

HISTORY
OF
BEDFORD AND SOMERSET
COUNTIES
PENNSYLVANIA

WITH GENEALOGICAL AND PERSONAL HISTORY

BEDFORD COUNTY

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SOMERSET COUNTY

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Southampton township was organized in 1801. As then formed, it included the present township of Northampton and Larimer—that part of Allegheny township that lies south of the Glades road or turnpike, as well as a part of the present township of Fair Hope, or nearly all of the territory that was annexed to Somerset county in 1800. But by the successive formation of the townships named it has been reduced to a rather small area. In its physical features it is nearly as rough and rugged as its near neighbors to the west, but with a better soil.

Of early settlers, Jost (or Joseph) Leydig, who came from Berks county shortly after the Revolutionary war, located on the Emerick farm. Peter Troutman, the Lopleys, John Comp, John Hahn and Jacob Martz were all among the earliest settlers.

In another part of this volume, under the caption of "Londerry Township Annexed," will be found the names of 90 taxables who lived in the annexed part in 1800. Of course, some of these lived in what is now Allegheny township. Some of them also lived in Northampton and Fairhope townships. But it is probable that the greater number of them lived in Southampton township as it is at present constituted. The date 1800 fixes a time when they certainly were here. It is about equally certain that nearly all of them may have been here from ten to thirty years earlier. Nowhere else in Somerset county are so many of the pioneer names still to be found as in Southampton township. Such readers as are interested are referred to the list itself.

The first gristmill in Southampton township was built near Wellersburg, by Jacob Korns, in 1809. About 1830 William and Daniel De Haven operated a carding mill in the same building. In 1837 the entire structure, then owned by George Weller, was destroyed by fire, and was never rebuilt. Jacob Uhl built the second gristmill in the township in 1810. In later years this has been known as the Reitz mill. The Kennell gristmill was built by George Leydig about 1818, and rebuilt in 1853, by Jonathan Kennell. This is where Gladdens postoffice is. An old grist-

mill on the Comp farm, a short distance below the Keauall mill, was converted into a woollen factory in 1873. This was operated by M. L. Tauber until about 1894 when he removed from the township. Since that time it has not been operated.

While it may still be far distant, Southampton township must certainly have a future before it. The northern end of the Frostburg coal field projects into the township from Maryland and covers about one-half of its area. Of the great Pittsburg seam there are less than three hundred acres. The lower productive coal measures underlie an area of about twenty square miles. The region has been rather fully explored, and about 1886 a bore hole was put down to a depth of 1,200 feet. This shows that all of the lower beds of coal exist here, and are of a workable thickness. The estimate of Peter J. Leslie, then State Geologist, was that there were probably four hundred millions of tons of coal in this field. There is also an abundance of iron ore to be found. The average results of eight analyses that have been made show a yield in pig metal of over 35 per cent. There are also immense deposits of good fire clay, and in the fullness of time all these resources will be developed.

Wellersburg borough was laid out in 1830, by George Weller. The town lies along the old Cumberland turnpike. So far as we know, the land on which the town is built was first improved by Jacob Korn, who sold the land to Weller. The first house was built by Jeremiah Wingert, in 1834. He also began operating a tannery in the following year. A man named Barnes opened the first store. John R. Brinham succeeded Barnes in the mercantile business. Through good and evil fortune, Mr. Brinham clung to the town, having an abiding faith in the future of both Wellersburg and Southampton township. Upright and honorable in all things, he carried on the mercantile business here for fifty years, as a public spirited citizen giving freely of his time and substance to promote the welfare of the town. It is said that Mr. Brinham was appointed postmaster in 1841, and held the office up to the time of his death, in 1892. While speaking about the postoffice, it may be said there was a postoffice in 1880, or about that time, called Southampton. Peter Boyer was the postmaster. It is very probable that it was where Wellersburg now is. It certainly must have been somewhere along the turnpike. About 1855 there was also a postoffice on top of Savage mountain called "Top Savage."

To return to Wellersburg, the first brick house, and so far as we know, the only one in the place, was built by John R. Brinham. All the raw material entering into the manufacture of iron abounds in Southampton township. In 1855 a furnace was built by the Union Coal and Iron Company. This company succeeded an older company, which had extensive mineral rights.

For the time being this enterprise brought great prosperity to the village. The furnaces had a capacity of about 300 tons per month, and in various ways gave employment to upwards of 200 men. The furnace was abandoned in 1856, and with it departed the prosperity of Wellersburg, and its population has since dwindled until it has become one of the smallest boroughs in the county.

Wellersburg was incorporated as a borough in 1857. The first election for burgess resulted in a tie between George Q. Walker and C. E. Wye. From 1860 to the present time these officers have been as follows: Jeremiah Wingert, I. D. Reese, Jeremiah Wingert (two terms), John B. Brinham, J. R. Shockley, Isaac Augustine, Wm. Uhl (two terms), John Wingert, Henry Moser, Peter Knearam, Adam Trimble (three terms), Joseph H. Luther, W. F. Uhl, John Wingert, Michael Long (six terms), John Wingert (two terms), J. H. Seth, John Winters, John Wingert (two terms), F. Fechtig, J. P. Meyers, C. H. Close, F. C. Fechtig, S. S. Fechtig, F. C. Fechtig, Hiram Stortz, Wm. Long, F. C. Fechtig, S. C. Fechtig.

FAIR HOPE TOWNSHIP.

Fair Hope township was formed in 1891, out of parts of Northampton, Southampton and Allegheny. Its early history cannot well be separated from that of its parent townships. Its physical features are about the same, while the lumbering business is of considerable importance. The township has extensive deposits of the best of fire clay. Williams, a station on the railroad, is the seat of extensive fire brick works that have been operated by the Savage Fire Brick Company since 1890. The plant of Welsh, Gloninger & Maxwell has also been operated here for about the same length of time. Millions of all kinds of fire brick are manufactured at these works every year and employment is given to many men.