

## CENTRE COUNTY.

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water had much to do in turning them into fiends, and bringing murder and rapine to the homes of the sturdy settlers.

**Other Settlers:**—George McCormick, the first settler of Gregg in 1773, was the ancestor of the Allison's. John Watson was the first settler in Penn township; next came Samuel Hoy in 1774.

Wilcot was the only settler in Penns valley in 1772, living where Earlystown now is; soon after him came Potter, McGrew, McMullen and Hubler.

Potter township, when yet belonging to Northumberland county, included all from Lemont east to Hartley township in Union county; and in this territory in 1774, there were 16 settlers, assessed with 17 horses and 20 cattle; and in the same year the first grist and saw mill in the valley was erected on the site of what is now known as the Red mill.

**Potter's Fort:**—A stockade fort, built square with an inner and an outer stockade enclosure—one for the shelter of families in times of danger and the other for live stock—no settler having more than one or two cows and a horse, which answered all their wants, consequently few animals needed shelter. The famous Indian spring at the foot of the eminence upon which the fort stood, was about ten rods distant; a stockade passage led from the fort to the spring, to protect the occupants in going to and from it for water for men and animals, at times when Indians were likely to be hidden behind trees watching for an opportunity to shoot any of the inhabitants of the fort if venturing out. The spring is still the source of water supply for the village of Old Fort.

The first forts were built by the settlers in 1777—the Potter's Fort, and afterwards minor forts in the vicinity of Kreider's mill, in Penn township, and another in Haines township. About 1789 the settlers all fled on account of the Indians, most of them returning to Penns valley again about 1784.

**Indian Massacres:**—May, 1778, Maj. Miles reports from Penns valley that Jacob Stanford, his wife and daughter, were killed and scalped, and a son of 11 years was missing. Stanford resided near McBride's Gap, about three miles west of Old Fort. The bodies were buried in a corner of one of the fields of Ephraim Kellar's farm. Henry Dale, grandfather of the Dales now among us, helped bury them.

Col. Potter in writing to Maj. Gen. Armstrong for assistance from the Upper Fort of Penns valley, made a strong appeal and in vivid language pictured the danger the settlers were in on account of the Indians, who continued to murder and scalp. He mentions of "two forts being in Penns valley, but have not men to make a stand, and the circumstances of the valley were lamentable; words cannot describe the situation—people poor, bread high in price, God knows what the consequences will be." On the 17th of May Capt. Potter wrote from the Upper Fort, "Our savage enemy continues to murder, scalp and capture." On May 31st, we find that all the inhabitants of Penns valley were gathered at one place in Potter township and a panic generally pervading the county. July 25, 1778, Capt. Potter writes, "Two white men went out to the plains a little below his fields and met five Indians whom they engaged. One of the soldiers, Thomas Van Doran, was shot dead. The other, Jacob Shadacre, came to a hand-to-hand encounter with one of the Indians, and both used their knives; Shadacre killed his antagonist. His fate was hard, for another Indian came up and shot him." The two soldiers were buried in the late a half mile east of Old Fort, now belonging to the Hennigh farm, two stones marking the graves. May 19, 1779, Capt. Potter writes, "that only 1 lieutenant and 15 men were left in three forts, as a guard; and on the 4th of June their time will expire, and then most probably we in this valley will have to fly. There are no inhabitants but in Penns valley, and they in the forts."

Capt. Potter received injuries from lifting at a barn raising on the James Runkle farm one mile east of Old Fort in the fall of 1789. He was conveyed in a cot-wagon to Franklin county for medical attendance, where he died in November. By neglect his grave was unmarked, and his remains rest unknown in Brown Mills graveyard in Franklin county. Let us hope the Bellefonte Chapter D. A. R. may find his grave, as they did his fort, and plant a marker there. Capt. Potter was the great-grand-father of the late Dr. Potter of Bellefonte.

**Hardships and Privations:**—The pioneer wives and daughters assisted the husbands and brothers in felling trees, clearing forests, splitting rails, grubbing and burning new ground, and on all-around farm work; spun tow and flax and wove the goods for the family garments. The pioneers in going for supplies to the Juniata or to Sunbury, often were overtaken by night and were obliged to camp in the woods on the banks of Penns or Bald Eagle creek with howling wolves and screaming wildcats and the childlike crying of the panther to disturb their slumbers, and worse than all, the Indian prowling after to murder and scalp, in a surprise attack.

The cases of Indian barbarities above cited, will suffice when it can be written that scores of similar cases could be given. The pioneer and his family never felt safe by day or by night. Behind every tree or stump, or in a clump of bushes, the red man might be hidden—and often was—to deal out death and the torch upon the settler, his wife and little ones and his home. The feelings of those pioneers might be described as those of the wave dashed mariner when the poet wrote:

"The deep may dash,  
The winds may blow,  
The storm spread out his wings of woe,  
'Till sailor's eye can see a shroud  
Hung in the folds of every cloud."

Such was the experience of your grand-parents in these valleys—the Halls, Stovers, Greggs, Dales, Potters, Kreamers,

Kornmans, Harters, and others of names familiar. Really, this was dark and bloody ground, and those were days that tried men's souls.

**Famous Indian Chiefs:**—Logan, the celebrated Indian chief, was baptized in the Moravian faith. He was named in honor of James Logan, at that time secretary of the Province of Pennsylvania. He was of fine stature, fine sense of honor and a true friend of the whites. Logan's Gap, Logan township, Logan's Branch and Logan's Spring on Shugert's farm, were named after him. Game getting scarce, Logan went to Ohio, located on the Ohio river where his family was massacred by whites, and for this his revenge was terrible in massacre of the whites. He removed to near Detroit, became addicted to drink and, losing his noble manhood, became quarrelsome and was shot by his nephew.

Logan was a resident of Kishacoquillas valley as early as 1766, and left there in 1771. He was a son of Shikellimy, chief of the Delawares and Shawanese. "When Capt. Potter's wife was a child and just learning to walk, her mother happened to express her regret that she could not get a pair of shoes to give more firmness to her step." Logan stood by and said nothing. He soon asked Mrs. Brown, the mother, to let the little girl go up and spend the day at his cabin. The heart of the mother was alarmed at the proposition; but she knew the delicacy of an Indian's feelings—and she knew Logan, too—and with secret reluctance, but apparent cheerfulness, she complied with his request. The hours of the day wore very slowly away; it was nearly night and her little one had not returned. But just as the sun was going down the trusty chief was seen coming down the path with his charge, and in a moment more the little one trotted into her mother's arms, proudly exhibiting a beautiful pair of moccasins on her little feet, the product of Logan's skill." He was over six feet high, well proportioned, straight as an arrow.

Chief Bald Eagle of the Six Nations, had his home where Milesburg now stands—the "Bald Eagle's Nest." He took an active part in the war upon the settlers, the opposite of Logan. His hatred of the whites and desire for murder and rapine knew no bounds. Yet he was honored by having Bald Eagle Creek and Bald Eagle Valley called after him.

Bald Eagle was murdered by a party of whites on the Monongahela and his body placed in his canoe with a piece of Johnny-cake in his mouth and floated down the river to where New Geneva, in Fayette county now is, and was discovered by a lady, who had it brought to shore and the old Chief was given a decent burial.

The adventures of Adam Poe, the great and fearless Indian fighter, strange to say, are not found in any of the histories. Poe made many a Redman bite the dust. Powerfully built, fleet as a deer, he got in his work so successfully, as to be a terror to the Indians, and they were constantly on the watch for Poe, as the foe whom they feared above any other White man, and wished to slay him. Upon one occasion, while Poe was in hiding at the top of a precipice, all night, Indians on the hunt for him, quietly lay at the foot of the precipice where they spent the night. Poe getting awake, scented danger and creeping noiselessly to the brink, was surprised to see three Indians at the bottom. One was asleep, another was sitting by the fire and the third was standing. Poe knew that it was a game of life and death; with gun in hand, he made a sudden leap, landing upon the breast of the standing Indian, stunning him long enough to shoot the Indian by the fire, and before the sleeper knew what was what, Poe knocked out his brains with the butt of his gun, and then finished the one who still lay stunned upon the ground. The incident is known in Frontier Life, as "Poe's great leap." Poe creek is named after Adam Poe.

### Organization of the County.

Centre county was organized Feb. 13, 1800, formed out of a part of Mifflin, Northumberland, Lycoming and Huntingdon. In 1839, in the erection of Clinton county, the townships of Bald Eagle, Lamar and Logan were taken from Centre. Centre has an area of 1,227 square miles and 785,280 acres. Territorially we have the largest county in the state, Lycoming being the next largest, having 1,213 square miles. When the county was erected in 1800, the population was 4,115, including two slaves in Bald Eagle. In the oldest history, by Rupp, the population is given as 2,075—or only half. In 1890 the population was 43,267.

**Contest for County Seat:**—There was an animated contest for the county seat, between Milesburg and Bellefonte. And as a story makes it, Bellefonte won by clever strategy. Milesburg was then at the head of the Bald Eagle navigation, which was greatly in favor of that town with the authorities at Harrisburg. Bellefonte, of course, expected navigation facilities to reach the town of the Beautiful Fountain in due course of time, but being uneasy lest Milesburg got ahead, a ruse was hit upon. A shower having caused a rise in Spring creek, a flat-boat was improvised, and loading it with some household effects, the boat was towed up to Bellefonte and a messenger was hastened to Harrisburg with the glorious news, "Navigation opened to Bellefonte, arrival of the first boat load of goods." It had the desired effect—locating the capital of Centre county at Bellefonte.

**Bellefonte:**—Bellefonte was laid out by James Dunlop in 1795 and celebrated its centennial in fine style in 1895. The first house was erected by James Dunlop, part of which not many years ago was occupied by Jacob Valentine, and in it the first courts were held in 1801. The Bellefonte Academy was opened in 1805, with a board of trustees from the different townships of the county. The state appropriated \$2000 towards the erection of the building. Bellefonte was incorporated as a borough in 1806, and at the time the assessment contained 54 names.

Bellefonte is the centre of half dozen railroads and has large industries, glass works, car shops, nail works, large furnace plants, match factory, scale works, planing mills, machine shops, etc., first class hotels, handsome churches, ample school buildings, and fine

private residences. Its citizens are noted for liberality, enterprise, and hospitality. Population, 5000.

**Phillipsburg:**—Phillipsburg, a beautiful town on the banks of the historic Moshannon, with a population, in 1890, of 4,245, is the centre of the bituminous coal trade of the Centre and Clearfield region. The town was laid out in 1795 by Henry and James Phillips. Hardman Phillips later founded important improvements. Within the past twenty-five years large industries, such as fire brick works of immense capacity, planing and grist mills, fine mercantile houses, hotels, etc., were erected. Its residences are among the finest in the county; streets regularly laid out, cleanly and adorned with shade trees—and above all, with its wealth, its citizens are noted for their sociability and genuine hospitality—a Phillipsburger is always a "hale fellow well met." It is thoroughly up-to-date in every respect. Several important railroads give it facilities reaching all sections of the state. The first settlers reached it by mountain paths, when that entire section was a wilderness with Indians and wild beasts occupying.

An offer of a town lot and a four acre out-lot as a premium to the first twelve settlers, about 1794-5, brought the following, all foreigners: Dr. Conrad Bergman, Joseph Barth, Jacob Dimling, Klumbach, Liepoldt, Jacob Meyer, Reese, Schillok, John Henry Simler, and John Shultz, all Germans. Leary from Ireland and McAuly from Scotland. The first house was built of round logs by John Shultz; soon one by John Henry Simler, who built the first hewed log house. Shultz's house was on the south corner of Presque Isle and Second streets; Simler's on the northeast corner of Laurel and Front streets. Indians, of the Cornplanter tribe, had an encampment along the right bank of Moshannon creek, below where the turnpike now crosses it. They were peaceable and gave the settlers no trouble. The Cottage State, Miners Hospital, for the miners of the central bituminous coal region, is located at Phillipsburg. Its public school building is one of the finest in the state.

**Aaronsburg:**—Aaronsburg is the oldest town in the county. It was laid out in 1786 by Aaron Levy, a Jew, and called after his given name. In early days it went by the nickname "Jew-town." It was regularly laid out, one mile square, the main street 150 feet in width, to admit of space for market houses through the centre. In the days of the settlers it was a stirring business town, all the trade and business of Sugar, Brush, Penns and part of Buffalo valleys was transacted at Aaronsburg, and Levy looked forward to its becoming a city. The Duncans and Fosters were the leading merchants and made their fortunes at Aaronsburg. But, alas, villages and stores sprung up in all localities, and the expected "city" did not materialize, and now it is a quiet, pretty village of about 400 inhabitants. Levy set apart a lot for every religious denomination, including one for a Jewish synagogue, on the lower end of Main street.

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