

EARLY HISTORY

OF

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA,

AND OF THE WEST,

AND OF

WESTERN EXPEDITIONS AND CAMPAIGNS,

FROM

MDCCLIV TO MDCCCXXXIII.

BY A GENTLEMAN OF THE BAR.

WITH AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING,

BESIDES COPIOUS EXTRACTS FROM IMPORTANT INDIAN TREATIES, MINUTE OF CONFERENCES, JOURNALS, ETC., A TOPOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTIES OF ALLEGHENY, WESTMORELAND, WASHINGTON, SOMERSET, GREENE, FAYETTE, BEAVER, BUTLER, ARMSTRONG, ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY SEVERAL DRAWINGS.

PITTSBURG, PA.

DANIEL W. KAUFFMAN.

HARRISBURG, PA.

WILLIAM O. HICKOK.

.....
1847

SOMERSET COUNTY

and could not conceive, nor could the Doctor say, why it was that the gun, when he presented it to the Indian; and snapped it, did not go off. The Indian himself had been surprised at it, and did not recollect that he had plugged the touch-hole to keep it from the wet, nor did the Doctor discover this. The Indian, to excuse himself, had represented the Doctor as a man of great stature and strength; but the Indians laughed at him when they came to know, and were informed by some from the other town that had seen him sent on, that he was a man of small stature and of little strength.—*Border Life.*

[NO. XXXI.]

SOMERSET COUNTY.

SOMERSET COUNTY was established by an act passed April 17th, 1795. The boundaries of the county were defined: "That all that part of Bedford county, lying and being to the westward of a line to be drawn along the top of the Allegheny mountain, from where the Maryland line crosses the same to where the line of Huntingdon county crosses the same mountain." The limit of this county was afterwards changed and reduced. In 1800, part of Bedford was annexed to Somerset; and in 1804 part of Somerset was taken into Cambria.

SOMERSET COUNTY is bounded on the north by Cambria; east by Bedford; south by the State of Maryland; west by Fayette; and northwest by Westmoreland. Greatest length, 38 miles; mean width, 28: area, 1066 square miles; and contains 682,240 acres of land. Population in 1800, 10,188; in 1810, 11,284; in 1820, 13,890; in 1830, 17,741; and in 1840, 19,650.

The physical aspect of the surface of this county, is diversified—parts of it mountainous, others hilly—a considerable portion rolling, undulating and uneven; while in certain sections there are considerable tracts that have a comparatively level surface. Like its geological features, the soil of this county is of a variety of character. The southern part of the county is best adapted to the raising of corn and wheat; the middle and more northern portion produce good crops of oats, potatoes and grass; and if ever, scarce any corn crops that repay the labor bestowed, tilling the ground. The whole county is well adapted to grazing, keeping and feeding of cattle, sheep, hogs, and live stock in general. The products of the dairy are profitable; from \$65,000 to \$75,000, is the annual estimate thereof. The finest butter in the world is made in this county; and there are many extensive dairy farms which produce it in large quantities for exportation.

The county abounds in what are known by the name of *Glades*, i. e. low, level, wet lands; and as those portions are better adapted to grazing than any other purpose, dairies are kept here, and produce the well known *Glades Butter*, sought after so much in the Baltimore markets. On the eastern boundary of this county, is the Allegheny Mountain, which ranges through the southeastern part thereof. In the southeastern corner, the Little Allegheny and Savage mountains, pass northward

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from Maryland and unite in a point near the Bedford county line, north of Will's creek. *In the south, Negro mountain extends northward from the State line and terminates a few miles south of the town of Somerset. The Laurel Hill is the western boundary as far south as to the Yonhiogheny river. These mountains give to this portion of country, a most diversified aspect.

Bituminous coal is found in abundance in many parts of this county. In the rough, irregular valley between the Little Allegheny and Savage mountain is a coal bed several feet thick, which has been worked in several places, and yields coal of a superior quality. Between the Allegheny and Negro mountains is another coal basin, extending northward by Berlin to the head waters of Shade creek. On some of the higher ridges in the southern basin, coal seams are found nine feet thick. In the neighborhood of Berlin, several of the lower coal beds are worked for the supply of the town and its vicinity. Further northward, on Stony creek, in the neighborhood of Stoystown, and on Shade creek, are a great many openings of production coal beds. Coal is also found in the hills along Castleman's river, Laurel Hill creek, &c.

Iron ore is also found in various parts of this county. Not far from the mouth of Will's creek, and in the same neighborhood on Stony creek, are localities of iron ore which may prove valuable and important. Ore is also found in considerable quantities on Shade creek, where a furnace has been erected for the purpose of working it. Bog ore frequently occurs in beds on the surface along the eastern side, and western slope of the Allegheny mountain. Iron ore is also abundant in many places along the east side of Laurel Hill, and has been mined near the head of Garey's run.

TOWNSHIPS — BOROUGHS.

POPULATION.

	1820.	1830.	1840.
Addison,	1,861	1,185	1,301
Allegheny,	372	506	633
Berlin borough,			524
Brothers' Valley,	1,683	1,675	1,548
Conemaugh,	378	767	882
Elk Lick,	1,197	1,531	1,495
Greenville,	394	545	572
Jenner,	1,129	1,167	1,469
Milford,	1,394	1,749	1,632
Paint,			487
Quemahoning,	796	1,102	924
Stoystown borough,			357
Stony Creek,	754	1,025	1,248
Shade,	948	1,135	1,052
Somerset borough,	442	649	638
Somerset,	1,954	2,515	1,620
Southampton,	540	710	755
Turkey Foot,	1,138	1,281	1,433
	13,890	17,741	19,650

Total,
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SOMERSET COUNTY.

The adult male population was variously employed. In mining, 5; agriculture, 3,556; commerce, 102; manufactures and trades, 914; navigation of the ocean, 57; learned professions, 34.

The actual wealth of this county may be estimated from the following, carefully compiled from the census of 1840.

Mineral, Agricultural, Horticultural, Commercial. Statistics of Somerset county of 1840.

One furnace, one forge, produced 20 tons of bar iron; bituminous coal raised 65,000.

Live stock, &c.—Horses and mules, 8,400; neat cattle, 31,000; sheep, 36,900; swine, 25,720; value of poultry of all kinds, \$8,670; bushels of wheat, 118,100; barley, 730; oats, 621,200; rye, 169,550; buckwheat, 46,650; corn, 32,940; pounds of wool, 70,100; hops, 4,830; wax, 760; bushels of potatoes, 134,800; tons of hay, 26,820; pounds of sugar, 299,800; value of the products of the dairy, \$56,550; of the orchard, \$5,430; of homemade goods, \$71,070. Stores 46, capital, \$168,500; Fulling mills, 13; Woollen manufactories 2; value of manufactured goods, 15,900; capital, \$12,450; value of hats and caps manufactured, \$6,400. Tanneries 29, tanned, 3,710 sides of sole and 7,940 upper leather; capital, \$39,000. Distilleries 47, produced 28,800 gallons; one brewery, 1,000 gallons. Value of carriages manufactured, \$9,400. Flouring mills, 2; Grist mills, 64; Saw mills, 141; Oil mills, 4. Total capital inserted in manufactures, \$116,310.

The aggregate amount of property taxable in 1845, was \$2,370,078 00; whereof \$2,312,200 00, was real estate.

The Youghiogheny river rises in the extreme south-west angle of Maryland, and flows a north-east course of thirty miles, comparative length, to the Pennsylvania line, where it enters in Pennsylvania, dividing Fayette and Somerset counties, forming the western boundary of this, as far as to its passage through Laurel Hill, above which it receives Castleman's river from the east, and of Laurel Hill creek from the north. The union of these three streams at the same point, is called "The Turkey Foot," from their fancied resemblance to the *three toes* of a bird's foot; and Turkey Foot township has been so named from this circumstance. Castleman's river is formed by the union of the Little Youghiogheny river with Cox's creek, in Milford township; after a circuitous route, it flows into the Great Youghiogheny, eleven or twelve miles north of the Maryland line, opposite to the east foot of Sugarloaf mountain. It is a rapid stream. These are the principal streams. There are also many important creeks: Somerset, Stoney, Quemahoning, Cox's, Will's, Rush, Buffalo Lick, Blue Lick, Penn's, Shade, Elk Lick, Middle, Scrub, Glade, Laurel Hill, Higgin's, Well's, Miller's, Rhoad's, Conover's Fork; and a number of runs: Negro Glade, Jones', Rodger's, Oldman's, Little Meadow, Pig Piney, Garey's, Flaherty's, M'Conaughey, Beaver Dam, Scaffold Camp, Savage, &c.

Three of the leading turnpike roads from the east to the west, pass through this county. In the northern part of the county, the main turnpike road from Philadelphia by Harrisburg, Carlisle, Chambersburg, Bedford, Stoystown, and Greensburg to Pittsburg, passes through. The

turnpike from Bedford to Mount Pleasant, &c., passes through the middle of the county. The National turnpike road crosses the south-west corner. There is also a turnpike road leading from the town of Somerset, by Berlin, to Cumberland in Maryland, from which point a railroad extends to Baltimore. The common roads are generally in a passable condition; and the large streams have bridges across them.

Education is not in the most flourishing condition; but, it is believed that ere long this important subject will receive due attention. In some parts of the county the common-school system is favorably received.

There is an academy of advanced standing in the town of Somerset, to which the Legislature some years ago granted \$2,000, and since smaller sums. There are nineteen school districts in this county; fifteen made reports, in which 119 schools were taught: stating that 13 additional schools are still wanted in the 15 districts reported. In these schools 2,594 males, and 2,140 females were taught, for three months and a half in 1845. A school tax of \$3,466,57 was assessed; and the State appropriation amounted to \$2,061,93. Total cost of instruction \$4,444,11; fuel and contingencies, \$219,87; cost of school house, &c., \$1,692,86, for 1845. The average salaries paid to teachers, \$14,83 cts. per month.

The religious denominations are Lutherans, German Reformed, Methodists, Mennonites, Baptists, Omish, Presbyterians, Catholics, Seventh Day Baptists, &c.

SOMERSET, (formerly called Brunnerstown) was laid out by Mr. Brunner, in the year 1795, is a handsomely built town, situated on the summit of a hill, near the centre of the county, on the turnpike road from Bedford to Mount Pleasant, Washington and Wheeling. It is 37 miles west of Bedford. It was incorporated by an act of Assembly, March 5th, 1804. The act was enlarged and explained by a supplementary act passed April 7, 1807. It has about 675 inhabitants, and contains a court-house, county offices, a jail, an academy, and several churches: German Reformed, Lutheran and Methodist.

This place was visited by a very destructive fire in October, 1833. Twenty dwelling houses, 15 shops and offices, 3 stores, 2 taverns, in one of which was kept the post office, and a number of stables, smoke houses, and other back buildings, were destroyed.

Berlin, eight miles south of Somerset, was laid out many years ago; incorporated February 27th, 1821. It contains between 500 and 600 inhabitants. It is 4 miles south of the turnpike road from Bedford to Somerset. It contains several churches.

Stoystown is a flourishing post-town and borough, incorporated March 29, 1819, ten miles north-east of Somerset, on the Bedford and Pittsburg turnpike road. It contains one or two churches, between sixty and seventy dwellings, and about 400 inhabitants. Population in 1840, 357. Mr. Stoy, an old revolutionary soldier, laid out this place. It is said that only a few years ago Mr. Stoy used to point out the ruins of a house built at the time of General Forbes's expedition in the fall of 1758.

There are other villages in this county,—Smithfield, Petersburg, Salisbury, Milford, Jennersville, Lexington, Shanksville.