

A LOGANVILLE HISTORY a community takes shape 1776-1852.

By Gerald E. Dietz

[Source of most of the information printed here is Prowell's "York County History" 1907]

During the years leading up to the Revolutionary War, there were only about eight pioneer families making up what would become Loganville. On average, the land had cost them about five to ten dollars per acre, and a lot of hard work. Besides the produce grown on the farms, there would be the cash crop of tobacco. I'm told that the main export to Baltimore was large woven baskets made of local white oak. These strong baskets were used to ship oysters in the shell. Once eaten, the remaining oyster shells were used to pave the streets. Our pioneer farmers found it easier to haul their goods down the road to Baltimore, than to ferry them across the Susquehanna and then make the long haul to the port of Philadelphia. It was during this time the brightly painted Conestoga Wagons made their appearance as huge transporters of goods. Large curved bottom boxes covered with canvas, mounted on heavy frames to take the rough terrain, and special wide wheels, all pulled by many large draft horses rather than oxen. The driver rode the lead horse. If he got stuck and he had to be pulled out of the mud, he would have to give his prized brass horse bells to that person in payment, hence the saying, "I'll be there with bells on." Meaning, in response to an invitation, if all goes well, I'll be there. There were several fords across the Susquehanna and today you can still see the ruts worn in the rocks, if you know where to look.

Being people of deep religious conviction, around 1758 new churches would be started in the area. One of the first was Codorus Church of the Brethren, organized by Elder Jacob Tanner [Donner] in Dunker Valley just east of town. The thirty members would worship in private homes, much as the Amish do today, until 1872 when a brick church was built on the site now occupied by the 1965 structure. Most Brethren Churches in the area grew from Codorus Church. In 1758, St. Peter's "Yellow Church," German Reformed Church, met with Friedensaal's [White Church] Lutheran Church west of town. St. Peter's would build a log church in 1783, a brick church in 1876, and in recent years become independent and build across the road. After the Revolutionary War, Jacob Albright started the Methodist churches in the area in 1808. Jacob Albright was the pastor who wore his uniform under his pastor's robes and upon finishing his sermon took off the robes, laid his sword across the pulpit, and urged his congregant males to join his militia outside. Methodists were the only church who had services in English at the time.

Here on the frontier of York County, our hardy pioneer ancestors had survived the many years of the French and Indian War. But now their British overlords, who had amassed great debt in the process, decided the colonists would be taxed in order to pay that debt. Just about everything was taxed, complaints seemed to fall on deaf ears in British courts, and soon there were rumblings of throwing off the British yoke and becoming independent. Quickly things deteriorated, armed conflict broke out, and local militias were formed. The first units from York force-marched to the Battle of Bunker Hill.

Though the German settlers were a conservative religious people, most took up arms and answered the call when militias were formed in 1775. Joining them were the Scotch Irish settlers who had been forced out of Northern Ireland. After a study of the original settlers of Loganville area, I found nearly all of those names show up on local militia musters. Only the very oldest men's names are missing from the lists. Of course young men under 21yrs old were considered under legal age to carry a musket, so they don't show up. This doesn't mean they didn't take part, as they usually served as wagon drivers hauling

supplies for the quartermaster. It is interesting to note, that many of these men re-enlisted a second time in 1777-78 to see the war to its end.

After the war, the returning men found land prices shoot up to two hundred dollars an acre. Yet, two new families, John Fry and Peter Brillhart, bought land raising the number of families in town to ten landowners in 1787.

As a new century dawned, many changes were about to take place, the first of which was the splitting of Adams County from York County on January 22, 1800. In 1814, the first wooden bridge across the Susquehanna was built, and the state banking system was formed. The public school system was established about this same time, with the county footing the bill for families whose children were designated on the tax lists as "Poor Child," because the family couldn't afford to pay for their education. The canal system was installed along the Susquehanna and transported goods up and down the river, and quickly became obsolete when the railroads came on to the scene.

The banking system and the development of new and better sawmills changed the appearance of the countryside during this time. Huge rafts of hemlock logs were floated down the Susquehanna from northern Pennsylvania forests and cut up at Wrightsville. The lumber was used to make houses two story, and barns bigger all over York County. Farming changed as new machinery was developed, old crops disappeared and a few new crops became staple, like wheat, oats, corn, rye and tobacco. The tobacco grown in our area was more suitable for making cigars so several cigar factories opened. The hills around Loganville were found to be excellent for orchards and these continue to this day. A need for large leather drive belts, harness, shoes, etc. would keep two tanneries in business, one at each end of town. Butchers were needed to supply the growing population with meat.

Being on the main road to Baltimore, there was a tavern and hotel on the square. No small town would be without a general store.

Finally, in 1820, Robert Wilson, a respected court crier and auctioneer, built a house on Main Street. There he would become the town's first postmaster. It was Wilson who first laid out the town, had Robert Richie survey it, and named it "Loganville," after Colonel Henry Logan of Dillsburg. Logan had represented York County in Congress.

By 1830 there were twelve houses, a hotel, and a store opened by Jacob Gipe in the home of Rev. E. B. Bailey. Sam Keyser succeeded Wilson as postmaster in that year. William Tell Faust was the proprietor of the "Loganville Hotel," according to the Susquicentennial Program. Faust was a well-liked, able proprietor known throughout the county.

Loganville had twenty houses and a population of ninety in 1840. For over fifty years, school children attended a one-room log schoolhouse, which stood near the Evangelical Cemetery.

From the Susquicentennial program, I learned that Loganville had a band in 1850. The band was organized by Henry Kerlinger and Henry Decker, and would continue for decades. April 2, 1852 Loganville would finally be incorporated as a borough.

Up to this point I haven't addressed the subject of slavery in the York-Adams area, but that's not to say it didn't exist. Because of Quaker influence, slavery was discouraged as early as 1712 in Pennsylvania. Yet, there were 77 slaves in York and Adams counties in 1800. By 1820 there were only

six, four women servants and two men, and the last man died in 1841. This means that there were no York or Adams County slaves or active slave owners twenty years before the Civil War. Prior to the Civil War, York County was a major station on the Underground Railroad for escaped southern slaves on their way to Canada. Once in the area, many former slaves decided to put down permanent roots in this rich agricultural and industrial area, rising to positions of wealth and influence. The York Heritage Society can share many stories about this period, and how local residents turned back “slave catchers” on numerous occasions at the risk of their own lives.

The little agricultural town of Loganville was slowly growing around the hotel that had been a popular stop for farmers hauling goods to Baltimore prior to 1838. On July 31, 1848, York County welcomed home the troops returning from service in the Mexican War. Closest rail service was the Northern Central formed in 1850 [now the York Heritage Rail Trail], destined to haul goods from Harrisburg to Baltimore and thousands of troops south during the Civil War in 1861-1865.

Loganville Borough was incorporated April 2, 1852. The first officers of the borough were John F. Beck, judge, George W. Reeve and Jacob Glatfelter, inspectors, John Beck, Sr., chief burgess, Michael Snyder, assistant burgess, and Charles Overmiller, constable. Town council members were Daniel Goodling, John Hildebrand, Adam Krout, Samuel Smith, and Frederick Venus.

Now, with most goods and passengers traveling by rail, Loganville would be passed by and continue to sit surrounded by orchards and tobacco farms. Yet, the hotel survived as some people continued to travel by carriage on what would become known as “The Susquehanna Trail.” Jeremiah Brown had been one of the early respected proprietors of the hotel. William Sprenkle finally replaced the old structure with one boasting “modern conveniences.” In the early 1900’s Sprenkle’s son-in-law, W. T. Faust, ran the hotel.

Perhaps this all explains why the Census’ for Loganville reveal little population change from 1860 at 221, 1870 at 256, 1880 at 320, 1890 at 296, and 1900 at 343. The environment and population are reflected in the growth of the local school. 50 years a single one-room school served the children of the borough, but in 1892 the school was enlarged to two rooms. E. B. Goodling had taught several terms, W. A. Spate taught several decades in the early 1900’s, and my wife’s uncle, Paul Gable, taught there in the 1930’s.

Communications in the area saw a bit of improvement in the late 1800’s, when in 1871 a double track was completed from York to Baltimore, and along with that came the first telegraph through the area and on to Harrisburg and Columbia. In 1895 the York Telephone Company expanded out into several towns, further upgrading communications.

Health care was not lacking during this period, as a precession of doctors seemed to open a practice, then later found Glen Rock to be a more desirable area for their services. Dr. George P. Yost, who later moved to Glen Rock, a major stop on the Northern Central Railroad, served local residents many years. Dr. J. C. Hildebrand, then Dr. Robert Hildebrand and Dr. Andrew Falkenstein, both born in Loganville and later moved to Glen Rock, followed Dr. Yost. Dr. Charles Howard, another native of the borough, was serving in the early 1900’s.

Mother Nature, during the late 1800’s, made herself known when in 1884 the first great flood recorded in York took place. Then March 11, 1888 residents all over York County experienced one of the worst blizzards ever recorded. Without modern snow removal equipment, residents just sat and waited for the snow to melt, which took over a week. That spring the Susquehanna River had huge ice jams at Long Level, with ice sheets over a foot thick. In 1896 a rare tornado visited the area, destroying many

buildings at the York Fairground and lifting and dropping the old wooden Wrightsville Bridge, ten feet north of the foundation.

During the late 1800's and up until World War Two, local farmers cultivated a type of tobacco, which was particularly good for making cigars. Naturally, many residents of Loganville and the surrounding area were soon employed in the cigar making business. D. B. Goodling, U. A. Yost, M.E. Plymire, Peter Feigly, and John Baum owned the main factories.