History of Westmoreland County", came

from Winchester, Maryland. Christopher Houseman, who had served in the Revolutionary War in Captain John Van Meter's Company, received a grant of one hundred and forty acres of land in Rostraver called St. Kitts, in 1787. It was apparently very irregular in shape as it had ten sides, no two of which were of equal length. He probably chose it because its topography exactly suited him. On the patent it is described as bordering John Houseman's land on three sides. It's a curious fact that in Greensburg there is neither a record of any grant of land to John Houseman, nor of any deed recorded by him, and yet the Houseman family maintains that John was the first of their name to settle here. No doubt in those very early days records were sometimes lost. There were two tracts of land, however, that we are sure belonged to the Houseman family. The tract belonging to John Johnson Houseman, according to his great granddaughters, Miss Mary Houseman, Mrs. Clyde Martin, and Mrs. Gillette Lutz, included the three farms on Route 981, now owned by William Daugherty, Samuel Heath, and Mrs. William Crawford respectively. The original log house stood on the Crawford farm, about eight feet to the rear of their house, and the family burying ground was just across the road from the house. The other tract belonging to Joseph Houseman, brother of John Johnson Houseman, lies now in Fayette County on the highway from Rehoboth Church to Fayette City. It is still in the hands of great grandchildren of Joseph Houseman, Ray Stephens and Martha Stephens Robertson, son and daughter of Lulu Houseman Stephens. Little Carol Anne Stephens

(daughter of Donald Stephens) is the fifth generation from Joseph Houseman to reside on this tract of land.

The founder of the Lowry family, Stephen Lowry, came to Rostraver at the age of thirty from Dublin, Ireland, in 1774. He purchased about two hundred acres of land from Adam Wickerham, which he cleared and upon which he built a log house, where for a time he kept "bachelor's hall". He married Anne Pollock of Maryland. His farm which became one of the best known and best equipped estates in the township is now owned by David Robertson. It is situated on Route 71, about three miles from West Newton. For many years Stephen Lowry took the products of his farm on flat boats to the New Orleans market, a custom not uncommon in those days among farmers living near the river. He and his wife are buried in Rehoboth Cemetery. They have direct descendants still living in the township.

The first of the Martin family to settle in Rostraver, George A. Martin, was of Dutch descent. There is an interesting story current among his descendants to the effect that he and his family, traveling up the Monongahela River in 1785, were stopped by an ice gorge in Turkey Hollow, and while waiting for the ice to move, found a tract of one hundred and eighty acres of land to their liking and settled upon it. It is situated on the hill above Turkey Hollow and was known as Warren Point at that time. It is now owned by Carl E. Martin who is the son of the second George A. Martin and the great, great grandson of first settler, George A. Carl's son, a third George A., lives on the tract, too, and his children, a fourth George A.,

Jimmy, and Jerry are the fifth generation to live on the farm of their ancestors.

The McClain family is of Irish descent. Alexander McClain, the first of the family to come to Rostraver, came directly from County Down, Ireland. He settled on the Youghiogheny, and may have lived in a log house that stood between the present home of Mrs. Thomas Williams and Route 981, on the road that crosses Route 981 just below the Olive Branch Baptist Church. His son, John McClain, lived at what is now Port Royal on the Youghiogheny, where he raised a large family, some of whom settled in the township while others went to other states. His son, Thompson McClain, was an influential member of his community, and in 1876 was elected to the State Legislature. He was also a member of the School Board. By profession he was a boat builder, as were his brothers, John and Abner, and constructed boats to be used in transporting produce to Pittsburgh. Later McClain boats were also sold in Pittsburgh for use in the river trade as far as New Orleans. When a man of middle age he bought the farm where his daughter, Miss Anna McClain and her sister, Mary McClain Howard, are living today. It was known as the Old Finley Farm and comprises two hundred and forty acres. The house was a very old one partly constructed of logs. He remodeled it and his son, Thomas, who with Miss Anna occupied the farm until his death in 1943, further improved it. Both Thomas and Miss Anna taught in the township schools. Abner McClain, brother of Thompson, was a tanner as well as a boat builder. Like his brother, he too, became a farmer. He bought the Samuel Wakefield farm adjoining his brother's farm.

It contained ninety-two acres, and is situated on Route 51, adjoining the new Concord School property and the Rostraver Grange. Indeed the Grange Hall was built on McClain property. The farm has been sold in building lots, but the part containing the original house is owned now by Jacob Gilmore. Mrs. Ella McClain McMillan, daughter of Abner McClain, owns the plot which adjoins the new Concord School, just across the road from her old home. She, too, was a teacher.

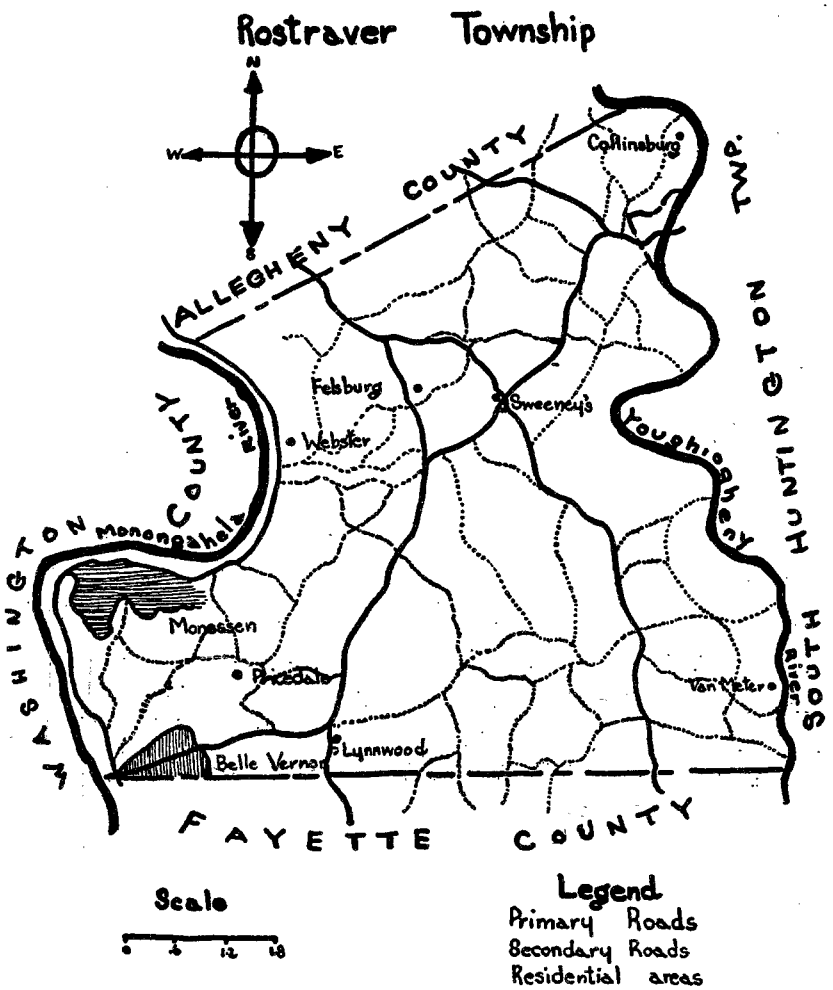
The first of the Porter family to settle in Rostraver was John, who came from Ellicot Mills, Maryland, in 1788 or 1789, although his ancestors had come to Virginia from England as early as 1622. The original Porter tract is the one with the interesting old stone house, now owned by Mrs. Charles Branthoover. In 1813 John sold this farm to his brother, Caleb, who was the great grandfather of O. T. and Miss Lyda Porter, who still reside in the township and also of Paul and Guy Porter of West Newton and Mt. Pleasant respectively. The tract must have included what is now the farm of Frank Smith, for Oliver Porter, father of O. T. and Miss Lyda, was born there, and on that farm there was, until a few years ago, the house in which this Virginia family housed the slaves that they brought with them.

Colonel John Power, born in 1757, a young officer in the Revolutionary War, was a distinguished early settler. He married Margaret, daughter of the Reverend James Finley in 1778. In 1788 Colonel John received a grant of two hundred and forty-seven and three fourth acres of land. It was what is now the Piersol farm and the farm of the heirs of Mrs. Victoria Smith. Major John Power, son of Colonel John,

married Mary Starrett, daughter of James and Elizabeth Starrett, in 1807, and thus the Starrett tract, now the A. Guy Patterson farm, came by the will of James Starrett into the Power name. Miss Mary Houseman and her sisters, Mrs. Clyde Martin and Mrs. Gillette Lutz are great, great granddaughters of Colonel John Power and great, great, great granddaughters of the Reverend James Finley. The old Power Bible in their possession supplies very authentic information concerning the pioneers of the family.

The farm adjoining the old Lowry homestead which is reached by a lane just at the corner of the Lowry (now David Robertson) farm was the original home of James and Mary Margaret Sampson, the first of that family to settle here. The Rostraver Sampsons were descended from John, who emigrated to Maryland from Ballyoughlin, County Tyrone, Ireland. William Sampson of this same family kept the famous Black Horse Tavern. The site of the tavern is in dispute, but the consensus of opinion seems to place it on the farm now belonging to Ben Donaldson, just where the road from Webster joins Route 51. Though we do not know who first owned this site of the Black Horse Tavern, it is interesting to note that just prior to the presnt, Mrs. Donaldson's father, Henry (Hense) Lange owned it, and prior to his ownership, Mr. Donaldson's father had it.

Of the Shepler family which had emigrated from Germany and settled near Winchester, Virginia, Matthias with his brothers, Peter and Philip, came to settle in Rostraver before the Revolutionary War. The original Shepler tract, which comprised over four hundred acres, includes the highest point in the town-


Rostraver Township
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W
E
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ALLEGHENY COUNTY
Collinsburg
TWP.
HUNTINGTON
SOUTH
Youghiogheny
River
Fellsburg
Sweeney's
Webster
WASHINGTON COUNTY
Monongahela River
Monessen
Pricedale
Van Meter
Belle Vernon
Lynnwood
FAYETTE COUNTY
Scale
0 6 12 18
Legend
Primary Roads
Secondary Roads
Residential areas
Drawing by Adolph Kobe

ship, according to government survey. It lies between Routes 71 and 981 and is reached by a road which leaves Route 71 at the George Frich farm and meets Route 981 at the William Daugherty farm. Matthias Shepler's son, Isaac, married Sara Hill, the daughter of Joseph and Mary Hill of the first family to settle in the township. Isaac's son, Joseph, born in 1807, was chosen Captain of the first company of the Eighty-eighth State Volunteers at the age of twenty-one, a position which he held for seven years; was captain of the Monongahela Blues for five years; and first lieutenant of the Rostraver Cavalry for five years. He was also one of the staunchest supporters of Fells Methodist Church. There are direct descendants of this family in the township and the surrounding towns.

According to "The Old and New Monongahela" by Dr. John S. Van Voorhis, Dr. Bela Smith, the first of his family to settle in Rostraver, came from Connecticut to the "Forks" between 1785 and 1789, as a Yankee school teacher, although he had studied medicine in Connecticut. He soon gave up teaching to practice medicine, and we learn from his descendants that he used to go down to Fort Pitt to doctor the soldiers there. His house stood in what is now West Side, West Newton, where the old Markle home just back of the Wagoner Garage now stands. His son Bela B. Smith, made his home on the farm still owned by the Smith family on Route 981 extending to and beyond Route 51. He was a Justice of the Peace for many years and was looked upon as a very upright judge, and a very good citizen. His son, the third Bela Smith to live in Rostraver, inherited the farm just mentioned and lived there all his life. It is his son, Grant Smith, who is the

owner now. He and his son, James, have new houses on the old farm. The daughters of James, Lavina and Patricia Jean, are the sixth generation of the family to live in Rostraver, and the fifth to live on this tract of land.

The Stewart family which is of Scotch descent has one of the oldest patents on land in the township. James Stewart received the grant of two hundred and ten acres called Gallio, in 1784, and to make it more interesting, his patent was signed by Benjamin Franklin. It included the farm still owned by the Andrew Stewart heirs and what is now the Willow Brook Golf Club. The original log house stood on the Golf Club ground, but the second generation built a log house which stood between the present homes of Eva Stewart (Mrs. John Stoneman) and Jessie Stewart (Mrs. George Peters), on the road leading from Route 71 past the Golf Club to Route 51. Billy Stoneman, twelve years old, is the sixth generation from the first owner, James Stewart.

The Timms family was of Irish descent. The first of the family to settle in Rostraver was Mrs. Mary Timms with her two young sons, Samuel and Caleb, who came from Hagerstown, Maryland, at the end of the 1700's or in the early 1800's. The tract of land that Mary Timms bought is the farm now owned by Benjamin McClain on Route 981 near the Smithton bridge. Samuel, Mary's elder son, became a boat builder. There are still descendants of this family in the township.

The Todd family is of French descent for their ancestors lived in Brittany before emigrating to America. They first settled in Lancaster County, but in 1779, Robert Todd, the grandfather of the late Robert

Sowers Todd and George Miller Todd, came here and settled on a farm a mile and a half from Rostraver Post Office, on part of which the old Concord School stands. The farm still belongs to the Robert Sowers Todd heirs. The first Robert Todd was a Quaker. He was a miller as well as a farmer. It is highly probable that he once operated the mill on Cedar Creek. There are many descendants of this family still in the township.

CHAPTER NINE

RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

Like the early settlers in other parts of our country, those in Rostraver Township had the universal desire to worship God publicly. The task of building churches in the wilderness would seem to us in this easy world of today a feat of courage and endurance that would have caused "our hearts to faint and our limbs grow weary." Just think how many suppers and festivals, shows and performances; how much talking and pleading must go into our modern attempts at remodeling or adding to our own meeting houses! Was not their original work much more difficult? Perhaps a brief story of some of these early congregations will give us a deeper sense of appreciation for the foundations these pioneers laid and inspire us to leave behind a record of accomplishments that future generations may read with interest and pride.

From the time of the first settlement in Pennsylvania by William Penn and his Quakers the province was a place of refuge for all the discordant elements of Europe. Thus it came about that in Pennsylvania we had all kinds of religious beliefs. Among our leaders were many liberal thinkers and prominent men who were not affiliated with any particular religious sect. Here there was genuine religious freedom and the Pennsylvania system of toleration was sanctioned by the Constitutional Convention for the rest of the Union.

Many of the early ministers preached for years with-

out churches. They traveled long distances on horseback from one preaching place to another and were in constant danger from Indians and wild beasts. On many occasions they were forced to spend nights in the wilderness, sleeping on the ground under the stars. These journeys were made still more difficult and dangerous because many of the larger streams had to be forded.

In 1750, Christopher Gist, a surveyor and agent for the Ohio Company, conducted the first religious services for the English-speaking people west of the mountains when he read prayers from the prayer book of the Established Church to the Indians of the Wyandot town of Coshocton. Andrew Montour interpreted the reading for the natives.

On Saturday, November 25, 1758, the abandoned Fort Duquesne was occupied by Major-General John Forbes and his army. The following day was set apart as a "day of thanksgiving to Almighty God." Reverend Charles Beatty, a Presbyterian minister and chaplain of Colonel Clapham's regiment, preached the Thanksgiving sermon and to him goes the honor of having preached the first Protestant sermon in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

The first settlers of western Pennsylvania were of the Presbyterian faith. In 1774 Reverend James Power, the first regularly ordained minister who settled in this part of the country passed through Westmoreland County, where he spent three months in missionary labors in the settlements, preaching in private homes, barns, forts, and the open woods. In 1776 he went east and brought his family with him and remained here. They crossed the Allegheny Mountains on horseback,

using the Forbes road. His eldest daughter he carried behind him on the horse and his youngest child in his arms. Two other children were carried in baskets, which balanced each other as they hung across the back of another horse, while the remainder of the horse's load was made up of clothes tied to the pack-saddle. The mother rode a third horse and the other household goods were carried on other packhorses. After he and his family were permanently established in their new home, he devoted more of his time to the work of organizing small bodies of people which eventually grew into church organizations with pastors of their own.

These meetings of the early pastors with the people were in the open air.

> "The groves
> Were God's first temples, ere man learned to hew
> The shaft, or lay the architrave."

A pulpit of logs was temporarily built and log seats resting on stones provided seats for those who wished to sit. The men and boys usually stood, leaning against the trees. When the pulpit was covered with boards it was called a tent. In cold or unpleasant weather the people brought with them blankets and coverlets and greatcoats and built huge fires, where, between morning and afternoon services, they went to get warm. Permanent arrangements for the services were made in a community which was the most accessible. The platform-pulpit, built like a shed, was made to protect the preacher from the wind and sun. It was erected on a slope among the trees. In front of the preacher was a board for his reading desk. The back and sides were closely boarded. Logs and puncheon seats ar-

ranged against the incline of the ground served for the congregation on such occasions. It is to these meetings that the peculiar revivals of the ecclesiastical history of Western Pennsylvania and Virginia can be traced.

The first churches were the log cabins made double with logs joined to each other along the sides. Many of these cabins were built in a single day. There was seldom a fireplace in them, but on extremely cold days a large kettle filled with red hot coals was placed in the middle of the room. The roof of the church was made of clapboards, held in place by small saplings laid on them.

REHOBOTH PRESBYTERIAN

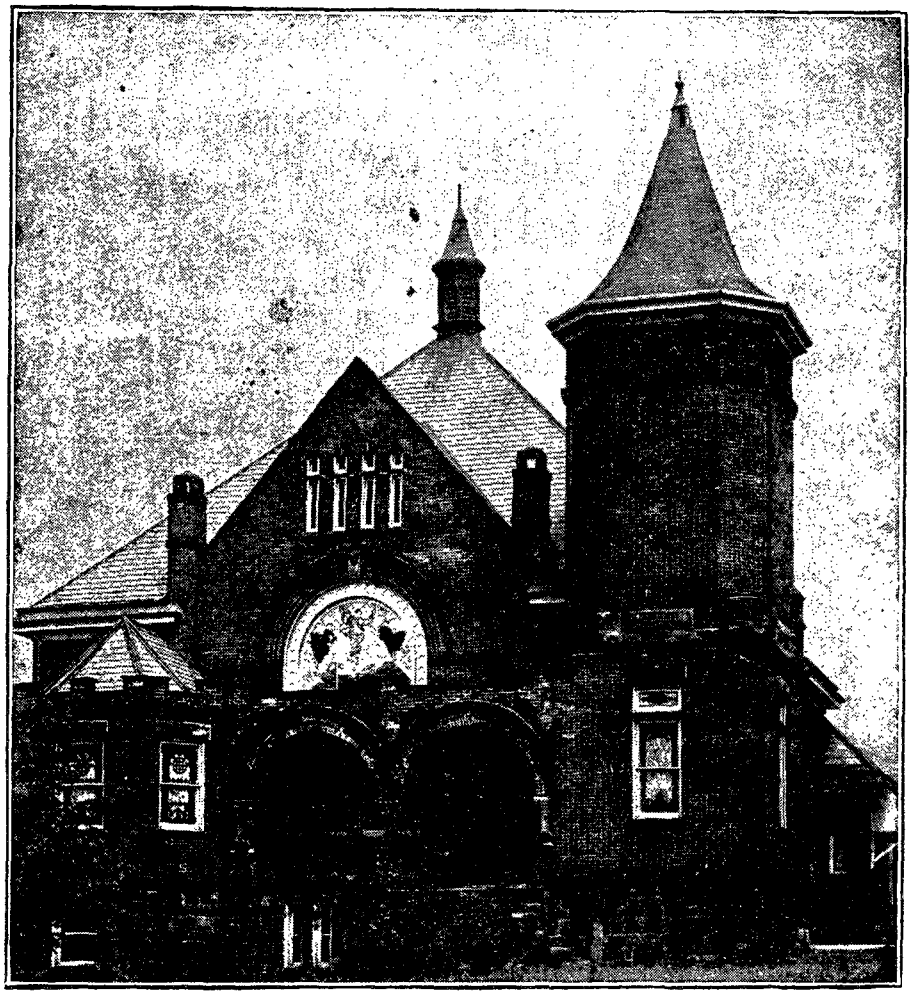
Rehoboth Presbyterian Church is one of the oldest organizations west of the Allegheny Mountains. It dates back to the coming to this section of Reverend James Finley from the East Nottingham Church in the New Castle Presbytery. He was the youngest of seven sons of Michael Finley who emigrated from Ireland to the American colonies in the year 1734. His early visits here were in the days when the countryside was nothing but a wilderness. For some time the gospel was preached in a log house on the land owned by Colonel Edward Cook about one mile from the site of the present Rehoboth Church building. Some time in the year 1778 Reverend Finley is supposed to have organized Rehoboth in the morning and Round Hill in the afternoon of the same day. He remained the pastor of these churches until the time of his death January 6, 1795.

An extract from the will of Reverend James Finley reads, "It is my will that two acres of my land on which the meeting house, Rehoboth, and the graveyard stand, and including the path from the northwest corner of the graveyard to the nearest spring, shall be under the care of the eldership of said congregation forever." So it was that the beginning of Rehoboth property came about.

During the ministry of Reverend David Smith (1789-1803) the second building made of brick was erected above the road almost opposite the log church. It was the first brick church in Western Pennsylvania and was considered an exceptionally fine building for those days. The pulpit and the sounding board above it were painted green. The pulpit was so high that it required eight steps to reach it.

In 1836 the third church was built near the site of the second one. It too was well planned and strongly constructed with inner dimensions of 50 x 60 feet without a pillar to support the roof. The whole amount of money paid to the contractor was $1,741.67. This sum, of course, does not represent the actual cost of the church, for nearly all the lumber and much of the stone were donated. This was the year preceding the panic of 1837 and money was unusually scarce. Many sacrifices had to be made to erect a building in such trying times and the fact that it was built at all, denotes an interest and zeal in the good fathers' religious worship that might cause us to question our own faith and stamina in times of adversity.

The present Rehoboth building was erected where the brick church had stood. It was begun in 1899 and completed in 1900 and stands today nestled among the



Rehoboth Presbyterian Church

rolling hills just off Route 981, a structure of beauty and a monument to God's eternal plan.

In the early days of Rehoboth the people were scattered over a wide area and the preachers were scarce, so that when a meeting was held it was quite long. Taking the Sacrament was an event of great importance, one which was conducted in those days in a somewhat different manner from that of today. At the preaching services on Friday and Saturday the ones who were going to take communion provided themselves with small leaden tokens with the letter M or the initial of the church on them. These tokens were then given in at the long bench-like tables that stood in the aisle. As the members crowded about the tables they fenced them in and prevented any unworthy person from communing. This custom was later done away with at a meeting of the session on April 5, 1851, when it was resolved that they dispose with tokens of admission to the Lord's Supper.

Contributions to the minister's salary were called stipends and were expected to be in accordance with the financial circumstances of the members. We can well imagine that many of those ministers received little material reward in this life. In the late fifties one member wrote: "The seats of the church were numbered and rented to persons and families and by this method the pastor's salary was obtained. Two or three seats near the rear of the middle block were reserved for the choir and the same number back of those for gents who had gotten beyond the age of control by parents, or thought they were."

Musical instruments and song books were hard to acquire for churches, because there were few to be

had and most congregations were unable to afford them. Therefore, it was the custom to have a preceptor whose duties were to lead the singing and line out the hymns for the congregation.

In the Sabbath School a sincere effort was made to acquaint the children and adults with the scripture. Portions of it were read and as many as sixty verses were recited by the pupils. Then the Scripture lesson was read by the class and a few questions from the Union Question Book were asked by the teacher. Between Sabbath School and the preaching service there was a short intermission which was spent in walking to a spring on Billy Finley's farm.

Once a year the pastor made a visit to each family in the congregation. His intended visit was announced from the pulpit the previous Sunday and each member of the family was expected to be present. Children attending school were kept at home to participate in the service which consisted of reading and explaining the Scripture and offering of a prayer. Surely these trips among the families must have afforded the good pastors a substantial meal upon occasions!

These stalwart religious pioneers of Rehoboth exerted a far-reaching influence, powerful enough to extend down to our own time when we can still hear them exhorting us to a more sincere and devout Christian life. May the present minister, Reverend Jackaway, find much happiness in his inheritance.

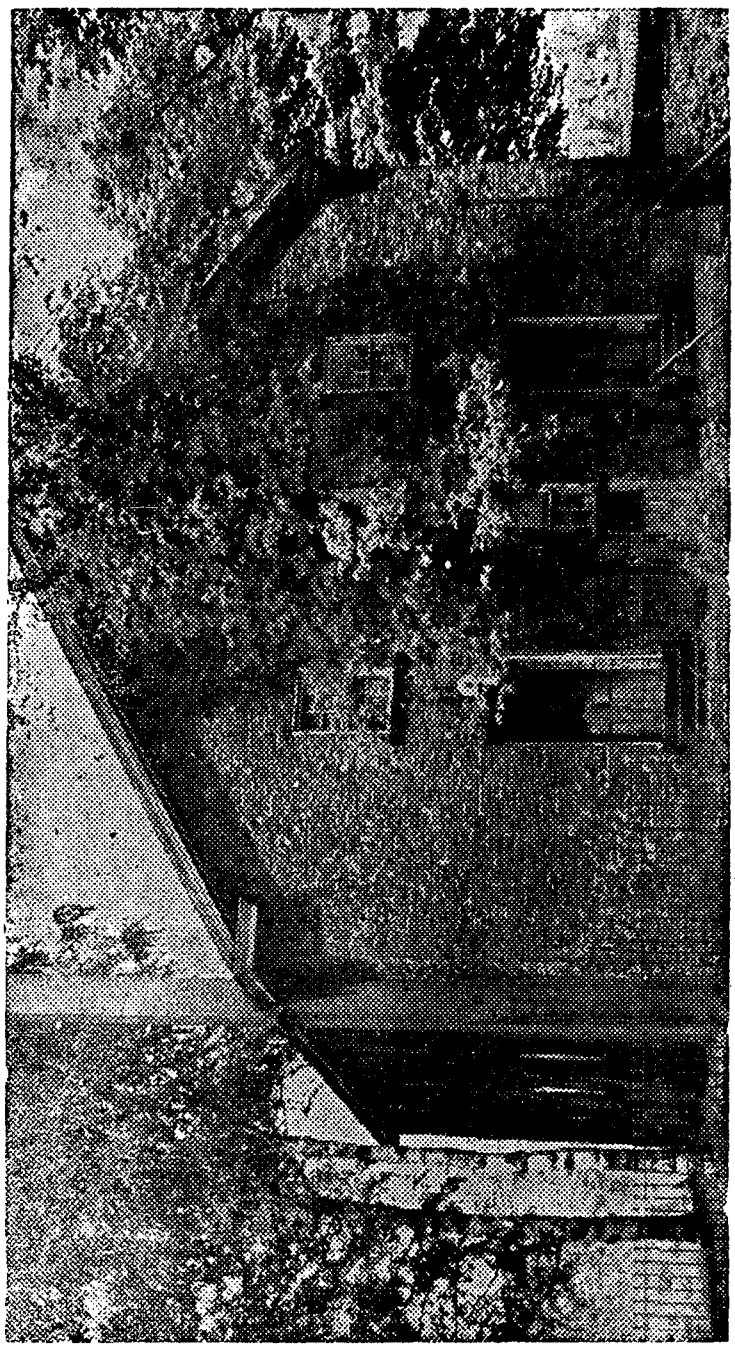
FELLS METHODIST CHURCH

Fells Church, located at the Crossroads of Routes 171 and Webster-West Newton Road, is another old

landmark in Western Pennsylvania. The stone church now standing was built in 1834, replacing the log church which served the congregation from 1792 until that time. In order to get a true picture of the history of this old church, it is necessary to look into the lives of two families who were responsible for its establishment, the Fell family, for whom it was named, and the Beazell.

Originally the Fells came from the counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland in the northwest corner of England. They had come under the influence of George Fox and the Society of Friends in England in the 17th century and their life in the New World was a continuation of the independent and liberal thinking to whch they had become accustomed. In the year 1705 Joseph Fell and his family left their estate of Longlands and journeyed to the colony of Pennsylvania. They eventually located in Bucks County near the present town of Buckingham.

Benjamin Fell, a grandson of Joseph, was a leather manufacturer in Buckingham at the time of the Revolutionary War. Although he was a member of the Society of Friends, he was also a kind, compassionate man who sympathized with the half-starved, half-frozen army of George Washington. At the risk of losing his membership in his chosen faith and of losing his life for helping the enemy of the Mother Country, he decided it was his duty to give aid to the Continental Army. His tools and leather supplies were turned over to Washington and his home was filled with soldiers making and mending shoes. As a reward for his services Benjamin received a grant of 600 acres of land in Westmoreland County, then known as



Fells Methodist Church

the West. In 1786 he and his family made the journey over the mountains accompanied by several of their neighbors, among whom were the Castners.

When the Fell family arrived they found the Basil family already settled here. The Basils (later Beazel or Beazell) had emigrated from Germany to Virginia, and in 1776 they moved north to Pennsylvania. Although they had presumably been of Lutheran faith, they soon came in contact with the Methodists who were being inspired by the eloquent preaching of such men as John Cooper, Samuel Breeze, and Francis Asbury. The records say that many of the meetings were held in the home of Matthew Basil and that for the remainder of his life the latch-string was always out for the Methodist ministers.

After the arrival of the Fells in this community in 1786, the two families joined together in their efforts to make Methodism a success. Their homes were used as the meeting places for the church services until the construction of the log church. Indeed it is told that Benjamin Fell enlarged his home to make more room for the crowd expected at a quarterly meeting.

In 1792 it was decided that a public building was needed to accommodate the rapidly increasing congregation. Like most of the buildings at that time the first church was made of logs. Much of the work was done by the two families, Fell and Beazell. They cut the trees, hewed the logs, and whipsawed the materials for the stairs and pulpit of the new church which was built on land given by Benjamin Fell. The building was made of hewn white oak logs, chinked, daubed and plastered on the inside. A gallery ran around three sides as in the present stone church.

Work on the stone church was begun in 1834. Since the old log Church was still in good repair, it is presumed that the only reason for starting a new one was the need of a larger building. For several years the discarded log building was used as a schoolhouse in place of the one which had been removed when the stone church was started.

Camp meetings were events of great importance in the history of Methodism. At Fells they were held on the ground owned by Matthew Beazell and Benjamin Fell. From the book "Sim Greene" this account is taken:

"People came from miles around, many of whom stayed till the close of the meeting (a week or more). Some of the tents were of canvas and some were of skins, but there were booths of bark and boughs of trees as well. These were arranged in the form of a hollow square with the entrance in each case opening into the square. Midway in one of the end rows was a preaching stand, having back of it an apartment provided with bunks, in which the preachers in attendance at the meeting slept. A door gave communication between it and the preaching stand. With the exception of a passageway around the inside of the square the space was filled with logs arranged for seats and it could accommodate a vast crowd. At each corner of the seated space was a platform a few feet square, set on four posts and looking something like a high table. A layer of earth was on top of these and at night fires were kept burning brightly on them, affording illumination for all the enclosure, thus presenting a most interesting and picturesque scene."

Today the church exterior looks much the same as it did originally, except for the encroaching of modern civilization, which tends to rob it of its peaceful and majestic appearance. Because of the rapid growth of

the community and the resulting congregation, an addition is being made on the west side of the old church to provide Sunday School rooms and space for social gatherings. When it is completed, many hope to see the exterior walls of the annex covered with stone to correspond with the main building. Though times have changed, the opportunity for carrying on the work is as great, if not greater, than in the days when Breeze, Asbury, Bascom and many other pioneers trod the ground of this meeting place. To Rev. and Mrs. W. S. Van Ryn, recently assigned to the Fells charge, we extend wishes for much success and happiness as they endeavor to continue the work of their predecessors.

In days gone by when many people walked to church or came by horse and buggy and therefore strangely enough arrived on time and often *before* time, the churchyard at Fells was an ever interesting meeting place for admiring and studying the inscriptions on the stones where the old ones rest. The stone of Benjamin Fell reads as follows:

> To the memory of Benjamin Fell
> A patriot, a Christian
> A friend of Washington
> And a friend of God
> Born April 22, 1739
> Died April , 1811

Matthew Basil's stone has the inscription, "A pioneer and a godly man." Within the memory of many of the residents of the community is the funeral of one of the last local descendants of the Beazell-Fell families. Dr. Benjamin Franklin Beazell, a minister and district superintendent in the Methodist Conference for

many years, had requested that his body be carried across the great wide meadow between his home (presumably the original Fell homestead) and the church. His wishes were carried out, and the entire funeral procession walked to the graveyard behind the casket. He rests among the fathers under the trees that were planted by him to replace many of the original oaks.

Living descendants of the Fell family who are still active in carrying on the work of the church are Mr. John Stoneman, Mr. Francis Fell, and Mrs. Rizpah Gallatin. There are many others of both Beazell and Fell clans scattered over the United States, pioneering, no doubt, for some worthy cause in the tradition of their ancestors.

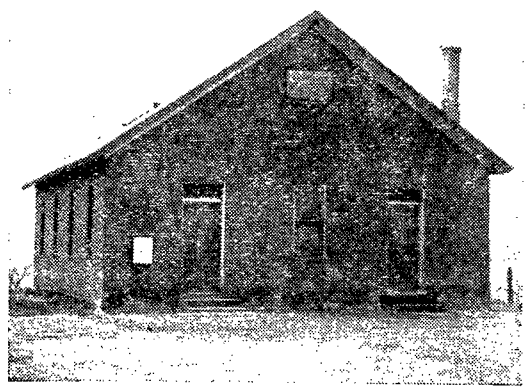
THE SALEM BAPTIST CHURCH

Standing high on a hill-top between West Newton and Route 51 overlooking a beautiful countryside is the old Salem Church organized in 1792. It is the oldest Baptist organization in the county. In a record of 1780 mention is made of the fact that the congregation had been without the preached word for four years, which would seem to mean that there had been some kind of church organization prior to that date. The first known pastor was Reverend Barkley.

In November of 1780 James Sutton came to preach for them and John Corbly in December. The members added to the church under the ministry of these two men in 1780 and 1781 were listed as follows: Prudence Davisson, Isaac Davisson, John Powers, Prudence Powers, Job Stout, Margaret Robinson, Mary Ed-

wards, Zadas Goodin, Daniel Stout, Elizabeth Stout, Thomas Stout, and Daniel Davisson.

Their place of meeting for business is mentioned in the minutes of February 2, 1782 as Simpson Creek. On March 29, 1783 William Davis preached his trial sermon at Davisson's Fort, after which he was licensed to preach. In June of 1783 the Church resolved to build two meeting houses for its use, one for Simpson Creek and the other near the mouth of the Elk, each part to be at the expense of building. Brother Jonathan Stout for Simpson Creek and Brother Thomas Bartley for Elk were appointed as projectors to carry on the buildings and in behalf of the church to secure advice about the land from the members.



Salem Baptist Church

Business meetings for the Church were held in the home of Andrew Davisson from February 26, 1784 to October 27, 1787. On June 27, 1789 at the regular business meeting, it was decided to make a general subscription for the building of the meeting house which must have been ready for occupancy by June 14, 1794.

In 1842 the brick church which now stands was erected. If you should drive past the church today you would notice that the building is undergoing some re-

pairs. It has an appearance of neglect, mainly because the church and cemetery grounds are not well cared for. Many of the old members have become scattered and attend other churches, but it is to be hoped that a new generation will take pride in restoring this old church to a place of beauty and renewing its spiritual influence throughout the community. The future of Salem should be assured if the young and capable Reverend Cunningham continues as the pastor and the members still in attendance give him their full support and cooperation.

Other churches in the township are branches of these three mother churches. They include the following:

Webster Presbyterian—erected 1881—originally supplied by Rehoboth—Minister today—Reverend Guest

East Salem Presbyterian—supplied by Rehoboth—Discontinued

Concord Methodist—erected 1849—originally supplied by Fells—Minister today—Reverend Mrs. Anna Potter

Webster Methodist—erected 1866—originally supplied by Fells—Minister today—Reverend Wallis

Olive Branch Baptist—erected 1857—supplied by Salem—Minister today—Reverend Cunningham.

In connection with the Olive Branch Church it is interesting to note that it has taken over the position of the mother church in that now it supplies the minister for the Salem Church, a condition which originally was in reverse. A quotation from the history of the Olive Branch Church as compiled by Miss Mary Piersol in 1947 gives an insight into the financial and spiritual circumstances.

"In this our ninetieth year our Church is in very fair financial condition, and more than able to meet its current expenses and its benevolent and missionary obligations. We have been able to meet our share of the rising cost of missionary work brought on by the great temporal and spiritual needs so increased by the aftermath of the Second World War. We have a building fund that is growing for we look forward to either building or buying a parsonage in the near future."

"Our membership includes many who are descendants of the founders and early members and we are therefore conscious of the spiritual ideals of our church from its beginning. We look to the future hopefully, praying earnestly that the spiritual aspiration and harmony of past years may continue, in a changing world, making and keeping Olive Branch a Church acceptable to our Master."

CONCORD CHURCH

If the old Church at Concord could talk, no doubt it could tell us many interesting and exciting tales of the happenings in the community during the last one hundred years. But its history has become somewhat obscured by the passing of time, and the failure of early Methodists to keep accurate and complete records, especially of churches on a circuit with a mother church.

However, some few facts are known about the early organization of the church. It is stated in the Constitution for the old stone schoolhouse and meeting house that:

"It shall be the duty of the Trustees to . . . and to open the house every Lord's day between the hour of 7 and 8 in the morning for Christian worship to each Christian denomination in regular rotation if required without partiality to any denomination and shall be

left to the discretion of the Trustees and teacher to open the House for Christian worship on week days on any particular occasions." As early then, as 1830, it is evident from the records that there was an organized congregation of Methodists at Concord on the Redstone Circuit with Fells.

An interview with some ladies of the Concord Church turned up a few interesting facts. Miss Annie McClain, Mrs. Howard, Mrs. Timms, and Mrs. Thomas Williams recall that the bricks for the church which was built in 1849 were burned on a farm owned in the latter part of the 1800's by a Douglas family.

Miss McClain, with a droll touch of humor, regrets that she is not older so as to know more about these facts, but adds as an afterthought, that if she were much older she might not be here to recall anything.

Mr. Samuel Wakefield, a member of one of the local families and pastor of the church in 1848 and 1849, was the minister who married Mrs. Timms' mother in 1869 and grandmother in 1849. She remembers that some old gentleman in defending Mr. Wakefield to a critic said of him: "There must be some good in him, for he is a good Democrat and a good fiddler."

Names of some of the other ministers who served after Mr. Wakefield are: Thorne, Mansell, Miller, Brown, Saddler, McCready, Otterman, Enlow, Hildebran, Wagner, Household, Ringer, Sipes, Forgie, Sellers, Robinson, Arthur, Spangler, Coughenour, Slonecker, Campbell, Miller, Somers, Chapman, Wick, Jones, and others.

The present pastor is Reverend Mrs. Anna Potter, who serves two other charges, Smithton and Banning, on the same circuit. The minister and the congregation

are now busy with some needed repairs to restore the beauty of the Church so that new generations may be served as well as the old. There are some of us like the French philosopher, who said, "I would not choose to see an old post pulled up with which I had been long acquainted." We want to preserve the old because it is dear to us in our recollections, but sometimes the Old must give way to the New to gain the most in usefulness for the present and the future.

This historic old church standing as it does on Route 51 sees a busy modern world pass its front door every day, while looking back to where the Old Concord School has been restored, it has a glimpse of a by-gone day. May past and present unite for a glorious future!

CHAPTER TEN

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

William Penn, the founder of the Province of Pennsylvania, was a man of great wisdom and foresight. It was he who had written into the laws of the Province the following provision:

"That all persons in this Province, and territories thereof, having children, and all guardians and trustees of orphans, shall cause such to be instructed in reading and writing, so that they may be able to read the Scriptures and to write by the time they attain the age of twelve years and that they then be taught some useful trade, that the poor may work to live, and the rich, if they become poor, may not want."

In Rostraver Township religion and early education were closely related in that the schools in many instances were built near the churches as is illustrated by the following lists:

Rehoboth Church	Harmony School
Fells Church	Lebanon School
Salem Church	Salem School
East Salem Presbyterian	Mount Pleasant School
Concord Church	Concord School

When the first school in the township was established is not known positively but it is assumed that it must have been in the 1770's. This first building was called the Center School because it was near the geographical center of the township. It stood on the hillside on the farm now owned by the heirs of Mrs. Victoria Smith. Many of the children who attended it

had to walk a distance of four or five miles, and of course, since it was the only school at the time, there were many who lived so far away that they could not have attended if their parents had wanted them to. Can't you hear some of the present generation sighing for the return of the "good old days"?

Center School was made of logs and poles, had a thatched straw roof, an earth floor, and was lighted by two small paper windows. A huge fireplace occupied one end of the structure and a crude door on wooden hinges gave admittance at the other. In 1805 a better building was erected. This one had two glass windows, a wood floor and clapboard roof, which was covered with clay to keep out the cold and rain. Frequently great drops of muddy water fell from the roof, sometimes spoiling a book, or driving the pupils home.

G. H. Lower, the first teacher of this school, came from New York. He was a fine scholar who created quite an interest in education while he remained in the township. In addition to teaching the common branches, he taught a class of six in Greek and Latin.

Most of the buildings in these early times were built in about the same way as the Center School. On one side of the schoolroom was the necessary fireplace that the teacher and the larger pupils had to supply with wood. Around the entire room there was usually a bench made of a slab from a saw log on which the pupils sat. The walls of the house served as the backs of these uncomfortable benches and the more advanced pupils were provided with a board placed in front of them for their copy books.

Since the township did not provide any money for the building or maintenance of the schools, those citi-

zens of the community who were interested in the education of their children were the ones responsible for putting up the structure. Several farmers would meet together to decide upon the site of the new building; often a farmer who wanted to insure his own children's education would donate the land. Water was also taken into consideration, so that schools, like the farms, were located near a spring. In one or two afternoons the trees were cut, hewed, rolled together and laid up, the roof put on, and the school was ready for use. None of these buildings were much larger than fifteen feet square, large enough in the opinion of the men who had the work to do, but very small for the conducting of classes, especially after the passing of the compulsory school law when so many more pupils were forced into them.

The following description of the raising of a pioneer school is taken from a story called *The Early History of Rostraver Township* by E. F. Carter.

"A location would be agreed upon and a committee to make arrangements would be appointed. The day would be announced and it would be looked forward to by old and young, probably with as much or more eagerness than the people of today anticipate Christmas or The Fourth of July. It was a holiday and also a day of hard work. The families would gather at the appointed place in the morning travelling on foot, on horseback, or in carts and wagons drawn by oxen or horses. They were dressed for work and brought with them axes, saws, other tools, and their rifles. The women brought food and a few cooking utensils. The materials for the building were the nearby trees of the forest

and some stones and clay from a nearby pit which could be dug in a few minutes.

The committee would select the trees and mark them by chipping the bark. Some of the men would fell the trees and cut the logs to the desired length and others would drive the oxen and horses which pulled the logs to the building site. The men selected to do the building would notch the ends of the logs and lay them up to make the walls. When a height of six or seven feet was reached, only the end walls were laid higher to form the gables. A long straight pole called the ridge pole was laid between the peaks of the two ends and other poles or rafters were placed to support the roof. Straight grained chestnut trees had been selected and cut into three foot lengths to be slit into shingles or clapboards. These were laid in overlapping layers on the rafters and weighted down with poles and stones, as nails were too scarce and expensive to be used in a schoolhouse. The fireplace, which was usually five or six feet wide and four feet high, was made from stones, sticks and wet clay, as was also the chimney. There was no ceiling, and the floor was wet clay packed down and hardened. This made a satisfactory floor when dry but became a mud puddle when wet by leaking roof and tracked in snow. The spaces between the logs was filled or chinked with pieces of stone and clay. Slabs for a crude door were split from logs and fastened together by wooden pegs.

The furniture of the school consisted of crude split log benches and a split log slab fastened to the walls to make a kind of sloping desk. The teacher's desk was a crude affair made from split logs with a sloping top

on which he could prepare copies for the writing lessons.

While the men were working, the women prepared a feast which was served at noon. The food served usually consisted of several varieties of game the men had shot, such as deer, bear, elk, buffalo, wild turkey, squirrel, wild pigeon, etc. If the hunting had been good some of all the above might be served. In addition to the game there was usually beef and pork, potatoes. corn bread, hominy, maple syrup, pies, cakes, and such home grown fruits as might be in season. For a beverage there would be sassafras tea, apple cider, apple jack, home-made wines and whiskey.

After dinner there would be shooting matches, wrestling, and square dancing. The meeting would break up in time for the people to reach their home by dark as travel by night was difficult and dangerous."

SUBSCRIPTION SCHOOLS

Before the time of the public schools in Pennsylvania these schools which were built and maintained by groups of families were called subscription schools. This name was given them because each family represented subscribed a sum of money to the support of the school. It usually amounted to twenty-five cents for each pupil per month although the amount varied with the community. Like the ministers of the early churches, the teacher's salary was often paid in products of the farm. One record states that John Powers gave eight bushels of corn, two bushels of oats, and one gallon of maple syrup for the salary of the teacher

at Lebanon School. Another man made his payment with five coon and three fox skins.

The school term was usually for the three months of December, January, and February and school was in session for six days a week from daylight until dark. Occasionally a half holiday was declared on Saturday afternoon when the teacher took time to lay in a good supply of rods with which to whip the children the following week.

Not many of the local young men were able to teach in the early schools because they had neither the time nor the learning. The qualifications for the teacher were certainly not very high, as all he was expected to do was to keep school. If he could read, write, and count with figures he was considered sufficiently well educated. In 1825 a teacher was well paid if he received ten or twelve dollars a month. Usually the master was an unmarried man and boarded around from house to house for his meals and lodging, since in most cases he was an outsider, having come into the community to seek additional employment.

In the control of the schoolroom the master was exactly what his title implies. He ruled by force and through fear, by use of the rod, and could never be accused of spoiling his pupils by sparing it. Our modern teachers he would consider weak and stupid if he should come strolling into one of our present-day classrooms, ruled only by the mutual respect of teacher and pupil and interest in the studies. One report of a teacher in the 1830's states that he opened school with a prayer and then proceeded to pass along the benches where the boys sat, and without any provocation, struck each one on the top parts of the legs,

striking so that the rod overlapped and left its impression on three or four legs at once. If he had plenty of time, or if he had been particularly inspired by his devotional exercises, he struck one blow for each leg, but ordinarily gave one blow for each pair of legs presented. Evidently the parents did not object to this cruel treatment of their children, for many of the sternest disciplinarians were well respected members of the community.

One of the old time teachers in the township was Billy Clemens. Pupils described him as follows:

"He was six feet tall and weighed one hundred ninety pounds. He was blind in one eye, but he claimed he could see more out of the other than most people could out of two. He had a long gray beard and a great shock of almost white hair. He wore leather boots with his trouser legs stuffed into the tops of them. A plain cotton shirt with no tie and a battered felt hat which he wore continuously, completed his outfit. On cold days he also wore a warmus which is described as a kind of jacket or coat. It was made of home-

Drawing by A. R. Krill

Billy Clemens

spun wool and being home-made was not well-fitted. It had no buttons but was fastened in front with ties of the same material. He was not well kept and showed considerable need of soap, water and laundry. His large stature, the empty eye-socket, and the stout rod he constantly carried, made an awe-inspiring picture. His favorite expression for opening the school term was, 'We'll have order, peaceably if we can, but forcibly if we must.' He chewed tobacco, and the egg stove was his favorite target. Like many other teachers of his day, he was addicted to whiskey. On one occasion when he had imbibed too freely, he afforded his pupils much fun by missing the stump in the schoolyard upon which he attempted to sit."

It is not to be implied that all of the teachers or masters were men such as these described. There were a few who had discovered that their pupils learned more when they were treated with kindness and firmness rather than harshness and brutality. The late T. J. Weddell told of one teacher at Salem who taught for three terms without flogging a single pupil.

TEXTBOOKS OF THE EARLY SCHOOLS

Most of the instruction in the schools in the early 1800's consisted of individual teaching of reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic. There were no uniform textbooks, so pupils had to furnish their own. They brought whatever books were in their homes and these were used according to the age of the pupil, being handed down from older to younger members of the family until they were worn out. The Bible or

New Testament was the most common book used to read from, since it was also the only one many of the pupils possessed. Other books to be found on opening day were: *English Reader, Lindley Murray's Grammar, History of Rome, History of the United States, Plutarch's Lives, Life of George Washington,* or any one of a dozen others. Imagine what a time the teacher must have had in a schoolroom with pupils of all ages and books of different kinds! Is it so strange that discipline was such a problem?

A popular textbook that came into use early in the 1800's was the *United States Spelling Book.* It was the first textbook published west of the Alleghenies and was used in at least one of the Rostraver Schools. With the exception of writing and arithmetic, it provided a complete curriculum, including long lists of spelling words, lists of words and their definitions, synonyms, abbreviations, homonyms, and antonyms. There were many pages of the world-wide geographical terms with brief explanations, and some geography of the United States. Then came lists of proper names of the Bible, followed by lists of words, with parts of speech, pronunciation, and definition given. Next was a list of chronological history of the United States, followed by several pages of almanack material. It also contained several poems and selections for reading. Its one hundred sixty pages contained as much as the average pupil could learn in several terms of three months and when mastered, gave the pupil a fair education for those times.

The standard text in arithmetic was the Western Calculator which in conjunction with the United States Spelling Book, completed the curriculum, with the ex-

ception of writing. This book contained problems of sufficient difficulty to test the abilty of the best mathematician. From the section of geometrical progression one of the easier examples is taken:

What sum would purchase a horse with 4 shoes and 8 nails in each shoe, at 1 mill for the first nail, 2 mills for the second, 4 for the third, etc., doubling in geometrical progression to the last? Answer: 4,294, 967.29 1/2.

Murray's English Reader was used in the subscription schools and in the early public schools. There were lessons in it for the advanced pupils, with special emphasis being given to selections for oral reading and elocution. These selections were taken from the Bible and the classics of Greek, Roman, and English literature.

When the master was teaching the art of writing, it was necessary for him to make and mend the pens of quills. The pupil took blank paper to the teacher who then wrote a copy at the top for him to practice on. The copy varied with the degree of proficiency of each pupil and from this custom comes the word copybook, a form of which is still used in the teaching of handwriting.

After the passage of the School Law of 1854 some improvement was made in texts and the curriculum. It provided that "Orthography, Reading, Writing, Grammer, Geography, and Arithmetic, as well as such other branches as the board of directors or controllers may require" were to be taught in every district.

Readers that suited the ages of the different pupils came into use as the schools became graded. Record books of Rostraver Township show that instruction

in the higher branches of Algebra, Astronomy, and Philosophy was given at Lebanon, Iowa (then in Rostraver Township), and Mount Pleasant, during some of the years between 1861 and 1866.

Some of the popular text books in those days were: *McGuffey Readers, Osgood Speller, Spencerian & Cowley Copybooks, Ray's Arithmetic, Covell's Grammar, Monteith's Geography, Raub's Lessons In English, Cornell's Geography, Wentworth's Arithmetic, Tarbell's Lessons in Language, Barnes' History of the United States.*

EARLY SCHOOLS AS SOCIAL CENTERS

Schoolhouses were used for social gatherings in the community, since churches were used strictly for religious purposes. The spelling bee was one of the most popular forms of entertainment for old and young alike. It was held at night and was attended by the older pupils and their parents and any others who wished to go. The teacher made all of the necessary arrangements. Usually two of the older pupils were selected as captains of the two sides, which were chosen from the crowd. Difficult words were then given out until all but one was spelled down. These old timers were exceptionally good spellers and the writer fears that she would have been among the first to go down in a competition using such words as: barouche, paroxysm, fratricide, egregious, querulous, chirography, deleterious, etc.

At the end of the school term another feature of great interest to all was the closing exhibition. This

entertainment consisted of recitations, dialogues, essays, music, and sometimes a debate. Later schoolhouses were provided with a platform extending across one end of the room on which the closing exhibition was held. It often lasted a whole afternoon or evening.

Every other Friday was set aside for hearing special programs consisting of declamations, essays, speeches, and songs. Each pupil was required to participate in the program which was often attended by his parents or friends.

THE PLEASANT GREEN SCHOOL

In 1861 a school for colored children was established in Rostraver Township. It was called The Pleasant Green School and was located near the Rostraver High School, on the bluff by the Pleasant Green Colored Church. The school was held in a log building and during the term of 1861-1862 twenty-two pupils were enrolled. It was open the following year, then closed for two years, and re-opened for the terms of 1865-1866 and 1866-1867. Again it was closed for several years, and it is not definitely known to have been re-oponed. The old colored families, descendants of the slaves who were liberated in the township when Pennsylvania abolished slavery in accordance with the Act of 1780, were represented on the roll book for 1861. They were Minnies, Phares, Butlers, and others. The teacher was Stephen B. Norris in that year. The same curriculum and texts were used as in the other schools of the township.

LAFAYETTE'S VISIT TO LEBANON SCHOOLHOUSE

This incident as reported in the Gazette of June 3, 1825 is of particular interest to those in the township near the Lebanon School:

"On Saturday last about 10 o'clock A. M., intelligence was received by express in this place that General LaFayette would be at the brick Meeting-House in the Forks of the Yough at 10 o'clock the following morning. Major Alexander, agreeably to a wish communicated through a messenger, paraded his artillery company on horseback, and started out at six o'clock with two field pieces. They proceeded eight miles the same evening, and on the following morning, were joined at General Markel's by a part of Captain Pinkerton's artillery company with another field piece. The troops, under the command of Major Alexander, together with a number of private citizens from the surrounding country, arrived at Lebanon School-House, adjacent to the Meeting-House, at about 11 o'clock. The three field pieces were placed on the side of the hill immediately back of the school-house. Telegraphs were posted on the surrounding hills, who gave information when the Nation's Guest passed the county line, upon which a salute of thirteen guns was fired. In a few minutes, the general and suite, escorted by fifty or sixty citizens of Fayette County, mounted, arrived. He received the troops, shaking each one cordially by the hand, after which he partook of refreshments provided by General Markel. A number of persons were then introduced, among them was old Mr. Sterrett, of Rostraver Township, who had fought

with him at Brandywine. The meeting was an interesting and affecting one. He examined the brass 4-pounder belonging to Major Alexander's artillery corps, and said it was a Spanish piece, but that it was not engaged in the battle of Saratoga, as was generally supposed. He paid his respects to a number of ladies who had assembled to see him, and having got fresh horses in his phaeton, was escorted by the citizens and a part of the military to Beazel's tavern (late Daly's), where refreshments were provided after partaking of which he proceeded towards Braddock's Fields, accompanied by a concourse of citizens of Allegheny County, where he arrived at 4 o'clock in the evening. He retired to his chamber to peruse some letters received from his family in France, and on Monday last entered Pittsburgh.

It rained very hard a considerable part of the day, which, together with the distance the troops had to travel (22 miles), made them to appear at great disadvantage. All, however, passed off well, and each one was pleased with the trip and the appearance and conduct of the old friend of American Independence."

REMINISCENCES OF MOUNT PLEASANT SCHOOL

Excerpts from an interview with Mr. Henry Snyder as recorded by B. C. Christy, at Mount Pleasant School Reunion — held August 27, 1904. Mr. Christy's exact account is given.

"Recollections of Mr. Henry Snyder, a former pupil of the Mt. Pleasant School. This pupil was born May 4, 1815 and attended his first term of Subscription

School and a term of three months at 50c for small children and 75c for larger pupils per month.

He relates of the old log school house that stood on the hill by a large oak tree, and a very heavy body of timber land surrounding it on all sides. Game was plentiful of which the boys engaged in chasing rabbits and squirrels, often catching many.

His first teacher was John Stetzen, who taught a three months term in the year 1825. Mr. Snyder remembers his first punishment very well. One day he fell asleep and his teacher carried him to another seat and when he awoke he was sitting with two of the largest girls.

The furniture consisted of a log split in the middle and nicely hewed serving as a seat which ran directly along the wall. The teacher's desk was made of a large board and for his chair had a round stool, which was not very neat, as the oak bark still remained on it. This building had only four windows, two on each side, made of thick paper, and same being greased with tallow. A large old fireplace built of stone was at one end. It was the boys' job to keep a large supply of wood cut, and many times a pile as large as the building was in store. The girls assisted in every way to make the room as comfortable as possible. The next year the same teacher taught, and school got along nicely.

Joseph Krepps, a farmer and teacher, living on and owning the G. M. Todd farm, taught five successive terms and had a large school all the time. He was a kind and affectionate teacher, administering kindness instead of cruelty. Mr. Snyder at the age of ninety years has an excellent memory and recollects of the great General Lafayette making his expedition in the

vicinity of Belle Vernon on Sunday A. M. springtime, traveling near Rehoboth Church and firing three shots from his cannon all the while services were being held. The minister requested a couple of men to go and inform the General of it being Sunday. This was done.

His second term was taught by Nathan Moorehead. One day the boys concluded to bar him out. Before he came to the schoolhouse in the A. M. all the pupils came this morning very early and succeeded in barring him out and he could not get in. Mr. Moorehead discovered his situation, and determined, went to farmer James Blackey, then owner of the farm owned at present by Howard Todd, borrowed a ladder, and got a large board, climbed on top of the house, put same over the chimney, and succeeded in smoking the scholars out of the building, then entered, and took up school. At this time the following pupils attended: Peter Hush, Joseph Krepps, Robert Patterson, D. P. Lutz, John McLaughlin, Adam Lutz, Henry Lutz, George Slotterbeck, Henry Coughanour, Tina Coughanour, David Coughanour, Siemon Dickens, Mary Coughanour, Christina Coughanour, and Rebecca Conkle.

Mr. Snyder's description of Mr. Stetzens is as follows: a man six feet tall, long white hair, dark eyes, smooth face, and a tenderhearted man always endeavoring to do great good, also an excellent teacher, would play towns ball, quoit and mush-pot with the pupils. He would punish generally with a ruler measuring about two feet in length, and anyone violating his laws, Stetzens would throw his weapon at the offender, have him pick the rule up, bring same to the teacher, then for a severe punishment."

An interesting poem written by Mr. Christy is also printed:

HOW I WANT THINGS

Backward, turn backward, oh time on your way
And make me a boy again just for today;
Make me as jolly and as rugged as of yore,
Shoes out at the toes and breeches all tore;
The rim of my hat torn off from behind
And gallus's, and then you will find
A real happy boy. Say Time, heed to my call
Back up real quick or don't do it at all.

Backward, turn backward, oh Time in thy flight
And send me a ball, a bat, and a kite;
A sled painted red and a new shinny stick,
For I want to go coasting and I want to go quick.
I want my school fellows to come at my call,
For a game of good paddle or else of sock ball.
Oh, say Father Time, please heed to my call;
And make me a boy again, but don't make me too small.

Backward, turn backward, oh Time, stop thy wing,
And make me a boy again, and then I'll go swing
The big girls, and have such a good time,
I'll go gather chestnuts and up the trees climb.
And when I come down the buttons will fly;
And then we'll all laugh and nobody will cry.
Oh, please, Father Time, won't you heed to my call.
Back up your old sundial but don't let it fall.

Backward, turn backward, oh Time, on thy track
And take this humpiness out of my back.
Limber the joints of my knees and elbows
Rub out the cheek wrinkles that lie near the nose.
Take off my gray whiskers and darken my hair
Brighten my face and relieve it from care.
For if I'm to play boy the warm pulses must throb.
Say, Time, don't you think you've got a very large job.

But now, Father Time, when I think the thing over
'Tould be a mistake to put me in clover
Just for a day, for when the time came
To change things around and turn back again,
We would be disappointed and feel rather sorry
That for such a short time we had made such a worry.
So you keep a going as fast as you can,
And I'll do the same and remain an old man.

Many times we have been told that history repeats itself and a brief glance at the number of schools in Rostraver now as compared with that in the early 1800's would lead us to believe that there must be truth in the remark. There are not many more schools now than there were then, but for a much different reason. Education then was in its infancy, crawling slowly toward the light of learning, but today has become a mature development that can not be housed in the small, inadequate rooms of long ago. The larger consolidated schools make it possible for the children to enjoy many more opportunities than were possible in the days of their grandparents, when the three R's were the chief diet of the public school. Thus, the last few decades of this century have seen the steady movement toward the consolidation of the elementary grades. Little one-room schools that once dotted our landscape and which many of us attended, have disappeared or have been discontinued for school purposes. The building at Lebanon where once a pioneer school stood and the one at La Grange have now become consolidated schools for the elementary grades, thus making unnecessary the use of such schools as: Harmony, Salem, Mount Pleasant, Crossroads, East Donora, The Point, Lenity, and Concord.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

OLD CONCORD SUBSCRIPTION SCHOOL

Concord was the last subscription school to be established and the original building was erected in 1830.

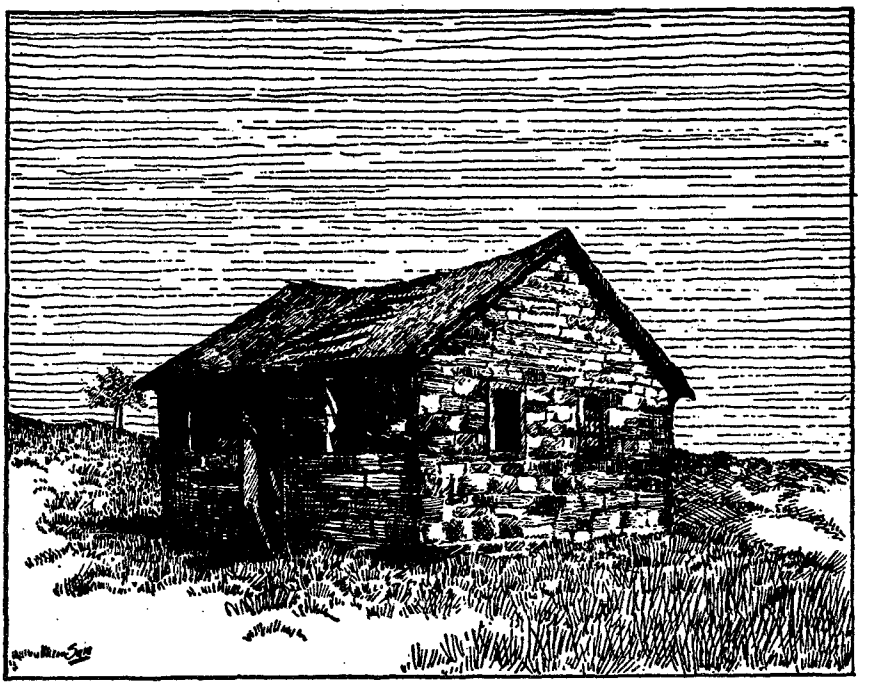
The development of the Concord Subscription School project grew out of the need for a schoolhouse and a place of assembly in the central part of the township. The subscription schools which had previously been established were several miles distant and were no doubt badly crowded, as most of such schools were. The general prosperity of the nation as a whole at this time probably contributed, as the people had a little extra money for such enterprises.

It is well to keep in mind when considering this project that this was a voluntary community effort. The stimulating force back of the project may have been the desire of the citizenry to provide as good or better educational opportunities for their children as were provided by other communities. They were also thinking of permanent and enduring values or they would not have chosen to use stone for the structure when logs were so much more easily procured and shaped.

One hundred and twenty years after this idea was conceived we can only conjecture as to much of the thinking and motive back of it, but we do know that there was a spirit of freedom, independence, and "do it ourselves" determination that has largely been submerged in our present attitude of "let the government do it." They had rejected the idea of a kind of State

controlled school system that had been authorized by the School Act of 1824. They still preferred to have absolute control of their schools even though it did mean considerable individual expense and personal concern.

We cannot help but praise the effort of the pioneer forefathers of the Concord area in conceiving the idea of a good school and then proceeding to erect a substantial stone building that stood the ravages of time



Drawing by Elias Sam

Concord School Before Restoration

for one hundred nineteen years and more than seventy-five years of neglect, since it was last used for school purposes, and still remained substantial and strong so that it could readily be reconstructed.

The Concord Subscription School was erected by the Concord School and Meeting House Committee. This group was governed by a carefully drawn-up constitution, a copy of which was among the papers of the late Ernest Finley. The constitution provided:

CONSTITUTION OF CONCORD SCHOOL AND MEETING HOUSE

ARTICLE I — No person shall be eligible to vote or hold an office in the concerns of this property but such as shall have subscribed to the building or toward defraying contingent expenses thereof.

ARTICLE II — There shall be three trustees of good moral character elected who shall form a board to whom and their successors in office shall be given a Deed of the Lot, and on them shall devolve the case of the property, and disposal of the building both as a school and place of Christian worship according to this constitution and by-law.

ARTICLE III — Of the three trustees first chosen the first named shall serve one year. The second shall serve two years and the third shall serve three years. So that there shall be an election on the first Friday in March for one trustee to serve three years that a full board of three trustees may be kept up forever, and when a vacancy shall have taken place from any cause residue of the board shall have power to transact business until the time of the next annual election when all such vacancies shall be filled.

ARTICLE IV — It shall be the duties of the trustees to employ suitable teachers whose examples may be calculated to improve the morals as well as piety of the scholars, to open the house every Lord's day, between the hours of 7 and 8 in the morning for Christian worship to each Christian denomination in regular rotation if required, without partiality to any denomination, and shall be left to the discretion of the trustees and teacher to open the house for Christian worship on week days on any particular occasions. It shall also be their duty to receive for the use of the property —

all donations or subscriptions which may hereafter be offered —to call special meetings and keep fair entrys of all receipts and disbursements and exhibit their accounts at every annual meeting.

ARTICLE V — The society shall have power to make such alterations and additions to this constitution, and also such by-laws as may hereafter appear necessary but notice must be given to the annual meeting in writing of what is proposed to be done at least one month before it can be acted upon.

Witness our hands this 27th day of September in the year of the Lord 1832.

Priscilla her x mark Todd

Trustees: Charles Norcross, William Robison, Hannah Todd, James Todd, Samuel Todd, Mary Todd, Daniel Todd, Robert Todd, Ans Todd, Margaret Foote

Trustees for 1830	Trustees for 1831
Bela B. Smith—1 year	Daniel McCurdy—1 year
Daniel McCurdy—2 years	Robert Cunningham—2 years
Robert Cunningham—3 years	Charles Norcross—3 years

Trustees for 1832

John S. Foote—1 year
Charles Norcross—2 years
Wm. H. Robison—3 years

The mandates of this constitution were carried out by the duly elected trustees and meetings were called from time to time to place before the subscribers important matters. Notices of some of the meetings have been preserved by the family of Miss Anna McLain and with her permission they are reproduced as follows:

"The Subscribers to the building of Concord Schoolhouse who are within the bounds of that district are requested to meet at the Schoolhouse on Saturday next at 5 o'clock P. M. to make arrangements for employing a teacher."

May 24, 1836 — Trustees — (John T. Jones
Rostraver Township — (William Morgan

Notice: The subscribers to the building of Concord School and Meeting House are requested to meet at the School House on Friday evening the 13th at early candlelight for the purpose of consulting together and making some arrangements for employing a teacher for the Winter season and adopting some necessary by-laws.

November 4, 1835 — Trustees — (John T. Jones
Rostraver Township — (William Morgan
(John Bennett

Notice: The citizens and voters included and mentioned in the following bounds, commencing at the Belle Vernon State Road and Yough River, thence down the river to Peter Van Meters, thence past Samuel Hammonds, Joseph Eckley's, Morgan Morgan's, James Cunningham's and Isaac Call's, thence along the said road to the river the place of beginning—are hereby notified to meet at Concord Schoolhouse on Friday the second day of September next at 2 o'clock P. M. to choose a committee of three persons for Concord School District as required by the new School Law.

August 19, 1836 — Trustees — (John T. Jones
Rostraver Township — Trustees — (William Morgan
Trustees — (John Bennett
Trustees — (Robert Cunningham
Trustees — (Charles Norcross

The Concord subscription school, when new, was said to be the finest rural school in Westmoreland County. The building, twenty-four by twenty-eight

feet outside dimensions, was constructed of stone gathered from nearby fields and some of the larger ones from local quarries. The stones for the outside of the wall were carefully dressed and some of them are quite large, weighing several hundred pounds each. A few of the larger stones are of a conglomerate structure being made up of small white pebbles cemented together with sand and other silicon material. The walls are firmly fitted together and cemented with mortar made from creek bed sand, containing considerable clay, and home-burned lime. This mortar is soft and crumbly but it has held the stone together for more than a century and bids fair to last several more.

The building has eight windows of six lights of glass in each sash. Each light of glass is nine by ten inches. The wood used for the sash was probably yellow poplar as that wood was commonly used for such purposes at that time. The window frames were of black walnut and were fastened together at the corners with wooden pins of the same material. There was a door in both the front and back of the building. Since they had been replaced many years ago by other doors we can only assume that they were oak doors. The original roof was of hand-split oak shingles nailed on oak strips and the whole supported by hand-hewn oak rafters, some of which were used in the restoration of the building. The inside of the building was plastered with plaster of lime, creek sand, and hair. In later times hair for this purpose was sometimes procured from barber shops but it was more often obtained from tanneries, of which one or more was found in most communities. The hair thus obtained would be short and suitable for the purpose.

The ceiling is about ten feet high and is semi-arched. Hand-split hickory laths were used on the ceiling but the plaster was applied directly to the masonry walls.

The building was heated by a fireplace in one corner and it probably contained an iron grate to aid the burning of wood used for fuel in the earlier times and coal at a later date. The floor was of virgin white oak sawed by an up and down water power saw and tongued and grooved by hand.

The furniture and equipment of this school was

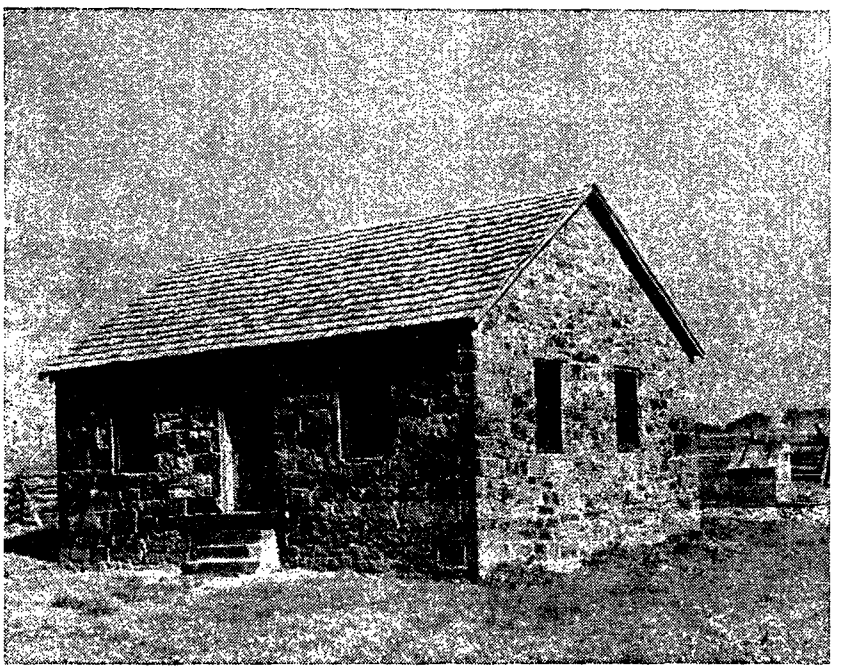


Photo by Abbie's Pictures

Concord School as Restored to Original Condition

described to the writer by Mrs. Anna Finley Lowe, who attended school there when a small girl. Her description is as follows:

The crude seats or benches were made from split logs smoothed on one side. They were without backs and were often so high from the floor that the shorter pupils could not touch the floor with their feet. The only desks were split logs or slabs supported by legs or sections of planks. They extended around three sides of the room and afforded a support on which the pupils could write. The younger pupils sat on benches near the center of the room and sometimes sat on the floor. The teacher's desk was high in front with an inclined slab smoothed to furnish a suitable place for "copy" preparation. A small platform was attached to the bottom of the desk, and on this was a high three-legged stool for the teacher. Directly back of the teacher's desk there were pegs in the wall to support an ever available supply of stout rods. There was a small bench near the door for the water bucket and gourd dipper. This completed the equipment as there were no maps, globes, or blackboards in this school.

The Concord School offered in addition to the three R's of the earlier schools spelling, history, geography and English grammar. All these subjects, excepting writing and arithmetic, were taught from the "United States Spelling Book." This book was published at Pittsburgh in 1809 and was the first textbook published west of the Alleghenies. (It and other early textbooks used in all the early schools are described elsewhere in this history).

Even in the earliest days of old Concord the curriculum was sometimes enriched by special classes for a few pupils who planned to attend college or read law or practice medicine. If the abilities of the teacher

permitted, sometimes there were classes in higher mathematics, Latin, and English Literature. The conditions under which the school was operated placed a premium on individual ability and initiative. Gifted pupils with ambition learned rapidly in spite of unfavorable conditions and later sang praises of the school and its teachers. Average and slow learning pupils learned but little and many of them soon dropped out.

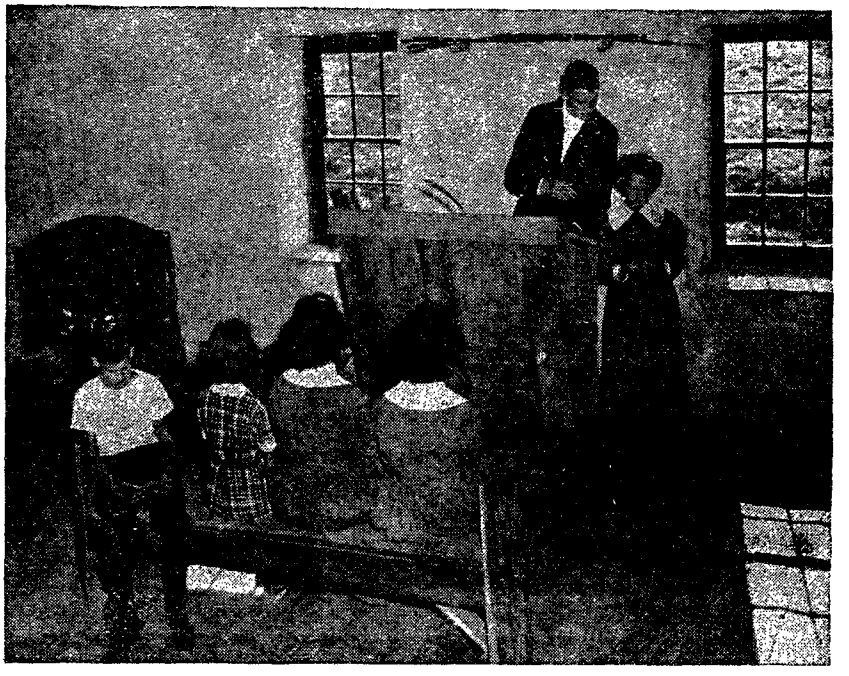


Photo by Abbie's Pictures

Master and Pupils at Old Concord

The teachers of old Concord were confronted with what would to present day teachers be insurmountable difficulties. From fifty to seventy pupils were usually enrolled in the Winter term and their ages

ranged from seven or eight to twenty or older. The building was small and pupils were jammed into every bit of available space. Uniform textbooks were not available and some pupils came to school with no books except those they could borrow from other pupils. Tom Pearce who attended school at Concord in the 1870's tells of a fight with an older boy because he would not lend him his spelling book. The tussle resulted in a terrific flogging from the master.

The teacher usually called on one or two of the older, more capable, boys or girls to help him and they would hear the individual and class recitations of the younger pupils.

Teachers varied greatly in ability to teach and discipline. We again use the recollection of Tom Pearce of the term of 1871-72: T. S. Theakston who began the term was so weak in ability to discipline that after a few weeks of school the older boys picked him up bodily, carried him outside, locked the door and thus finished his career at Concord. They probably regretted this action as Tom Newell finished the term. He was a very stern disciplinarian and went about on crutches, having lost a leg. He used his heavy, homemade crutches very effectively whenever there was the slightest infringement of rules. Many a head and body felt the resounding whack of these formidable instruments of discipline.

Frank Hall who taught the 1875 and 1876 term at Concord did not believe in corporal punishment or the use of "hickory" as it was then commonly called, but ruled with a kindly, firm and respected hand. He placed mottoes such as "Be Kind", "Do Good", "Try Hard" and others before the pupils and directed their

thinking into a higher plane. His influence and quality of teaching was such that when he was called to serve on the Westmoreland County Jury for a week, he left the school in charge of two older pupils, Clarence Finley and Cy Fisher.

Concord was probably fortunate in having a succession of capable teachers as many who attended school there had a warmth of feeling for their school and teachers that can only be engendered by respect and appreciation of the service rendered to them. Samuel Wakefield, who was also a preacher, taught the term of 1867 and 1868 and is remembered as an outstanding personality. J. W. Douglass, who as one of the last teachers in the old stone building, leaves the following notations in an attendance record book that has been preserved for us by Ella Flannigan. They read as follows:

"October 1st 1861 — Here I am in Old Concord for the fifth term of school—May I be aided from heaven to do my very best. We have had some good times in days gone by in this old house, but may this be the equal to any other term."

"We feel both glad and sad today. Not all are here who were our much loved pupils in other days, some noble boys (God bless them) who were our scholars are now in 'The Army' defending our dear and glorious 'Stars and Stripes.' May Heaven bless them and protect them."

"One month ended and a very pleasant and interesting time we had. Though we had no visitors. When will parents become convinced that it will be both interesting and money making to attend the schools at least monthly."

"November 23rd — Teachers met at Mount Pleasant Schoolhouse to organize an institute. Day cold and unpleasant—few in attendance but had a good time and lots of good things to eat. 'Long live our Institute.'"

There is no known record of the teachers who taught in Old Concord previous to 1853. From 1853 to 1861 the winter terms were taught by: Abel Price, Johnston Elliot, Charles C. Douglass, John C. Hasson, J. Wesley Douglas (four terms).

The summer school terms were taught by: Mrs. Sarah Dick, Mary Beazell Cunningham, Jane Pollack, Emma Ramsey, Maggie Armstrong, Hanna Michiner Douglas, Lizzie Household Woodrow, Nancy Smith Fisher, Elizabeth McClain Todd, Vina McClain Nicholls, J. H. Cunningham, Ella McClure.

Teachers who taught the regular school term from 1861 to the present were:

1861-62—J. W. Douglass
1862-63—W. M. Eckley
1863-64—J. M. Darr
1864—1 mo.—Lenora Hassler
1864-65—J. W. Douglass
1865-66—Aug. E. Hassler
1866-67—Aug. E. Hassler
1867-68—Samuel Wakefield
1868-69—Samuel Wakefield
1869-70—J. S. Zundel
1870-71—Benj. Wakefield
1871-72—T. S. Theakston
Thomas Newell
1872-73—Porter Haggerty
1873-74—Porter Haggerty
1874-75—G. W. Hoover
1875-76—Frank Hall
1876-77—Frank Hall
1877-78—Rufus Darr
1878-79—Leightty Steen
1879-80—G. B. Sweeny
1880-81—Lizzie Malone
1881-82—Belle Finley
1882-83—Belle Finley
1883-84—Geo. P. Blackburn
1884-85—Geo. P. Blackburn
1885-86—Rufus Darr
1886-87—James McMillen

1887-88—Roland Wilson
1888-89—Belle Finley Rankin
1889-90—Belle Finley Rankin
1890-97—James Woolsey
1891, Oct., Nov.—W. A. Davis
1891-92—Thomas E. Finley
1892-93—S. S. Cover
1893-94—S. S. Cover
1894-95—Geo. A. Woolsey
1895-96—J. S. Walthour
1896-97—J. S. Walthour
1897-98—J. S. Walthour
(Part Term)
1897-98—J. C. Nicholls
1898-99—Oscar Kelly
1899-1900—Edna Neff
1900-01—Joe Weaver
1901-02—Alvina Danielson
1902-03—Ella Grove
1903-04—
1904-05—Jessie Rhodes
1905-06—Jessie Rhodes
1906-07—Mattie Huffman
1907-08—Lola M. Pore
1908-09—Lola M. Pore
1909-10—Susan Glenn
1910-11—Lola M. Pore
1911-12—Mattie Huffman
1912-13—Fred F. Herman
1913-14—Fred F. Herman
1914-15—Pearl Chalfont Stone
1915-16—Elizabeth Hutchinson
1916-17—Lola M. Pore
1917-18—Mary S. Hough
1918-19—Mary S. Hough
1919-20—Lucy Beggs Lenhart
1920-21—Alfaretta Todd
1921-22—Ella McClain
1922-23—Ella McClain
1923-24—Mildred Smith
1924-25—Mildred Smith, 2 mo.
1924-25—Frank E. McClain
1925-26—Frank E. McClain
1926-27—Gertrude Finley
1927-28—Gertrude Finley
1928-29—Gertrude Finley
1929-30—Gertrude Finley
1930-31—Anna Smith
1931-32—Anna Smith
1932-33—Louise Monath
1933-34—Louise Monath
1934-35—Louise Monath
1935-36—Gertrude Finley
1936-37—Gertrude Finley
1937-38—Gertrude Finley
1938-39—Gertrude Finley
Closed July, 1939 to 1948
1948-49—Ruth Wycoff

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF REVEREND JAMES FINLEY

1794

In the name of God Amen I James Finley of Westmoreland County & State of Pennsylvania Minister of the Gospel being weak in body but of sound mind and memory Blessed be God for all his mercies and calling to mind my mortality do make constitute and ordain this and only this to be my last Will & Testament hereby revoking and disanulling all other and former wills & Testaments made by me and this my will and Testament as in manner and form as follows viz First I will my soul into the hands of a gracious God who gave it hoping for his mercy thro Jesus Christ our Lord And my body to the earth to be buried in a decent manner at the discretion of my Executors without extravigance, not, doubting that I shall receive the same at the general resurrection by the power of God. And as to what worldly estate it has pleased God to favour me with, I will and dispose of the same as follows Imprismis it is my will that after all my just debts and funeral expenses are paid, my loving wife Hannah Findley shall have one third of my personal estate at her disposal & the use of one third of the two parcels of land on which I live & have been improving during her natural life & one feather bed & furniture, at her disposal & also her choice of my mares a good saddle & bridle. It is also my will that my Son John Evans Finly shall have one hundred pounds worth of my lands at the head of Elk, which shall be valued by three men chosen by him & my Executors & shall be the property of him his heirs & Assigns forever. My said Son John E. Finley shall also have thirty pounds given him out of my personal estate and his Son James twenty. It is also my will, that the whole of my lands at the Head of Elk, after my Son John E. shall have received his share as above shall be the property of my Wife Hannah, her Heirs & Assigns forever. It is also my Will that a good young Horse of mare, a good new saddle & bridle with a good new suit of clothes be given to my Son Samuel Robert

Finley & that an hundred pounds to be paid out on Interest upon good security for his use, the bonds to be renewed every five or six years at least. Also that the following division be made of my Lands on Dunlaps creek viz. Beginning where a line of my land crosses the lesser branch of said creek & (Page 121) running down on the easterly side of said creek with its natural courses until it reaches my Son Ebenezars mill dam thence straight to where the great road crosses the main branch of sd. creek, thence along said road to within forty perches of sd. Ebenazers mantion house thence in a straight line towards Captain John Moors mantion house. until it intersects a line of my land, thence to the left hand and along all of the out side lines of my land until it reach the place of beginning. Now it is my will that reserving to my Son Ebenezar his Heirs and Assigns liberty to make & repair such water courses on said inclosed land as they may see proper then said inclosed land with the aforesd. hundred pounds shall be under the direction of my executors for the use of said Samuel Robert until he shall have a legitimate heir when all shall be given into his hands, but if he shall have no such heir he shall only have the use of sd. money, & land during life after which it shall be equally divided among all my Children. And it is my will that all the remainder of my lands on Dunlaps creek shall be the property of my Son Ebenezer Finley his Heirs & assigns forever. There shall also be given to my son Ebenezer out of my Estate five pounds & five pounds to his son James. Item it is my will that my Son in law John Power & my Daughter Margaret Power have each of them twenty pounds given them & their Son James Power ten pounds. It is likewise my will that my son in law John Robinson & my Daughter Hannah Robison have each twenty pounds out of my estate & their Son James Ten pounds. Item it is my will that my Son Joseph Finley have the lands I purchase of Benjamin Fell to be the property of him his Heirs & Assigns forever & also one hundred pounds of my Estate besides & likewise the horse & cow creatures now at his plantation. It is also my will that my Sons William & Michael Finley shall have

the lands on which I live purchased of Benjamin Sweet & Dorsey Penticost equally by divided between them by three men chosen by themselves & the part falling to each to be the property of him his Heirs & Assigns for ever. Each shall have an horse or mare saddle and bridle or twenty three pounds in money. It is also my will that two acres of my land on which the meeting house of Rehoboth & the grave yard stand & including a path from the northest corner of the grave yard to the nearest spring shall be under the care of John Wright, John Power, John Robison, Thomas son of Peters & patterson & my Sons Joseph and William Finley & their successors, or the Elders of said Congregation for the use of said Congregation forever. It is also my will that my negro wenches Nan & Bet Junr. shall serve my Sons Samuel R & Michael behaving obediently until they arrive at the age of thirty years & that said sons shall pay five pounds a year of wages for each into the Estate, with sufficent victuals and clothing and then to advise my Executors to set said wenches at liberty upon their giving good security for their good behavious & that they not bean incumberance to the Estate otherwise to keep then in servitude. It is also my will that my negro men Toby & Plato Junr. shall serve my Sons Joseph and William until said negroes be twenty nine years of age & that then they be set at liberty upon the plan that I freed their parents, which is to be found at the backside of one of my large books. Item it is my will that *my mulatta Child Cush shall serve my son in law John Robison or assigns until free by law & that my other negro Children shall serve my wife & my son Samuel Robert & Michael until they be twenty eight years of age. Item it is my will that after five pounds shall be given for the education of pious young men for the Gospel Ministry at Canonsburgh the whole remainder of my Estate shall be equally divided among all my Children excepting William & Michael whose share shall not exceed the half of the others. Lastly

* This was the terminology used by slave holders in referring to their slaves.

I do hereby nominate constitute & appoint my Sons Joseph Finley and William Finley Executors of this my last will & Testament to see the same executed according to the true intent & meaning thereof. In witness of all which I have hereunto set my hand & affixed my seal this thirteenth day of December Anno Domini seventeen hundred & ninety four 1794.

James Finley (SEAL)

Signed sealed & declared by the said
James Finley to be his last Will &

Testament in presence of us

James Stewart Saml. Rannells, Mary O Minteeth
mark

ENROLLMENT LIST

The following are lists of the pupils who attended some of the schools in Rostraver township during the term of 1861 as recorded in the teachers' report books. These were all one-room schools.

CONCORD SCHOOL

Teacher: J. W. Douglas October 1861

BOYS

J. S. Wakefield, Frank Hall, Alex Hall, George Eckley, Frank Eckley, Oliver Faulke, Manley Faulke, Morgan Moose, George Todd, James Lane, C. L. Lane, W. B. Lane, Clark Patterson, James Brown, William Jennings, Benjamin Jennings, Joseph Jennings, Jud Jennings, G. P. Smith, J. H. Smith, Ross Smith, Presley Culler, O. J. Forney, Frank Finley, Bela Smith, J. W. Hixenbaugh, J. H. Eckley, Alfred Wakefield.

GIRLS

Maggie Culler, Allie Culler, Wilmina Culler, Annie Culler, M. B. Culler, J. S. Hixenbaugh, Lutesia Hixenbaugh, Amelia Armstrong, Maggie Armstrong, Fidelia Armstrong, Mattie Armstrong, S. Armstrong, Carrie McLellan, Annie Todd, Mary Forney, Mattie Smith, Nannie Smith, H. Ella Douglas, Elizabeth Brown, Sadie Brown, Anna M. Forsythe, Anna Finley, Ruth Finley, M. E. Wakefield, Mollie Thomas, Mattie Eckley, Allie Patterson, Sadie Owings, Ada Owings, Amy McLain.

IOWA SCHOOL

Teacher: J. C. Hasson November 1861

BOYS

John Smock, Abraham Smock, John Carnes, Milton A. Smith, William McC. Pritchett, David Montgomery, John Patterson, Charles C. Smock, Findley C. Smock, Ethan Mill-

er, John N. Smock, Josephus Smock, John Montgomery, Joseph L. Davis, George T. Davis, David W. Courtney, Leonidas H. Reeves, Lindsey Graham, Richard Montgomery, John S. Reeves, Peter Swatz, William McMahon, Clemment Watson, Robert McFall, Joseph Bell, Cyrus Fisher, John McConnell, Alvin Smith, John McAlpine, William Greene, Samuel Alloway, Alex McMahon, Caleb Baldwin, Hiram Sill, John Sill.

GIRLS

Lettitia Scott, Harriet Carnes, Lurena Smock, Nancy Smock, Oriella Miller, Isadore Montgomery, Eva Patterson, Lydia Smock, Serena Miller, Mary Smock, Cora Montgomery, Mary Graham, Eliza McConnell, Elvira Furnier, Emma Hipsley, Wennie Swatz, Alice Luce, Mary McMahon, Elizabeth McFall, Margaret Watson, Elizabeth Reeves, Ella Daly, Diana Harris, Harriet Alloway, C. Swatz, Martha Reeves, Flora Furnier, Martha Miller.

WEBSTER SCHOOL

Teacher: F. W. Patterson December 1861

BOYS

S. B. Dawson, David Orm, Cornelius Porter, William Haywood, Perry Boyd, William Porter, J. W. Crouch, Joseph White, Jacob Beenley, John Beenley, John Ward, N. F. Simeral, Wesley Beeler, A. J. White, Charles Beeler, William Bacon, Thomas Swaney, James Swaney, William Bake, John Johnson, A. J. Crouch, Finley Polock, James Thompson, Joseph Beeler, Charles Dawson, Robert Greenouch, Henery Porter, H. Onlaugh, R. Onlaugh, John Gamble, A. Cox, Calvin White, William White, Hugh McCathan, George Lytle, Edward Piles, Michael Hugo, John Piles, William Adison, G. A. White, Daniel West, Henry Louttit, A. A. Thomas, George Beenley, Edward Sexon, James Sansom.

GIRLS

Hannah Polock, Anna Beeler, Mary Gamble, Angeline Bake, Elizabeth Beenley, Olena Richard, Mary Beeler, Alice Fell, Lurena Bake, Martha Sansom, Jennie Blasdell, Mary

Power, Annie Power, Annie Richard, Harriet Dawson, Elizabeth Dawson, Martha Harvey, Elizabeth Orm, Mary Boyd, Mary Crouch, Emma Haywood, E. J. Lape, Lucy Lape, Joan Rothrock, E. J. Story, Clara Boyd, Mary A. Bake, Mary Kocain, Levina Kocain, S. R. Bake, Theressa Brown, Jane Thompson, Priscilla Crouch, Lydia Oliver, S. A. Johnson, Hester Greenouch, Mary Greenouch, Jane Thompson, Hannah Orm, Mary Adison, Melissa Chester, Elizabeth West, Sarah Cox, Mary Rudge, Annie Lytle, E. J. White, Jane Johnson, Elizabeth Johnson, Nancy Simeral.

POINT SCHOOL

Teacher: James C. Jackson November 1861

BOYS

Andrew McMillan, Joseph McMillan, Robinson McMillan, Richard McMillan, Joseph Roberts, Matthias Roberts, William Rodicks, John Rodicks, Albert Orr, David Orr, Christopher Lunchberger, William Maxwell, Benjamin Ovley, Joel Van Kirk, George Webster, David Markle, Markle Smith, George Coughenour, Daniel Coughenour, William Carter, George Niles, Albert Penny, John Huchinson, Joseph Montgomery, Andrew Montgomery.

GIRLS

Amanda Van Kirk, Martha Van Kirk, Annie Van Kirk, Sarah McCurdy, Isabel Montgomery, Hannah Maxwell, Rebecca Maxwell, Hannah Coughenour, Sarah Coughenour, Kizzie Webster, Angeline Webster, Lavina Webster, Elizabeth Pollock, Josephine Pollock, Mary Ann Ovley, Mary C. Drumm, Mary Roberts, Hannah Robinson, Catherine Robinson, Elizabeth Myles, Terezah Webster, Mary Webster, Lydia Montgomery, Maggie Hutchinson, Emma Walters, Harriet Penny.

LEBANON SCHOOL

Teacher: John W. Scott November 1861

BOYS

John Davies, William Anderson, Hamlin Anderson, Ulysus

Davis, Joseph Jones, Homer Power, William Van Kirk, Frank Davies, John Power, William Bake, B. C. Jobs, Joseph Finley, George Finley, John Miller, Frank Beazell, Frank R. Davis, Gilbert Bake.

GIRLS

Jane Bake, Mary Anderson, Ella Jones, Bell C. Flanagan, Lizzie Dick, Ada Power, Emma Beazell, Rebecca Power, Ann Bake, Mary E. Stoneman, Flora Douglas, Matilda Platt, Sarah Brombley, Hannah Power, Mary Hamelton, Frances Finley, Lorinda Davis, Viola Anderson, Mary J. Finley, Maggie Davis, Nancy Hayden, Sarah M. Jobs.

LENITY SCHOOL

Teacher: J. S. Zundel November 1861

BOYS

J. E. Houseman, James Fisher, Homer M. Jones, John Hunter, James M. Duffield, William Hunter, Alonzo D. Shepler, Luther Jones, Franklin Shepler, Samuel Shepler.

GIRLS

Martha Houseman, Elizabeth Fisher, Maggie Fisher, Mary Elizabeth Fisher, Maggie Houseman, Mary Ellen Fisher, Idabella Fisher, Martha Jones, Laura Shepler, Josephine Shepler, Sarah J. Hunter, Annie Thomas, Flora Thomas, Harriet Thomas, Amanda Jones.

LAGRANGE SCHOOL

Teacher: Amzi Flack December 1861

BOYS

Mortimer Beazell, Leroy Bedsworth, John Allen, Oscar Allen, Theadore Allen, Roland Speer, Edgar Speer, James Allen, Jefferson Cummins, Robert Cummins, Albert G. Beazell, Dan W. Frazer, Robert Frazer, Alfred Johnston, Robert Johnston, Nelson Johnston, Caleb Guiles, Andrew Houseman, Fan William McFall, Cassius Cook, George Brittain, Folney Furnier.

GIRLS

Anne Beazell, Martha Bedsworth, Mary Springer, Amanda Houseman, Celia Speer, Caroline Allen, Allie Cummins, Mary Cummins, Sarah Allen, Mary Johnston, Felleoise Furnier, Mary Houseman.

MOUNT PLEASANT SCHOOL

Teacher: Theophilus R. Van Kirk November 1861

BOYS

Albert Snyder, James Snyder, John Porter, Horatio Porter, Rufus Darr, Albert McClain, Joseph Norcross, John Patterson, George Lutz, George Hough, Sammie Flack, Lias Weimer, Willie Weimer, John Power, Pattie Power, Willie Power, George Baker, John Hough, Finley Temms, John McClintic, John Snyder, John Darr, Joseph Bolton, Homer Houseman, James Houseman, William Mathews.

GIRLS

Ettie Porter, Sarah Porter, Edith Porter, Bell Porter, Pressie Porter, Lizzie Porter, Ada Porter, Lib Flack, Nancy Flack, Josephine Flack, Ella Houseman, Mary Frances Houseman, Annie Power, Binie Power, Margaret McClain, Emma McClain, Eliza McClain, Nancy McClain, Josephine Lutz, Susanna Snyder, Sis Darr, Christianna Jobes, Liddie Weimer, Naomi Patterson, Mary McClain, Evaline Snyder.

PLEASANT GREEN SCHOOL

(Colored)

Teacher: Stephen B. Norris

BOYS

Benjamin Miney, John Miney, James Miney, John Ross, Willie Sorrels, Johnson Butler, J. A. Miney, John Butler, Austin Miney, Samuel Ross, Nathan Phares, Alex Phares, Thomas Phares, Robert Butler, Joseph Butler, Robert Ceaton, Aron Ross.

GIRLS

Matilda Miney, Dollie Ross, Mollie Miney, N. J. Miney, Frankey Ross.

GIBSONTON SCHOOL

Teacher: E. N. Hall December 1864

BOYS

Hiram Sill, George Davis, John Carns, James Husher, Robert McFall, John Sill, Francis McGuire, William McGuire, William Davis, William McFall, William Morrison, Thomas Morrison, Charlie Morrison, Louis Jobes, John Fisher, Cyrus Fisher, A. M. Fisher, Bomen Furnier, Sammy Brum, Welsley McKelpin, Robert McKelpin, David McFall, Thomas Husher, John McKelpin, Willie Husher.

GIRLS

Lottie Sill, Jane McKelpin, Elvira Furnier, Annie Abell, Maggie Dunaway, Nettie Sill, Lizzie Titus, Maggie Morrison, Susy Abell, Harriet Carns, Agnes McKelpin, Mary Davis, Mary Stone, Tishie Scott, Annie Sill.

FIRST TAX LIST — ROSTRAVER TOWNSHIP

1772 — Bedford County

Benjamin Applegate, Daniel Applegate, William Applegate, Thomas Applegate, Alexander Bowling, Andrew Baker, Samuel Burns, James Burns, Ishan Barnett, Morris Brady, Samuel Biggon, Samuel Beckett, Edward Cook, Andrew Dye, James Devoir, John Dogtauch, William Dunn, Peter Elrod, Peter Easman, Paul Froman, Rev. Jas. Finley, Samuel Glass, Samuel Grissey, John Greer, James Gragh, Christopher Houseman, Thomas Hind, Peter Hildebrand, Joseph Hill, Llewellen Howell, Deverich Johnson, James Johnson, Jacob Johnson, Joseph Jones, John Kiles, John Kilton, Andrew Linn, William Linn, Nathan Linn, Frederick Lamb, John Miller, Oliver Miller Abraham Miller, Alexander Miller, Alexander Mitchell, John Mitchell, Jesse Martin, Morgan Morgan, Robert Mays, Daniel M'Gogan, James M'Kinley, Robert M'Connell, Ralph Nisley, Dorsey Pentecost, Benjamin Pelton, David Price, John Perry, Samuel Perry, Joseph Pearce, John Pearce, James Peers, Andrew Pearce, Edward Smith, Samuel Sinclair, Henry Speer, John Shannon, Michael Springer, Richard Sparks, William Sultzman, Van Swearingen, William Turner, Philip Tanner, Joseph Vanmeter, Jacob Vanmeter, John Vanmeter, Peter Vandola, Adam Wickenhimen, David Williams, George Weddel John Weddel, James Wall, Samuel Wilson, James Wilson, Isaac Wilson, John Wiseman, Thomas Wells, James Young.

Indentured Servants

Benjamin Allen, Nathaniel Brown, Benajah Burkham, John Bleasor, Samuel Clem, Thomas Cummins, Benajah Dumont, Samuel Davis, Thomas Dobin, Hugh Dunn, Peter Hanks, Joseph Hill, Joseph Lemon, William Moore, John M'Clellan, Felty M'Cormick, Martin Owens, Abraham Ritchey, Peter Skinner.

Single Freemen

William Boling, Jesse Dumont, John Finn, Isaac Greer, Moses Holliday, Peter Johnson, Ignatius Jones, Thomas Miller, Jacob M'Meen, Baltser Shiling, Levi Stephens, Cornelius Thompson, Robert Turner.

INVENTORY
OF DAVID FURNIER'S PROPERTY *

November 6th, 1807

An inventory of the Household Goods and Chattles of David Furnier late of Rostraver Township Westmoreland County Deceased Appraised Upon Oath by us the Subscribers Duly called on to that service by Polly Furnier and Joseph Beckett Executors of the last Will and Testament of the Said David Furnier Deceased

Sworn and Suscribed before me the
Day and Date Above Written
Philip Wright

John Wright
Manasen Reeves

To Ten Botles of brackish Oile	2.50
15 pr. Bridle bits at .12	2.70
1 dz. Kirb bits at .40	4.80
5 pr. Serrup irons at .40	2.00
1 bx. of Sadlery buckles	3.00
3 Knives & forks	1.00
1 lot or box of Buttons	4.00
1 pr. Pistols	6.00
A number of Sadlery tools	8.00
Shaving bar soap & 3 combs	.20
5 Augors	1.75
2 Clevises & Stone boaring irons	1.25
1 Lot of iron	2.00
2 Old sythes and one old saw	1.25
1 Old Bell 5 trap cocks & 2 old coffee mills	2.00

* Arnold Johnston who lives near Allen's Cross Roads is a direct descendant of Polly Furnier.

1 Black Mare with a star & blaze	16.00

1 pr. Girting 100 c 1 compass saw 25 c	1.25
1 Wire saw 100 1 coarse saw 75	1.75
1 pr. Scales & Weights	2.00
2 Trap Door locks 2.00 1 half bushel .50	2.50
2 pr. Butt hinges	1.00
3 small pieces of copper	1.50
35 lb. Nails also a lot of brimstone 1.00	4.50
Ginger 200 5 pr. Steel spurs 60	2.60
9 sadle bag locks 11 door bolts 200	3.00
11 Chest & cubboard locks	2.00
1 Powder horn 50 2 Saddle 1.25	1.75
9 Empty kegs	1.50
1 Empty barrel & two old trunks	4.00
11 yds. Red plush at .75	8.25
5 yds. Straw col. carimon at 2.00	10.00
2 yds. Green broad cloth at 3.50	7.00
5 yds. Black Sattinett at .75	3.75
5 yds. Scarlett at 4.00	20.00
2 yds. Fancy cord at 62½	1.25
Remnant of fancy cord	.75
8 yds. Red Furniture at .50	4.00
2 Remnants of Carimon	3.50
Merrailes Vest Pattron	1.50
8 Large Rugs at 6.00	48.00
15 Second size rugs at 2.50	37.50
30 Pigs at .18	5.40
1 Old Sorrell Mare 1.00	1.00
1 Young Brown Mare bald face	45.00
1 Old Bay Mare	10.00
1 Bay Mare	55.00
1 Bay Mare Bald face & white feet	50.00
1 Young Iron grey Mare white face	55.00
1 Young Bay Stud Colt	45.00
	501.40

1 Black horse 4 white feet and blaze	55.00
1 Bay horse 12 years old	50.00
1 Bay 2 white feet and Star	60.00

4 Barrell Cherry juice at 1600 cents	64.00
2 Empty hogshead at 1.00	2.00
39 Empty salt & flour barrells	3.90
3 Plows & irons & 1 clevis & link	9.00
1 Harrow 1.75 1 wheelbarrow 1.00	2.75
1 Brick kiln	80.00
3 Chains at 2.00	6.00
1 Old cart & old yoke	10.00
16 Sheep at 1.10	16.60
1 Old wagon & body thereunto belong	25.00
1 Tin plate stove	16.00
1 Tin plate stove with pipes & screws	25.00
1 Tin plate stove 6 plates	12.00
2 pots ea. 1/6 & 1/5 gallons	2.25
2 pots 1/6 & 1/4 gallons	2.50
1 Damaged pot	1.00
2 Kettles 1/18 3.50 1/10 gal. 2.00	5.50
1 Kettle 7 gal. at 1.50	1.50
2 Bake ovens and two small pots	3.50
1 small pot .75 1 stew pot .50	1.25
1 small kettle 1.00 1 spider .50	1.50
1 Copper tea kettle	.75
1 small mettle tea kettle	2.50
3 smothing irons	1.50
1 Copper gallon	2.00
2 Old sythes at 1.00 2 old hoes at .50	1.50
3 spades and one old shovell	1.50
1 Mattock .75 1 stone hammer 2.00	2.75
2 Axes at 1.00	2.00
2 Mill gudgeons (cart)	2.40
1 Grind stone 4.00 1 brand iron .75	4.75
1 Vest pattron	.50
2 pr. Gloves at .40 1 pr. Stockings 1.00	1.80
4 yds. Worstic web	1.00
57 Harness at .30	17.10
- Ditto for bridle	3.00
- Sheep skins	.50
- Upper leather	1.50
5 Harness at .30	1.50

2 Mouse traps at .25 gloves .25	.50
1 Brush .25 Stilyards 1.50	1.75
2 Churn hoops and plane stocks	.50
1 Large waiter 4.50 1 Ditto 1.50	6.00
1 Ditto .50 5 small Ditto 1.50	1.75
1 Ditto 1.00 3 small Ditto 1.00	2.00
1 set Ivory handled knives and forks	3.00
3 Brass candle sticks	1.25
2 pr. Butt hinges .25	
	$521.55

2 Brass candlesticks 37½	.75
3 Wool mats at .25	.75
15 gal. Peach brandy at .60	9.00
1 Brekfast table and oil cloth	4.00
2 Bed quilts 5.00	10.00
1 Bed quilt 3.00	3.00
1 pr. Blankets (at the mill)	4.00
1 Barrel salt	10.50
6 window chairs	7.00
2 small chairs	1.50
1 Still suposed 300 gal. at .50	150.00
1 Still suposed 125 gal. at .55	68.75
1 Still suposed 80 gal. at .75	60.00
22 Tubs and 2 fleakstands at .50	11.00
Leading troughs old barrell and chest	.50
200 ft. Boards 1.00	2.00
1 pr. Timber wheels	25.00
1 Old red and white cow	12.00
1 Cow and calf	15.00
1 Brindled cow white face	13.00
1 Red and white cow crumpled horns	11.00
1 Flecked young cow	11.00
1 Red cow brocked face	12.00
1 Heifer	9.00
3 Heifers two years old at 6.00	18.00
1 Bull and 1 Steer at 6.00	12.00
1 Calf	1.00

1 Cutting box and fuel trough	2.00
Remains of old wagon	1.00
2 Old saddles	.50
Tar can	.30
2 pr. Spurs and 2 bridles	4:00
2 pr. Spurs and 2 bridles	3.00
Brick mould table and box	.25
Axeltree of wagon	.50
1 Man's sadle 4.00 2 bridles 1.25	6.50
1 Old mill saw	1.00
6 window chairs	4.00
6 split bottom chairs	2.40
1 Dining table	3.00
1 Breakfast table	1.50
2 Stands	2.00
	$524.95

1 Bed & furniture	40.00
1 Ditto & furniture	35.00
1 Ditto & covering & bedstead	25.00
1 Ditto Ditto & furniture	30.00
1 Ditto Ditto with covering	20.00
2 Old coverlids at .75	1.50
1 Looking glass	1.50
1 Ditto	1.50
1 Ditto	.75
1 Ditto	.50
Cupboard furniture	22.67
1 lot of pattron Gown silk	12.00
2 yd. Blue cloth and 1 small ps. plush	2.50
8 table cloaths	6.00
6 sheets	7.50
8 handtowels	2.00
2 Trunks at 2.50	5.00
Twist, ferriton & pocket books	2.00
1 Anviliron .75 1 pan .75 1 griddle .40	1.90
1 Trap kittle 1.00 1 pr. tongs 1.00	2.00
1 Desk	20.00

7 Old books	1.50
1 Pocket snap	.25
1 Negro woman	60.00
Simon Negro boy 9 yrs. old	40.00
2 twins Easther & Rachele ea. 40	80.00
Lidia age about 5 yrs.	35.00
Joseph aged about 3 yrs.	30.00
Mary about 18 months	25.00
Wearing apparell	16.00
3 Barrell flour	7.50
2 Stacks wheat at 9.00 ea.	18.00
1 stack part wheat part rye	7.00
	$558.17

BILL OF SALE

Know all Men by these Presents that we Polly Furnier Executrix and Joseph Beckett Esqr. Executor of David Furnier, late Deceased, of Westmoreland County State of Pennsylvania for and in Consideration of the Sum of One Hundred Dollars to us in hand paid by Jacob Bowman, North of Brownsville, Fayette County and State aforesaid,

Have Granted Bargained and Sold and by these Presents do Grant Bargain Sell and deliver unto the Said Jacob Bowman One Negro Girl Named Ledia about five years of age Being Recorded According to Law in the County of Westmoreland by Said David Furnier, the Said Jacob Bowman his heirs Executors Administrators & afsigns, to have and to hold the Said Negro Girl as a servant until She arrives to the Age of Twenty Eight years, and we the Said Polly Furnier as Executrix and Joseph Bickett Esqr as Executor of the Said David Furnier for ourselves our heirs Executors and administrators Shall and will warrant and define as Recorded also a Servant untill She arrives to the age of Twenty Eight years as aforesaid from and against all and every Person or Persons by these Presents the Said Negro Girl Ledia, Unto the Said Jacob Bowman his heirs and afsigns,

In witness whereof we have hereunto Set our hand and Seals this
Day of
Witness Present

Anno Domini 1808

AN EARLY EPISODE

Mary Lucinda Furnier lived along Speers run, which empties into the Monongahela river at Belle Vernon. She attended a log subscription school where Rostraver high school now stands. A family record of the Johnstons states that one morning on her way to school she saw a bear up a tree and ran back home.

OLD TIME REPORT CARDS

The report cards of Mary Lucinda Johnston for the term of 1856 are as follows:

Miss Mary Lucinda Johnston is quite an obedient little girl and is learning better than I anticipated.

J. Wilson, Teacher.

La Grange School, Nov. 4, 1856.

Miss Mary Lucinda Johnston is a good and obedient little girl in school and I have no doubt her progress will be in the same proportion.

J. Wilson Teacher

La Grange School, Dec. 2, 1856.

Miss Mary Lucinda Johnston still remains an amible girl in school and only wants a little assistance to become a good speller.

J. Wilson Teacher

ITEMS FROM ACCOUNT BOOK

OF LEVI JOHNSTON, BELLE VERNON, PA.

April 12, 1840

One half bushel salt	.37
2 pigs	.50
1 barrel flour	5.00
1 pound candles	.14
1 Bonnet (ladies hat)	5.00
6 pounds sugar	.60

June 9, 1840

1 pair shoes	1.50
6 pounds coffee	.90
1 pound tea	.80
1 barrell flour	3.00
2 palm leaf hats	.87½
1½ bushels corn	.56

Sept. 28, 1842

¾ lb. of tobacco	.25
26 lb. pork	.78
15 yds. muslin	1.80
1 bed cord	.50
5¼ yards casinette	4.60
8 lbs. coffee	1.20
3½ yds. lindsey	.87½
1 pr. shoes for Mary	1.62
1 pr. shoes for Thorton	1.50

REFERENCES:

Old and New Westmoreland ..... John N. Boucher

Historical Sketch of Rehoboth Presbyterian Church ..... By a member of the church

Historic Fells ..... Miss Blanche Craig

Sim Greene ..... Wylie

History of Westmoreland County .... George Dallas Albert

History of the Olive Branch Regular Baptist Church ..... By Miss Mary Piersol

History of Education in Rostraver Township and **A Brief History of Rostraver Township** ..... E. F. Carter

The Old and New Monongahela .. Dr. Jonn S. Van Voorhis

The Monongahela of Old ..... James Veech