
LUZERNE TOWNSHIP.

LUZERNE, one of the original townships of Fayette, lies on the Monongahela River, which along the western and northern lines of the township describes a series of irregular bends, and flows for the most part between hilly ranges that give sweeping views of the river's course and a long stretch of country beside. The great bend on the west curves gracefully from Davidson's Ferry to Millsboro', and there taking a sharp turn outward makes a second but more abrupt curve to where William G. Crawford's farm fronts the stream. Across by land from Davidson's Ferry to Crawford's the distance measures less than three miles; between the same points by river it is more than eleven miles. The river separates the township on the north and west from Washington and Greene Counties. On the south the boundary is German township, and on the east Redstone. Steamboats ascend the Monongahela as far as New Geneva. Ferries established at convenient distances give easy access to the opposite shore. These are located at Jacobs', Davidson's, Rice's Landing, Millsboro', Fredericktown, and Crawford's. On the river-front, as already noted, the land lies high and forbids much profitable agriculture. Generally, however, the surface of the township is rolling and offers a fine field for farming. Coal is plentiful, but mining is chiefly confined to production for local demand. Merrittstown, the most important village in the township, is located upon Dunlap's Creek, whose mill-power is freely utilized at that and other points. Curious features in the landscape are found in so-called carved rocks, of which the most striking are on "the river hill" near Millsboro'. They are two in number, flat of surface, and jutting perhaps a foot above the ground. The larger of the two measures

about sixteen feet upon either side, and bears numerous sunken impressions of divers figures said to represent wild animals, fishes, turkey-tracks, etc. Legends make the Indians the carvers of these strange and in some cases unfamiliar figures, while speculative antiquarians hold to the prehistoric theory. Whatever the basis of argument, it is certain that the impressions were upon the rocks when the first white settlers came to the river region.

The total assessed valuation of Luzerne subject to county tax in 1881 was \$1,050,092, or a decline from the preceding year of \$2061. The population of the township by the census of 1880 was fourteen hundred and forty-five, including the village of Merrittstown.

The opening of the road from Laurel Hill to the mouth of Dunlap's Creek, by Col. James Burd, in 1759, brought settlers to the vicinity of its terminus at an earlier date than settlements were made in most of the other parts of the Monongahela Valley. Among the early comers William Colvin was the first who came into the territory which is now Luzerne with the intention of making a home here. He acquired a settlement right in 1763, and afterwards sold that right to Thomas Brown (the founder of Brownsville), who, on the 16th of December, 1779, obtained from the commissioners of the State of Virginia a certificate for four hundred and fifty-seven acres, "to include the settlement purchased of William Colvin, near Redstone Old Fort, made in the year 1763." This is recited in the certificate, and thus the date of Colvin's settlement is fixed. What became of Colvin after he sold his settlement right here is not known. The tract which he sold, and which was certificated to

Brown as above mentioned, was surveyed to the latter in March, 1785. It was then described as bounded on the north by land of John and Samuel McCullough,¹ northwest by land of Rees Cadwallader and Thomas Gregg, and on the south by land of Basil Brown. Thomas Brown soon removed to the north side of Dunlap's Creek, where he laid out the town of Brownsville, as before mentioned.

Basil Brown, Sr., brother of Thomas, settled on the land mentioned in the preceding description as adjoining the Colvin tract in the year 1770. It was a tract of four hundred and forty-three acres, granted to him on a Virginia certificate, and was surveyed to him March 22, 1785. The certificate on which it was so surveyed recited that the tract granted was "to include his settlement made in the year 1770." On this homestead tract Basil Brown lived and died. He left two sons, Thomas and Basil, Jr., and a daughter, Sally, who was a cripple. Thomas Brown lived in Luzerne, on the farm now occupied by Lewis Adams. He married Dorcas, daughter of William Goe, and for a second wife the widow of Philip Worley. His brother, Basil Brown, Jr., was a bachelor, who remained for some years in Luzerne, and afterwards removed to Brownsville, where his father had purchased a number of town lots from his brother, the elder Thomas Brown. Basil Brown, Jr., and his sister Sally lived in Brownsville, on Market Street, at or near the corner of Morgan Street, where he died at the age of seventy-five years. Sally, the cripple, died in that town some years later.

John McKibben was a very early settler in what is now Luzerne, locating on three hundred and eighteen acres in April, 1766, as is recited in a deed for the same tract, made by David Breeding to Nathaniel Breeding, in 1783. The tract is located about one mile southwesterly from Merrittstown, and was for many years the farm and home of Nathaniel Breeding. It is now owned by his grandson, George E. Hogg, of Brownsville.

Jehu Conwell and his brother, Capt. William Conwell, settled within the limits of this township in June, 1767. One James Bredin was in the territory before the Conwells, who upon their arrival found Bredin living in a log cabin upon a tomahawk claim, where he had girdled a few trees, he having come in the previous April. For a small consideration the Conwells purchased Bredin's claim and improvements, and he departed for other scenes. The land thus taken by the Conwells lies now in the Heistersburg school district, and is included within the John McMullen farm. The country was at that time infested by savages and wild beasts, but with neither had the settlers then any trouble, for the former were friendly, and the latter not so much inclined to pursue man as afraid of being themselves pursued. By and by, however, the In-

dians began to show signs of hostility, and the Conwells thought it advisable to withdraw for a brief season to a more populous locality. In August, 1772, Jehu returned to his old home in Delaware, in October was married, and in November of the same year set out with his young bride for the Luzerne clearing. Existence was comparatively quiet and uneventful until 1774, when Indian aggressions set in in earnest. Jehu Conwell and his brother, Capt. William, then bestirred themselves and started the project of building a fort. A site was selected upon the Coleman plantation, on the west side of Dunlap's Creek, not much more than half a mile below Merrittstown, on a place now occupied by Harrison Henshaw. There a block-house was hastily constructed, to include within its inclosure the spring near the present Henshaw house. Assisted and directed by the Conwells, the settlers had the fort completed in quick time, and in May, 1794, it was occupied. There appears to be no evidence that the fort was ever attacked, or that the people living in that portion of Luzerne met with serious injury at the hands of the savages, although they were for a time in great terror for fear of Indians. Several children are said to have been born within the fort during 1774. The names of only two can now be given. One was Ruth, daughter of Capt. William Conwell. She married Abram Armstrong. Another was a daughter of Jehu Conwell. She married Judge William Ewing. After the autumn of 1774, the clouds of alarm clearing away, block-house life was abandoned, and the peaceful pursuits of the pioneer were pushed forward with renewed vigor.

When the flag of national independence was raised in 1776, Jehu and William Conwell responded to the call, and fought through the Revolution. Happily surviving the struggle they resumed their rural labors, and in good time ended their lives upon the Luzerne lands they had cleared from the wilderness. Jehu died in January, 1834, at the age of eighty-six, upon the farm that had been his home for sixty years, and from which he is said in that time never to have removed himself a distance of more than fifty miles. He was married more than sixty years, and had seven children. His sons Shepard, Yates T., John, and George settled and died in Luzerne. One of his daughters married Judge William Ewing, another Andrew Porter, and the third John Arnold. With his brother, Capt. William, he rests now in the old Conwell burying-ground upon the George Conwell farm, where lie also numerous others of the same name.

Jehu Conwell was not only a farmer, but a manufacturer and miller. He built a log grist-mill upon Big Run, which was certainly the first grist-mill in the township, and, according to some authorities, the first in the county.² A half-bushel measure, made

¹ These McCulloughs were Indian traders who acquired settlement rights here nearly as early as Colvin, but they were not permanent settlers, and soon migrated.

² Clark Breeding, of Uniontown, says Jehu Conwell told him he constructed the mill the year after he came to the township. It was used simply for pounding corn. A flutter-wheel was the motive-power for a great sweep, to which a pounder was attached. The mortar was a rock

of mulberry wood and used in the mill when the latter was first erected, is yet in the possession of George W. Conwell. Jehu built also a distillery at the same place, and as the business transacted there assumed an appearance of extraordinary briskness, while it attracted many patrons, the locality was given the name of Frogtown, and by that name was known for many years.

About the time of the coming of Jehu and William Conwell there came also to Luzerne Aaron Hackney, grandfather of Aaron Hackney, now of Luzerne. He settled in the Conwell neighborhood, but, like the Conwells and other early settlers, was soon compelled to vacate his new home by the threatening danger of Indian aggressions. He returned to his former home in Virginia, but came again to Luzerne after an absence of about two years, and remained there ever after until his death in 1807. His sons were George, Joseph, John, Jehu, and Aaron. George, Joseph, and Jehu died in Luzerne, John moved to Menallen, and Aaron to Mercer County.

Richard Aschcraft, a Revolutionary spy and scout, claimed also to be a settler and land-owner upon the Monongahela, just above Heaton's mill, nearly opposite the mouth of Ten-Mile Creek. He was living there about, and perhaps before, 1767, and likely enough was simply a hunter, scout, and trader, without any ambition in the direction of a husbandman's vocation except to raise what little he needed for home consumption. From the record of the proceedings of the West Virginia Historical Society in 1871 is taken the following copy of an affidavit made by Richard Ashcraft and Thomas Carr before James Chew, July 19, 1777:

"Richard Ashcraft and Thomas Carr, two of the spies, came before James Chew, one of the Magistrates for Monongahalia County, and made oath that on Thursday evening, the 17th inst., they discovered on the head-waters of Buffaloe creek (tracks) which to the best of their knowledge appeared to be them of the enemy, and that from the sign of the said tracks their number might be seven or eight, that the said tracks were making toward the Monongahalia river, and appeared to be gone the said day."

The land tract on the river known as "The Bone of Contention" is thus alluded to by Veech:

"The land just above Bridgeport, on the river, embracing some three or four hundred acres, was in early time the subject of long and angry controversies—from 1769 to 1785—between adverse claimants under military permits. It was well named in the official survey (which one of the parties procured of it under a Pennsylvania location) 'Bone of Contention.' One Angus McDonald claimed it, or part of it, under a military permit from Col. Bouquet, dated April 26, 1763, and a settlement on it. In March, 1770, he sold his claim to Capt. Luke Collins, describing the land as 'at a place called Fort Burd, to

in which an excavation was rudely made. Conwell said he had grown tired of going miles upon miles to mill, and was determined to have a mill of his own.

include the field cleared by me where the saw-pit was, above the mouth of Delap's Creek.' Collins conveyed it to Michael Cresap (of Logan speech celebrity) on the 13th of April, 1772, 'at half-past nine in the morning,' describing it as situate between 'Point Lookout and John Martin's land,' recently owned, we believe, by the late Mrs. John T. Krepps. Cresap's executors, in June, 1781, conveyed to one William Schooly, an old Brownsville merchant, who conveyed to Rees Cadwallader. The adverse claimants were Henry Shryock and William Shearer, assignees of George Andrew. Their claim reached farther southward towards the creek, and farther up the river, covering the John Martin land. They sold out to Robert Adams and Thomas Shain. Although they had the oldest *permit* (in 1762), their title seems to have been overcome by the settlement and official location and survey of their adversary. One Robert Thorn seems also to have been a claimant of part of the land, but Collins bought him out. This protracted controversy involved many curious questions, and called up many ancient recollections. No doubt the visit to this locality of Mr. Deputy Sheriff Woods of Bedford in 1771 was parcel of this controversy. Many of these early claims were lost or forfeited by neglect to *settle* the land according to law, and thus were supplanted by others. They were valued by their owners at a very low mark, and often sold for trifling sums."

The Crawford settlement in Luzerne was important in one respect. It was the first location in the bend of the river, and included an extensive tract that reached along the river-front from Millsboro' to Crawford's Ferry, south of lock No. 5. The heads of the Crawford families were James and Josiah, who came together from Maryland to Fayette County in 1770 or 1771, and bought about sixteen hundred acres on the Monongahela, in Luzerne. James Crawford built his cabin a little below Fredericktown, on the bank of the stream, and not long after established a ferry there. Before that ferry was established, Josiah Crawford, his brother, who had settled near the river upon the place now occupied by Joseph Crawford, south of lock No. 5, had put a ferry on at that point. That was probably the pioneer ferry on the Monongahela along the Luzerne line. Illustrative of the wild character of the country when he founded his settlement, James Crawford said that when he and his brother Josiah came out on their land-prospecting tour, they found houses so scarce they had to sleep in the woods at night with the snow knee-deep all about them, and that when he (James) put up his cabin it was the only house between the river at that point and Uniontown. The log house that James Crawford built at the river is still standing, and is said to be in good preservation despite the fact that scarcely any repairs have been put upon it. The weather-boards with which he inclosed it he got out by hand upon his place with the aid of his slaves, of whom he had several. James and Josiah Crawford were known to the Indians as Quakers and friends to William Penn. For this, it is said, the savages not only did not molest them, but took frequent occasion to show an exceedingly friendly disposition. Once the Indians gave James and his family a severe fright. A party of them came down the river one evening and put up

for the night upon James' place. In the morning they said to the old gentleman that they had determined to take one of his children with them, and to emphasize their remarks with an apparent threat showed him some scalps. The old man pretended that he wasn't much frightened, and in that fiction was helped along by his good wife, who knew as well as did her husband the value of a strong policy of conciliation toward the redskins, and thus they acquiesced in the taking of the child, while in response to the Indian demand that he (James) too should accompany them apparent willing resignation was yielded. To the unspeakable relief of the Crawfords the Indians informed them, laughingly, that neither child nor old man should be taken, and that the project was simply put forward by way of a joke. Joke as it was, the Crawfords did not for many a day forget the terror it had brought upon them.

In the course of time James Crawford concluded to go still farther west, and dividing the bulk of his property among his children, moved to Ohio and settled upon land now occupied by the city of Chillicothe, where he died. His sons were John, Ephraim, William, and Joseph, all of whom died in Luzerne. John and William lived to reach the age of ninety-six. Josiah (brother of James Crawford), who died in Luzerne at the age of eighty, had seven sons, named James, Josiah, Jr., Benedict, Elijah, Levi, Ephraim, and Abel. Benedict was killed on the river by the Indians; Elijah, Ephraim, and Levi died in Luzerne; the rest removed out of the township. There are still among the residents of Luzerne many bearing the name of Crawford. Of these the oldest representatives are William, aged eighty-two; Joseph, eighty-three; Ephraim, seventy-five; and George, seventy.

The ferries established by James and Josiah Crawford were maintained for many years by some member of the family, and before the great volume of traffic between the East and West was diverted to the National road they were kept busy night and day transporting passengers, live-stock, and freight that at one time moved through that region. There was at a very early day a John Crawford at what is now known as Jacobs' Ferry, where he had a ferry. He was not of the other Crawford family, but belonged, it is believed, to the Crawfords of Greene County. He disappeared from Luzerne history, and gave place at the ferry to Jeremiah Davidson, who came from Mercer County before 1800, and continued the ferry established by John Crawford. Davidson must have been in the river region during the time of Indian troubles, for recollections of him and his time mention the circumstance of his assisting at the organization of a party of settlers who went out upon an expedition that had for its object retaliation upon a band of savages who had been committing depredations. Davidson's first ferry-boat is said to have been a dug-out, which he soon replaced with a flat-boat. Besides being a ferryman and farmer, he was also a

boat-builder, and constructed barges for himself as well as for others. Not infrequently he would journey down the river in one of his barges on trading expeditions, and thus became a pretty well known character. The ferry he maintained until his death, about 1850.

The old Davidson property is now owned by Adam Jacobs, of Brownsville, who in 1862 bought and took possession thereof. His land embraces two tracts, patented respectively by John Crawford and Samuel Stokely. The Stokely farm was called "The Cave," by reason, it is said, of the fact that early explorations noted the presence thereon of a cave, but what sort of a cave, what its dimensions, or even its locality are to-day unknown, since not one of the many later searchers has been able to locate it. Capt. Jacobs has about one thousand acres of land near the river, and has at the ferry a summer residence, store, grist-mill, boat-yard, etc. At his boat-yard he has built four steamboats and numerous barges. During 1881 he employed a large force of men in the boat-yard upon steamboats and barges already contracted for. Upon the hill overlooking the river Capt. Jacobs has sunk a shaft running perpendicularly down one hundred feet, and four hundred and sixty feet along a slope. At that depth he has found the "nine-foot Pittsburgh vein," and intends developing the coal interests of that region. A branch wire of the Western Union Telegraph Line from Brownsville to Davidson's Ferry connects the latter place with Jacobs' Ferry. East Riverside post-office was established at Jacobs' Ferry in 1864. The first postmaster was Adam Jacobs, Jr. The second and present one is John N. Jacobs.

Another early ferry was the one established by David Davidson, where his son David has maintained a ferry for many years. At this place a steam ferry-boat was once put on, but business did not warrant its retention. There was another ferry at Rice's Landing, and still another at Millsboro', which latter was owned by Henry Heaton and Rezin Virgin. Below were the Crawford ferries, already spoken of.

In 1772, Andrew Frazer built a fine log house on the present W. S. Craft place, and placed high up on the chimney the mark "A F 1772." A lock weighing eleven and a half pounds secured the door, and is still held as a relic by his descendants in Cincinnati. Some of the apple-trees planted by Mr. Frazer about the time of his settlement are still bearing. Mr. Frazer died in 1800.

Robert Baird, Sr., was the eldest son of Moses Baird, Sr., of New Jersey, and was born in the year 1736. He came to this county first in the year 1777, a young man, and bought the lands in the southeastern part of what is now Luzerne township, and southwestern part of Redstone township, now owned by Jeremiah Baird, heirs of Uriah Higinbotham, Samuel M. Baird, and others, in all six hundred acres or more. He returned to New Jersey, married a Miss Elizabeth

Reeves, and came back with his young bride, bringing their household goods on horseback over three hundred miles. They had a good cabin near a large spring, amidst the almost trackless wilderness of sugar, black walnut, oak, etc. He was an energetic man, and soon had several acres cleared. His brothers and sisters came after a few years, and a family by the name of Frame, who settled on the next farms south. His brothers, John, Moses, and James, soon married, and moved to Ohio, as did also his younger sister. Moses was the father of Mrs. James Ewing, of Uniontown, Pa. His sisters Jane and Margaret married Charles and John Porter, of this county. The former was associate judge for many years.

Robert Baird, Sr., and his wife were very industrious and frugal, and raised a family of four sons and four daughters, all of whom married and raised large families. He was a man of true Christian merit, and stood among the best of men in his day. His wife's brothers, Manassah and Michael Reeves, came to Western Pennsylvania soon after, and settled near to where Belle Vernon, Pa., now stands. Some of their descendants are in that section yet.

Mrs. Elizabeth Baird died in 1826, and Robert, Sr., married for his second wife Mrs. Sarah McClelland, of Greene County, Pa. He lived until Oct. 5, 1835. His oldest son, Alexander, inherited that part where the widow Uriah Higinbotham now lives and where Samuel M. Baird lives; his second son, Aaron, the part where Mr. Grove now lives; and his son Moses, where Jeremiah P. Baird now lives. His youngest son, Rev. Robert Baird, D.D., was educated at Jefferson College, Pa., and at Princeton, N. J., where he married Miss Fermine O. A. DeBoisson. Dr. Baird was for a long time corresponding secretary of "The Foreign Christian Alliance," during which time he crossed the ocean fourteen times and visited eighteen different crowned heads. He could converse in many languages, and was the author of several works. His "Travels in Northern Europe," "Religion in America" (written in French and afterwards translated into English), with many smaller works, live after him. He died in 1861, leaving a wife (who died a year afterwards) and four sons,—Rev. C. W. Baird, D.D., of Rye, N. Y.; Rev. H. M. Baird, D.D., Professor of Greek in the New York University; Judge E. P. Baird, of New York City; and William W. Baird, Esq., of the same place. Among the descendants of Robert Baird, Sr., now living there are six ministers of the gospel, five ruling elders of the church, and many that are useful mechanics and farmers.

Shortly after Robert Baird, Sr., settled in Fayette County, Pa., a family by the name of Morgan settled near where Morgantown, W. Va., now stands. The Indians were troublesome; the men who cleared the lands had to keep their guns with them or near at hand in the fields. On one occasion the elder son of the Morgans went away on business, and when he

returned he found their house burned, and his father, mother, one brother and sister murdered by the Indians. He stood terror-stricken. Two of the younger children, a boy and girl, had run away and hidden themselves. John Morgan, then and there, took an oath that he would kill every Indian he ever set eyes on. Several years after this, during which time he *did* kill many a redskin, he went to Baltimore for salt with his pack-horses. In the city one day he saw a small crowd of men and boys who were having fun over something; as he looked in among them he saw an Indian cutting pranks. Capt. Jack Morgan turned pale as he started away, and remembering his oath he turned, went back, pushed into the crowd, and with his knife stabbed the Indian to the heart and walked away. Of course he was remanded to jail for trial for murder. His attorney heard his story, his oath, etc., then asked if he had no friend that could testify to these things. He said Robert Baird, of Western Pennsylvania, could. So Baird was sent for, and when he heard of Capt. Jack's bad luck went to him in time to give testimony before the court and jury that tried the case. After the hearing the jury returned a verdict of *not guilty*. Capt. Morgan and Mr. Baird came home together, with their train of pack-horses laden with salt, etc. They were fast friends.

Mr. Baird's treatment of his youngest son, Robert, Jr., showed his wisdom and judgment in planning the future of his boy. The parents desired very much to educate their youngest son, whom they had so often prayed God to call into the ministry, so they toiled hard to get means and clothing (home-made at that) to send him to school. There was a grammar school at Uniontown, Pa. (twelve miles away), taught by a Mr. Gilbert. When the spring of the year came they took Robert, Jr., to the school, arranged for his board and tuition for six months, by which time he could enter college. Robert stayed a few weeks, when he packed up and walked home. It was near noon when he arrived. His mother soon learned with sorrow that he did not want to stay at school. His father came in from work, found his boy there, and learning his dislike to books, etc., or rather staying from home, he said, "Well, Robert, get a mattock, and come with me after dinner down to the thicket and help grub." Here they toiled for several days beneath a hot sun. Robert's hands blistered,—the thorny wild plum was hard to grub,—but still his father did not say a word about a change of work. About ten o'clock, the fourth or fifth day, Robert, Jr., said, "Father, I'll go to school and stay." "Well, my son," said his father, "if you are determined to do so you can go, otherwise this thicket must be cleared." "*I'll stay*." Young Baird went. At the end of six months he entered college, and graduated with honors and became one of the great men of America.

Robert Baird, Jr., was greatly attached to the cause

of religion and education; gave a great deal to the support of the church and schools and colleges. He was a ruling elder in the Dunlap's Creek Presbyterian Church more than forty years.

None of his children are living now. When his youngest son, Robert, Jr., brought home his wife, a few days after their marriage, according to the custom of those days, there must be a gathering of friends and a dinner. The old father had invited all his children and grandchildren to be present at the old mansion, Oct. 14, 1824, to take part in the festive occasion. They were *all* present: his three sons and four daughters, with their children, making in all forty-five persons, besides the bride and groom and the family. After dinner Rev. Robert Baird, Jr., made a short address to the young folks. And the old grandfather handed each grandchild, thirty-eight in number, a copy of the New Testament, bound in calf, saying, "My dear grandchildren, this is a small gift, but a very precious one. Make it the guide of your lives." Many of these are yet in the families of those grandchildren.

In September, 1879, the Bairds held a centennial gathering at the old home, in memory of the first settling of old grandfather Robert Baird, Sr., on these lands. There were present thirty-eight representatives, a singular coincidence. There are now living descendants in Fayette County of the family of Alexander Baird, one; of Aaron Baird, six; of Moses Baird, two; of Elizabeth, who became the wife of Randolph Dearth, one. The rest are scattered in the West and South.

Lewis and John Deem came to Luzerne among the earliest settlers, and located a tract of four hundred and fifty acres, which include now the farms of James Cunningham, I. N. Craft, and John Acklin. Lewis built a log cabin upon the present Craft place in 1777. John put up his cabin on the Acklin farm. The portion now owned by James Cunningham was bought of the Deems by Eber Homan. A part of the house built by Homan in 1780 still serves as a portion of the residence of James Cunningham, and, as far as appearances go, is yet stanch and tight. Eber Homan set up a blacksmith's shop on the Cunningham place, and employed also a hand-mill for grinding corn, not only for himself, but for many of his neighbors, who were glad of even that primitive kind of a mill. Grated corn was a common and sometimes exclusive diet with some people, simply because they were too poor to buy anything else. Instances are given of how farmers, preliminary to harvesting, finding themselves unable to purchase bread, would cut unripe wheat, dry it and take it to mill, so that bread might be provided to feed the harvesters at their coming to gather the crop.

In the list of Luzerne's pioneers—a list of some magnitude—may be recorded the names of James and William Dearth, the Vernons, Acklins, Ewings, Samuel Durnell, John Patterson, Joseph Ritchie,

John Denny, John McConnell, John Wanee, Swethen Chandler, Charles and John Stewart, Job Briggs, and the Thorntons. Samuel Durnell was a Chester County shoemaker, and about the year 1800 located in Luzerne upon a place now owned by William Roberts, where he resumed his trade of shoemaking. He bought a farm later, and in 1819 he sold it, intending to remove to Ohio. While making his preparations for the journey he was taken ill and died.

John Wallace, of Chester County, migrated to Luzerne with his family, and settled on the river hill near Jacobs' Ferry. Of his two sons, Robert moved to Washington County; William settled in Ohio, returned to Luzerne, and died in the township. The only member of John Wallace's family living is the widow of Aaron Baird, now residing in Merrittstown.

Hugh Gilmore, a settler in German township about 1780, built a grist-mill and saw-mill on Redstone Creek, in Redstone township, and gave the charge thereof to his sons, James and Hugh Jr., who lived over the creek in Luzerne. James and Hugh Jr. died in Merrittstown. Three brothers named Dearth came in before 1780, but only two, James and William, made actual settlements. The third brother was a great hunter, and devoted himself almost constantly to the sports of the chase. As civilization advanced and cleared the forests he kept in the advance, and still clinging to his nomadic life among the wilds, pushed on westward as the pioneer's axe opened the way for the march of progress, and so kept on toward the setting sun a hunter and a roamer to the last. He died somewhere in the far West.

William Ewing, who married one of Jehu Conwell's daughters, lived on the J. W. Conwell place, and operated for some years the distillery started by Jehu Conwell. He was father of Nathaniel Ewing, who served the county as president judge. William Miller was on the present William Miller place (located by Amos Hough in 1784) in 1800, where he died in 1822. Samuel Hurford, one of his farm-hands, married his daughter Margaret, and died in the township in 1842. David Jamison, from Delaware, and afterwards of Washington County, settled in 1804, in Luzerne, near the river, upon land now occupied by A. G. and J. R. Jamison. There were one hundred and forty-seven acres in the tract that had been warranted to Jonathan Arnold in October, 1785, at which time also his son, Jonathan, Jr., located an adjoining tract. In July, 1785, William Hammond received a warrant for three hundred and fifty-two acres upon which is now the Andrew Porter farm.

In 1784, Rezin Virgin located the lands now occupied by Jacob Jamison and William Heller, the property being known as "Perkins' Beauty." The Richard Covert place was first settled by Kinsie Virgin, and in 1792, John Lawrence located land west of William Hammond. The Nelan property was warranted to Thomas Gilpin, and called "Gilpin's Adventure," the William Hurford farm (known as Ulster) to

Thomas Lingan in 1785. Daniel Goble and Thomas Goodin warranted lands in 1784 just west of Cox Run, and Obed Garwood tracts near by in 1789 and 1792. Michael Cox received his warrant in 1786, and James Williams his on June 30, 1796. John Covert, who came to the river about 1800, lived there until his death. William Horner and Nicholas Black ranked among the old settlers on the river. Black was one of William Hammond's slaves, received his freedom because of his faithful service, turned basket-maker, and in time earned money enough to buy a farm, upon which his descendants are living at this day.

A deed dated Nov. 10, 1777, recites the transfer from John Craig to Charles Porter of three hundred acres (consideration £600), adjoining lands of John McKibben, Robert Smith, Lewis Deem, and others. Feb. 7, 1798, a tract called "Newery" (adjoining Jonas Kitts) was patented by Robert Adams, and sold by Adams to Alexander Nelan, July 8, 1799.

Before the outbreak of the Revolution James Cunningham, of Chester County, Pa., came out to Washington County, and tomahawked a claim near the present site of Washington borough, where there was at that time but one house, and that a log cabin. Mr. Cunningham put up a hut, did a little chopping, and returned to Chester County to make ready for a return trip to his proposed new settlement, looking to a permanent location thereon. He did come back that fall, but found that his cabin was already occupied, and although he hated to be beaten away from what he considered his own by right, he concluded not only to leave the interloper in peaceful possession, but to abandon utterly the project of settling in the Western wilds, being urged to that conclusion, no doubt, by the conviction that the country looked a trifle wilder and more desolate than he at first thought it did. So back he went to Chester County, bought a farm, and pursued a quiet and uneventful existence until the tocsin of war sounded, and then with four of his brothers, living also in Chester County, he entered the service in the Continental army. His brother John and a William Ramsey were captured by the enemy and confined in one of the abominable prison-ships into which the English thrust many of their captives. The ship in which Cunningham and Ramsey were confined was dispatched to a far-off port, and *en route* the unhappy prisoners in the dark and reeking hold died each day in great numbers, of actual suffocation. Ramsey and Cunningham were lucky enough to sustain life at a small aperture through which refreshing air came to them, but it was at that only by dint of sticking closely and constantly to the opening that they did manage to keep breath in their bodies. During their subsequent confinement on shore they had a terrible and painful experience. As a portion of their daily food (it is said) they received bread mixed with lime, and as a part of their daily exercise they found employment in separating the lime from the bread so

that eating the latter seemed possible. They passed safely if not happily through their captivity, to be restored at last to home and friends.

The experiences and sufferings they had endured in common made them fast friends, and at the close of the war they resolved to seek together a new home in the West. Both were bachelors, and a location and settlement in the wilderness was a matter of speedy accomplishment. They bought lands in Luzerne township, Fayette Co., and erected a distillery upon the place now occupied by Armstrong Porter. The log house they built for a dwelling they used in part as a malt-kiln, and in a little while they were doing quite a business in the manufacture of whiskey. Ramsey generally carried the product by flat-boat to New Orleans, and in making the return trip would sometimes come back on foot, but most frequently proceeded by sea to Philadelphia, and thence by horseback over the mountains, taking occasion also to bring a lot of salt with him, and such necessities as the backwoods failed to afford.

Some time before the year 1800, Mr. Ramsey concluded to leave Luzerne for Cincinnati, where he judged there was a wider and more profitable field for the exercise of his energies. The Luzerne distillery had brought much profit to himself and his partner, but Cincinnati promised more, and so he dissolved his business partnership with his old friend Cunningham and moved to the future Queen City. Not relishing the idea of being left alone, John Cunningham wrote to his brother James, still living in Chester County, that if he would come out to Luzerne and build a good stone house he might have in exchange one-half of the distillery business, as well as one-half of the land connected therewith. James responded promptly by selling his Chester County farm and moving to Luzerne with his family. The house that he built upon his arrival, according to contract, is the one now occupied by Armstrong Porter. Set in the stone-work is a wooden tablet, bearing the inscription, "James and Mary Cunningham, 1800." Of William Ramsey it will suffice to say that he engaged in business in Cincinnati, grew up with the town, and became in time one of its wealthiest merchants. John and James Cunningham carried on the distilling business in Luzerne until 1820, and grew rich. The distillery was operated by others until 1833, William Porter being the last proprietor.

John Cunningham died in the old stone house in 1830, at the age of eighty-seven, remaining to the last a bachelor, and bearing wherever he was known the title of "Uncle John." He was a member of the State Legislature thirteen successive years. For the fourteenth time he was nominated, but was defeated in the contest by Charles Porter, afterwards county judge. Uncle John took his defeat sorely to heart, but declared he would stand another nomination, just to show that he could beat Porter, and, in fact, both being nominated the next year, he did beat him. His

ambition fulfilled, he declined to appear any more as a candidate. Upon his first election he sent to England for a silver watch, that he might properly support the dignity of his exalted station, and wore it ever after with much pride. It is now in the possession of his brother's grandson, and although an article of some consequence in Cunningham's time, does not now look like much of a watch as compared to time-pieces of modern production.

John Cunningham's brother James died on the home farm in 1832. Of his two sons, William became a merchant at Merrittstown, and died in 1819. John boated on the Monongahela for his father and uncle, and died at an early age. In his school life he was a famous debater, and was, with his brother William, a schoolmate of Andrew Stewart, who entertained a high regard for John's educational abilities. James Cunningham's daughters were Arabella and Jane. The former married David Porter, and the latter William Gallaher.

Armstrong Porter came westward in 1774, and bought seven hundred acres of land in Luzerne township, including the farm now owned and occupied by W. J. Stewart. He lived in a two-story log house on the present Stewart place. His sons numbered six and his daughters two. The sons were named Andrew, Jared, William, David, John, and Armstrong, all of whom, except John (who moved to Ohio), settled and died in the township. Their mother lived to be over ninety, and each of them to an advanced age. Andrew died at the age of eighty-seven; Jared, at eighty-one; William, at eighty; David, at ninety-one; and Armstrong (in 1879), at ninety-six,—a remarkable showing of long life in so many members of one family.

Early settlements were made along Cox Run, near Dunlap's Creek. Among them a conspicuous figure was Michael Cox, who was famous as a great Indian-fighter and an ex-Revolutionary soldier. The Coxes were at one time quite numerous in Luzerne, but now may be looked for in vain. A story about Michael Cox and a hog stands as a laughable episode in the old man's experience. He had been so much troubled by the animal's depredations that he arose one day in his night and swore he would jerk the hog to an unmentionable place, meaning to throw him over a high bluff into a depth known locally as "hell." Accordingly Cox caught the hog by the tail, and dragging him toward the precipice put his available strength into a last pull that was to land the porker in perdition. Unluckily Cox pulled with such vigor that he fell on the precipice brink, the earth gave way, and Cox promptly relinquishing his hold upon the tail, descended into the place where he had hoped to send the beast. It was a terrible fall and well-nigh killed Cox, who lying where he fell and groaning out his misery attracted a lad named John Covert to the scene, and the boy running for assistance Cox was got home and to bed. His injuries were serious in-

deed, but he recovered after a long confinement. John Covert, the boy above named, died in Luzerne in 1881 at the age of ninety-three. Michael Cox died in Luzerne, and was buried upon the present C. H. Swan place. Cox had a large family, and to each of his sons gave a farm. One of these sons was a captain in the militia, and, what was singular for a militia captain, invariably appeared upon parade in his bare feet. One day at parade he got a thorn into one of his feet, and halting to repair damages yelled to his men, "Go ahead, boys, and march to yon mullein stalk while I pull this blasted thorn out of my foot."

Upon the farm where C. H. Swan lives a man (whose name is now not remembered) put up a fulling-mill and carding-machine as early as 1800. He dug at the expense of much time and labor a race through the limestone, and tried hard to make the venture a paying one. It proved instead a failure, and was abandoned by the projector in disgust. After lying idle some time the property was bought by Rev. William Johnston.

James Coleman was among the early settlers on the run, and on Oct. 24, 1783, deeded a tract to John Roiley, of Westmoreland, who for a consideration of £575 sold it to Andrew Oliphant, of Chester County. The land is described in the deed as "lying and being in Menallen township, Westmoreland County, adjoining the lands of Andrew Fraser, William Gray, Thomas Gregg, Michael Cox, Sr., Henry Swindler, and M. Douglas." The Thomas Gregg mentioned was a Quaker, but was charged, nevertheless, with holding his house open as a Tory rendezvous. The name of Gregg is now extinct in Luzerne. A grandson of Thomas has been recently the subject of some public notoriety in one Elihu Gregg, who burned the jail of Preston County, W. Va., in 1869, was sentenced to be hanged, escaped the day before the date fixed for his execution, was recaptured in Greene County, Pa., two years afterwards, tried a second time, and a second time sentenced to death. Governor Matthews commuted his sentence to a life-imprisonment, but this commutation the prisoner (then seventy-seven years old) refused to receive, saying he would have liberty or death. His case was reviewed a year later by Governor Jackson, who, in April, 1881, issued an unconditional pardon.

As an evidence of the kindly and self-denying humanity that characterized some of Luzerne's early settlers stands the story of the man who, coming into the township from Hagerstown to find employment, accidentally broke his leg only a little while after he came in. He was poor and unable to pay for such service as his case required, but eight of the inhabitants of old Luzerne improvised a hammock, laid the wounded man thereon, and shouldering the burden marched through the woods and over hills until they reached Hagerstown, and there delivered their charge into the hands of a surgeon, whom they bade attend him at their expense. Five of these men were

Thomas Davidson, John Conwell, Michael Cox, Eli Virgin, and William Roberts.

Passing down from Cox Run towards Brownsville, the chronicler of history comes upon an early Quaker settlement south of Bridgeport. Among those prominent among the "Friends" were Stephen Darlington, Jonas Cattell, Robert Miller, Obed and Jesse Garwood, David Cattell, John Haines, Joshua and John Moore, Jonah and Septimus Cadwallader, and Thomas Gregg. Septimus Cadwallader was a fuller, and set his mill on Dunlap's Creek, where Miller's mill now stands. Jonas Cattell built a tannery in 1808, and hired Samuel Wheaton, now living in Redstone, to dig the vats for him. William Dales became a proprietor of the tannery, and carried it on until his death in 1845. William Binns had also a tannery, which Joel Painter subsequently converted into a malt-house. Capt. I. C. Woodward, who was raised in the family of David Cattell, and began his service on the river in 1834, lives now in the same neighborhood that knew him in his boyhood's days.

The Quakers built a log church about 1800 in the Charleston District, at the site of the old graveyard. This church was destroyed by fire, and when a new house of worship was built the location was changed to Bridgeport. Among the Dearths known as early settlers in Luzerne, John Dearth is known to have been here in about 1780, for in August, 1783, he quit-claimed to Armstrong Porter a tract of land lying on Dunlap's Creek, and adjoining lands of Rogers, Robert and Lewis Deem.

Henry Heaton, at one time a prominent man in Luzerne history, was a miller on the river at Millsboro', and carried on a mill upon each side of the stream. He was a representative in the Legislature, but far from a handsome man. As to the latter reference to his personal appearance a good story is still extant to the effect that a man calling at his mill to see him was told that Mr. Heaton was attending a Legislative session at Harrisburg. The visitor was exceedingly anxious to see him, and accordingly started for Harrisburg. Although a stranger to Heaton he knew the latter as soon as he encountered him at the capital, and at once accosting him proceeded to unfold his business. Heaton appeared to be impatient while the man told his story, and before the latter had got half through broke in with, "See here, my friend, I'm mightily curious to know how you, who had never seen me before, knew me the instant you saw me. I'm so curious to learn that your business can wait until I find out." The man fidgeted some and said he'd rather not tell, but upon being informed that he must tell or go without transacting his business replied, "Well, Mr. Heaton, if you must know, I met a man near your mill of whom I asked a description of your personal appearance, so that I could pick you out unaided. He told me it would be the easiest thing in the world for me to know you, for I had but to look about me until I saw the ugliest-

looking man in America and call him Heaton, with a positive assurance that there would be no mistake." Heaton was philosopher enough to laugh, and as a proof that he was not sensitive about it used himself to tell the story as a capital joke. Another story about Heaton deals with him as a miller. He set out one day with a boat-load of stones to stop a hole in his mill-dam. He got his boat around in what he judged the proper position, and caught hold of a great bowlder which he proposed to push into the opening. By some mischance he failed in his intent, so that instead of pushing the bowlder in he lost his balance and himself went headlong from the boat into and through the aperture. He shot into the lower depths with considerable velocity, but managed to scramble up and out of his involuntary bath without feeling seriously damaged. Indeed, he was more surprised than hurt, and as he recovered his mental balance he exclaimed, with a good deal of emphasis, "By Jove, the man that beats that performance will have to go through the other way!" He said, moreover, that it was about the closest shave he had ever sustained, for his body just about fitted the opening, and while he was going through even he feared he might stick fast and be drowned. Mr. Heaton was widely known and highly respected, and in business as well as politics bore a conspicuous place. Singular to relate, four of his children were born mutes, and thus remained all their lives.

Nathaniel Breeding, living in Cecil County, Md., found himself at the close of the Revolutionary war in possession of considerable Continental money, and not knowing what better to do with it, carried it away on horseback over the mountains to Southwestern Pennsylvania, and laid it out in about seven hundred acres of land lying upon Dunlap's Creek, in Luzerne township, about one mile above Merrittstown. Having bought his land, Mr. Breeding proceeded at his leisure to bring his family out, and got comfortably located some time during 1784. Later he built a grist-mill and saw-mill down the creek, and hired Samuel Bunting as his miller. Mr. Breeding always appeared in knee-breeches and silver buckles, and wore his hair in a cue. He rose to the distinction of member of the Supreme Executive Council from 1790 to the close of the Council, and of associate judge of the County Court, serving from 1790 until his death in 1821. He bore otherwise a prominent part in local affairs. The stone house which he built in 1794, and in which he died in 1822, is still a solid structure, and serves as the occasional residence of his grandson, George E. Hogg, of Brownsville, who owns the old Breeding farm. A portion of the land purchases of Nathaniel Breeding, as above noticed, appears to have been acquired by him from David Breeding, his brother, of Lancaster, as per recorded deed bearing date May 8, 1783, the consideration being £500. The land is mentioned as being "a certain tract lying and being on Dunlap's Creek, in the township of Menallen, in

Westmoreland County, containing three hundred and eighteen acres, adjoining lands late of Robert Evans, Charles Porter, John Ewing, and other lands, it being the tract whereon John McKibben, of the County of Westmoreland and Commonwealth aforesaid, settled on the 24th of April, in the year of our Lord 1766, and which was surveyed and located to the aforesaid John McKibben by Alexander McLean, but without warrants." McKibben sold to David Breathing, and he to Nathaniel Breathing, as stated. A tract adjoining this, and containing two hundred and twelve acres, was surveyed under two warrants, dated respectively Nov. 6, 1771, and June 4, 1772. Rev. John McMillan, a pioneer preacher in the West, recorded in his journal under date of "second Sabbath in August, 1775," "Preached at the house of John McKibben, and lodged there all night." David Breathing, who with his brother Nathaniel served through the Revolutionary war, bought land in Fayette County while still living in Lancaster, and in 1786 followed Nathaniel to the new country as a settler. He lived on the farm now owned by Robert Hogsett, who lives in the stone house erected there by David Breathing in 1800. Both David and Nathaniel Breathing died in Luzerne. None of Nathaniel's children are now living. David's son, Clark, the only remaining member of the family bearing the name of Breathing, resides in Uniontown.

The hamlet of Heistersburg, so named from Governor Heister, was in 1825 the location of a roadside inn that Yates S. Conwell opened to accommodate the travel that passed between the river and the mountains over the State road. A store was opened there in 1830 by Robert Brown, who kept also the Conwell tavern. This latter house has been a house of entertainment since 1825, and for a long time was known as "The Exchange." The last landlord was Samuel Kelly, who died in the winter of 1880-81. In 1827, Samuel Roberts built a brick house at Heistersburg, and in a little while afterwards William Rice bought it, and kept store in one portion of it. In 1837, Zebulon Ridge rented it of Rice and converted it into a tavern stand. For some years Heistersburg boasted two taverns, each of which was tacitly understood to be a rallying-point for members of each political party, and report has it that Heistersburg was on more than one occasion a very animated locality. The best known of the respective landlords during the exciting political eras were Zebulon Ridge and John S. Conwell. Thomas Acklin is remembered as among the early store-keepers at Heistersburg, but he failed to make much of a mark as a merchant. The present brick store, kept by John Ridge, was built by John S. Conwell, and kept by him for some time. The first postmaster at Heistersburg was John S. Conwell. The office was discontinued after he resigned, and remained so for some time. Upon its revival Neil Hostetler was appointed. Succeeding him the in-

cumbents have been Taylor Lynch and David Conwell, the latter being the present postmaster.

From 1785 to 1800 licenses to tavern-keepers in Luzerne were issued as follows: William Homan, March, 1785; Abram Forker, March, 1792; Job Briggs, December, 1792; Samuel Large, June, 1796; Eber Homan, September, 1796; James McCoy, September, 1797; John Black, September, 1797; Elijah Crawford, March, 1799; Isaac Kimber, September, 1799; Adam Blair, June, 1800.

In the records of the September sessions in 1784 appears the following entry: "William Homan, of Luzerne, having been reported to the court by the constable of that township for keeping a tippling-house, and Thomas Scott, Esq., having declared upon his oath to the court that in his opinion all the property of said William Homan would be insufficient to pay the fine and costs on an indictment, and that he must become a charge on the township, the Court duly considering these circumstances do recommend to the attorney for the State not to prefer a bill of indictment against him."

EARLY ROADS.

One of the early roads laid out through Luzerne was the one extending from James Crawford's ferry to Uniontown. Upon a petition for the road, presented at the June sessions of court, 1784, Roger Roberts, Josiah Crawford, Aaron Hackney, William Royle, David Jennings, and Nathaniel McCarty were appointed viewers. A report of the road was made at the September sessions of the same year. The course of the road lay through Luzerne, Redstone, and Menallen townships, by way of "Mr. Lawrence's," "Mr. Fenting's," and "Big Meadow Branch," and so to Uniontown. At the same sessions the court confirmed the report and ordered it opened, cut, cleared, and bridged, thirty-three feet wide. A petition for a road from Oliver Crawford's ferry to Uniontown was presented at the June sessions in 1784. Samuel Adams, William Ross, William Gray, James Hammond, Andrew Fraser, and William Haney were appointed viewers. The road is spoken of as "the nearest and best way from Oliver Crawford's ferry to Uniontown," and passed by Thomas Davidson's house, Absalom Littel's, Charles Porter's, intersecting the road leading from James Crawford's ferry to Uniontown, and thence by the course of said road to Uniontown. A road twenty-five feet wide from Josiah Crawford's ferry to Uniontown was reported at the December sessions of 1784 by the viewers, Messrs. Armstrong Porter, Henry Swindler, Amos Hough, Samuel Douglas, Josiah Crawford, and Thomas Gregg, and accordingly confirmed. The route was from the ferry by way of Daniel Gudge's, Samuel Douglas' mill (at Merrittstown), Amos Hough's mill, and intersecting the road from James Crawford's ferry to Uniontown, the course of which road thereafter being followed.

LUZERNE TOWNSHIP.

643

A report of two roads from Redstone Old Fort was made to the court at December sessions of 1788. One of the roads reached from the ferry of Thomas McGibbin, just below the Redstone Old Fort, on the Monongahela River, to Septimus Cadwallader's grist and saw-mill, and from thence to intersect the road from the Friends' meeting-house to the ferry aforesaid, near the mouth of Joseph Grayble's lane. The second road was the road from the Friends' meeting-house to the ferry aforesaid. The viewers were Samuel Jackson, Josiah Crawford, James Crawford, Lewis Deem, Samuel McGinley, and Robert Baird. In September, 1794, Jehu Conwell, Charles Porter, Jr., Robert Baird, Michael Cox, Thomas Gregg, and William Oliphant laid a road thirty-three feet wide from Kinsey Virgin's ferry towards Brownsville, a distance of six miles and seventy-eight perches, intersecting a road leading to Brownsville. June, 1795, a road was laid from near Robert Adams' to James Crawford's road. The viewers were Jeremiah Pears, Robert Adams, Samuel Adams, Thomas Gregg, Hugh Laughlin, and Charles Porter, Jr.

TOWNSHIP ORGANIZATION AND LIST OF OFFICERS.

At the December session of the Court of Quarter Sessions for 1783 the county was divided into townships, of which one was Luzerne. The limits were described as follows:

"A township beginning at the mouth of Dunlap's Creek, thence up the Monongahela River to Oliver Crawford's Ferry, thence along the road leading from Oliver Crawford's Ferry to Uniontown to McKibbin's Run, thence down the said run to Dunlap's Creek, thence down Dunlap's Creek to the beginning, to be hereafter known by the name of Luzerne township."

At the December sessions of 1820 a petition of a number of persons living near the dividing line between the townships of German and Luzerne was presented, setting forth,—

"That the said line being declared to be the old Muddy Creek path, which is now obliterated, its precise location being known to few or none, whereby inconveniences may occur; besides, as the market and business of your petitioners are at Brownsville, it would be more convenient for them to be included in Luzerne township; they therefore pray the court to appoint three impartial men to enquire into the expediency of so altering said line as to make the same more certain and more convenient to your petitioners by beginning at Seceders' meeting-house, and running thence by a straight line to the headwaters of Patterson Run, and down said run to the Monongahela, or by such other course as they may think proper whereby the greater part of said line will be a natural boundary not liable to mistake or dispute. Viewers appointed, George Craft, Charles Porter, and Robert Boyd. Order issued; returned March 6, 1821; confirmed June 7, 1821."

A petition was presented to the court at this sessions of June, 1845, for the alteration of the line between German and Luzerne township. An order was issued and commissioners were appointed. A report was made and approved Sept. 4, 1845, and confirmed Dec. 12, 1845. The change of boundary is indicated in the

report of the commissioners, as follows, viz.: "Commencing at the corner between German, Luzerne, and Redstone townships, thence up Lilly's Run to Bixler's line, thence with said line until it intersects the present township line."

A list of the principal township officers chosen in Luzerne between 1784 and 1881, as gleaned from the imperfectly preserved records, is here given, viz.:

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.

1840. P. F. Gibbons.	1866. Joseph G. Garwood.
James Cunningham.	Isaac Covert.
1845. James Cunningham.	1869. Isaac Messmore.
Lewis Mobley.	1871. W. S. Baker.
1850. Jesse B. Ramsey.	1872. William J. Stewart.
William R. Milligan.	1873. John Conwell.
1855. William Dunaway.	1874. Lewis Mobley.
James Cunningham.	1876. William S. Baker.
1860. Isaac Messmore.	1877. Isaac Covert.
Moses B. Porter.	Levi Antrim.
1861. Isaac Covert.	1878. James C. Acklin.
Joshua Meredith.	Jehu Conwell.
1865. Isaac Messmore.	

ASSESSORS.

1841. Samuel John.	1862. John Vernon.
1842. John Bradman.	Alexander Gibson.
1843. James D. Williams.	1863. William G. Wood.
1844. George D. Moore.	1864. Richard Covert.
1845. Lewis Knight.	William Dunaway.
1846. Mark R. Moore.	1865. Joseph Scott.
1847. James F. Baird.	1866. Joseph Hackney.
1848. John Bradman.	1867. Albert McMullin.
1849. John G. Hackney.	1868. George A. Miller.
1850. Samuel S. Crawford.	1869. John A. Messmore.
1851. Clark Breeding.	1871. Joseph T. Hackney.
1852. Samuel McGinnis.	1872. Reason Walters.
1853. James Dunaway.	1873. George W. Crawford.
1854. Charles C. Stewart.	1874. John Hackney.
1855. John Armstrong.	1875. George C. Porter.
1856. William P. Crawford.	1876. James Robinson.
1857. John G. Hackney.	1877. James Dunaway.
1858. John A. Nealon.	1878. William Porter.
1859. George G. Johnson.	1879. John W. Dearth.
1860. William Heller.	1880. Oliver Miller.
1861. John Conwell.	

AUDITORS.

1841. James Ewing.	1858. Samuel Roberts.
1842. P. F. Gibbons.	Mark R. Moore.
1843. William Dunaway.	1859. William Cattell.
1844. William C. Johnston.	1860. John D. Scott.
1845. William R. Milligan.	1861. Jesse Coldren.
1846. James Cunningham.	1862. G. M. Nelan.
1847. Joseph Crawford.	Jesse P. Crawford.
1848. William Miller.	1863. James Cunningham.
1849. James Cunningham.	1864. John D. Cree.
1850. Alexander Gibson.	1865. John Nelan.
1851. James Ewing.	1866. Joseph Crawford.
1852. Cephas Porter.	1867. Otis G. Harn.
1853. James Cunningham.	1868. James Ewing.
1854. George A. Nealon.	William P. Craft.
1855. Hamilton H. Cree.	1869. John O. Stewart.
1856. Johnston McGinnis.	1870. Lewis Knight.
1857. James Ewing.	1871. David Porter.

1872. John N. Jacobs.	1877. John L. Nelan.
1873. William Dunaway.	David Porter.
1874. George W. Acklin.	1878. William J. Stewart.
1875. James Ewing.	1879. Jefferson Hibbs.
1876. William Moore.	1880. Jehu Conwell.

SCHOOLS.

The oldest school record extant in Luzerne is an ancient document now in the hands of John M. Moore, dated 1802, and inscribed "School-House Subscription." The document reads as follows:

"We, the undersigners, do promise to pay such sums as shall be laid on us by James Thompson, John Work and David Breeding, to William Moore and Ebenezer Finley, trustees for the purpose of building a school house near Thomas Barnes, at the intersection of the Morgantown and James Thompson road, the size of 20 ft. by 18 do. Such sums we promise to pay in manners following: The one half payable in wheat at 9 p. rye at 3, corn 2-6 p. Bu. in James Thompson or Ebenezer Finley's mill; all on demand, as witness our hands and seal this 1st day of Dec. 1802. Further, we agree that the above witness shall purchase a seven-plate stove and set it up in the house when finished.

John Moore.....	\$5.50	Abram Haney.....	\$4.50
Ebenezer Finley.....	14.50	William Haney.....	6.00
Thos. Frame.....	9.00	Samuel Haney.....	2.00
William Moore.....	2.00	Wm. Brown.....	3.50
Robt. Baird.....	14.50	Jacob Moss.....	2.00
John Nicholson.....	1.00	Robt. Thompson.....	3.50
Christ. Buchanan.....	5.50	Jacob Brown.....	2.00
James Frame.....	6.50	Aaron Moore.....	3.00
John Frame.....	5.50	James Hany.....	2.00

"We are of the opinion that the foregoing assessment is equitable according to the above article.

[Signed]

"JAMES THOMPSON,

"JOHN WORK,

"DAVID BREADING."

The school-house they built still stands, and is known as the old cross-roads or Morgantown road school-house. It was constructed of round logs, chinked and daubed, and covered with slat-boards and shingles; chimney made of split sticks. Slabs with two sticks under each end served for seats. Rough boards fastened against the walls were writing-desks. Two square holes about two by two and a half feet, one on each side of the house, were windows. There was one door, which was all that was necessary. The building has been inhabited for a number of years by Aaron Moore and John White, who vacated it on April 4, 1881.

Merrittstown was a little more fortunate than the surrounding country in the matter of educational advantages, for it had a school that was enough better than the ordinary school of the time to win the honor of being designated as "the college." The school-house, which stood near the old Baptist graveyard, was not any different from the log cabin school-houses of the period, but old Anthony Burns, the teacher, must have been considered a superior sort of pedagogue, since in that respect only was the superiority of the Merrittstown school discernible. Schoolmaster Burns

must have been a teacher in great favor, for he taught in Merrittstown and vicinity about fifty years, and gave up the business of teaching only when, at eighty years of age, he found himself too infirm to continue it. Andrew Stewart (afterwards known to fame as "Tariff Andy") took his first lessons in that school-house under a teacher named Carr, who ruled there before 1805, or before the advent of Burns, and who boasted in his school a Latin class, of which three members were Andrew Stewart, John Cunningham, and William Cunningham. Andrew Stewart's father was a blacksmith at Merrittstown for a while, and thus Andrew was a pupil in Daddy Carr's school. Later the Rev. William Johnston, pastor of the Dunlap's Creek Presbyterian Church, opened a Latin school at Merrittstown, and conducted it successfully for some years. Mention may likewise be made that William Darby, afterwards editor of *The Gazetteer*, was among the earliest teachers in the old Merrittstown log school-house, which, standing until 1836, was then accidentally burned. In 1806 the school-house in the present Crawford district stood about three-quarters of a mile distant from the site of the house now in use. The teacher in that year was Joseph Wanee, son of John Wanee, then living where John Wanee now lives. School children were not over plentiful there even in 1806, and by dint even of strongest effort the number available fell short of the requirement; whereupon Joseph Crawford, exceedingly anxious for a school, agreed to pay for the tuition of ten children, although he could send only three, and so the school was started. In 1813 the house in the Charleston district stood near the present house. Murdock, the then teacher, was succeeded by Mr. McCleary, Anthony Burns, and others.

The following is a list of the school districts of Luzerne as formed in 1835 under the operation of the school law of the previous year, and of the districts of the township at the present time (1881), viz.:

In 1835.	In 1881.
Merrittstown.....	Merrittstown (No. 1).
Heistersburg.....	Heistersburg (No. 2).
Middle District (changed to).....	Haines' (No. 3).
West Bend.....	West Bend (No. 4).
Crawford's.....	Crawford's (No. 5).
Cross-Roads (changed to).....	Charleston (No. 6).
Serabbletown (changed to).....	Luzerne Village (No. 7).
Davidson's (changed to).....	Sassafras (No. 8).
Oak Hill.....	Oak Hill (No. 9).
	Colored School (No. 10).

The amount expended in the year 1835 for school purposes was \$611.36. Teachers' wages then were from eleven to twenty-five dollars per month. The directors in 1838 were Joseph Crawford, Jr., John Moore, David Porter, Jr., Clark Breeding, P. F. Gibbons, and David Craft. Joseph Crawford, Jr., was president, and David Craft secretary. The list of school directors of Luzerne elected since the year 1840 is as follows:

LUZERNE TOWNSHIP.

645

1841. Ephraim R. Crawford. Johnston McGinnis.	1863. Isaac Woodward. Lewis Knight.
1842. William Dunamon. Lebbeus Clark.	1864. John Armstrong. Jesse B. Glenwood.
1843. Larkin S. Dearth. William R. Milligan.	1865. Samuel McGinnis. George Vance.
1844. Benjamin Vernon. John R. Jennison.	1866. Samuel S. Meredith. James Cunningham.
1845. Wm. G. Crawford. David H. Wakefield.	Robert Douilly. Jacob S. Jamison.
1846. James Ewing. Johnston McGinnis.	1867. Robert Harn. Henry Crawford.
1847. John R. Jamison. Cephas Porter.	1868. William Hatford. John J. Cree.
1848. Jesse B. Ramsey. Lewis Mobley.	William Keller.
1849. David Craft. James P. Baird.	1869. I. C. Woodward. J. N. Craft.
1850. Wm. Y. Roberts. William Cattle.	Andrew Porter. Wm. J. Stewart.
1851. J. R. Jamison. Jesse Heacock.	1870. I. C. Woodward. R. C. Vernon.
1852. James D. Williams. David Porter.	Joseph Crawford.
1853. William H. Crawford. Hamilton Cree.	1871. E. T. Gallaher. Aaron Hackney.
1854. James Ewing. Samuel McGinnis.	J. L. Nelan.
1855. William Hufford. John Conwell.	1872. John Conwell. John S. Pratt.
1856. Robert Williams. George A. Nelan.	1873. Hiram Calvert. C. D. Krepps.
1857. Clark Breeding. John R. Jamison.	Caleb B. Douilly.
David Porter.	1874. John O. Stewart. John McEldowney.
1858. William Cattell. Isaac Covert.	Thomas L. Wood.
1859. Ebenezer T. Gallaher. William Dunaway.	1875. Levi Antram. E. T. Gallaher.
1860. James Ewing. Elisha P. Gibbons.	1876. William S. Croft. Caleb Duvall.
1861. William Hurford. Samuel McGinnis.	Adin Horn.
William Cattell.	1877. Adin Horn. Charles Swan.
Isaac Messmore.	David Porter.
1862. Jacob N. Ridge. Joshua Meredith.	1878. L. C. McDougal. Oliver Miller.
	1879. John L. Nelan. William S. Craft.
	1880. John W. Dearth. Charles Swan.

The school board of 1881 was composed of Oliver Miller, Charles Swan, John W. Dearth, John L. Nelan, L. C. McDougal, and William S. Craft.

CHURCHES.

Although Luzerne contains now but three houses of worship,—a Cumberland Presbyterian, a Methodist Episcopal, and an African Church (the latter at Luzerne Village),—no less than four other churches have been known to the township's history, although of those four nothing now remains save the recollection that they once flourished. Each church had a history that began almost as soon as the history of the township itself, and each has for so many years been a thing of the past that but little save a reference to their existence can be here presented, since

the church records have disappeared, no one knows where. One of the oldest of the four was the Baptist Church at Merrittstown. It must have been organized as early as 1800, for the present recollection is that when the church building was destroyed by fire in 1836 it was old and dilapidated. The church stood near the school-house, and was burned with the latter structure. Among the leading members of this Baptist organization were Abram Vernon, Josiah Richards, David Wilson, the Crafts, Harfords, Hibbs, and others. The congregation was a large one for many years, but towards the last it became weakened, and was virtually dissolved even before the church was burned, so that there was not strength to create a revival of the organization or the building of a new house of worship, and so the record was closed. The last pastor the church had was the Rev. William Brownfield, whose home was near Uniontown. He was a very eccentric preacher, and seems to take great comfort in doing and saying things widely out of the common way. Mr. James Cunningham remembers going one Sunday with James Walker to hear Brownfield preach, and that the parson paused suddenly in the midst of his sermon to point his finger sharply and apparently at Cunningham and his companion, to exclaim, in a loud voice, "Did you ever see me fly?" Then, keeping his eyes intently fixed upon the two young men, who blushed and looked much confused, he said, quite as loudly but more deliberately, "No, you haven't, and what's more you never will." Having thus relieved his mind of a seeming burden, he went on with his sermon. He was once engaged in reading the Declaration of Independence at a Fourth of July celebration, when, coming to that part of it where recital is made of the English king's oppressive acts, he grew quite excited, and with flashing eyes commented upon the passage with the single exclamation, "The villain!" delivered in such emphatic and fiery manner that none who saw or heard him could doubt for a moment that if Parson Brownfield could get at King George at that instant he would make short work of him.

HOPEWELL METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

was formed not long after the year 1800, and near what is now known as Heistersburg, where its house of worship stood until about 1835. Singing-schools are said to have flourished there with considerable vigor, but the church organization did not maintain a very long lease of life. It may be well to say, however, that the dissolution of the church organization was chargeable as much as to anything to the fact that the location of the church edifice was not a convenient one. This statement would appear to be borne out in the declaration that when West Bend Methodist Episcopal Church was formed, about 1835, many of Hopewell's old members participated in organizing the new church.

In the southern portion of the township a Seced-

ers', or United Presbyterian Church was formed so long ago that no one now living remembers anything as to the details, and it is believed that none of the constituent members are living. For more than fifty years the church history has been but a memory. A strong effort was made some years ago to revive the organization, but the effort resulted in failure.

There was a Quaker Church in the Charleston district even before 1800. It was a log structure, and stood near where the old graveyard in that district may yet be seen. It was burned about 1820, and replaced by a stone church, whose location was fixed in Bridgeport borough. The land for the church lot in the borough was deeded by Jonah Cadwallader "to the Society of Friends and citizens of Brownsville and Bridgeport, for the purpose of building upon it a house of worship." The church is no more, and Quaker meetings in Luzerne a thing of the past.

HOPEWELL CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

In the autumn of 1831, Revs. Alfred M. Bryan and Milton Bird, acting as missionaries under the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, were called to visit the neighborhood of Hopewell, and as their ministrations were met with an interested awakening of religious fervor, it was thought expedient to form a Cumberland Presbyterian Society at Hopewell. The Methodist Episcopal Society of Hopewell tendered the use of their house, and May 14, 1832, the Cumberland Society was formed with a membership of eighteen, to whom the Lord's Supper was administered for the first time June 17, 1832, by Rev. A. M. Bryan, assisted by Rev. Samuel M. Aston. Thenceforward preaching was supplied by Revs. Bryan, Sparks, and Aston. Liberal accessions were made to the congregation, and on Sept. 19, 1832, the formal organization of a church was effected. Sixty members were enrolled, and there were, in addition to these in the congregation, twenty-five seekers after religion. The constituent members were Samuel Roberts, Josephus Bindsley, James Gibson, John Davidson, William Downey, Robert Baird, Enoch Baird, William Chambers, Eleanor Mehaffie, Sarah Davidson, Rachel Ritenhour, Isabella Milligan, Mary Gibson, Ruth W. Gibbons, Orpha McDougal, Moses Baird, Rachael Baird, Mary Porter, Rachel Downey, Mary Longley, Eliza Abrams, Mary B. Henderson, Eleanor Gibbons, Naomi Hurford, Sarah Moss, Ann Moss, Ann Hurford, Jane Loudon, Eliza J. Paul, Lydia G. Gibson, Mary Jamison, Ann V. Gibbons, Eleanor Irwin, Ursula Arnold, Alexander Wilson, Deborah Wilson, Andrew Porter, Jr., Henry Alexander, William Kelly, Maria Porter, Mary Hurford, Eliza Rogers, Edward Rose, Hugh Kerns, Melinda J. Porter, Esther Pennell, Achsah A. Roberts, Mary Lawrence, Rebecca Kennedy, Hester J. Roberts, William G. Roberts, Caroline Roberts, Tirza Roberts, Isaac Covert, Nancy Porter, Mossill Jamison, George W. Baumgartner, Elisha Pierce, and Mary

Pierce. Samuel Roberts, Josephus Lindsley, and James Gibson, Jr., were chosen and ordained ruling elders. Lindsley being selected to represent the church in Presbytery, reported that Revs. A. M. Bryan and S. M. Sparks had been assigned to preach at Hopewell during the ensuing six months. Nov. 3, 1839, John Davidson, Samuel Jennison, and Moses Barnes were chosen trustees.

In the spring of 1835, Rev. Mr. Wood was ordered to the charge as stated pastor, and remained until the spring of 1838. In April of that year Rev. A. M. Blackford succeeded to the pastorate. In April, 1840, came Rev. John Cary, and remaining one year was followed in April, 1841, by Rev. Samuel E. Hudson, whose term of service endured to 1846. In the fall of 1846, Fairview and Hopewell Churches united in a call to Rev. J. T. A. Henderson, who remained nearly all the time until 1856, Rev. Jesse Adams preaching also occasionally meanwhile. Rev. J. H. Coulter was the pastor a while after 1856, and then Mr. Henderson returned, to give way again to Mr. Coulter. Since April, 1880, Rev. A. W. White has been in charge.

The first house of worship was built in 1833-34. The second and present one was built in 1872. It is a handsome brick structure, 60 by 40 feet in dimensions, and cost six thousand dollars. The membership is now about two hundred and forty. The elders are John Vernon, William Heller, A. G. Swan, Samuel Baird, and Elijah Craft. The trustees are William Acklin, John Vernon, Oliver Miller. The Sunday-school superintendent is Jesse P. Crawford.

WEST BEND METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

The dissolution of the Hopewell Methodist Episcopal Church, about 1830, led to the formation of a Methodist Episcopal class in the river bend, the members being John Covert, Patience Lawrence, Richard Jamison and wife, George Lawrence and wife, and William Roberts, formerly of Hopewell. John Covert was chosen leader, and for many years afterwards was one of the ruling spirits in the church. Services were held in a school-house a few years, and when the congregation became prosperous enough to warrant the erection of a house of worship the one now used was built. Increase of membership has made the house too small, and within a short time it will be replaced by a spacious brick edifice to cost about six thousand dollars. The members number now about one hundred. The pastor is Rev. J. G. Gaugley. The trustees are Samuel Jamison, Benton Covert, John Covert, William Hurford, Albert Jamison, John Wane, and Joshua Strickler. The class-leader is Joshua Strickler.

A Union Church near Jacobs' Ferry is a monument to the generosity of Mrs. Adam Jacobs, of Brownsville. Residing during the summer seasons at the Ferry, she caused the church to be built for the purpose of having Episcopal services therein regularly

during her suburban stay, and then caused it to be declared that all denominations were free to hold meetings in the house at all times save such as were chosen for the meetings of the Episcopalians.

BURIAL-GROUNDS.

Burial-places are numerous in Luzerne, and include among private and public graveyards some that are old and neglected, but yet dotted with weather-stained headstones that record the deaths and virtues of many of Luzerne's pioneers. There is the old Quaker burying-ground in the Charleston district (but little used now), one at Merrittstown, where the old Baptist Church once reared its modest front, one at Hopewell (or Heistersburg), one on the John Horner farm near the river, one on the David Porter farm, another at the site of the United Presbyterian Church, another on J. W. Dearth's farm, and still another on the Joseph Crawford place. All these are burial-places dating from 1800 or near that period. There is a neat cemetery at the Hopewell Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and one at the West Bend Methodist Episcopal Church, at which latter place there is also an unused graveyard, originally laid out for the family of Jonathan Arnold, but used also by the neighborhood.

THE VILLAGE OF MERRITTSTOWN.

Merrittstown, lying upon Dunlap's Creek, and on the eastern line of Luzerne township, ranks among the old villages of the county, but that it has materially improved with age cannot be truthfully said. It contains to-day as its representative business interests two stores, a grist-mill, tannery, and the usual minor village industries, and a population of sixty-two inhabitants by the census of 1880. Seventy years ago it was a livelier place, for then it was a station on one of the traveled routes between East and West, and a halting-place for stock-drivers, freighters, etc. The opening of railway communication diverted such traffic, and took away much of Merrittstown's importance, but now the probability of a railway to touch at this point has awakened hopes of renewed prosperity, and brightened the prospect materially.

Merrittstown was founded and laid out by two brothers, named Caleb and Abram Merritt, of whom Abram was a man of considerable energy. Just when the Merritts laid out the village cannot be ascertained, although the statement is made that the original plat of the town is in the hands of some person living in the far West. The date may, however, be fixed with moderate certainty as not far from 1790. It is known that Samuel Douglas had a grist-mill and saw-mill there as early as 1785, and sold his interests to the Merritts, who conceived the notion of building a village around the nucleus of a mill. The place was at first called New Town, but directly after Merrittstown. Abram Merritt's house stood opposite the present shoe-shop of Lewis Dur-

nell. Caleb lived on the lot now occupied by John Moore. But little can be said touching the history of Merrittstown up to 1805, but it would appear that at or before that time people journeying across the mountains and drovers taking stock to market began to make a point of stopping there, and the demand for accommodation naturally led to the opening of a public-house. In the year mentioned, therefore, we find that Adam Farquar was keeping a tavern in the old Caleb Merritt house, and that by that time the Merritt brothers had sold their property and moved to Ohio. Simeon Cary was then making nails by hand in a little log shop, and although he turned out some coarse and clumsy work in the shape of shingle-nails, he found the demand quite equal to the supply, for, as luck would have it for him and other unskillful manufacturers, the pioneers were not over-fastidious in that direction. A man named Richard Bates was the miller at the old Douglas mill, and it is said that the mill proprietor was Encal Dodd. Bates seems to have been especially conspicuous for the generous way in which he treated himself to strong drink. Upon the old account-books kept by John and James Cunningham, the distillers, it may be observed that charges against Richard Bates for "one gallon of whiskey" appear with remarkable frequency. Encal Dodd was esteemed a great talker, as well as one of the most rigidly honest men in the country, but slightly given to absent-mindedness withal. It is told of him that while grinding a grist for James Cunningham he maintained with that gentleman an incessant flow of argument, and as he talked he helped himself quite absent-mindedly to toll so frequently that when the grist was ground the miller had decidedly more of it than his customer. Mr. Cunningham, who had noted with much amusement the freak of his friend, laughingly remarked, "Well, Mr. Dodd, suppose I take the toll for my share and you take what I have." At this Dodd looked and felt much ashamed of his action, and then turned not only the toll into Cunningham's bag, but added an extra allowance from the mill stock, saying he was determined to punish himself for being so absent-minded.

In 1805, Elijah Coleman carried on a tannery where E. T. Gallaher now pursues the same business, and from best accounts obtainable Coleman had then been there some years. Of the Colemans none are now to be found in the township. Daniel Bixler was the village shoemaker, and upon the lot now occupied by W. L. Guiler, George Hogg kept a store, the pioneer store in Merrittstown.

A post-office was established in Merrittstown before 1805, with Elijah Coleman as the first postmaster. Old Dennis McCarty was the mail-carrier between Uniontown and Bröwnsville *via* Merrittstown, and for a long time made the trip on foot once a week. Although his mail-pouch was exceedingly light, he always carried a bulky batch of copies of *The Genius*

of *Liberty*, which he left to subscribers *en route*. Dennis was a white-haired old man, but a merry one, and regularly upon his approach to Merrittstown was greeted by the village lads, then in waiting for him, with the announcement, "Here comes old white head!" Having delivered his mail Dennis would bestow himself in the bar-room of the village tavern, and sing rollicking songs as long as the landlord would pay him for the songs in cider. Then Denny was in his glory, and the gathered villagers in a state of delight. Denny bore about with him a pair of ears of which each was ornamented with a slit. Rather proud than otherwise of the marks, he called frequent attention to them, and boastingly related that early in life he had been taken captive by the Indians, and thus received from them signs of their kindly attention.

Elijah Coleman did not fancy being postmaster because of the trouble it always gave him to make out his quarterly returns, and failing to get a better idea of the business as time passed he resigned in utter disgust. Adam Farquar, who kept the village tavern, is said also to have had a bowling alley in it, and between selling whiskey, furnishing entertainment, and running the nine-pin alley managed to make life pleasant and lively for the travelers who came that way in considerable force and halted at old Farquar's for the night.

In 1808, John McDougal came from Maryland to Merrittstown and set up a cabinet-shop. He was also a builder, and with John Allander to assist him did a good deal in the house-carpentering way. In 1810, George Hogg having given up business as a village trader, William Cunningham, son of James Cunningham, the distiller, opened a little store on the lot now occupied by L. C. McDougal's residence, and built also the house known as the Baird residence adjoining McDougal's. Mr. Cunningham's establishment was known as the Continental store, and as he had other business interests to look after, he employed John Gallagher and Benjamin Barton as his store clerks. He bought also the grist-mill property, and employed John Dunlap as his miller. He was excise officer for some years, and altogether had his hands full of industrial enterprises. He removed from the village to the Cunningham farm in 1817, and there died in 1819. During the latter portion of his stay at Merrittstown he operated a fulling-mill as an attachment to the grist-mill. Merrittstown had in 1810 a hatter named Joshua Wilson, who had a shop across from where Lewis Durnell's shoe-shop is, and there made heavy fur hats. He had in front of his place a great sign, upon which he had painted the picture of a hat, a fox, and other fur-coated animals. Matthias Lancaster, his workman, succeeded him in the business. Lancaster afterwards moved to Redstone. Caleb and Joshua Harford were the village blacksmiths, and Daniel Wilson the wagon-maker. The blacksmith's shop stood near where Mr. Moore's house

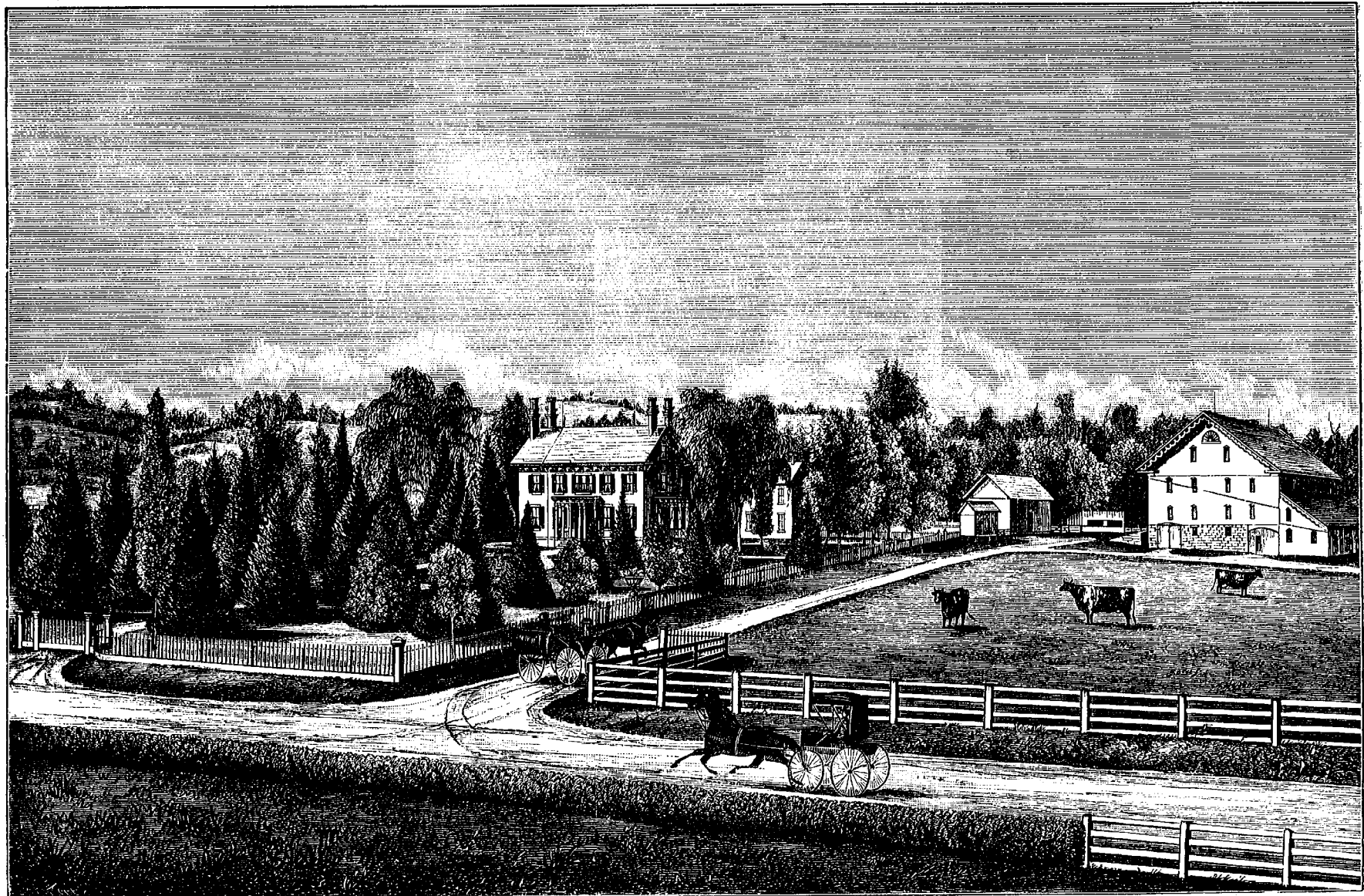
now stands. In that shop James Cunningham, now of Luzerne, worked as an apprentice under George Brown, beginning in 1826. Speaking of his impressions of Merrittstown's early history, Mr. Cunningham says he is sure that Daniel Wilson, the wagon-maker, was in the village in 1812, for Daniel Wilson's wife Hester once told him (Cunningham) that she carried him, then a babe, to the window one day in that year to see a company of soldiers march past on the way to the army. George Chandler was then the village tailor, and in his shop he had as apprentice Josephus Lindsley, who afterwards set up a shop of his own and became the village postmaster. Chandler carried on tailoring until his death, when the business was continued by his son Isaac, who not long afterwards removed to Ohio. Noah Lewis succeeded Adam Farquar as the village tavern-keeper in a house occupying the lot that adjoins Gadd's blacksmith's shop.

One of Merrittstown's local characters about 1812 was Lott Green, a Quaker and a good mechanic. He was a noted manufacturer of flax-hatchels and also a skillful repairer of firearms.

The year 1823 saw considerable activity in Merrittstown. John McDougall, the carpenter (who was said, by the way, to have put the cabin upon the first steamboat built at Brownsville), built a brick tavern stand upon the site of William Cunningham's Continental store, the frame of which latter was included within the new structure. Mr. McDougal kept the brick tavern until 1845, since when it has been used as a family residence, it now being the home of Mr. L. C. McDougall. John McDougall died in 1856.

In 1826 there were three village taverns in Merrittstown, namely, McDougal's, Hiram Miller's (in the old Noah Lewis stand), and Daniel Marble's, in the building now occupied by Lewis Durnell. A new grist-mill had replaced in 1824 the old Douglas mill, and was owned by Joseph Thornton, whose miller was John Grimes, who removed at a later date to Ohio. William Ramsey and his son Jesse were for many years millers at the Thornton mill and the Gilmore mill, a short distance up the stream. The Thornton mill is now carried on by Lynch & Hanna. After John McDougal closed his tavern stand no public-house was kept in Merrittstown from that day to this. The opening of the National road had turned traffic from the route through Merrittstown, and of course the consequence of no travel was no tavern.

After William Cunningham closed his store, in 1817, Merrittstown was without a local trading-place until 1830, when John Smith opened trade in a store-house built by George Brown, the blacksmith. In that year Hugh Gilmore had a distillery near the town, and Elijah Coleman was still carrying on his tannery. Coleman was no less famous for being a tanner than he was for being the father of nineteen children. Hiram Durnell had been the village shoemaker from 1818. George Brown, the blacksmith, had opened



RESIDENCE OF CAPT. ISAAC C. WOODWARD,
LUZERNE TOWNSHIP, FAYETTE CO., PA.

his shop in 1822, prospered, and went to store-keeping. He traded about ten years, when in consequence of business misfortunes he became deranged. George Brown, who was Merrittstown's fourth store-keeper, was the successor of Robert Brown, and the predecessor of Samuel Henderson and John Gallaher. In 1876 the village had two stores, kept by Alfred Cunningham and Thomas D. Miller. Cunningham's store was burned in 1877 and Miller's in 1879, at which time the post-office with all the mail, being in Miller's store, was likewise destroyed.

In 1822 the foot-bridge across Dunlap's Creek at Merrittstown was washed away by a flood, and from that on to 1836 fording or ferrying was the method of crossing. In that year John Langley and Liberty Miller built the mason-work, and Stoffel Balsinger, with his son Perry, the frame-work of a new bridge. The mason-work remains, but the frame, being badly constructed, fell soon after it was put up. The present frame was constructed by William Antrim.

In the post-office the successor of Elijah Coleman was William Cunningham, who was succeeded in 1817 by Josephus Lindsley, the tailor. Lindsley resigned in 1832 and left the town. The next postmaster was George Brown, the blacksmith, who, after holding the place several years, was followed by Hugh Gilmore. Then came Margaret Gilmore, Alexander Brown, John Armstrong, and James McDougal. The succession after McDougal was Hiram S. Horner, 1861-62; Lewis Durnell, 1862-68; Mary Messmore, 1868-69; Samuel H. Higinbotham, 1869-72; E. H. Baird, 1872-75; T. D. Miller, 1875-79; Harriet A. Cook, 1879, to the present time. For a small place Merrittstown appears to have had a pretty extensive supply of postmasters.

The first resident physician at the village now remembered was Dr. Morrill Parker, who located there in 1821 or 1822. He was at no time very popular, for he appeared to esteem himself a grade above his neighbors in the social scale, and instead of cultivating friendly relations with them he had visitors from abroad at his home constantly, and rather delighted in showing off what he was pleased to term his aristocratic company before the villagers. By the latter he was termed a high-flyer, and when he left the town, after a stay of a few years, he was not much regretted. He aspired to be an author, and wrote "The Arcanum of Arts and Sciences," but it is not known that it created a very great commotion in the world of letters. After Dr. Parker's departure there was no village physician for some time.

Dr. Meason was the next to locate, and after him Dr. Wilcox, but neither remained more than a year. In 1827 came Dr. Elliott Finley from Westmoreland County, who, after a stay of a few years, moved to

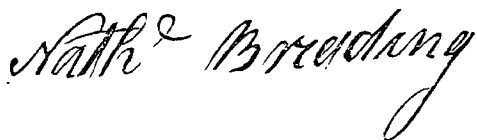
Greene County, where he was killed by an accidental fall from a wagon. After another interval the field was occupied by Dr. William L. Wilson, who left after the expiration of about a year. In 1840 an office was opened by Dr. J. N. Craft, son of David Craft. Dr. Craft practiced in Merrittstown and vicinity until his death in 1846, and achieved a popularity that causes grateful mention of his name to this day. His successor was Dr. H. R. Roberts, who had but little practice. N. L. Hufty followed Roberts, and in 1847 was succeeded by Dr. Henry Eastman, who came to Merrittstown in June of that year. Since then he has been steadily in practice in and about the village, and rides a wide circuit in a practice that has been extensive and profitable through his residence of thirty-four years and made his name a household word in hundreds of families in the county.

The only civic society in Merrittstown is Merrittstown Lodge, No. 772, I. O. O. F., which was organized Aug. 5, 1871, with charter members as follows: Isaac Messmore, P. G.; Samuel H. Higinbotham, John A. Messmore, P. G.; James M. Jackson, William Knight, Johnson Miller, James H. Ball, Jesse Coldren, William H. Higinbotham, George W. Green, Jacob N. Ridge, Samuel L. Stewart, Jacob Huber, Casper Haynes, George Thompson, William S. J. Hatfield, F. F. Chalfant, R. Brashear, John Coldren, J. C. Wood.

The first officers were J. A. Messmore, N. G.; Isaac Messmore, V. G.; S. H. Higinbotham, Sec.; James M. Jackson, P. S.; Johnson Miller, Treas. The Noble Grands have been J. A. Messmore, Isaac Messmore, John Allen, James Jackson, Samuel Higinbotham, S. J. Gadd, William Gadd, S. L. Stewart, George Roberts, W. S. Craft, Absalom Hostetler, J. N. Ridge, Johnson Miller, John Williams, and Newton Jackson. The members are now twenty-four, and the officers as follows: Newton Jackson, N. G.; John Norman, V. G.; Robinson Savage, Rec. Sec.; Richard Miller, P. S.; Joseph Woodward, Treas.

The most important industry in Luzerne, aside from that of agriculture, is the distillery of George W. Jones, on the river near Bridgeport. The business was founded there and a distillery built in 1857 by John Worthington and J. S. Krepps. Fire destroyed the establishment in 1859, and in 1860 John Worthington rebuilt it. He carried it on until 1866, when he sold out to Britton & South, who were succeeded in 1868 by Britton & Moore, and they in 1869 by Jones & South. In 1876 George W. Jones became the sole proprietor. Mr. Jones has recently enlarged the works. They have at present a capacity of one hundred and fifty bushels, employ fifteen hands, and produce about twelve barrels of whiskey daily.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.



Among the immigrants into Fayette County at an early day was Judge Nathaniel Breeding, a man of strong character and of peculiar note in his times. His grandfather, David Breeding, was of Scotch descent, and was born near Coleraine, Londonderry Co., Ireland, and coming to America settled in Lancaster County, Pa., about 1728, bringing with him his family, of whom was his son James, the father of Nathaniel Breeding.

Nathaniel Breeding, son of the above-named James and Ann Ewing Breeding, was born March, 1751, in Little Britain township, Lancaster Co., Pa. Being given a fine classical education, he took charge of an academy at Newark, Del., and afterwards taught school in Prince Edward County, Va.

We next hear of him serving in the army of the Revolution under his future father-in-law, Gen. Ewing, commissary of the Pennsylvania line, while the army was encamped at Valley Forge during the hard and gloomy winter of 1777. Having married Mary Ewing, he removed his family to Tower Hill farm, Luzerne township, Fayette Co., in 1784. During 1785 he was appointed one of the five justices of the peace, who were the sole judges in the Court of Common Pleas for some years, until Judge Addison was appointed president judge, on which event Mr. Breeding was appointed associate, and continued such until his death. After the close of the war he was chosen as one of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, with whom was lodged all the executive power of the State. This office he held about five years, until the adoption of the new constitution of 1790 providing for the election of a Governor.

At an early day Judge Breeding did much to develop the infant trade between the western counties of the State and New Orleans by sending annually to that market a flat-boat laden with flour and whiskey, at that time almost the only articles of production and export, though as he was early engaged with John and Andrew Oliphant in the furnace business, they occasionally included salt- and sugar-kettles, hollow-ware, etc.

During the troublous times of the Whiskey Insurrection Judge Breeding, as a law-abiding citizen, used all his influence in maintaining the laws taxing whiskey, notwithstanding these laws were destructive to his interest and so obnoxious as to create a rebellion which could be suppressed only by the strong arm of military force. So strong indeed was public opinion against the excise laws that large

amounts of Judge Breeding's property were burned by the insurgents. He, in connection with Edward Cook and John Oliphant, was a delegate from Fayette County to a convention of gentlemen which met at Pittsburgh, Sept. 7, 1791, to take measures in regard to suppressing the Whiskey Insurrection.

Judge Breeding was commissioned by the State, March 5, 1785, to survey all the lands then recently purchased from the Indians north and west of the Ohio and Allegheny Rivers to Lake Erie, as also to assist in running the lines between Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Ohio.

We recur here to the days of Judge Breeding's early manhood to note that he purchased the Tower Hill farm, before referred to, in 1783, buying at that time the tomahawk right of one McKibben, who had taken it up and was then living upon it, and "paid out the land" to the State in 1784, and immediately moved upon it, and in 1790 built thereon a stone house, which is in perfect preservation, and is now in the possession of one of his grandsons, George E. Hogg. Judge Breeding lived continuously in this house after its erection, and died therein.

Judge Breeding was very enterprising, and aside from various other important operations he, in company with others, built at Brownsville, in 1814, a steamboat named the "Enterprise," which was the first steamer built at Brownsville, and which, after making a number of trips to Pittsburgh, was sent down the river to New Orleans and never returned. In 1816 the same persons built a second steamer.

Nathaniel Breeding died April 22, 1822, his wife, Mary Ewing, surviving him, and dying Aug. 31, 1845, aged seventy-eight years. Their children, now all deceased, were George; Mary Ann, intermarried with George Hogg; James E., who married Elizabeth Ewing; Sarah, who married Dr. James Stevens, of Washington, Pa.; Harriet, who was the wife of Dr. Joseph Gazzam; Caroline Margaret, who married Dr. Joseph Trevor, of Connellsville and Pittsburgh, Pa.; Elizabeth, who married Rev. Wm. B. McIlvaine; William E., a lawyer, who died in the twenty-fifth year of his age; and two children who died in infancy.

Nathaniel Breeding and his wife Mary, as also his father, James, and his wife, Ann Ewing, were interred in the Laughlin burying-ground, two and a half miles east of Brownsville, in sight of the National road.

JAMES E. BREADING.

James E. Breeding, son of Judge Nathaniel and Mary Ewing Breeding, was born at Tower Hill farm, Luzerne township, Fayette Co., Pa., Oct. 19, 1789. While quite young he entered on his long career as a merchant at New Haven, in his native county, then the centre of the largest and almost the only iron interest west of the mountains. Thence he removed to Brownsville, and there pursued the same line of busi-



Jos E Breeding



Wm Ewing

ness until the death of his father made it necessary for him to take charge of Tower Hill farm in 1822. He removed to Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1829, where, in connection with his brother-in-law, George Hogg, and William Hogg, the uncle of George, both of Brownsville, he embarked very largely in the wholesale trade of groceries and dry-goods. Herein, by his recognized character for honesty and integrity and his fine business capacities, he was eminently successful, and secured the confidence and respect of a large community with which he had business relations. He retired, however, some years before his death to enjoy that rest in the evening of his days to which his long life of activity entitled him.

Mr. Breathing was connected with the commissary department during Gen. (afterwards President) William H. Harrison's campaign against Tecumseh and his braves. He was for many years connected with a large mercantile establishment in St. Louis as a silent partner, holding the most responsible position in the house.

In 1821, Mr. Breathing married Elizabeth, daughter of William and Mary Ewing, and died without issue in Allegheny City, Nov. 19, 1863, his wife surviving him. His remains were interred in Allegheny Cemetery.

Mrs. Elizabeth Ewing Breathing, his widow, now in the eighty-fourth year of her age, resides at Emsworth, a few miles west of Allegheny City, on the Fort Wayne Railroad, where she passes her venerable years in affluent domestic quiet, her life being now given, as her earlier days were in a great measure expended, in literally doing good, and commanding the affection of all who know her.

DAVID BREATHING.

David Breathing, who was the son of James and Ann Breathing, was one of the early settlers of Fayette County, moving thereinto in 1794 from Lancaster County, Pa. He entered the army as a private in 1776, and passed the winter at Valley Forge, and was afterwards made an officer of the commissary department, wherein he continued during the remainder of the war of the Revolution, except for a short time while he was aide-de-camp to Gen. Maxwell in the battle of Monmouth, during which Mr. Breathing was witness of a notable incident in the military career of the "Father of his Country." While the battle was progressing, Gen. Maxwell, thinking that the division general, Lee, was not conducting his forces as he should, sent Breathing to Gen. Washington, then in a distant part of the field, to inform him of the state of affairs. Washington on receiving the dispatch asked, "Young man, can you lead me to Gen. Lee?" Breathing replying, "Yes, general," Washington promptly said, "Well, you lead and I will follow," and soon Breathing became witness of the se-

vere reprimand which, as is well known, Washington bestowed upon Lee, curses and all.

In 1785, Mr. Breathing married Elizabeth Clark, of Lancaster County, Pa., and moved to Luzerne township, Fayette Co., in 1794, as above noted. He had a large number of children, the majority of whom died of yellow fever, at about the same time, in Vincennes, Ind. The only surviving member of David Breathing's family is Maj. Clark Breathing, who resides at Uniontown, and at whose death, he having no male issue, the name of Breathing of this stock will become extinct. Maj. Breathing has a daughter, Mrs. Dr. O. E. Newton, of Cincinnati, Ohio.

WILLIAM EWING.

William Ewing, one of the early day eminent men of Fayette County, was born May 19, 1769, in Peach Bottoms, York Co., Pa. He was the son of George Ewing, who was a brother of the Rev. Dr. John Ewing, of Philadelphia, a great scholar and an able minister of that period, and for many years professionally connected with the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Ewing was a man of great scientific attainments, and was commissioned to run the southern line of Pennsylvania.

William Ewing, who for some time resided with his uncle, Dr. John, and under his direction had made considerable progress in studies, including that of medicine, following his brother Nathaniel (afterwards of Vincennes, Ind.) and his two sisters, who preceded him by about two years, left York County, and came as a surveyor into Fayette County about 1790, when he was about twenty-one years of age, and took up a tract of land and built thereon a house in which he lived, and wherein he died in 1827.

He married, in 1791, Mary Conwell, daughter of Jehu Conwell and Elizabeth Stokeley (her family perhaps coming from New Castle, Del.), a woman of great spirit, natural talent, and energy. She became the mother of a large family, widely scattered and occupying influential positions in society. Their children were Hon. George Ewing, born Feb. 27, 1797 (afterwards of Houston, Texas); Judge Nathaniel Ewing, born July 18, 1794, of Uniontown; Hon. John H. Ewing, born Oct. 5, 1796, of Washington, Pa.; James, born April 18, 1807, of Dunlap's Creek, Pa.; Mrs. Elizabeth Breathing, born July 9, 1799, and Mrs. Maria Veech, born Aug. 22, 1811, of Emsworth; Mrs. Ellen J. E. Wallace, born Jan. 23, 1819, of Allegheny City; Mrs. Louisa Wilson, born March 8, 1802, of Uniontown; Mrs. Mary Ann Mason, born Feb. 24, 1816, of Muscatine, Iowa; and Caroline, born April 20, 1804, and who died in infancy.

William Ewing was one of the early settlers of the Dunlap's Creek district, Fayette Co., together with other of the now "old families" who came from York and Lancaster Counties,—the Breadings, Conwells, Crafts, Davidsons, Finleys, Hackneys, Peterses, Wil-

sons,—all associate names well known among the early inhabitants, and in these times also.

William Ewing and his son, John H., of Washington, constructed the National road between Hillsborough and Brownsville. He was appointed by the Governor of the State a justice of the peace, and held that office with great credit to himself and satisfaction to the public until the constitution of the State made it elective.

He was a man of strong mind and excellent judgment, together with great physical strength; an active and enterprising business man, who kept up close relationships with the prominent characters of his day. He was a Federalist in politics, and often took an active part, especially in the Ross and McKean campaign of 1800.

William Ewing died Oct. 21, 1827, of what perhaps would now be called typhoid fever. He lies buried in the Conwell family graveyard, on the old homestead farm of Jehu Conwell, and is remembered as one of those substantial, honorable, public-spirited men of whom the community was justly proud.

ALEXANDER GIBSON.

The progenitor of the Gibsons of Luzerne township was one James Gibson, who migrated from Ireland in 1770, and located in Chester County, Pa., and engaged in farming. He followed his vocation until 1776, when he entered the Continental army and served until the surrender of Cornwallis. After the surrender he found that two of his brothers were soldiers in the British army, having been pressed into the service by the mother-country. At the close of the struggle they settled in Virginia, and their descendants nearly all reside there. James Gibson's home continued in Chester County until 1790, when he emigrated to Southwestern Pennsylvania, and settled upon a farm in Luzerne township, where his son Alexander afterwards lived and died, and which is now in possession of Mr. Oliver Miller. James Gibson was married to Margaret Lackey in 1792. They had six children, of whom Alexander, the subject of this sketch, was the third. He was born June 8, 1797. His early life was spent upon his father's farm, and received his education in the country schools of that period. He began work for himself at the age of twenty years, engaging in wagoning from Wheeling to Baltimore, and in 1820 changed his route to and from Baltimore to Nashville, Tenn. Here he, in company with Levi Crawford, now living in Luzerne township, spent two years trading with the Cherokee Indians. In 1823 he returned to Pennsylvania, sold his team, and purchased a farm. On the 24th of June, 1824, he was married to Mary Hibbs, of Redstone township. To them were born six children, four of whom are living, viz.: James G., married first to Mary Rodgers. They had two children,—John A. and Mary R. Mary died in 1861. He was married again June 25, 1867,

to Rebecca J. Haney. Margaret J., married to William H. Miller; Mary A., married to Oliver Miller. They have two children, Albert G. and Emma V. Albert M., married to Alice Frey. They have one child, Nellie.

The most of Alexander Gibson's active business life was spent in farming and stock-dealing. He was industrious, a good manager, and accumulated enough property to give each of his children a fair start in life. He never sought political preferment. He was prompt to perform what he promised, and was highly esteemed by his neighbors. He was eminently a man of peace, and never had a lawsuit in his life. He was for many years an active member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and his Christian life challenged the respect of those who knew him. He died July 12, 1875, and his remains rest in the Hopewell Cemetery. His wife, Mary, died Jan. 25, 1876.

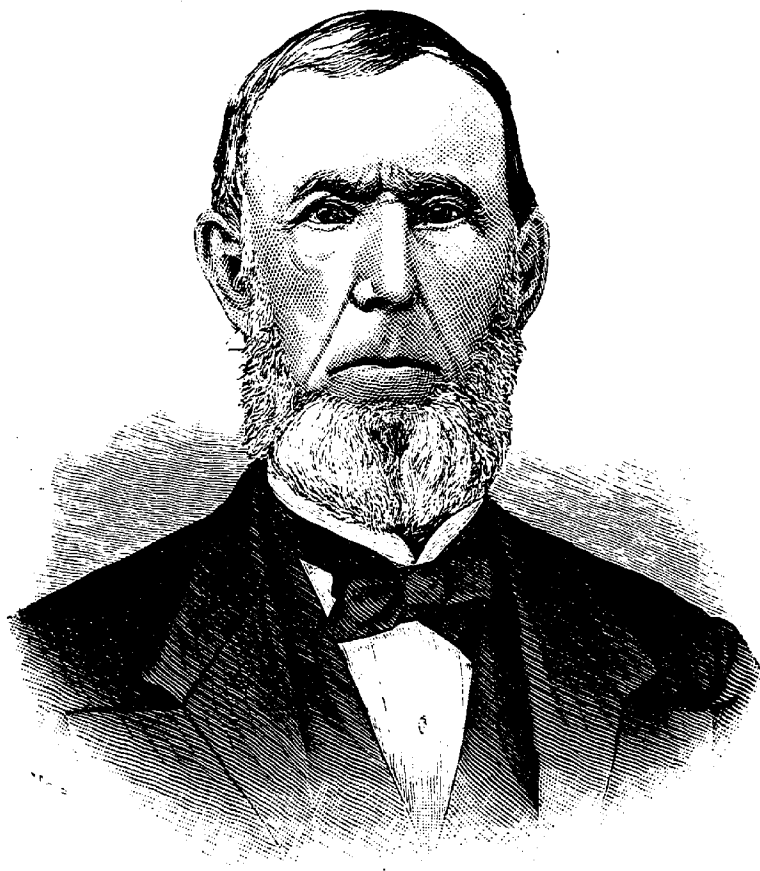
BENJAMIN COVERT.

The progenitor of the Coverts in the United States was one Abraham Covert, who came from Holland to the colonies about 1707. Of his family nothing is now known except that he had a son Abraham, who raised a family of eight children,—four sons and four daughters. The sons were Abraham, Isaac, John, and Morris. These four sons in time became widely separated. Abraham remained East, while the others sought their fortunes in the West. John settled north of Pittsburgh. Morris first lived in New Jersey, and there married a Miss Mary Mann. After his marriage he moved to Col. Cresap's estate on the Potomac, in the State of Maryland, where he resided some years. About the year 1780 he moved to Fayette County, Pa., and located about three miles west of Beesontown, now Uniontown, where he purchased a farm of three hundred acres for eight hundred and fifty dollars, on the old Fort road leading to Redstone Old Fort. Here he lived and died, and raised a family of eleven children,—six sons and five daughters. The oldest son, Joseph, married Nancy Borer, of Harrison, Ohio, where he lived and died. The second son, Abraham, married Catharine Black, and they removed to Harrison County, Ohio. The third son, John, married Amy Doney, and lived on the Monongahela River, in Luzerne township, Fayette Co., and died in his ninety-third year. The fourth son, Morris, was an itinerant Methodist preacher. He married Nancy Purcell, of Chesapeake Bay, and died near Clarksburg, W. Va., aged about sixty years. Jesse, the youngest son, married Henrietta Gibson; resided principally in Fayette County, Pa., and died at the age of fifty-five.

Benjamin Covert was born July 10, 1799, on the old homestead, where he grew to manhood. He married Abigail Randolph, and removing to Harrison County, Ohio, in 1820, settled on the Stillwater, and there resided until 1830. Two of his children, Richard and Mary, were born there. He next removed



ALEXANDER GIBSON.



Benjⁿ Couert

to a farm on Short Creek, in the same county. There he remained three years, and there his youngest daughter, Elizabeth, was born. He then moved to a farm in Luzerne township, Fayette Co., Pa., which he purchased from George Custer. It contained two hundred and fourteen acres, and cost him two thousand six hundred and fifty dollars. Here he has resided for forty-eight years, doing good as the Lord prospered him, "by helping to build churches in the Bend and at the Landing, and sustaining the ministers of *his* church, as well as contributing to the support of others." He has been an ardent Methodist for sixty-four years. His father and mother

were Methodists, as were also his brothers and sisters. They are all dead, having lived and died meek and humble Christians. He alone of the family survives, in his eighty-third year.

His children are Richard, who resides on the old homestead; Mary, married to D. H. Wakefield, of Jefferson township, Fayette Co., Pa.; and Elizabeth, married to Joshua Strickler, of Luzerne township. With but little intermission he has held an office in the church during the entire time of his membership. His start in life was a strong constitution. He has always been noted for his sobriety, indomitable energy, frugality, and rectitude of purpose.