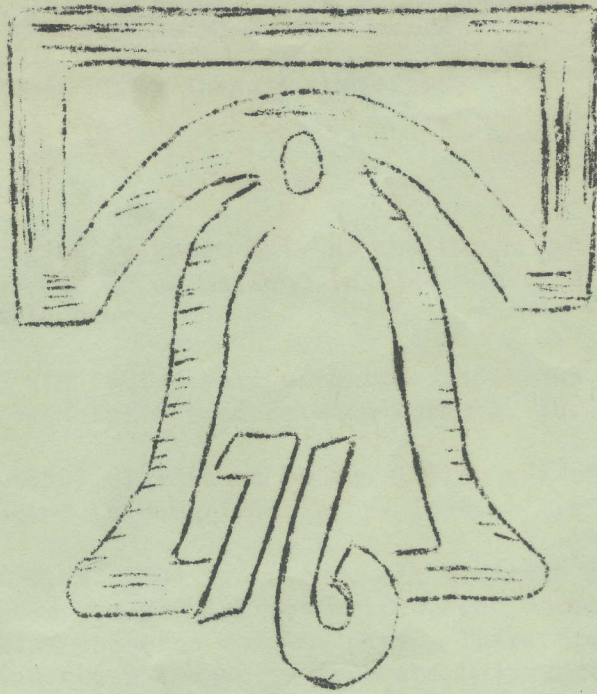


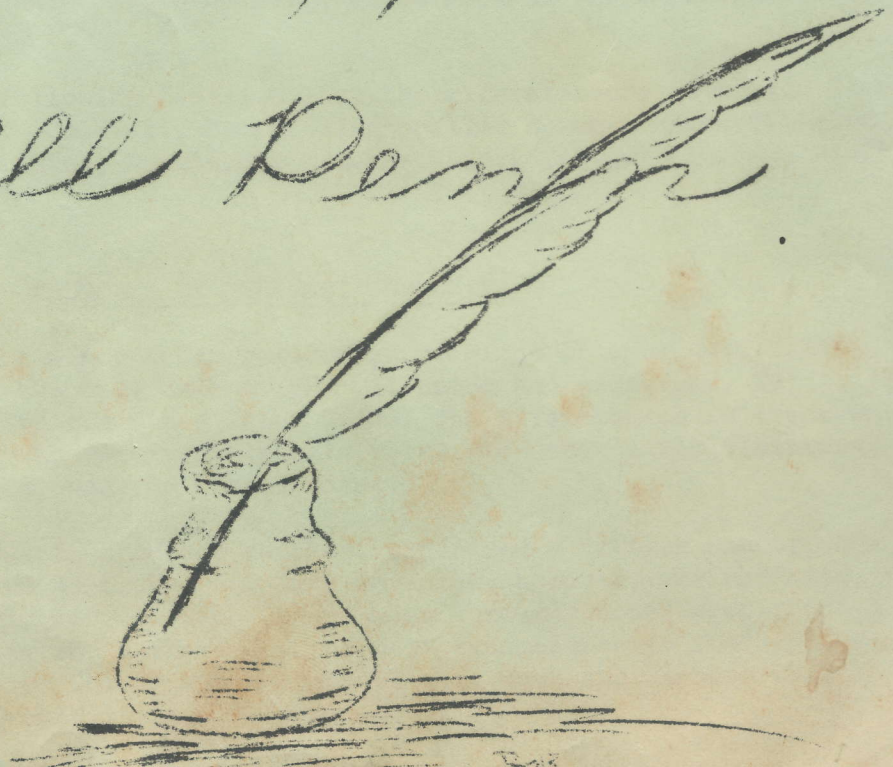
Carl Hauser

Property of Richard Hoover  
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Please do not take



History  
of  
Delaware  
Township  
from  
Joannie Applesseed's  
Quill Pen





H I S T O R Y  
O F  
D E L A W A R E   T O W N S H I P

by Joannie Applesseed

\* \* \*

Mercer County, originally known only as the Northwestern Domain of Pennsylvania, later was set aside as land in West Moreland County. From 1788 to 1800, it was part of Allegheny.

Delaware Township (in 1801 - part of Salem; 1802-1805 - Pymatuning Township) was one of the eight townships formed between November 1805 and February 1806.

Delaware was, in 1850, diminished by the laying off of Jefferson Township and a portion was allotted to Hempfield in May 1856.

(Before the Ice Age, 300,000 years ago, all drainage in the county was to the north and west. When the glacial ice melted, the waters could not push through the hills of clay and sand and boulders. Therefore, a new river system, which the Indians called the Shenango -- from the Delaware Indian name ockenango -- translated "big bull thistles" -- was born.)

(Earlier inhabitants.-who vanished before the Seneca Nation, principally the Cornplanter Tribe - lived here, left no written records of what they called the area known as Pymatuning -- Indian translation: "place where the crooked mouth man or chief with the broken jaw lives".)

Soldiers of the American Revolution, who came to claim their share of the Donation Lands awarded for military service, were among the first pioneers in Delaware Township, Mercer County.

Others purchased tracts for \$20.00 per hundred acres - with the provision they erect a habitation, clear, fence and cultivate at least two acres in each hundred.

Armed only with simple tools, meager provisions, and their trusty rifles, they came on foot or horseback from over the Alleghenies to cut down the virgin forests of pine, poplar, oak, maple, hickory, beech, chestnut, etc.

By firelight in the rude log cabins, they made crude furniture and tools and buckskin boots, they spun and wove and made garments of linsey-woolsey. Sustained by their courage and faith in the Bible, they endured the privations of life in the wilderness where often the nearest neighbors were miles away.

It required great labor to clear the trees, grub and hand-cultivate the land for planting -- even small plots of corn and wheat, flax, potatoes, etc.

Fences of stumps, stones, and rails were built to keep wild animals from the crops and farm animals.

Nothing was wasted, which could by being saved prevent the expenditure of even a penny.

Descendants of the following families list their forefathers among the first settlers of the township: Caldwell, Homer (also spelled Hommer, Hammer), Reznor, Williamson, Wasser, Beil, Haas, Donaldson, Kamerer, George, Fruit, Hecker, Black, Stamm and Webster.

CHURCHES OF DELAWARE TOWNSHIP

In the beginning of the new century (1800), the minds of many were filled with the conviction that the very dawn of the Millenium had come (Rev. 20: 1-5). That year the Presbyterians organized Upper Salem, the first church in the township. Rev. Samuel Tait, who received his salary, as did other early ministers, in grain and other produce, was the first pastor.

In 1817, Samuel Webster, a school teacher, organized a Sabbath School, the first in Mercer County, at Salem Church. The movement, however, was believed to be exceedingly radical, for the Sabbath had been formerly considered too sacred to be desecrated by any gathering which bore resemblance to a school. (Soon after 1908, the Salem Church was abandoned, torn down and timbers used to build two houses in Greenville.)



Methodists of Delaware Township first held services in private homes of the Reznor District and about 1820 built a meeting house known as the Log Church on the David Reznor Farm, which in 1871, had 47 members. (Only one grave stone marks the place where the Log Church many years ago fell into decay.) (Some families moved remains of loved ones to other cemeteries.)

Bethel Methodist Church, located in the Stony Point District two miles north of Fredonia, was abandoned and torn down about 1880. Members organized the Fredonia Methodist congregation.

The Methodist Episcopal Church of New Hamburg, which was erected in 1873, closed its doors in 1940. (The building is now used for storage.)

St. John's Lutheran and German Reformed Societies in 1837 built a log church (24 x 30) known as the Haas Church, at the Corners, one mile east of New Hamburg, which in 1846 was replaced with a large two-story edifice. (Timbers from the log church are today part of the Conrad Reigleman house, Kremis.)

On October 30, 1921, the congregations dedicated the substantial \$50,000 red brick building known presently as the United Church of Christ which embraces the Reformed Congregation.

The St. John's Lutheran Congregation erected a new church on the Greenville-Mercer Road (north) which was dedicated in 1965.

The Presbyterians completed a church in New Hamburg in 1854 (it was moved from St. Glory, now part of Hempfield Township) which they later sold to the German Reformed Society -- subsequently used for a town hall until 1955.

At Delaware Grove, a union church of frame construction served various groups from 1845 to 1872 when it was abandoned as a place of worship. (The spot long since has been marked only by four grave stones.)

The Moyer Evangelical Church which stood at the present site of a small cemetery on the former David Moyer Farm, Hamburg Road, south of Oniontown, was abandoned about 1920. (Words from a gospel song, "Along, along we go, we'll soon be there, Halleluiah", used before the turn of the century, yet echo in the minds of oldsters who attended services at Upper Salem.)

St. Mark's Evangelical and Reformed Church (United Church of Christ) of the St. Paul's Classes was organized at New Hamburg in 1860. In 1894 the cornerstone was laid for the brick structure which was destroyed by fire on December 18, 1967. Ground was broken for a new church early in 1969.

The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints was organized January 17, 1907. A church was erected one-fourth mile west of the village of New Hamburg from lumber sawed out on the McDowell Farm where the church was moved in 1965 opposite the Temple Grove Youth Center in the Deep Hollow District. A new church was constructed 1-1/2 miles west of Temple Grove in 1969.

The Church of Jesus Christ was established in 1956 on the former Charles Long Farm, Lynn District, west of Fredonia.

#### CEMETERIES & BURIAL GROUNDS OF DELAWARE TOWNSHIP

Indian Burial Hill and Ball Cemetery located on the Ball Farm (now owned by the Donald Shipton's).

Indian Burial Ground - former Jacob Slater Farm - Reznor District.

St. John's - due east behind the church where the first graves are dated about 1809, where a soldier who served in Napoleon's Army is also interred.

Delaware Cemetery - directly north of St. John's Burial Ground, Caldwell District, Greenville-Mercer Road.

Bethel Cemetery, Stony Point District, at site of the church which was torn down about 1880.

Moyer Church Cemetery located on New Hamburg Road south of Oniontown.

Log Church Cemetery. Without doubt, many unmarked graves near where the old meeting house stood in the Reznor District.

Union Church Cemetery at Delaware Grove.

Upper Salem Cemetery is now located in Hempfield Township, which was, prior to 1856, part of Delaware Township.



## ROADS OF DELAWARE TOWNSHIP

Earliest routes of travel in Delaware Township were Indian trails and the larger streams.

In 1803, the Shenango River was declared a public highway. The Erie Extension Canal - in operation between 1840 and 1871 - provided slow transportation, however, we would not minimize its impact on industry in the county.

As early as 1807, the state appropriated funds for building improved roads, turnpikes or tollroads in Mercer County - shortened to "pike", indicating that a pike or pole formed a barrier across the road at the toll-collecting point.

The Mercer-Greenville Turnpike Road Company was chartered in 1830; ninety-two years later, the dirt road was paved and travelers and people who lived along the way shook off the dust, which in dry weather was so annoying, and pulled out of the mud of wet weather.

One by one, side roads of the township were improved with gravel, and during the administration of Governor Gifford Pinchot, some were black-topped with a hard surface until today, most of the township roads are passable winter or summer.

Taxpayers who formerly worked out their road tax now pay the tax and men with machines take care of the roads.

## "FIRSTS" OF THE TOWNSHIP

First sawmill (upright) was built (1823) by Samuel Williamson upon a little stream which the Indians called Lowango (now in the present village of New Hamburg.)

In 1838 another was constructed on a stream which today is known as Kremm Run, about one mile south of Uniontown. This second mill with upright saw was yet in operation in 1890 making shingles, etc.

The first elections in the township were held in the home of Samuel Caldwell, Sr. -- where a hat served as a ballot box.

The first grist mill was erected by John Donaldson in 1832. (The last feed and flour mill was operated by Daniel Frantz from 1905 to 1940.)

There were three Delaware Township post offices. The first post office was established at Delaware Grove in 1835 (discontinued in 1885) where the first store was also built (1834). A post office was established in New Hamburg in 1853, and at Kremis in 1880.

Samuel Caldwell, Jr. purchased the first threshing machine in the township -- previously every one threshed his grain with a flail.

Eli George bought the first lot in the Village of New Hamburg (1838) where he built the first shop (tin shop).

John Stamm built the first tannery in the Village -- laid out by Peter Beil who wove cloth and bed coverlets (treasured now by descendants).

Daniel Hecker was the first Justice of the Peace in New Hamburg.

Some of the first settlers in the township came up the Shenango River by raft and from the point of embarkation carried their possessions on their backs to seek out a new home in the forest.

The great westward movement which began in 1783 created a need for better transportation of passengers and goods which heretofore had been transported over wilderness trails.

About 1835, plans for building a canal to unite the waters of the Ohio River and Lake Erie were first proposed. Surveys were made and the work pushed vigorously.

The canal, which followed the course of the river or used its channel, was dug through muck, clay, sandstone, limestone, slate, rock, coal and beds of quicksand to a depth of 6 to 8 feet and from 30 to 40 feet wide. The dirt from the channel formed a towpath for the horses and mules that drew the boats.

The Shenango Division of the Erie Extension Canal, which was completed and opened for traffic as far as Meadville in 1840, gave a big boost to coal and iron interests along the Shenango Valley.



Freighters 8 feet by 40 feet carried a capacity load of 60 tons. (The first freighter - Rufus S. Reed - carried coal shipped by William Fruit.) Passengers who furnished their own food could travel in 48 hours from Beaver to Erie for 66¢. By passenger Packet -- Queen of the West -- the same journey required 36 hours.

The Big Bend Iron Furnace, which was built in 1846 by McFarland and King, announced soon thereafter that they could fill all orders -- from a needle to an anchor. The company exchanged castings for wheat, rye, corn and other produce.

Nearly all the merchandise for the county seat passed along the canal to the village at the Big Bend of the Shenango which was christened Shenango Town, from where it was hauled by road to Mercer.

The Hamburg Furnace was built about 1846 by Mills and Lowry just due south of the village of New Hamburg, which had been laid out in 1838 by Peter Beil. (Chunks of the slag may still be found at the site.)

With business on the canal booming, the village of New Hamburg became the metropolis of Delaware Township.

On August 5, 1871, the aqueduct by which the canal was carried 90 feet above Elk Creek, Erie County, collapsed. Soon the boatman's horn was silenced; the iron horse replaced the stolid tow-horse and the bustling town of New Hamburg, which boasted a hotel, 2 blacksmith shops, a tannery, a tinnery, a wagon maker, a harness maker, a shoe maker, a watch repairman, a dentist, a doctor, a drug store, a weaver, a barber, an undertaker, a stone mason, a saw mill, a grist and flour mill, a general store, a tailor, a butcher, and photographer, began a steady decline.

Kremis, named for the Kremis families who settled there, had at one time a fine 3-story grist and flour mill, a cheese factory, a blacksmith shop, a railway station, a post office (established 1880), a general store, a school and a number of substantial houses.

#### TALES & SUPERSTITIONS

Indian tales that were told and retold in the 'olden days' have been forgotten, along with the fact that not all Delaware Township citizens were against the abolition of slavery. (During the War Between the States (about 1862) some of those who were for the North raised the Stars and Stripes on the Bethel Church, Stony Point District. Families who stood in opposition tore it down and members there had a little battle of their own.)

In the long ago, a travel-weary family, whose youthful daughter lay ill with scarlet fever in a covered wagon as it rumbled along the way (District Road), stopped for the night to camp at a spring on Stony Point Hill. Before they continued their journey over the Covered Wagon Throughway, a lock of hair was cut from the young girl's head, a hole was drilled in a big tree, the hair was sealed inside the opening -- in trust that the little lady would recover from her illness. Many years later, the lock of golden hair was found by men while cutting the tree near the spring.

Superstitions were part of the daily living in days gone by; crops were planted, sauerkraut was made, fence posts set, trees pruned and grafted when the sign of the moon was favorable. It was considered bad luck to walk under a ladder or have a black cat cross one's path; or carry a shovel through the house; or rock an empty cradle; or raise an umbrella indoors or break a looking-glass.

It was bad luck to kill a cricket or count warts, which were supposed to come from handling toads, unless one would afterward make a knot in a thread for each wart and throw away the thread - or bury a warm chicken's head under the eaves.

According to the signs -- a house should be roofed during the dark of the moon, likewise potatoes were planted at that time.

Thirteen people were never seated at the table when the clock was about to strike 12, nor was 13 considered ever to bring luck.

Seven was thought to be a lucky number; it was good luck to have a horse-shoe hanging, open side up, or find a four-leaf clover.

Delaware Township still, however, upholds stories of witches and ghosts and gypsies who frightened and haunted and disturbed the peace, and almost everyone believes in at least one sign or superstition.



### SCHOOLS IN DELAWARE TOWNSHIP

Samuel Webster, a Connecticut Yankee, a champion of temperance and the abolition of slavery (in 1817) taught in a little log school located near Upper Salem Presbyterian Church, Delaware Township. Robert Fruit taught a school in the Reznor District (1818). The third log school in the area was located two and one-half miles east of the Caldwell One-Room School Museum.

The Bible, the Catechism and the New England Primer -- along with the Horn Book for beginners -- were among the first books used in the primitive schools where pupils studied at puncheon desks pegged to the log walls that afforded very little reflection from the small greased-paper windows and the broad fireplace.

Between 1800 and 1850, education of the youth was regarded as an affair of the church, somewhat akin to baptism, marriage, the administration of the sacraments and burial of the dead.

In 1824, the state legislature passed a law providing for the election of school directors in each township or borough -- one which the people firmly opposed because they were determined to control the schools themselves.

After the first "free-school legislation" was passed in 1834, the taxpayers worked diligently to repeal the measure which provided that the poor should be educated 'gratis'. (Schools formerly had been supported by subscription.)

One hundred years ago, patrons believed that books should be used until they were worn out, hence they would not bear the additional expense of new or a uniform series of readers, spellers, etc. Taxpayers felt that they had provided well if they installed a blackboard (wide boards painted black), glass window-panes and a pot-belly stove for heating the room. School directors (until the Civil War) preferred to hire men, even though they had to pay 10 to 12 dollars a month to employ them.

Subscribers were convinced, however, that a good teacher made a good school; they demanded that total abstinence and good moral conduct be practiced by the teacher.

In 1887, Delaware Township hired the following ladies to teach for a 3-month term, for which each received a total sum of \$15.00 with the privilege to board around: Flora Ball, Clara Cunningham, Minta Lee, Carrie Weaver, Hannah McEwen, Lizzie Stoyer, Emma Ferguson, Ellen McCann, Lizzie Byles, Lizzie Junkin, Lilly Weaver, Jennie Peat, and Hattie Cunningham.

In 1907, salaries were increased \$5.00 per month (school taxes were 3 mills in 1906) to \$40.00 a month for Delaware Township teachers: Clara Schaller, Preston Anderson, Edna Slater, Emma Haas, Mae Reimold, Lena Bower, Carrie Heilman, Helen Womer, Nellie Rose, Irene McCann, Iola Orr and Y. M. Haggerty.

In 1911, New Hamburg's first brick school (two-story, built 1871) was damaged by a severe wind storm, and the same year a two-room frame structure was erected which, through the sincere efforts of Horack H. Hedglin and Miss Beatrice Beil (1914-1917), was rated by the superintendent of schools as the "first standard school in the county".

The new school had fine large glass windows, a slate blackboard and a jacket for the stove, pictures hung on clean walls. The children no longer drank from a common dipper. Flowers and trees were planted on the grounds and a cement walk was laid.

Every child was provided with a slate, a copy-book, pen, pencil and tablet, as well as books, and there were library books suitable for each age group.

In 1960, the last 5 of the schools in Delaware Township were closed forever: Bower, Caldwell, Deep Hollow, Delaware Grove, Homer, Kremis, Lynn, New Hamburg, Reichard, Reznor, Rock, and Stony Point.

From "Joannie Appleseed's Quill Penn" .....

For three times 40 years the one-roomers of Western Pennsylvania functioned in spite of a fumble from time to time. There were those who labeled the country school as frumpy, frivolous and frightful.

The big boys were too big, the little girls too small; there were no special teachers for either the slow learner or those who excelled; the little school was in poor repair; the children had to walk from one to two and a half miles; they usually had only cold lunches. So the parents voted to consolidate and the little red schoolhouse was deserted.



Because the big yellow buses were somewhat heated, the boys and girls decided coats and caps were unnecessary. "I don't want to wear rubbers or boots; the other kids don't," protested Jim. "Besides", chimed in Jan, "we don't have anywhere to put them in the new school. Do you want our friends to think we are from the sticks?"

While the kids stood waiting for the bus, pride and vanity failed to shut out the chill winds and the dampness under foot; the boys and girls came down with colds, sore throats, flu and all the complications. It was easy to spread germs on the bus filled with children.

Few students relished the cafeteria lunches which had to be gulped down. The noise which rose from 100 restless boys and girls as they pushed and all tried to talk at the same time, raised noise pollution to a level all but equal to that on the bus.

You see, those who voted to consolidate hadn't thought of the dangers of noise and frustrations.

The one big, happy family concept wasn't so happy after all. Some parents began to complain that Johnny and Mary were not learning to read and write or figure as well as Tom, Dick and Harry, who had attended the little red school.

So the educators tried an upgraded system, they planned for the younger and older children, the gifted and slower to work in one unit. Soon it was found the groups were too large -- students and teachers scarcely knew each other by name.

To support the big schools, taxes skyrocketed, taxpayers protested, educators confided in their advisers, "We can't even pretend that we think the one-room teacher, who, on the average, handled 30 classes a day, 30 and more boys and girls from 6 to 16 years of age -- served as nurse, janitor, adviser, etc. for the top salary of much less than \$100 per month, was what the country needs."

We must keep up with the times even though our funds and our nerves are strained to the limit.

When school taxes amounted to two mills on the dollar, the little red schoolhouse was the symbol of education across America. Strange, after it has been long-abandoned, that the little red schoolhouse is still the hallmark of learning. The slate, the apple for the teacher, the hand-bell, the dunce stool, the Hickory switch, the well-worn reader or hornbook still spells out school for our land.

Education in the olden times was homespun and handcrafted. Under the up-to-date system it has more or less of an assembly line quality.

#### A TRUE STORY

##### "The Last Day of School"

It was the last day of school in the little village of New Hamburg in Delaware Township.

One small boy, who had studied under the modest schoolmaster (not too modest to wield the birch rod) considered it to be a day of emancipation. Parents were crowded into the little one-room schoolhouse to see and hear the closing day exercises.

One small boy bravely recited his piece, "The Charge of the Light Brigade" and with the closing lines, "Into the valley of death rode the six hundred", he charged through the open doorway to find relief and solace in his secret hide-out in a big hollow sycamore, deep in the underbrush, along the Shenango.

There he waited for his chum and together they crept into the dark tree-cave where on other occasions they had erected a ten foot pole ladder and built a floor at the top of it. Above the first floor they constructed another, again ten feet higher, inside the old giant of the forest. (This sycamore - 17 feet, 6 inches in circumference - once marked the Cuyahoga Indian Trail.)

In fancy the boys believed they had escaped the blood-thirsty Chief Terrible Thunder and his thousand warriors who crept about the river bottom.

Men in pursuit of one Barney Brady, a vagabond who supposedly had committed a murder in a township tavern, came upon the big tree that very afternoon, discovered the ladder and drew the conclusion that it must be Barney's hiding place.

They spread the news to enlist volunteers.



- 7 -

Meanwhile at the schoolhouse, the last numbers of the program were in progress. Little Amy Weston in pink gingham and matching new hair ribbon was on the platform giving her recitation, "Once I was pure as the beautiful snow, but I fell ... Fell like a snowflake," etc.

At that moment the constable's voice bellowed, "Barney Brady is up a tree; help is needed to get him down."

When a dozen men rose to volunteer, the program ended and everyone hurriedly dispersed to get clubs and pitchforks or axes. Dusk fell before they had a proper warrant, and foreboding shadows reached along the river as they crossed the foot log.

Squire Hampton, who had insisted on a legal arrest, called out when they reached the old tree, "In the name of the law and the commonwealth come down and surrender."

There was a rumble and cry heard inside and it was presumed he was ready to give himself up. At that precise moment, however, the sheriff fingered the trigger of his rifle and the gun went off.

The crowd thought it was Barney trying to shoot his way to freedom and they broke for cover.

Two very frightened little boys, grime covered with decaying wood, tumbled out of the hollow tree to confess that only they had been inside.

The secret of their disappearance (at other times) was out. As for Barney Brady, it is very likely he never knew how closely he came to being tarred and feathered and hung for his evil deeds.

#### MERCER COUNTY COVERED BRIDGES

Kidds Mills and the Big Bend of the Shenango (Big Bend was formerly located in Delaware Township; Kidds Mills is just outside the limits of Delaware in Pymatuning.)

Road building in Mercer County was begun in 1804, the year the first covered bridge in the Keystone State was built across the Schuylkill River near Philadelphia.

By 1811, a plank road had been laid from Mercer to the Big Bend of the Shenango; however, it was some time later that a covered bridge (perhaps the first in the county) was built to span the waters.

The heavy hewn timbers were hauled to the site by oxen. Rural craftsmen - carpenters with a flare for engineering - used heavy wooden pegs to fasten the beams together.

When completed, tolls were charged as follows:

- 1 cent - foot passenger
- 4 cents - horse and rider
- 10 cents - horse and carriage
- 5 cents - horse and sleigh (snow was hauled onto the bridge so that sleds and sleighs could pass after cold weather arrived)

Church-goers on Sunday were permitted to cross free of charge.

A fine of \$2.00 was imposed on anyone riding a horse faster than a walk or driving more than 20 head of sheep over the bridge at one time.

One night a lad on his way across the covered bridge was sure he had come face to face with evil spirits when in the darkness he stumbled upon some cows that had found shelter there.

Schoolboys played on the rafters of the old bridge, lovers carved their names on the timbers, mourning doves nested in the eaves.

Other covered bridges were erected in Mercer County. In February of 1867, the one at Kidds Mills on the Shenango was washed out by a flood which also took many bridges in the county, one of which may have been that at Big Bend.

One hundred years ago, a second covered bridge had been built at the Kidds Millssite, from a design known as the Smith patent truss (July 16, 1867). (East of Ohio it is the only one of Robert Smith's bridges - Tippecanoe City, Ohio.)



Today (1976), a tourist attraction, visitors admire its sturdy construction -- a design employing fitted joints and timbers, now of mellowed wood, yet with marks of chisel and adz wielded a century ago.

"Here was a refuge from the sudden showers  
That swept like moving music fields and wood,  
And here cool tunnelled, dark, where sultry hours  
Danced with silver feet beyond the bridge's hood.  
Yet there are soul-less men, whose heart and brain  
Tear down what time will never give again."

Let every citizen of Mercer County, every visitor who pauses to salute this Vanishing American, pledge himself to help these noble persons who have dedicated time and money to restore and preserve this heritage from the past.

#### HE FOUGHT UNDER NAPOLEON

John George Leisher (Lischer) was born near Strassburg-on-the-Rhine in Alsace Lorraine. However, his grave is located in the St. John's Burial Ground in Delaware Township, Mercer County, known originally as the Haas Church at the Corners.

His German father and French mother, who were both linen weavers, saw their young son drafted into the French army then under the command of Napoleon, and with the would-be world conquerer saw action in the decisive Battle of Waterloo.

Leisher saw his company perish when the bridge over the Elbe was blown up; he again escaped death by holding to a horse's tail as the army forded the river at Kutzenbach.

After he received his certificate (number 5861) for exemption from military service (October 3, 1815), he made plans to sail for America.

The vessel was shipwrecked in a violent storm at sea. Although his life was spared by a rescue ship, he lost all his possessions and thus was obliged to serve three years as a "bound out" workman to pay for his passage. Subsequently, he became a teamster between New York and Philadelphia.

Mary Wettmer who became his wife in 1829 died a few short years later. In due time he was wed to her twin sister, Susanna, whose parents purchased a farm, 202 acres of the original James Beatty Donation tract in Mercer County, for the newlyweds.

The Leishers and Wettmers packed their tools, seeds, clothing and as many household items as they could carry in the covered wagon and set their faces westward.

On May 2, 1834, when Andrew Jackson was President of the United States, when the present Route 58 was little more than a trail, they left Mercer by wagon to go to their \$238 farm in Delaware Township.

The oxen moved slowly through swamps and underbrush and around the giant oaks, maples, chestnut, ash, hickory, poplar, etc. At the end of the long day's journey, they found refuge with settlers who had at an earlier date arrived from east of the Alleghenies.

Sturdy sons of the pioneer family helped them build their first log cabin in the tall timber, described as between New Hamburg and the Moyer Church, where they lived out their lives. Susanna died at age 38, John George Leisher was past 89 and a long way from Strassburgh-on-the-Rhine, when he died many years later.

The Leishers and Wettmers arrived in the county in time to see -- the subscription schools become 'free' schools -- the building and early use of the Erie Extension Canal -- the erection of the log St. John's Lutheran and German Reformed Church and in 1846, the two-story edifice where services were held in German until sometime before World War I.

They and their friends ate -- schnitz un knepp -- sauerbraten -- ponhaws -- sauerkraut and speck -- hasen pfeffer -- braune mehlsuppe -- liverwurst -- ob'l puffers -- fastnacht kucka -- kaffee kuchen -- krum kuchen, etc. Cheese, sausage and sauerkraut, always with raw green salad, made a staple German supper. (Oysters and ice cream were delicacies.)

~~Citizens of Delaware Township, Uphold, sustain, guard=~~ DRY

LEGISLATION for this and future generations!



A half century ago the historic Ball Farm, two miles northwest of Fredonia, was a favorite place for "a picnic with a purpose".

Mr. Ball took time to show visitors around the spring-studded grove where practically every kind of tree which can adapt to our weather conditions had been planted to complement the native maples, oaks, hemlocks and the famous Johnny Appleseed tree which still clings bravely to life. A live oak grown from an acorn picked up under the Powhattan Oak at Jamestown, Virginia, was of special interest as was the willow, whose parent grows at Napoleon's tomb at St. Helena. (He spoke of trees he had furnished descendants of signers of the Declaration of Independence for planting at the Tomb of Thomas Jefferson.)

Close by the burial ground, which Mr. Ball had enclosed with a stone wall, he called attention to a great "boulder with a story", a stone grinding wheel seven feet in diameter and one foot in thickness.

In the cemetery, which stems from an old Indian burial ground, we here list graves of the following: Cpl. James Simmons, a Revolutionary soldier; John Arnold, Pennsylvania Militia - War of 1812; Levi Arnold, the pioneer who built Arnold's Mills; Larkin Arnold, his young son who was killed in a powder blast; Caleb Ball, mentioned numerous times in Mercer County History; Daniel Harper, shipwrecked and swam seven miles to land while serving during the Revolution; John Slover (1752-1797), stolen at age 6 by Picts Indians, held 8 years by Shawnees, in 1773 joined Revolutionary forces, honorably discharged, captured again by Indians and on eve he was to be burned at the stake, he escaped by running the gauntlet; graves of two red men killed near New Hamburg are those of Omugksadago and Cagkniarota; Mr. A. E. Ball and his father, Amos Walton, who surveyed Fredonia; Rev. Amos Ball, circuit rider minister who held church and Sunday School services in one room of the log house (used by the family until 1870 when the brick was erected); Mr. Amos Entheus Ball's son, Amos Walton, and grandson, Edwin, who died as a result of the bombing of Hiroshima, World War II.

History classes from local schools were treated to a firsthand account of Mr. Ball's three grueling years in the Klondike (Read "From Tenderfoot to Sourdough" by Hazel Truth Procter). They heard the story of the Biglers who lived close by. (John Bigler became governor of California, William of Pennsylvania.) For further information on this "outing place" and its historical significance, review writings from Joannie Appleseed's Quill Penn, "Yesteryear in Mercer County".

#### DELAWARE TOWNSHIP SERVICEMEN

##### Revolutionary War

Zopher Ball, Caleb Ball, Daniel Harper, John Slover, and George Morgan. John Slover (1752-1797), stolen at age of 6 by Indians, held 8 years by Shawnees, joined Revolutionary forces in 1773, honorably discharged. Captured on Ohio Frontier; escaped after running gauntlet on eve he was to be burned at the stake.

##### War of 1812

Caleb Ball, John Arnold and James K. Marshall. (The above named, as well as Edwin Ball, World War II, and other war veterans, are buried in the Ball Burial Grounds.)

##### Civil War

Edwin Blumer, John Fruit, James McCleery, George W. Reznor (guard at the death of Lincoln), Joseph Kashner, John G. Folwell, John Snyder (lost one eye), William Loudermilch (starved to death in prison), James Heckman (held in prison), Daniel Haas, Leviticus Caldwell, James Stamm, George Careless, James McGrath, Jacob Wagner, Gus Wellar, Samuel Fisher, Mottis Heinze, William Grunman, Joseph Weaver, Henry Leisher, John Schell, Henry Robb, Samuel Ferguson, Capt. Reznor, Daniel Wagner, Eugene Weikal, Henry Stoyer, Freeman Piper, Aaron Blumer, Thomas McDowell, Daniel Bower, Samuel Moyer, Dexter Greenman, William Greenman, Rev. Philip Zeiser, Charles D. Umholtz, S. J. Phenecy.



### World War I

Clifford (Jerry) Boger, Herman H. Gehres, George F. Kremm, John Keith (lost at sea), Earl Frantz, Robert Leisher, Robert Little, James Hunter, Albert S. Heilman, Frank Diefenderfer, Clinton McGrath, Stanley McGrath, Ralph Reichard, Floyd Reimold, William Schiable, Carl E. Schaller, Frank Wagner, Levi N. Wasser (Chatteau Thiery)\*, Oran Wellar, William S. Wellar, Fred Swartzbeck, Prescott Heckman, Gilbert Carter, Ralph Redfoot, Samuel Koonce, Fred McGranahan, Vencil Friede, Fred Kuntz, Charles Jordan, Clarence Golden, John Jordan, Charles Homer, Theodore Carter.

### World War II

Edwin Ball, Richard Ammann, Paul T. Ammann, James D. Ammann, Frank I. Aubel, James T. Burns, William H. Bartel, M. E. J. Barrett, Ralph C. Boger, Carl Bear, George M. Bair, Kenneth L. Bair, Lewis N. Bear, Jr., Richard J. Beatty, C. E. Beatty, Jr., D. N. Bromley, G. E. Bromley, Willis R. Barnett, Stanley F. Bortz, Kenneth Bittner, J. Kirk Barefoot, Norman P. Bortz, T. A. Benner, Clarence Black, E. E. Chambers, Leslie C. Dale, Robert Eckley\*, Dale Eckley, R. A. Eastlick, Dale Eastlick, A. C. Eastlick, Robert Ealy, Duane Gilson, Robert P. Flinn, Donald T. Flinn, Harry Frantz, Floyd E. Fritz, Lloyd Bennett, Walter Black, Harry B. Hoovler, James J. Hoovler, Leroy S. Harpst, Robert E. Hall, Robert H. Hittle, Paul J. Jennings, John F. Jordan, William D. Kremis, Richard J. Kremis, John F. Kremm, Fred D. Kremm, Lester I. Kaufman, John W. King, Paul E. King, C. Lionel King, Roy B. Kellar, Max A. Little, Donald L. Little, L. E. Leighty, Paul G. Leisher, Ralph H. Leisher, Ralph E. McConnell, Paden S. McConnell, W. A. Mitcheltree, Harold J. Mathay, Mearle E. Mathay, Lyle McCullough, W. M. McCartney, William Munnell, R. V. McDougall, Luther C. Miller, Frank S. Meyer, John H. McClimans, Lamar McCartney, D. E. Mitcheltree, John F. Osborne, Peter Resek, Jr., James Paris, George T. Polliard, William J. Qualk, William Rodemoyer, Gail Rodemoyer, R. T. Rodemoyer, H. E. Rodemoyer, John Rodemoyer, James D. Redfoot, Harley Rutter, Robert Reigleman, Roy E. Reichard, Leon W. Reichard, Norman D. Reichard, John A. Reimold, Stanley E. Reimold, Floyd N. Ryhal, Jr., Earl Reash, Myron Stamm, C. Swartzbeck, John F. Stewart, C. C. Stoyer, Jr., Donald E. Stoyer, Paul L. Stoyer, Floyd Stoyer, Gregory Synowka, Theodore Synowka, David F. Sunderlin, John R. Sunderlin, Richard L. Slater, C. J. Schaller, George L. Schell, E. P. Schell, Carl F. Shardy, Joseph R. Shearer, N. S. Shearer, M. B. Shearer, George H. Seidel, Andrew Sulek, Bert E. Thompson, James L. Taylor, J. R. Wishart, Jr., Harold Wagner, H. J. Whitlatch, Owen Willaman, C. L. Anderson, Vivian Eckleberger, Ellsworth M. Lineman, James Gilson, Fred Lawyer.

NOTE:- For all available information concerning servicemen and women, check with Veterans' Administration, Mercer County Court House.

### SO YOU'RE LOOKING FOR THE VILLAGE OF NEW HAMBURG? By Joannie Appleseed (1970)

The history of Mercer County described it as a thriving canal town, the metropolis of Delaware Township.

In its hey-day, New Hamburg could boast of 3 churches, a good school, a post office, hotel, a weaver's shop, tin shop, two blacksmith shops, a general store, a dentist's office, 2 doctors' offices, a wagon and harness maker's shop, a millinery store, a barber shop, a drug store, a shoe shop, a stone mason's shop and others.

Along the well laid out streets, substantial houses were set inside neat picket fences. People were busy in and about the little town; men worked at the iron furnace, a short walk to the outskirts or the saw mill, tannery, brick works or the dock along the Erie Extension Canal where goods from far away places were received and where passengers embarked to Beaver or Erie and points distant.

The covered bridge across the Shenango, which the Indians called "Ochenango" -- translated "Big Bull Thistle" -- was swept away by a flood and in 1876, an elegant iron structure was built to replace it.

Along picturesque Lowango Creek, which runs through the village and to the very cross-roads of the main thoroughfares, unsightly and obnoxious weeds and tangled briars and brush grow -- untamed and uncut upon the once fair properties, now a part and parcel of the Shenango Reservoir Domain, owned by the government, which plans only to let the land go back to the "wilderness".



(Perhaps they could be persuaded to bring in a tribe of red men to complete the picture. They could make baskets from the willows and cooking vessels from the clay. They could plant maize to supplement the fish and small game and herbs to be found in plentiful supply.)

There is, however, another solution to the unsightly problem: The folk of the village could be so proud of the fact that their little town had, at one time, everything it takes to make a story-book example of the "olden days" when bare-foot boys and sunbonnet girls watched the weaver design his coverlets, the smithy at his forge, the sawyer working at his upright saw, the mules as they plodded along the tow-path pulling the heavy "packets".

If the villagers stretched their imaginations a bit, they could see ox carts rumbling along the narrow streets and men in high silk hats escorting ladies dressed in hoop-skirted frocks as they strolled along the walks.

First, though, they would have to cut the weeds and carry away the debris. They may, if they get a permit from the U.S. Government.

We urge every able-bodied citizen to "STAKE OUT A CLAIM". Reclaim the land. Make New Hamburg a beauty spot. ERASE the reputation of having the tallest rag weeds, burdocks and thistles in Mercer County.

#### ONE ROOM SCHOOL MUSEUM

(Located on Route 50 - midway between Greenville and Mercer,  
opposite Delaware Cemetery and St. John's United Church of Christ.)

After the little red brick Caldwell School was closed in June 1900, the Delaware Township directors voted to donate the building and grounds to the Mercer County Historical Society. Since the dedication July 4, 1962, the curators, Harry and Mae Little Beringer, have welcomed thousands of visitors from this and neighboring states and foreign lands. Former rural school boys and girls and teachers from many of the 225 one-roomers in operation 50 years ago in Mercer County have come from near and far away places to bring school books, souvenirs, pictures, etc. from other little schools for the collection.

Early in May 1976, reservations were made for bus loads of pupils and students from several county schools to receive instruction in education from the era of the primitive round-log schools to 1960 when the last county public one-roomer was closed.

#### Classes learned:

- that the Bible was read every morning;
- that children walked to school, some times many miles;
- that the teacher was paid as little as \$1.00 per week in the first school -- 100 years ago \$15.00 per month -- 70 years ago \$40.00 -- 50 years ago \$75.00 (and up) each month.
- John Bigler who was elected governor of California and William Bigler who became governor of Pennsylvania in the same year both attended the Caldwell area log school.
- A plank school stood directly north, across the road to New Hamburg prior to the erection of the red brick in 1880. (This school with desks pegged to the walls was moved a few rods north on the Caldwell farm for storage purposes.)
- Bricks for the "museum" school were hand made during 1878-79 on the Ball Farm east in the township and stone for the building was hewn in a local wagon shed. Visitors, old and young, learn that the bell on the school was originally in London School, Springfield Township; the standard and wheel were on the Pulling Mill School, Jefferson Township; the belfry was the gift of a former pupil in White School, Fairview Township.
- Chestnut rails for the fence came from North Township; the butt stone was used in an old mill on Mill Run near Fredonia.
- The colonial, outdoor oven, the Yankee hoist well, the stone watering trough, the Teachers' Garden, flag pole and flowering shrubs and trees, etc. have been made possible since 1962 through the efforts and interest of many, many persons who have helped to make the "Little Red School House" a 'nice' place to visit on Sunday afternoons or holidays, May through the middle of October and by special arrangement with the Historical Society, Mercer.



DELAWARE TOWNSHIP SALUTES AMERICA'S 200 YEARS

This second edition of our township's history was printed for the occasion of our celebration on Saturday, July 3, 1976, to commemorate our nation's 200th birthday.

We wish to thank the many people and businesses who volunteered their talents and services to make this day one to encourage family unity and emphasize the positive aspect that is the way of life our pioneer forefathers envisioned.

We Americans enjoy a freedom that no other nation on earth has ever known. We truly are a nation under God ... Let us pause daily and give humble thanks to our Father in Heaven that we are privileged to live in this beautiful land and strive to remember the tyranny that led the first settler to our sparkling shores.

We have a heritage and a future to protect, and with the help of God, we who love our country will continue to do so with the same strength that guided the dedicated authors of our constitution.

AMERICA, WE SALUTE YOU!

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Mr. & Mrs. Dale E. Haws, Chairmen  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Little, Co-Chairmen

Delaware Township  
Bi-Centennial Committee

DELAWARE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Mr. Clifford Schaller, Chairman  
Mr. Paul Snyder  
Mr. Horace Reichard  
Mrs. Marian Eich Prebula, Secretary

July 3, 1976

