

The Dewart Family

By LEWIS DEWART

Presented Before The Society, June 16, 1936



In presenting to the Northumberland County Historical Society this paper on the Dewart family it is with pardonable pride that I tell you we are one of the oldest families in Sunbury and that few of our members have wandered from the environs of the city. A rather unique feature of the Dewart family also is the fact that few female children have been reared by its successive generations. Several daughters were among the large family of the original Dewart to come to this country, but they died in infancy. Since that time there have been only male children born until the present generation when my younger brother, in 1930, presented the family with a girl, the first in the Dewart family since 1793.

You will probably become weary of hearing practically no other names except "William" and "Lewis" throughout this paper. It has been the custom of past, as well as present generations to name their first born either "William" or "William Lewis" and the second "Lewis." If you will pardon a personal reference, my oldest son is William the seventh while my second son is Lewis the fourth.

Practically all we know about the Dewarts before they came to America is that they belonged to a powerful Scottish clan known in History as the Maclean-Duart clan, created in 1632. This clan derives its name from a famous celtic warrior, and has been seated in the Isle of Mull from early times. The family seat was Duart Castle, a massive tower on the edge of a

high cliff on the coast of Mull, near Oban. The walls of this famous castle are still standing, but the ivy-clad ruins are desolate. The plaid is quite beautiful, red being predominant. The badge is "Holly;" and the coat of arms consists of a shield, supported by two large birds, divided into four sections as follows: Upper left hand section, rook, red in color with a white background; upper right hand section, dexter hand fessewise, holding a cross-crosslet, hand red, cross gold, white background; lower left hand section, blue sailboat, with gold background; lower right hand section, two eagle heads facing each other, below a salmon, natural, with white background. On top is the crest in the form of a castle and below the motto, "Virtue mine Honor."

This clan suffered for the Stuart cause. It is supposed that they were driven out of Scotland into Ireland after which one branch drifted to America.

William Dewart, born April 5th, 1740, in Ireland, and in humble circumstances, came to America and settled in Chester county in 1765, coming to Sunbury with his family in 1769. He was a weaver of fine linens by trade and the proud possessor of a medal presented to him by a representative of King George III while still a resident of Ireland. This medal, which I have brought along for your inspection, has served the children of each succeeding generation for teething purposes, and together with this watch are the only two pieces which we know were brought from the old country by the first William Dewart. He opened a store in Sunbury on Chestnut street, between Second and Centre, in 1775, just three years after the organization of Northumberland county. He was the second merchant of Sunbury. Purchasing the site on which the Rice building is at present located, he built a store and residence for himself. He accumulated considerable property in Sunbury. He was constable of Augusta township during 1777. William Dewart died on July 25, 1814. His wife, Eleanor, died September 17, 1805, aged 58 years, 10 months and 24 days. Their children were as follows: Joseph, born 1776, died 1792; Sus-

anna, 1776-1805; John, 1777-1808; William, Jr., 1778-1810; Lewis, 1780-1852; Samuel 1783-1804; James, 1786-1803; Jane, 1788-1798; Eleanor, 1790-1806; Mary 1793-1811. All of these children with the exception of William, Jr., and Lewis died at an early age and their remains are buried in a long row of graves in the Sunbury Cemetery.

In the summer of 1915, William T. Dewart, of New York City, sent his personal representative to Sunbury to interview my father. He had been a partner of the late Frank Munsey, known as the ruthless consolidator of newspapers and magazines, and upon Munsey's death became head of the various Munsey interests, chief among which was The New York Sun, of which Dewart became publisher. Extensive investigation revealed that the great grandfathers of both William T. and my father were brothers and had come to this country less than five years apart, the forebear of our branch going to Chester county, while the great grandfather of William T. Dewart went to Canada. Both at the time were in humble circumstances and had large families.

William Dewart, Jr., married Liberty Brady, born August 9, 1778, daughter of John and Mary Brady, famous Indian fighters of this section, and died July 25, 1851. Their son, William, born November 24, 1806, died May 18, 1841. He was a well known merchant on Front street, and was a prime mover in the organization of the Episcopal church in this city. He was a member of its Vestry until his death and was its first Rector's Warden. In 1824 the corner stone of the first church was laid and William Dewart had two large tablets made in Philadelphia, which he presented to the new church. One contained the Lord's Prayer, while the other listed the Ten Commandments. Both were handsomely mounted with walnut frames and stood on either side of the altar until the church was enlarged some sixty years later. They were then fastened to the walls of the choir room and following the recent flood have been mounted on the walls of the Sunday school room.

Hon. Lewis Dewart, son of William and Eleanor Dewart, was born in Sunbury, November 14, 1780, when the place was little more than a military post in the wilderness. For a number of years he was his father's assistant in the store and was postmaster of Sunbury from 1806 until 1816. His public career began when comparatively young and covered many years. From 1812 to 1820 he represented his district in the State Assembly and in 1823 was elected State Senator to succeed Albright, deceased, serving three years in that capacity. In 1830 he was elected a member of the Twenty-second Congress from which later became the Seventeenth District and was re-elected in 1832. In 1834 he was honored with re-election to the State Legislature, in which he resumed his seat and served three terms, until 1840. During the last year of that period he was made Speaker of the House. In 1839 he was Chief Burgess of Sunbury, and for many years was a member of the school board. He benefited his community greatly in the development of industrial enterprises, noteworthy among which was the Danville and Pottsville railroad, which with Stephen Girard, of Philadelphia, and General Daniel Montgomery, of Danville, he organized and built. Mr. Dewart was one of the first directors of the road and served as such for many years. He and Stephen Girard were pioneers in the Schuylkill county coal fields and they had large holdings of valuable coal properties in the vicinity of Shamokin, this county, as well as Schuylkill county. Their idea was to uncover the coal instead of tunneling it, but it proved too expensive to be practical. Lewis Dewart was identified with the promotion and realization of many of the most advanced improvements of his day and was indeed one of the most prominent citizens of Central Pennsylvania; but his business undertakings were particularly helpful to the opening up of the territory north of Sunbury. In 1840, the year he retired from active business pursuits, he was Democratic candidate for the nomination of Governor. He was succeeded in the leadership of the party by his son, William Lewis Dewart, who carried the honor of the name into even greater usefulness than his father had attempted. Lewis

Dewart was associated with the most noted men of his time, being a warm friend of Andrew Jackson, and his influential connections gave him the opportunity to do much for his community that would have been impossible for one less powerful or valuable personally. He was a man of fine presence, commanding attention and respect wherever he went. He married Elizabeth Liggett, a native of Chester county, Pennsylvania. His death occurred April 26, 1852, when he was seventy-one years old, and his remains rest in the family vault at the Sunbury Cemetery. It so happened that this same vault was broken into about a year and a half ago. Whether this vandalism was perpetrated through morbid curiosity or for the purpose of robbing the dead, will never be known. However, after the discovery of the crime it was found that the interior of the vault was in perfect condition and contained the crypts of the Hon. Lewis Dewart and his wife. Also the Hon. William L. Dewart and wife in hermetically sealed caskets, together with the caskets of several others, one of which was broken into and found to contain the body of a woman—probably buried more than a hundred years ago. This corpse had been disturbed and the coffin partially destroyed which necessitated reburial. After putting the vault in order the entrance was sealed against future molestation.

I have also brought along a cane carried by Hon. Lewis Dewart. This, of course, was used before the days of lighted streets and adequate police protection. You will note that the head becomes a weapon of defense if the occasion arises.

Hon. William Lewis Dewart, only son of Lewis and Elizabeth (Liggett) Dewart, was born June 21, 1821, at Sunbury, and received his education at various places. His early training was largely received at Harrisburg, where the family was located during the many sessions his father served in the State Legislature, and he took his preparatory collegiate course at Dickinson Preparatory School, Carlisle, Pa., after graduating from which institution, he entered Princeton as a Sophomore in 1836. He graduated in 1839, read law with Hon.

Charles G. Donnel, of Sunbury, and was admitted to the bar, January 3, 1843. Law was his chosen vocation and he practiced for many years in partnership with the famous Captain Charles J. Bruner, of Sunbury, but his forceful nature and the circumstances of his father's failing health and consequent retirement drew him into business and public affairs, for which he proved to be eminently qualified. Mrs. Dewart also was prominent in literary circles, having formed the Meteor Society in Sunbury. She also was the first primary superintendent in the First Presbyterian Church in Sunbury. She taught and led the first Missionary Society formed in this Church.

In 1845 and 1846 William Lewis Dewart served as Chief Burgess of Sunbury, and at that time he was already regarded as the local party leader, a supremacy which was accorded him until 1870, for a quarter of a century. During that period he was regarded as the foremost Democrat in Northumberland county. In 1850 his father's health failed, forcing him to assume business cares which were too important to be entrusted elsewhere. His private interests were very extensive, and he was long a director of the Northumberland National Bank (now the First National Bank of Sunbury). He was given the honorary title of Major by his friends because of his organization of the Sunbury Guards. Here I should mention that the Dewart family was not a family of fighters and that, with the exception of the present generation, I do not know of any of them who fought in any of our wars. My older brother, William Lewis, however, served in the late World War. It is an amusing incident to me, however, that at the outbreak of the Civil War Major William L. Dewart, whom we are at present discussing, promptly disbanded the Sunbury Guards in the fear, I suppose, that they might actually have to go to war. Seriously, however, many of them did serve and benefited by their training under Major Dewart. In 1852 he was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention at Baltimore. In 1856 to the Cincinnati convention and in 1860 to the "Douglas" convention, the same year being a Pennsylvania elector on the Douglas ticket. In 1884 he was a delegate to

the Chicago convention which nominated Cleveland for President. In 1856 he was elected a member of the Thirty-fifth Congress. The town of Dewart, situated two miles above Watsontown, was named in Mr. Dewart's honor. Mr. Dewart built a number of buildings in Sunbury and developed considerable real estate in and about the city. A portly gentleman, of fine appearance and genial disposition, he was an attractive as well as prominent figure in society, and held a notable place in all the activities of his day. He was a member and Past Master of Lodge 22 F. and A. M. in fraternal connection and a Presbyterian in religion. His death occurred in Sunbury, April 19, 1888.

On June 21, 1848, Mr. Dewart married Rosetta Van Horn, daughter of Espy Van Horn, of Williamsport, and they reared two sons, Lewis and William Lewis. Mrs. Dewart survived her husband. In 1853 Mr. Dewart took his wife and family to Europe, spending about a year traveling over England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and other places of interest and attraction, in a private coach. While in Edinborough he had a set of flat silver dinnerware made upon which the crest of the Duart Clan was embossed. He also brought back to America many objects of art.

It is a coincidence worthy of note that Espy Van Horn, of Williamsport, father of Mrs. Dewart, was the direct predecessor in Congress of Mr. Dewart's father; and that William Wilson, her stepfather, was her father's predecessor in that legislative body.

Lewis Dewart, son of Hon. William Lewis Dewart, was born May 6, 1849, in Sunbury. After attending the common schools, he took a preparatory course at Columbia, Pa., and Edge Hill, and then entered Princeton, graduating therefrom in 1872. He read law with the late Judge Jordan, and was admitted to the bar in 1874. He received the degree of Master of Arts from his Alma Mater. In 1875 Mr. Dewart was elected borough clerk, which office he held one term, and in 1877 was elected District Attorney, which office he held two terms, during which time he prosecuted the last of the

Molly Maguires in Northumberland county. Like others of the name, he was an energetic worker in the Democratic party, having been a member of the Central Committee, and delegate to County, District, State and National Conventions, among them the convention at which Pattison was nominated for Governor and the convention of 1892 when Cleveland received the nomination. He was a member of Sunbury Lodge No. 22, F. and A. M., and of the Phi Kappa Sigma Fraternity, which he joined while in college. He died August 27, 1901, unmarried.

William Lewis Dewart, son of William Lewis and Rosetta (Van Horn) Dewart, was born March 24, 1858, in Washington D. C., while his father was attending Congress. After receiving his elementary training, he was a student for two years at the Pennsylvania Military Academy, Chester, Pa., thence going to the Shoemaker Academy of Chambersburg, from which he was graduated in 1877. Returning to Sunbury, he commenced to learn the printing and newspaper business.

Mr. Dewart began his newspaper career early in life, when returning to Sunbury from boarding school he turned his attention toward journalism which had appealed to him since the day of his youth. He began as a carrier on The Sunbury Daily and made collections for the paper. Later he entered the office as an apprentice and thoroughly mastered the printing trade. In those days he set type from the case and made up the paper. On January 1, 1880, he purchased an interest in The Sunbury Daily and The Northumberland County Democrat, associating himself in the publication of these two newspapers with the late Jacob Ely Eichholtz, who had been the editor and publisher of these papers for some years previous to Mr. Dewart's becoming a member of the firm.

Upon the death of Mr. Eichholtz he became associated with the latter's son, William F. Eichholtz, with whom he continued the newspaper business until the time of his death. During the last two years of his life, however, owing to failing health he was able to devote but little time to the business of the firm.

Though he never had any personal official aspirations, and never was a candidate for any political office, Mr. Dewart strongly upheld the reputation of his family as bulwark of the Democratic party, and served as delegate to many conventions. In 1884 he was alternate at the National Convention held at Chicago which gave Grover Cleveland his first nomination for the presidency; in 1892, when Cleveland was nominated for the first time, he was a delegate to the National Convention; and he was again a delegate in 1904, at St. Louis, when Alton B. Parker received his nomination. From time to time he was greatly interested and keenly active in the political affairs of the city, county and State.

Mr. Dewart was a keen political observer and although unswerving in his allegiance to the Democratic party, generally formed accurate forecasts of the outcome of campaigns in county, State and nation. In his earlier years he was an active party worker. Later this activity took the form of editorial work for *The Northumberland County Democrat*. He kept in close touch with affairs at large, following all important issues with the deepest interest. He was an ardent reader of current publications and works of fiction.

Mr. Dewart was a member and a Past Master of Lodge No. 22, Free and Accepted Masons, Northumberland Chapter No. 174, Royal Arch Masons; and Mt. Hermon Commandery, No. 85, Knights Templar, and of the Temple Club, all of Sunbury. He was a member of the St. Matthew's Episcopal church and for a number of years served as Vestryman. He was a charter member of the Sunbury Lodge Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks and of the Good Intent Hook and Ladder company. Before disease had robbed him of his strength and vigor he maintained considerable activity in the social life of the community, being noted especially for his hospitable and companionable nature. He died January 6, 1921, and was buried in Pmofret Manor Cemetery.

On February 9th, 1897, Mr. Dewart married Miss Edith Grant, youngest daughter of the late William Thomas and Rachel Yoxtheimer Grant, of Sunbury, and

to whom were born three sons; William Lewis, Lewis and Gilbert.

William L. Dewart attended the public schools of Sunbury, later graduating from the Peddie School at Hightstown, New Jersey, and after graduating from Brown University at Providence, Rhode Island, in 1920, entered the employ of the United States Finishing company of which he is now an official with headquarters in New York City. He served in the World War with the rank of corporal.

Your humble servant after attending the Peddie School at Hightstown, New Jersey, and graduating from the Tennessee Military Institute in 1920, entered the employ of The Sunbury Daily in 1920 where he learned the printing trade and in 1925 became a partner in the business. In 1928 he purchased the half interest of W. F. Eichholtz for the Dewart family, since which time he has been the publisher of The Sunbury Daily. On September 20, 1922, he married Henrietta Sybil Bendt, daughter of Herbert and Elise Paris Bendt, born in Krefeld Rhineland, Germany. To them have been born two sons, William Lewis, and Lewis, all of whom reside in Clifftmont, which is the old Dewart farm.

Gilbert Dewart, third son, was named for an old friend of the Dewart family, Gilbert S. Burrows. When Gilbert was born the traditional names of William and Lewis had been exhausted. Gilbert after preparing at Worcester Academy and graduating from Amherst College took the Pulitzer course of Journalism at Columbia University, graduating in 1929. The day following his graduation he married Elizabeth Sowards, of Pikeville, Kentucky, a classmate. During their respective courses Gilbert had been a part time reporter on the New York World, while his wife had been a writer on the New York Journal. Following the merger of the New York World with the Telegram, Gilbert became a court reporter on the New York Herald-Tribune where he is now employed. Two children have blessed their union, Elizabeth Ann and Gilbert, Jr.

The First Iron T Rail in the World Rolled at Danville

By HEBER C. GEARHART

Presented Before The Society April 21, 1936



This evening the scene of our interest is shifted to Danville, the iron center of this portion of the Keystone State. For years this town has been a bee hive of industry with its iron furnaces, rolling mills and foundries. It achieved distinction over ninety years ago, by reason of American genius, in rolling T rails to improve railroad transportation. These rails were the first of their kind in the entire world and Danville has just reason to be proud of this achievement.

More than a century ago iron ore was discovered in Montour ridge and this discovery was the beginning of the iron industry in this locality. Many charcoal iron furnaces soon dotted the farms adjacent to Danville. The first of these furnaces was built by John Hauck in 1815 on Furnace run near Catawissa creek. In these furnaces charcoal was used to smelt the iron.

The discovery of anthracite coal, the development of coal mining and the building of railroads to ship coal to market soon made a change in the iron industry. It was found that anthracite coal was superior to charcoal for use in the iron furnace. The first iron furnaces in this locality to make anthracite iron were the twin furnaces built by Chambers and Biddle in Danville about 1840. They were located on the right side of the road as you enter Danville from Northumberland and became known as the Montour Iron Works. This was the beginning of the present Montour plant of the Reading Iron Company. Benjamin Perry was the leading spirit in the production of anthracite iron here, while the

whole plant was superintended by Major Henry Brevoort.

In 1844 a rolling mill was added to the plant to manufacture iron T rails from this anthracite iron to improve railroad transportation. It was here, on the 8th of October, 1845, that the aim was accomplished and the first T rail made of anthracite iron in the world was rolled. It was a notable achievement. Before that time railroad tracks were made either of strap iron fastened to wooden stringers, or of U shaped rails made in England. The tariff on these rails became prohibitive, hence the endeavor for an American product and it was achieved at Danville.

The Sunbury American, published by Henry B. Masser, gives an interesting account of the manufacture of rails here at this early time. It relates how the iron from the furnace is first rolled into heavy flat bars, then cut, tied into bundles and heated, then rolled into the form of the T rail, the shape still in use upon our railroads. It states that these rails weigh fifty-one pounds to the yard and are cut square at each end, exactly eighteen feet long. It continues: "The rail is then dragged to the pile and left to cool, perfectly finished. The rails we saw were intended for the Harrisburg and Lancaster road. These are said to be the first rails ever made with anthracite iron, in this or any other country, and are, we believe, superior to any that have ever been imported."

When the finished rails were left to cool they were curved and it became necessary to have workmen straighten them for use. Only two days ago, I had the pleasure of talking to a man from Riverside, whose father, Alem Sechler, worked in this rolling mill and there straightened these first iron T rails.

Rails of this shape, but made of steel and two or three times as heavy, now connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and checker with railways every civilized country in the world. The laying of these rails in the trans-continental railroad in 1869, and how they were joined at Promontary, Utah, with gold and silver spikes, is a story of world wide interest.

Our own local railroad, the Danville and Pottsville, which brought anthracite coal from the mines at Shamokin to Sunbury, was built in 1835 and then used strap iron on wooden stringers for a track. In 1852 the track was re-laid with the new iron rails, new locomotives were secured and the road formally re-opened for traffic in 1853. Whether these rails came from the Danville plant has not been ascertained, but it seems reasonably sure.

In addition to these rails, the Montour Iron Works was noted for another pioneer product. A foundry and machine shop were added in 1852. This foundry, during the Civil War, cast many of the cannon and mortars used by the Union forces. It had previously, in 1852, cast the first cannon in the United States made of anthracite iron. This added distinction to the work of this pioneer enterprise.

The Montour Iron Works passed through many phases of ownership and management and brought much wealth to Danville. Several evidences of this wealth now remain there as public insitutions. Thomas Beaver, one of the owners, gave to the town the Thomas Beaver Free Library, which was endowed by him and opened to the public in 1888 and was the first free library in this general locality. George F. Geisinger laid the foundation of his fortune in this plant, and today we have in this iron town the wonderful institution known as the George F. Geisinger Memorial Hospital, one of the best in the Keystone State, built by his widow in 1912 as a memorial to her husband.

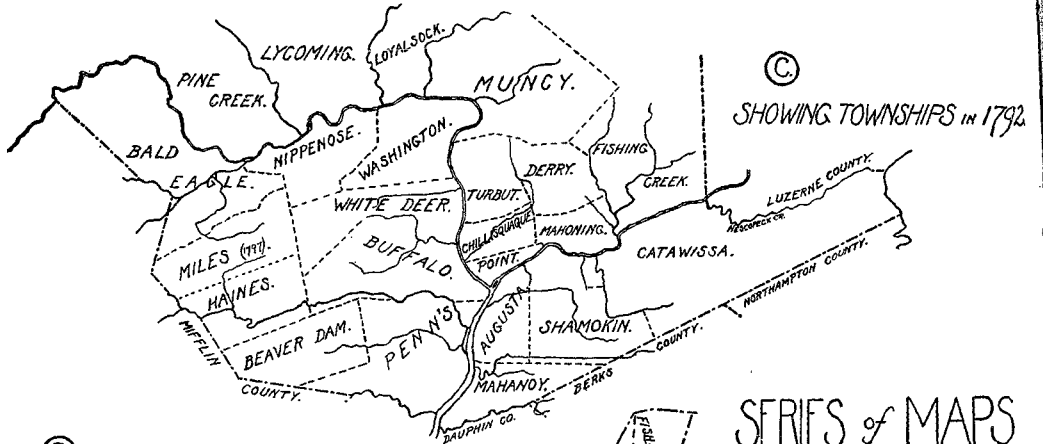
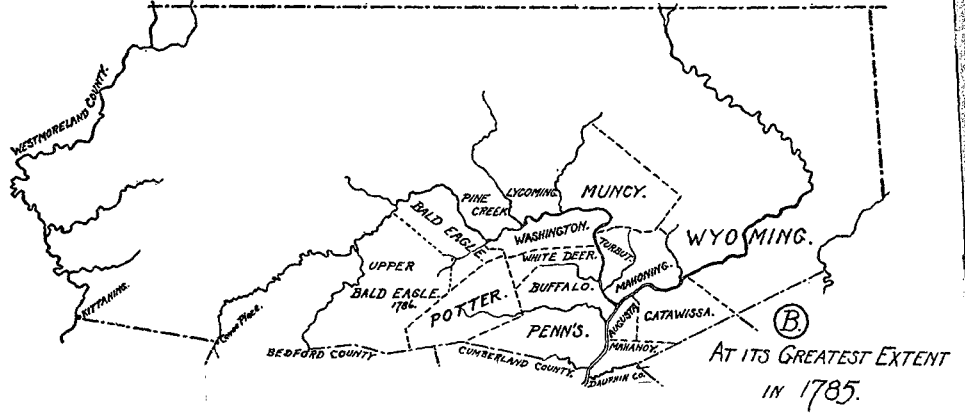
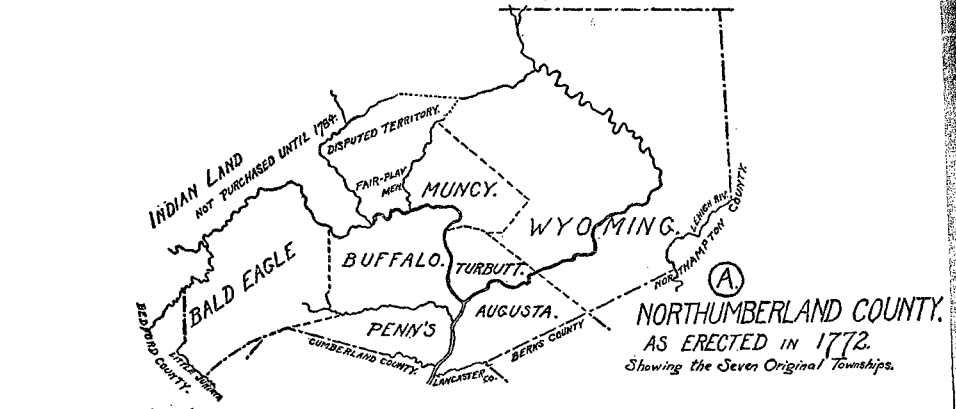
Two of the noted homes in Danville came from the iron industry. One of these was the Thomas Beaver home built on the west hill. The other was the home of the Grove Brothers built on the east hill at a cost of over \$300,000, which for architectural beauty was not surpassed in its time in the country. The former of these homes is now a nunnery, while the latter is a monastery.

In 1923 an interesting story appeared in the "Saturday Evening Post" concerning the history of Danville

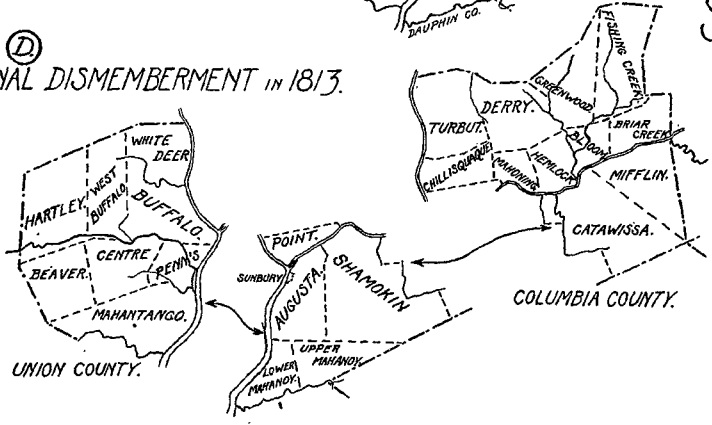
as an iron town. It was published serially, later appearing in book form. It was written by Garet Garret, a noted writer on financial matters and fiction and was called "The Cinder Buggy." He went to Danville to collect material and was impressed that Danville had lost the hey-day of its glory, and so wrote the story, using fictitious names for the town and its people, calling the town "New Damascus." The story, as he wrote it, did not please the citizens of our sister town at all.

He speaks of the Woolwine (Beaver) mansion on the east hill and the Gib (Grove) mansion on the west hill and says they were once very grand though ugly. "They are no longer grand and have been made uglier by the architectural additions of a cold ecclesiastical character. One is a nunnery. One is a monastery. The church got them for less than the walks and fencing cost. Only a church could use them. All that the indwellers know about them is that the woodwork polishes easily and must have been very expensive. The grounds are still very nice."





(D)
 FINAL DISMEMBERMENT IN 1813.



SERIES of MAPS
 of
 NORTHUMBERLAND
 COUNTY.
 1772 TO 1813.

Compiled and drawn by
 CHARLES FISHER SNYDER
 JUNE 1936.

Township Names of Old Northumberland County

Their Origin and Meaning

By CHARLES FISHER SNYDER

Presented Before The Society March 17, 1936

Northumberland county was erected by an act of the General Assembly of the Province of Pennsylvania on March 21, 1772, from the northern portions of Northampton, Berks, Lancaster, Cumberland and Bedford counties. The influx of settlers to these parts, following the "New Purchase" of this land from the Six Nations at Fort Stanwix on November 5, 1768, having created a situation where the people were too far removed from the seat of the courts of those counties.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY was the tenth county organized in Pennsylvania and like all its predecessors, save one, received the name of an English shire. However, it did not follow that the corresponding name of the English county seat should likewise be transferred to America, as had been those of Chester, Lancaster, York, Bedford, and also Reading and Carlisle; for the county town of Northumberland in England is Newcastle-on-Tyne. Now the Penns already had a town named Newcastle in the Lower Counties, in what is now Delaware, so they accordingly sought an entirely new name to bestow upon the county town of Northumberland county.

There had already been a precedent for this departure. Twenty years previous, the county town of Northampton county had been named Easton by Thomas Penn, for the country seat of his father-in-law, the Earl of Pomfret. And incidently, it was also for him that the **Manor of Pomfret**, surveyed December 19, 1768, which embraces this site where we meet tonight, was named.

SUNBURY

Richard Penn, the son of the founder had died, February 4, 1771. He was the lesser proprietor, having owned a one-quarter interest in the Colony of Pennsylvania; his brother Thomas Penn for some years holding the three-quarter interest. Richard Penn had two sons who became governors of the Province. Of these, Richard Penn, Jr., was Lieutenant Governor from October 1771, to July, 1773.

Sunbury was named by Governor Richard Penn, who, three months after the formation of our county, together with the Provincial Council, ordered that, "the surveyor-general, with all convenient speed, repair to Fort Augusta, on the Susquehanna and with the assistance of Mr. William Maclay lay out a town for the county of Northumberland to be called by the name of Sunbury, at the most commodious place between the fort and the mouth of Shamokin Creek."

The name, SUNBURY, was taken from an English village on the Thames about fifteen miles above London and is at present included within "Greater London."

I have always felt that there must have been some definite connection between the Penn family and Sunbury, since almost without exception there was a definite purpose in the names which they assigned here in Pennsylvania.

And such is the case, for we find that in the codicil to the will of Richard Penn, the proprietor, who had died only a few months previous, this statement—

*"I am possessed of an house called Batavia House, in the parish of Sunbury, in the county of Middlesex, with the garden, etc."

It might perhaps be well to reflect here that our city may have narrowly missed being named **Batavia**. had the same procedure been followed as had been in the case of Easton, which received its name in a very similar manner.

The name SUNBURY, of course, means "the city of the sun." Sunbury was laid out in 1772, and was in-

* (Penn. Magazine, Vol. 22, Page 76.)

incorporated as a borough by act of Assembly, March 24, 1797. At the November session of court 1803, it was erected into a township, and continued under that form of government until April 19, 1858, when by Act of Assembly it again became a borough, with its original boundaries extended so as to include the Hunter and Scott farms, the section commonly known as "Caketown." On January 1, 1922, following a referendum, Sunbury assumed its present government under a charter as a third class city.

SUB DIVISION OF THE COUNTY

On April 9, 1772, at a court of private sessions of the peace, the new county was divided into the seven original townships, namely, Augusta, Penn's, Buffalo, Turbutt, Wyoming, Muncy and Bald Eagle. These have been fully described, together with their boundaries, in Bell's History of Northumberland County, page 149, and the Acts of Assembly creating new townships have been collected by Chester D. Clark and appear in our publication, Vol. VII, page 215, so that it is not my purpose to repeat all this, except to state that by 1813 there had been a total of 37 townships formed, of which 25 were then included within its boundaries.

I have selected the year 1813, for it was in that year that "Old Northumberland County"—Mother Northumberland—was reduced to such a small fragment of its once grand extent, that the map makers of that day, or should I say wreckers, must have leaned back with the satisfaction of having reduced this once most extensive county in the State to the town of Sunbury and five surrounding townships and a population of approximately 8000 people. I shall merely outline the order and dates of the divisions made up to this date, so that the location of the various townships may be made more clear.

- 1772 (1.) AUGUSTA—One of the original townships.
- (2.) PENN'S—One of the original townships.
- (3.) BUFFALO—One of the original townships.
- (4.) TURBUTT—One of the original townships.

- (5.) BALD EAGLE—One of the original townships.
- (6.) MUNCY—One of the original townships.
- (7.) WYOMING—One of the original townships.

(The original county shown on insert map as A)

- 1774 (8.) POTTER—erected from Bald Eagle and Buffalo. (Penn's Valley, now eastern Centre county.)
- 1775 (9.) MAHANOY — erected from Augusta. (That portion south of Line Mountain.)
- (10.) MAHONING—erected from Turbutt (That portion south and east of Chillisquaque creek.)
- 1776 (11.) WHITE DEER—erected from Buffalo. (That portion north of Buffalo creek.)
- 1785 (12.) CATAWISSA—erected from Augusta. (That portion east of Gravel run and line to south.)
- (13.) WASHINGTON—erected from White Deer.)
(That portion north of South White Deer ridge—present Union-Lycoming line.)
- (14.) LYCOMING—erected from land purchased in 1784 between Lycoming and Pine creeks.
- (15.) PINE CREEK—erected from land purchased in 1784 west of Pine creek.

(Northumberland county at this extent shown on insert Map as B.)

- 1786 (16.) POINT—erected from Mahoning.
- (17.) LOYALSOCK—erected from Muncy. (That portion between Loyalsock and Lycoming creeks.)
- (18.) CHILLISQUAQUE—erected from Turbutt and Mahoning.
- (19.) DERRY—erected from Turbutt and Mahoning.
- (20.) NIPPENOSE—erected from Bald Eagle and Washington.

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- (21.) UPPER BALD EAGLE—erected from Bald Eagle.

(Now in Centre county, north of Nittany mountain.)

In 1786 LUZERNE COUNTY was formed and embraced almost all of Wyoming township. The small portion of this township which remained in our county was given the name of FISHING CREEK, in the region of present Columbia county.

- 1787 (22.) BEAVER DAM—erected from Penn's.

- 1788 (23.) SHAMOKIN—erected from Catawissa (Named Ralpho during first year.)

In 1789 part of Buffalo township was added to Penn's township. (This section is the present Monroe township in Snyder county.)

In 1789 MIFFLIN COUNTY was formed and took all of Upper Bald Eagle township and part of Potter leaving 22 townships. (Practically all the territory taken at this time is now included in Centre county.)

- 1789 (22.) HAINES—name given to remainder of Potter township.

- 1792 (23.) WEST BUFFALO—erected from Buffalo. (The county at this date shown on insert as C.)

- 1795 (24.) MAHANTANGO—erected from Penn's. (That portion south of Shade mountain, now in Snyder county.)

In 1795 LYCOMING COUNTY was formed, taking seven townships, Muncy, Loyalsock, Lycoming, Pine Creek, Washington, Nippenose and Bald Eagle, and leaving 17 townships. This reduced Northumberland county to an interior county.

- 1797 (18.) MILES—erected from Haines. (Brush Valley in present Centre county and Sugar Valley in present Clinton county.)

- (19.) BRIAR CREEK—erected from Fishing Creek.

- 1798 (20.) BLOOM—erected from Briar Creek.

- 1799 (21.) MIFFLIN—erected from Catawissa.

(22.) GREENWOOD—erected from Fishing Creek.

In 1800 CENTRE COUNTY was formed taking Haines and Miles townships, in addition to that part of Northumberland county which had gone to form Mifflin county in 1789. This left 20 townships.

1801 (21.) HEMLOCK—erected from Mahoning.

1803 (22.) SUNBURY—assumed a township government, having been a borough since 1797.

1804 (23.) CENTRE—erected from Penn's.

1806 (24.) MAHANOEY township divided into UPPER MAHANOEY and LOWER MAHANOEY.

1811 (25.) HARTLEY—erected from West Buffalo.

In 1813 Old Northumberland was finally dismembered into three counties, of which Northumberland was the smallest in area. (Shown on insert as D.)

COLUMBIA COUNTY taking 11 townships:

Bloom,	Greenwood,
Briar Creek,	Hemlock,
Catawissa,	Mahoning,
Chillisquaque,	Mifflin,
Derry,	Turbut.
Fishing Creek,	

UNION COUNTY taking 8 townships:

Buffalo,	Penn's,
West Buffalo,	Centre,
White Deer,	Beaver,
Hartley,	Mahantango.

Leaving NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY with only 6 townships:

Augusta,	Sunbury,
Point,	Upper Mahanoy,
Shamokin,	Lower Mahanoy.

GROUPING OF TOWNSHIP NAMES

Since it is the purpose of this article to consider the origin and meaning of the names of the townships of Northumberland county, I have grouped the names of the 37 townships which were organized in the county

during the first 40 years of its existence in the following groups:

Those named for Streams (24)		Named for Famous Men (7)
Indian Names (12)	Other (12)	
Catawissa,	Bald Eagle,	Potter,
Chillisquaque,	Upper Bald Eagle,	Haines,
Lower Mahanoy,	Beaver Dam,	Miles,
Loyalsock,	Buffalo,	Hartley,
Lycoming,	West Buffalo,	Turbut,
Mahanoy (Upper)	Briar Creek,	Mifflin,
Mahoning,	Fishing Creek,	Washington,
Mahantango,	Greenwood,	(Penn's).
Muncy,	Hemlock,	
Nippenose,	Pine Creek,	
Shamokin,	White Deer,	
Wyoming,	Penn's.	
Natural Features (2)		Other (4)
Centre,		Augusta,
Point.		Bloom,
		Derry,
		Sunbury.

From this it is quite evident that these first 37 townships, by far the larger number took their name from the stream which drained the area, 24 having been named in this manner. Our forefathers seem to have preferred to refer to their neighbors from Chillisquaque or Muncy Creek or Fishing Creek rather than to honor the names of local or national heroes. This is also quite noticeable in the naming of the early churches—Buffalo Chillisquaque, Warrior Run, and Mahoning, to name but a few.

INDIAN NAMES

No state in the Union has more beautiful Indian names, or more of them, and I am sure you will agree as this article progresses, that Old Northumberland county had a bountiful share of them. As the Indian

vanished over the western hills, he left behind him the names of rivers and mountains all about us.

“Ye say they have all passed away,
That noble race and brave;
That their light canoes have vanished
From off the crystal wave;
That 'mid the forest where they roamed,
There rings no hunter's shout;
But their name is on your waters,
And ye cannot wash it out.”

Since the 24 townships, named for streams are the largest group, I shall deal with them first. In fact, this group includes all the Indian names, and I feel that the names of most of the others are the English equivalent of the original Indian name, which may have been too cumbersome for the frontiersman to repeat, perhaps meaningless to him, or in other cases more easily translated than were the others.

SHAMOKIN

Beyond a doubt, the most important Indian name in Northumberland county, altho not applied to any of the original townships, is Shamokin.

Thruout the journals and diaries of all the early travelers, and upon the older maps for over a century, the name SHAMOKIN is applied to the entire region about the forks of the Susquehanna for possibly fifteen miles in either direction. It seems to begin at Mahanoy mountain and extends to Montour ridge and beyond.

Principally, however, it was the name of the Indian town, the seat of Shikellamy, who ruled the eastern Delawares and other Indians hereabouts as Vicegerent of the Six Nations, and therefore the Indian capital of Pennsylvania from 1727 to 1755; the largest, most important and most historic Indian town in this Province during those years, until the Indians left following Braddock's defeat and the Penn's Creek massacre.

The old Indian town on this site was opposite the island, facing the West Branch, and immediately above the later site of Fort Augusta. It was the most central

point in the Province with Indian trails radiating in all directions; the Wyoming Path along the North Branch to Wyoming, Tioga and the Upper Delaware; the Shamokin Path along the West Branch to the Big Island (now Lock Haven) and on to Chinglecrouche (now Clearfield) and Kittaning, with branches up the Bald Eagle Valley to Frankstown, along Pine creek, Lycoming creek, and the Sheshequin Path along Muncy creek, into present New York; a trail south along the Susquehanna to Harris' Ferry; the Warrior's Path southwest to the Juniata thence thru Path Valley to the Potomac and the Carolinas, which was the Iroquois War Trail; and other trails leading thru the gap in Blue Hill and over Catawissa Hill.

Shamokin was also the Delaware name for the West Branch. It is today the name of two creeks, differentiated by calling one, Little Shamokin, and is also the name given to the ranges of hills which flank the valley of Shamokin creek. It is also the name of the mountain ridge which comes down to the West Branch at Winfield.

It is the name of the large island lying in the North Branch at the forks of the Susquehanna, which is also referred to in some of the older deeds by the somewhat poetical name of **Corcyra**.

The ledge of rock extending across the river from the southern section of Sunbury was formerly marked on maps as **Shamokin Falls** or **Shamokin Riffles**, and when this ledge was used as the foundation of a dam constructed as part of the Pennsylvania canal system, it was known as the **SHAMOKIN DAM**. This name came to be applied to the town which grew upon the western shore, and which had for some time been known as **Keensville**.

When the town of Sunbury was laid out in 1772, the main street was Shamokin street, but this was changed to Market street in 1866.

In 1785, Catawissa township had been formed from Augusta township, but by 1788 it too was found to be too extensive, so that a new township was formed which

embraced all of what is today eastern Northumberland county. This township was at first given the name of **Ralpho**, but one year later the name was changed in response to a petition of the inhabitants to "strike out the strange and unknown name of Ralpho lately given to the township newly laid out and taken off the township of Catawissa and grant it its known and natural name, Shamokin." Shamokin township is still a subdivision of Northumberland county, altho greatly reduced from its former area.

A postoffice named Shamokin was established before 1830 at the village we know as Snufftown, just west of Paxinos, which was then the most important stop on the stage route over the Centre Turnpike between Sunbury and Pottsville.

Upon the development of the anthracite coal fields, a town was laid out in 1835 by John C. Boyd in what was then Shamokin township, and was named Shamokin for the stream which flowed thru the site. In 1840 the postoffice at this town also became Shamokin, which necessitated changing the former office of that name to Paxinos.

The town of Shamokin was incorporated as a borough in 1864. It has grown rapidly in population until today it is the most populous town in the county. However it took over a century for the name Shamokin to move eighteen miles, starting at the old Indian town in 1727, thence along the creek and on to the township in 1788, pausing at the Snufftown postoffice, until it reached its present location in 1835.

Regarding the meaning of the name, SHAMOKIN, the various authorities give us a wide range of derivations. Heckwelder, the Moravian historian, tells us that it is a corruption of **Schahamoki** or **Schahamokink**, meaning "the place of eels." He also says that it later became **Sachachhenamendi**, "the place where gun barrels are straightened," because it was the residence of a chief, Nutamees, who had learned to repair the bent firearms of the Indians. This certainly is an error, because Nutamees was the king of the Nescopeck Indians

and lived further up the North Branch, and it was the Moravians, Joseph Powell and John Hagen, who first built a smithy at Shamokin in 1747 at the direction of Shikellamy, and the name had been attached to this location long before that date. Then Gerard gives the origin of the name as **Schumokenk**, "where antlers are plenty" or "the place of the horns," perhaps in reference to the forks of the river.

However, what seems to me to be the most probable origin of the name is that given by Reichel and by A. L. Guss, and this is the meaning which Dr. Donehoo seemed to prefer, as being from **Sachem-okhe**, that is **sachem**, a chief with the locative **-ing** signifying "the place where the chief lives." What name could be more descriptive? Shamokin was not only the residence of Shikellamy, the great Iroquois deputy, but also the home of the Delaware "king" Sassoonan, or Allumapees, the successor of the renowned Tammany. The name is very possibly the same, or at least of the same origin as Shackamaxon, the original "Council Fire" and chief village of the Delawares, now in Philadelphia, where William Penn met their chiefs and concluded the famous treaty, "Not sworn to and never broken." The Delaware capital was next removed to the Forks of the Delaware and after that to Shamokin until 1755 when it passed on to Logstown and towns in Ohio.

The name of the Indian town is given as **Shahomaking** in a speech by Allumapees in 1727, and **Schomako** in 1742 by Zinzendorf. John Bartram in his account of his trip in 1743 uses **Shamokin**, which form is also used by Conrad Weiser the same year, but in a letter the following year he spells it **Shomhomokin**. Lewis Evans on his map of 1749 uses the present form, **Shamokin**.

It should be noted here that while the Delaware name of the West Branch was Shamokin, the Iroquois name of this stream was **Otzinachson**. This is very well shown on Isaac Taylor's map of 1701, where the West Branch is marked **Chinasky** or **Shamokin**. There were various forms of the name, **Zinachse**, **Tsinaghse**, **Tsnason** and **Otzinach**, which Bartram tells us refers to caves along Blue Hill where evil spirits or demons

were supposed to have had their abode. On Lewis Evan's map of 1755 it is marked **Senaxse**.

The terms "at Shamokin" and "at Zinachson" refer to the same locality. This is especially shown by the reports of the French officers sent to reconnoiter Fort Augusta which is placed at "**Schinanchen**" on Pouchot's map of 1758, while in Vandreuil's letter of 1757, he states, "This fort is on the upper part of the river **Zinantchain**."* Also, according to Heckwelder, Shikellamy had told him that the name of the place was **Otze-nach-se** in the Maqua language of the Six Nations.

MAHANOEY

The first division of territory made in the bounds of present Northumberland county was in 1775, when all that portion of original Augusta township, south of Line Mountain was erected into a new township known as Mahanoy, taking its name from the principal stream of that region, which has its source in Schuylkill county and flows west across the southern part of our county until it reaches the river at Herndon.

This stream already had historic importance at that time, since the boundary of the Purchase of 1749 had been designed as:

"Beginning at the Kittochhinny Hills, where your last Purchase ends, on Sasquehanna, from thence by the Courses of the River Susquehanna to the first Mountain North of the Creek, called in the Onondaga Language, Cantawghy, and in the Delaware Language, Makooniahy, on said River Sasquehanna, this is the Western boundary; then for the North boundary a straight line to be run from that Mountain to the Main Branch of Delaware River at North side of the Mouth of Lechawachsein," etc.†

Mahanoy Mountain which rears its stately head over 1100 feet from the water level of the river, at a half mile distance; one of the highest points in Northumberland county, a distinctive summit upon many a beautiful landscape for many miles of surrounding country, has taken its name from the stream due to this

* (Penna. Archives, 2nd Series, Vol. VI, Page 404.)

† (Colonial Records, Vol. V, Page 407.)

circumstance, and altho no tablet in bronze and granite marks the fact, it in itself is an eternal memorial as the boundary point between the Province of Pennsylvania and the Indian land for almost twenty years, during which time occurred the French and Indian War and the first white blood shed by the hand of the red man on the war path in Pennsylvania, almost within its shadow, which in many accounts is referred to as the Mahanoy Massacre, altho identical with the two actions we usually refer to as the Penn's Creek Massacre.

The name MAHANNOY, together with several derivative forms which I will consider later, was applied to many stream by the Indians. It is a Delaware word, **Mahanoi**, and was used to designate a place or stream along which were outcroppings of salt, sometimes in rock but usually flat beds of mud licked smooth by deer, buffalo and other animals of the forest, for a considerable space in their hunger for the salt which it contained. Our pioneer forefathers sometimes continued the Indian name, and at other places translated it to Licking Creek or Lick Run. These spots were frequented by Indian and Pioneer alike, since the hunting was always best there.

In the early days there were two Mahanoy creeks, one on either side of the river, even as there are today two Mahantangos. The majestic stream which we know as Penn's creek was known in pioneer days on the **Big Mahanai**. It is thus referred to in early deeds, and on Scull's map of 1759 it is marked **Big Mahonoy**, while the channel back of the Isle of Que is marked **Little Mahonoy**. I will treat this further in the paragraph on Penn's creek.

Mahanoy creek is mentioned by John Bertram, the botanist, in his diary of his journey thru this section in 1773 in which he refers to it as **Mohony** and **Mohonoy**, while Lewis Evans, the famous map maker who accompanied him, shows it on his map of 1749 as **Moxunay**.

Mahanoy township was divided in 1806 into UPPER MAHANNOY and LOWER MAHANNOY townships

and these have been further sub-divided into five townships at the present day.

LITTLE MAHANOEY township was erected in 1813 from Augusta and Shamokin townships and embraced that section between Line Mountain and Little Mountain. This section was never a part of the original Mahanoy township. There is also a Mahanoy township in Schuylkill county near the headwater of the stream, which has also given its name to Mahanoy City and other towns there.

MAHONING

Mahoning township, formed in 1775 from Turbut, included all that territory south and east of Chillisquaque creek, that had originally been in the latter township.

It took its name from Mahoning creek which flows into the North Branch at the present site of Danville. MAHONING is also derived from the Delaware language *Mahanai*, meaning a salt lick, and seems to be the most generally used derivative name from this source. In fact the Delaware nation can be traced across America by the streams which still bear this name; in eastern Pennsylvania in Carbon county, then here in Northumberland county where we have its many derivative forms, then in Armstrong and Indiana counties, and into eastern Ohio where the Mahoning river thru Youngstown, lined with great steel mills, has been likened to the life cord of the steel industry from Pittsburgh to Cleveland. There seems to be a connection between this name and steel, for it was on the banks of Mahoning creek in Danville, that many of the early improvements in the iron industry were originated.

The name also occurs in combined forms, such as Sinnemahoning, Quemahoning and Nesquehoning. The meaning of the name and its relation to the other forms derived from a common source is proven by reference to Nicholas Scull's map of 1759 where this stream is marked as **Mahony or Licking Creek**.

MAHANTANGO

Mahantango township was formed in 1795 from that part of Penn's township, south of Shade Mountain, and covered the territory included in Union, Chapman, Washington, Perry and West Perry townships in present Snyder county. It became part of Union county when that county was taken from Northumberland in 1813, and was greatly reduced by the formation of Perry and Washington townships in that county, so that when Chapman township was formed in 1820 the name disappears from the map as a political unit.

Like the two preceding townships considered, Mahanoy and Mahoning, it took its name from the principal stream of the area, and the names of all had a common origin in the Delaware language, **Mahanai**, a salt lick. Some authorities extend the meaning in this case to "where we had plenty of meat," which only means that the Indians referred to these streams where the hunting was especially good, due to the deer, buffalo and other animals frequenting the salt licks there.

There are two stream by this name, flowing into the Susquehanna River from either side, and both were a part of the original boundaries of Northumberland county as laid out in 1772. The one on the eastern side is still part of the southern boundary of the county. It was this stream, crossed by Count Zinzendorf in 1742 in company with Conrad Weiser, to which he applied the name ***Benigna's Creek** in honor of his daughter; while on Lewis Evans' maps of 1749 and 1755 it is marked **Kind Creek**. The forks of this stream, called "**Spread Eagle**," at present Klingerstown, was a point in the original boundary of our county.

The Mahantango on the western shore was followed by the surveyors who marked the boundaries of Old Northumberland in 1772, but not quite to its source. In fact they designate a spot known as **Meteer's Spring** from which a straight line was run in a westernly direction. Local tradition has it that at this early date Robert Meteer had built a still house over this spring, using the cooling waters to chill the coils of the still, and it

* (Memorials of the Moravian Church, 81, 1870.)

was at this point that the early surveyors tarried before striking out across the mountain wilderness.

On the trader's map of Isaac Taylor, dated 1701, the Mahantango on the east side is marked **Quatoochatoon** and that on the west is **Sequosakoo**; these names are no doubt from the Iroquois language, or if not that, then possibly from the older Susquehannock.

WYOMING

Wyoming township was one of the seven original townships into which Northumberland county was divided when it was organized in 1772. It included all the valley of the North Branch to the eastward of the former Berks-Northampton line, which crossed that stream near the present site of Bloomsburg in a north-westerly direction. The name Wyoming had then already been used to designate this entire valley from this point northward to the old Indian town of Tioga, at present day Athens, often called the gateway to the Iroquois country.

The statement is made by Ferree and others that the Wyoming Valley had been visited by only one white man previous to 1750, Count Zinzendorf. This is a gross error, since it was thru this valley that Etienne Brule journeyed to the ocean and returned in 1615 and it was also the route used by the Palatine immigrants who came from Schohaire, N. Y., to the Tulpehocken during the years 1723 to 1729.

The right to the Wyoming Valley had been the subject of controversy between Connecticut and Pennsylvania, and it was during the conferences at Albany in 1754 that Conrad Weiser learned that the Connecticut agents for "The Susquehanna Company" were negotiating for the purchase of this valley from the Mohawks. This was done secretly at this time and not publicly announced for several years. In 1757 and 1758 at the Treaties at Easton, Tedyuskung, the Delaware "King," asked that this valley be reserved forever as a perpetual possession for his tribe. However in 1763 a number of families from Connecticut established themselves here, and in the following years there was a

steady influx of settlers from that colony, so that in May, 1776, it was formed into the county of **Westmoreland** of Connecticut.

During the Revolutionary War the Indians made a last supreme effort, with British aid, to regain possession of this valley, in the struggle we know as the Battle of Wyoming followed by the terrible massacre of July 3, 1778.

Thruout the war these settlers steadfastly regarded themselves as a Connecticut county, and the jurisdiction of Northumberland county did not extend far in this direction. In fact the officers chosen to represent Wyoming township seem to be from that portion now in Columbia county.

When the claim of Pennsylvania to this region was sustained in 1782 it was only natural that a greater share of local government should be sought. This resulted in the creation of Luzerne county in 1786, which embraced the greater portion of Wyoming and was named for Anne Ce'sar, Chevalier de la Luzerne, minister of France to our young republic.

The name WYOMING is a corruption of the Delaware word **M'cheuwami** meaning "extensive flats" or "great meadows" and referring to the bottom lands in the locality of present Wilkes-Barre. Heckewelder says that the Delaware name for the North Branch of the Susquehanna was **M'cheuweami-sipu**—"the river of the extensive flats," so that the name **Wyoming** came to designate the entire region, the Indian town and the entire valley. Conrad Weiser in referring to the valley during a journey in 1737, used the Iroquois name **Skehandowana** and in the early records the Seneca form **Tsanandowa** is found both with similar meanings to the Delaware name. There could be a long list made of the various forms in the transition of this name to its present form. A few will suffice for the purpose of this article.

M'cheuomi, M'chwauwaumi, Mechayomy, Mehea-hoaming, Wawamie, Wayomick, Weyoming. In 1743 Bartram calls it **Wiomick**, and on Lewis Evans' map of

1749 it is **Wioming**. In later years the name Wyoming was given to a new county, north of present Luzerne, and the name was also taken by settlers to the far west where a new State bears the name, and about which novelists, poets and song writers, have woven much romance. However, all their efforts to create romance can little compare to the real romance of the Old Wyoming in Pennsylvania.

CATAWISSA

Catawissa township was erected in 1785 from Augusta township and included all that part east of Gravel run and a line continuing southward. CATAWISSA took its name from the stream which enters the North Branch at the present-day town of Catawissa. It is usually stated the name of this stream is derived from the Indian word **Gatawisi**, and means "growing fat" according to Heckewelder. This may have referred either to the increasing volume of the stream, or that the hunting and fishing there were so bountiful, that the Indians living there became fat. However, Reichel believes that the name is a corruption of **Ganawese**, one of the names applied to the Conoy tribe who retired to these parts upon leaving Lancaster county, and this latter seems to be the more probable origin.

Before 1756 there was an Indian town at the mouth of the creek called **Lapachpeton's Town**, for a famous Delaware chief who lived there, and who had been suggested as the "king" of the Delaware nation after the death of Allumapees here at Shamokin in 1747.

On Nicholas Scull's map of 1759 it is marked as **Catawessy Cr.** and there have been numerous spellings ever since the organization of the township.

It is also the name of a town, at present in Columbia county, which was laid out in 1787 by Wm. Hughes and at first called **Hughesburg**.

A short trail from Shamokin to Wyoming left the site of Fort Aguusta and ran across to the present brewery, then directly up along the valley of Shamokin creek, or rather on the divide between the creek and the Susquehanna river, which was reached at the mouth

of Roaring creek, according to Donehoo. This proves beyond doubt that the present Catawissa road which we sometimes refer to as Mile Hill, is along this ancient Indian trail. These hills are properly the Catawissa hills, and likewise Catawissa avenue in Sunbury which leads to this trail could not have a more appropriate name.

CHILLISQUAQUE

Chillisquaque township was formed in 1786 from portions of Turbutt and Mahoning townships. For eleven years Chillisquaque creek had been the boundary between these two townships, and the new township now took in the entire valley with land on either side of the creek. As then laid out it extended from Limestone Ridge on the north to Montour Ridge on the south.

Chillisquaque township remained intact in its original extent, and was one of the townships taken from Northumberland county, along with Turbutt, in the formation of Columbia county, March 22, 1813, of which county it remained a part until Feb. 21, 1815, when it was returned to Northumberland county. However, on Jan. 22, 1816, a considerable portion of this township was again given to Columbia county, and this part is today Liberty township, Montour county.

CHILLISQUAQUE township, of course, was named for the stream which bisected its area. This creek is referred to by Conrad Weiser as **Zilly-Squache**, when he tells of being ferried across its flood waters on March 7, 1737, by an old Shawnee named Jenoniawano, and it is marked on Scull's map of 1759 as **Chillisquaquy**.

As to the meaning of the name, Heckwelder tells us that the name has been corrupted from **Chililsuagi**, which he says means "the place of snow birds," and that the correct spelling in the Shawnee language is—**Tsalachsasagi**. Taking this as their cue, it seems that the older settlers when pressed for the meaning of this name would state that ducks were once found here frozen in the ice, "chilly-squawk," which to me has always seemed a cheap pun and nothing more.

The fact is that there was an Indian town at the mouth of this creek, on the north shore, according to Donehoo. This was a Shawnee town of the Chillicothe clan and was abandoned by them in 1728 when they moved on to the Ohio. From this circumstance this stream received its name exactly in the same manner as had Shamokin and Catawissa.

According to the Bureau of American Ethnology, the Chillicothe were one of the four tribal divisions of the Shawnee nation, and the division is still recognized. The Chillicothe always occupied a village of the same name, and this village was regarded as the chief town of the tribe; as the Shawnee retreated west before the whites several villages of the same name were successively occupied and abandoned. There were at least four in Ohio, at one of which Daniel Boone was held prisoner in 1778, and Chillicothe on the Sciota later became the capital of Ohio from 1800 to 1816. In fact the Shawnee nation can be traced across America by these towns in Ohio, Illinois, Iowa and Missouri. The correct Shawnee form signifies, "man made perfect," no doubt referring to the right of this clan to rule. This is doubly of interest to us, since here in Northumberland county we have had not only the Delaware capital, Shamokin, which was also the seat of Shilkellamy, vicergerent of the Six Nations, but here we have also the site of the chief town of the Shawnee when they lived in this region.

MUNCY

Muncy township was one of the seven townships into which Northumberland county was originally divided. Its boundaries as then described extended over what is today all of eastern Lycoming county and for that reason it is often referred to as the mother township of that county. A remnant of the original township now in Lycoming county, still bears the name as does also a borough along the West Branch. This town was originally incorporated in 1826 as **Pennsborough**, because it was built on John Penn's **Manor of Muncy**, but the name was changed to MUNCY the following year by act of Legislature.

The range of hills whose summit marks the northern boundary of our county, and separates it from Lycoming are known as the Muncy Hills.

MUNCY township took its name from Muncy creek, the principal stream which drained that area. This stream is marked **Canascoragu** creek on Lewis Evans' map of 1749 and **Ocochpocheny** on Scull's map 1759, the latter being a Shawnee town, meaning "hickory flats." During his numerous visits to this place from 1737 to 1755, Conrad Weiser called the creek **Canusorago**, and the village at its mouth the same, or sometimes **Canusorogy** or **Canaserago**, an Iroquois name, meaning "a town on a rock."

The name Muncy was applied to one of the three divisions of the Delaware nation, the Wolf tribe or the Delawares of the mountains, and the most warlike tribe. The Moravians insisted that the name was derived from **Mins-ink** meaning "where there are Minsies," and applied to Minisink in Sussex county, New Jersey, which seems to have been their original location. It has also followed this tribe across America and the name **Muncie** is applied to towns in Indiana and Illinois.

The famous **Sheshequin** path ran up along Muncy creek and across to Wyoming, and the country to the north was referred to as the "Munsey country."

In 1771 emissaries of the Susquehanna Company, from Connecticut, brought a group of settlers to this region, where they formed two township which they named **Charleston** and **Judea**. In order to prevent these encroachments by Connecticut, Col. William Plunket was sent up the West Branch with militia and broke up the settlement in September, 1775, bringing the men back as prisoners to be confined in the jail at Sunbury.

LOYALSOCK

Loyalsock township was formed in February, 1786, and embraced all that territory between Loyalsock and Lycoming creeks. Like its neighbors in this vicinity, its northern boundaries were indefinite.

The name has its origin in the Delaware language, **Lau-i-saquick** and means the Middle creek, that is it

was the stream midway between Muncy creek and Lycoming creeks. The name **Loyal Sock** first appears on Nicholas Scull's map of 1759.

Previous to this, on Lewis Evans' map of 1749 it is designated as **Ostwagu Creek** and on his map of 1755 as **Ostonage Creek** and **Frenchtown** marked at its mouth on the west shore. **Ostonwakin** was the name of an Indian villege of mixed population at the present site of Montoursville. This town was visited by Conrad Weiser on his journey of 1737, and was so called because "of a high rock which lies opposite." It was then the home of Madame Montour and her family, and from their residence there was sometimes known as **Frenchtown**. The Montour family have likewise given their name to Montour ridge in our county and to MONTOUR county of which the ridge is in part the boundary.

LYCOMING

Lycoming township was erected by the August, 1785, sessions of court in response to a petition from residents of that region. This section had not formerly been within the bounds of any of the older townships, having been that land included in the purchase from the Six Nations at Fort Stanwix in 1784. The area included in Lycoming township was that part between Lycoming creek and Pine creek, or was rather that previously debatable region, due to disagreement as to which of these streams was the "**Tyadaghton**" of the treaty of 1768.

This township still retains its identity as OLD LYCOMING to distinguish it from a later division known as LYCOMING, and both in the county of that name.

LYCOMING township took its name from Lycoming creek which flows into the West Branch in the present city of Williamsport. The name Lycoming is a corruption of the Delaware name **Legui-Hanne**, meaning "Sandy stream." It is marked **Lycawmick** creek on Nicholas Scull's map of 1759 and at an earlier date (1737) was referred to by Conrad Weiser as the "**Lost or Bewildered Stream**." It is also of interest that the root word of this name, **Legeui** or **Lechau**, has also been

corrupted to form our present name Lehigh, and is also the first syllables of Lackawanna.

As the population of early Northumberland county increased, and settlers pushed further on, the great thinly populated northern and western region was organized into a new county in 1795. Several names were proposed for this new extensive county, among which were **Jefferson, Lycoming, Muncy** and **Susquehanna**, but the name LYCOMING was adopted after much debate.

Lycoming county took in its formation seven townships from Old Northumberland—Muncy, Loyalsock, Lycoming, Pine Creek, Washington, Nippenose and Bald Eagle. As then constituted it embraced an area of about 12,000 square miles; it replaced Northumberland county as the most extensive county in area, and reduced the latter to an interior county. From the original area of Lycoming county have been organized in whole or in part, nineteen of our present day counties; while what was once Old Northumberland is now included wholly or in part of thirty-one counties.

Even today, Lycoming is the largest county in Pennsylvania in area, having held this rank ever since its formation in 1795.

NIPPENOSE

Nippenose township was formed in 1786 from Bald Eagle township and possibly from a portion of Washington. The early boundaries at this point are somewhat indefinite. It took its name from the beautiful stream which breaks thru the mountain barriers to enter the West Branch at Antes Fort, and a remnant still retains the name in that vicinity.

The early authorities seem to agree that the name is derived from the Indian, **Nipeno-wi**, meaning "like summer" or "a warm and genial situation." On most of the early maps, the spelling is **Nepanose**.

However, Meginness gives another unique origin of the name. "The name is a corruption of that of an old Indian called **Nippenucy**, who had his wigwam there, and the bottom of the same name, where he lived and hunted alternately."

This completes the names of the twelve townships which had Indian names. The following twelve townships also took their names from the principal stream draining the area, but the names, if originally of Indian origin, have been translated.

BUFFALO

Buffalo township was one of the original seven townships laid out at the time Northumberland county was erected. Originally it embraced all of what is now Union county and beyond to the north and west. Its southern boundary was Penn's creek as far west as the forks of that stream, at the point where today the village of Coburn is located in Centre county; thence north by a line to the West Branch in the vicinity of where Lock Haven now stands, while the West Branch formed its northern and eastern boundaries.

BUFFALO township took its name from the creek which flows into the river at Lewisburg. This creek has been known by its present name from the earliest times. One of the great Buffalo trails, broken thru our eastern forests by these great animals in their migration from one pasture land to another, the same as in later days upon the western plains, followed the course of this stream, after fording the river near Lewisburg and continued westward into present Centre county thru the mountain passes to Clearfield. Even in recent days a number of depressions in the earth, which had been buffalo-wallows, were still visible near Cowan, and were called locally, "buffalo bath tubs." This trail was no doubt the one mentioned by John Blair Linn in his "Annals of the Buffalo Valley" as being still visible at places in his day and extending into Brush Valley. Another of these great Buffalo trails from east to west followed the general course of the Juniata river, fording the Susquehanna at the present village of New Buffalo, likewise named for this circumstance.

Buffalo creek is mentioned by this name in the Indian deed of Oct. 23, 1758, and is marked on Nicholas Scull's map of 1759 as **Buffalow Creek**. Buffalo township was divided in 1792, the western portion taking the name of WEST BUFFALO township.

It is also of interest to note that in 1853 when a movement was made to divide Union county, it was proposed to call the northern portion **Buffalo county**, because it comprised the Buffalo Valley. Two years later, however, when the division was made, the northern portion retained its name, while the southern division became **SNYDER COUNTY** in honor of Simon Snyder, the first governor of Pennsylvania of German descent, who served three terms as governor and whose home was in Selinsgrove, in the new county.

WHITE DEER

White Deer township was set off from Buffalo township at February session, 1776, "by a line beginning at the upper side of Buffalo creek, at its mouth; thence up the same to the northeast branch of the head thereof; thence by a straight line to the four-mile tree, on Reuben Haines' road, on the line of Potter township."

The Four-mile tree, which was to later become quite an important boundary point on the line between Centre and Union counties, stood at the point where the present State highway crosses the county line near Hairy John's Park. So that all that area north of a somewhat circuitous line from that point to Buffalo creek, northward to the West Branch, became White Deer township.

This township was also named for its principal stream. On Nicholas Scull's map of 1759 this creek is marked **Opaghtanoten** or White Flint creek. Donehoo believes the name to be a translation of **Woap'tuchanne**, white deer stream. It is traditional that there were a number of these albino or white deer found in this valley.

BALD EAGLE

Upon the erection of Northumberland county in 1772 the most western of the seven townships received the name of **BALD EAGLE**. It embraced that territory to the south of the West Branch as far as Moshannon creek, and southward to Tussey's mountain and the upper reaches of the Little Juniata. This region is today in Centre county and parts of Clinton and Hunting-

don. It received this name long before this bird came to be chosen as our national emblem.

Like the other townships we have thus far considered, it received its name from the principal stream which drained the area; that majestic stream which flows into the West Branch at the Great Island, now Lock Haven. Bald Eagle was marked thus upon the earliest maps of 1755 and also on Scull's map of 1759. The name is very patently a translation of the Delaware name **Wapalanewach-schiec-hanne** which according to Heckewelder means "the stream of the Bald Eagle's nest;" while Zeisberger carries it further: **Woap-su** and **Woa-peek**, white; **Woap-a-lanne**, the bald eagle; **Wach-schie-chey**, a nest; **han-ne**, a stream. In this region also, the Great Island is marked on Evans' map of 1755 as **Cawixnawane I.**

In those years when the first white men penetrated to this region, prior to the Revolutionary War, a noted chief "Bald Eagle" had his residence or lodge at the confluence of Spring creek with this stream, on the present site of Milesburg. This spot was a natural point where several trails converged; a branch of the Shamokin Path ran from the Great Island to Frankstown, past the Bald Eagle's nest, and here joined a path southward over the Seven Mountains to the Juniata.

The "Bald Eagle" or Chief Woapalanne became a leader of many of the raids upon our frontier during the Revolution. On Aug. 8, 1779, he led an attack upon a party of American soldiers at Loyalsock when James Brady was killed. Capt. John Brady, his father, had been ambushed and killed on April 11, 1779, near Muncy, by three Indians. The son and brother of these two frontiersmen was Capt. Samuel Brady, who charged the Bald Eagle with these acts and determined to avenge them.

Capt. Sam Brady went to the Allegheny to head off raids by the Munsee and Seneca tribes, and there he located a band of Indians at the mouth of Red Bank creek, fifteen miles above Kittaning, since called Brady's

Bend, where he killed their chief, who according to the tradition in the Brady family was the Bald Eagle.

The **Bald Eagle's Nest** was an important point, being marked thus on the early maps. From it the creek received its name, and likewise Bald Eagle Valley and the mountain along its southeastern side, Bald Eagle mountain; while a fragment of the original township still bears this historic name in Clinton county. When that eccentric land promoter, Jerry Church, endeavored to have a new county created from liberal slices of Centre and Lycoming so that his new town of Lock Haven might have the further dignity of being the county seat, a petition was presented to the Legislature for three successive years, asking for a new county to be named **Eagle**, which was repeatedly voted down, until the name of CLINTON was substituted to mislead the opponents of the movement and the county was created under the new name in 1839.

UPPER BALD EAGLE

In 1786 Bald Eagle township was divided and that portion to the southwest of Beech creek received the name of UPPER BALD EAGLE TOWNSHIP. The course of the Shamokin Path from the Great Island to **Chinglecamouche**, now Clearfield, ran along this boundary from Bald Eagle creek westward up the north bank of Marsh creek.

This township was taken in 1789 in the formation of Mifflin county, and was included in Centre county when it was organized in 1800. However, in 1801 the name was changed to SPRING township for Spring creek and the large and beautiful spring which also furnished the inspiration for the name of BELLEFONTE when it was first seen by Charles Maurice, Duke of Talleyrand-Perigord, later Prince Benevento, upon his visit there in 1795, following his exile during the French Revolution. This is according to tradition in the Harris family, descendants of James Harris, who laid out the town, while Talleyrand himself fails to mention the incident in his memoirs.

Spring township is still a sub-division of Centre county and surrounds the town of Bellefonte. Its name is appropriate, not only because of the great spring mentioned, with its daily flow of 11½ million gallons of purest limestone water, but also for many other springs of good size. It has frequently been referred to as a land of great springs.

BEAVER DAM

Beaver Dam township was erected at the May session of the courts in 1787, from the western portion of Penn's township. It took its name from Beaver creek, and the name has been shortened to BEAVER, the "Dam" having been dropped about 1800.

The name of this stream may have been a translation of the Indian name. In western Pennsylvania and elsewhere we find that Beaver creek was originally **Tamaque** in the Delaware language. However, we have no record whatever of such being applied to this stream, yet it is quite possible that this may have been the case.

The original area of Beaver township has been divided into at least four present townships, including one known as West Beaver. In this district a portion was annexed to Mifflin county in 1812, but returned to Beaver township in 1819.

The borough of BEAVERTOWN was laid out in 1811 by Jacob Lechner on land originally patented to John Swift of Bensalem, Bucks county, and because of this was long known as **Swifttown**.

BEAVER SPRINGS also takes its name from Beaver township. It was founded in 1806 by Adam Reger, a veteran of the Revolutionary Army, and at first known as **Regerstown**. This was later changed to **Adamsburg**, also in his honor. This name was then changed to its present form by the Post Office Department, to avoid conflict with a town of the former name in Westmoreland county.

Beaver Furnace was an early iron furnace erected and placed in operation in 1848, which for a time gave its name to the surrounding community. In 1871 it

passed into the ownership of Robert Paxton and since that time has been known as PAXTONVILLE.

PINE CREEK

Pine Creek township was organized in 1785 from land which had been purchased from the Six Nations at Fort Stanwix in 1784. It then embraced that area bounded by Pine creek and the West Branch, while today only a small portion in that vicinity, now in Clinton county, retains the name.

This township was named for that mighty stream which comes down from the north thru magnificent gorges to join the West Branch just above the Long Island, or present Jersey Shore. Pine creek with its kindred streams, Muncy, Loyalsock, Lycoming and Bald Eagle, would be considered rivers in many other States.

It is very evident that the name of PINE CREEK is a translation of the Delaware name for this stream, **Cuwenhanne**, which authorities agree means the Pine Stream. No doubt many other smaller streams which we know by the same name were named in a similar way. Then there is Quemahoning in Somerset county, "a lick among the pine trees," and we also have our Isle of Que, on which part of Selinsgrove is built, which is the same Delaware word, "the isle of pine."

So much for the actual present-day name of this magnificent stream. However, it is the name of the stream in the Iroquois tongue which holds the most poetry, romance and history; for this was the Tyadaghton, famous in frontier history as the boundary between Pennsylvania and the Red Man after the treaty of 1768 and during the Revolution. During the years following the treaty, or New Purchase as it came to be known, the Iroquois attempted to withhold the land between Lycoming and Pine creek, by the subterfuge that the Lycoming was the Tyadaghton of the treaty and not Pine creek. The proprietary government anxious to avoid any border incident between the frontiersmen and the Indians had forbidden anyone to settle beyond Lycoming creek, and accordingly no land was patented

to anyone in this district. But these rugged frontiersmen were undaunted and entered upon these parts in spite of the edict forbidding them. These settlers thus became squatters and outlaws in the eyes of the government, and for their own protection they came to an agreement or mutual alliance which resulted in the organization known as Fair Play Men. It is related that they met when the exigencies arose and that any squatter who refused to abide by the decision of their court was rowed to the mouth of Lycoming creek and set adrift down the river in his canoe.

When word came to these daring spirits, living beyond the bounds of the Province, that the Continental Congress contemplated taking a step toward independence they were greatly elated, and a mass meeting was called on July 4, 1776, when they met under a great elm on the shore of Pine creek and drew up and adopted resolutions absolving themselves from all future allegiance to Great Britain, almost at the same hour that the great Declaration was being adopted in Philadelphia two hundred miles away. Surely this coincidence stands almost without parallel in all history! And the mighty Tiadaghton Elm is still a beautiful tree, well worth a short detour for anyone today to stand within the shade of the same wide spreading branches which shaded those frontiersmen on that summer's day 160 years ago, who there fearlessly proclaimed their Pine Creek Declaration of Independence.

The Indian name of the stream is spelled in various ways, Bartram in his diary of 1743 calls it **Tiadaughton**, and Conrad Weiser in his report of 1744 spells it **Idyixogan*** Bishop Spangenberg in 1745 says **Diadochton**, while on Lewis Evans' map of 1749 and 1755 it is marked as **Tiadaxton**. Most accounts state that the true meaning of this name has been lost.

However, I have found in scanning an old French map of the Ohio river, drawn by a Jesuit, Father Boncamp, in 1749, that the lake which is at the headwaters of that river in present western New York, and which we know as Lake Chautauqua, is marked thereon as **Lac**

* (Penna. Magazine, Vol. 1, Page 414.)

Tiadakain. I have also found that the best authorities (Henry Ganett's *Origin of Certain Place Names in the U. S.*—U. S. Geological Survey Bulletin) give the following as the various meanings for the name of this lake: "the place where fish were taken out," also "the place of easy death" and "the place where one was lost." Compare this with Conrad Weiser's account of his journey in March, 1737, over the trail along Lycoming creek which he calls the "Lost or Bewildered Stream," and a locality there where the Indians believed that an evil spirit or "Otkon" ruled. Since Weiser always used the Iroquois tongue in preference to the Delaware, is it not possible that Lycoming creek was also known as Tiadaghton, much in the manner that we have two Mahanoys, two Mahantangos and two Shamokins, and that the Iroquois may have been falsely accused in this matter of the Tiadaghton?

FISHING CREEK

The rival claims of Pennsylvania and Connecticut for the North Branch Valley, or Wyoming Valley as we know it, had resulted in that miniature civil strife, known as the Yankee-Pennamite War, in 1769 and continued thru the early days of our country, until both parties were called upon by the Continental Congress to cease hostilities until such time when the dispute could be legally disposed of.

After the close of the Revolutionary War Congress was petitioned to establish a court to settle the controversy. This was accomplished by the Trenton decree of Dec. 30, 1782, which unanimously awarded the disputed territory to the jurisdiction of Pennsylvania.

Inasmuch as the settlers themselves in the Wyoming Valley had always had closer ties with Connecticut than with Pennsylvania it was but natural that they should seek their own county government. To this end Luzerne county was organized in 1786 and took the greater portion of what had been previously Wyoming township. To the remnant of this once extensive township, which remained in Northumberland county, was given the name of Fishing Creek and corresponded to

a large extent with present day Columbia county, north of the North Branch, and took its name from the stream which drains this area.

The name FISHING CREEK is very patently a translation of the original Indian name. On Nicholas Scull's map of 1759 it is marked as "Namescesepong or Fishing Creek," and according to Heckewelder, Nameeshanna is from the Delaware meaning Fish stream, while Donehoo believes that it may be derived from "Namesiponk," meaning "it tastes fishy."

Upon the formation of Columbia county in 1813, Fishing Creek township became part of the new county, and today remains a sub-division of that county. Fishing Creek has attained pre-eminence in the raising of buckwheat and the fame of its principal crop has spread far and wide.

The Fishing Creek Valley attained another form of notoriety during the Civil War, when a group of men who had been drafted into the army refused to obey the summons, and fled into the wilds of the valley hoping thus to escape being forced into the army. Draft riots were not uncommon in various places during those stirring days, notably in New York City; but when the draft was resisted in Columbia county, they called it "The Fishing Creek Confederacy." In spite of much sensational fiction regarding this "confederacy," the truth is that this band of malcontents did not offer open resistance to Federal authority. Federal troops were sent to make a short life for that little rebellion.

BRIAR CREEK

Briar Creek township was erected in 1797 from Fishing Creek township and was first known as **Green-Brier** township, for sixteen years was along the eastern boundary of Northumberland county. It took its name from the principal stream of that area which had formerly enjoyed the Indian name of **Kawanis-honing**.

It was in this district that the town of Berwick was laid out by Evan Owen in 1786, when it was just within the boundaries of Northumberland county. He named this town for his former home in England, Ber-