

EARLY HISTORY OF INDIANA COUNTY—CONTINUED.

or five churches were built within three years. In 1834 the communication was opened over the river, the trip was but little used, and the trade and travel, to a great extent, "passed by on the other side." Notwithstanding this, the town continued to thrive, and in 1840 had a population of 1000, and 1,500 in 1850.

The Pennsylvania Railroad, which was completed to Pittsburgh in 1852, seemed to draw heavily upon the vitality of Blairsville, and in 1860, the population had receded to 1,000 souls, just what it was in 1840. Since the completion of the Indiana Branch Penn. R.R., and the West Penn. R.R., the terminus of which is at this place, the business is entirely local. The Penn. Canal became obsolete about the year 1864. Within the last few years some improvements have been made in the town, and others are still being made. The offices and shops of the West Pennsylvania Railroad Company are now located here, and give employment to a large number of men.

There is now six churches, two banks, a good variety of stores, several mills, two tanneries, three hotels, and two flourishing schools. The Blairsville Academy, recently built, and the Blairsville Ladies' Seminary, which has maintained a high character as an institution of learning since its organization in 1833 and is now very popular under the direction of J. Jewett Parks, A. M., Principal. Blairsville is situated on the right bank of the Conemaugh River, a stream flowing from the Allegheny about thirty miles from Pittsburgh, and is distant from that city, by the course of the river, seventy miles. By the Pennsylvania Railroad fifty-seven miles. The Conemaugh at this point, furnishes valuable water power, and is in grand contrast with the surrounding scenery of mountain, hill and dale.

BUFFINGTON. Buffington was formed from Pine in 1868, and in 1870 had a population of 877. The principal business of the Township is farming and lumbering. Among the early settlers were William Bracken, John Stewart, Joseph McCartney. The principal village is Dilltown, and was laid out by James Dill and William Stevens. Coal, lime and iron are found in considerable quantities.

CANOE TOWNSHIP. Canoe was formed from a part of Montgomery in 1868. It has a population of 908. The principal production is lumber. The Little Mahoning affords convenient transportation for marketing the lumber. There are several first class mills in the Township. Among the early settlers were Solomon Leasure, Solomon Braugher, D. Bower, Joel Stout, Joseph Brady and John Brady.

CHERRY HILL. Cherry Hill was formed from Green and Pine in 1855, and in 1870 had a population of 1,576. The soil is a sandy loam, and is well adapted to farming and stock growing. The minerals are coal, lime and iron. The principal village is Greenville, situated in the east part of the Township. Among the early settlers were John Morton, J. Evans, J. Huston.

CENTER TOWNSHIP. Center Township was formed from Armstrong in 1807, and in 1870 had a population of 1,553. The soil is generally adapted to raising grain and growing stock. There appears to be a sufficient quantity of coal to make the opening and working of mines profitable. A greater part of the east half of the Township is occupied by a coal company who are carrying on successful mining operations. The Township is well laid out with roads, although some of them are but little used, but a substantial claim is filed upon the same by dumping in a few loads of stones promiscuously. This rule seems to have been practiced in different localities in the county. There was in the Township several block houses in older times, to which the people were in the habit of congregating for mutual protection from the ravages of the Indians. One was on the farm now owned by Peter Fair, the logs with marks of post holes still remain. Among the earlier settlers of the county who fled to this block house, were Thomas Wilkin, Daniel McKesson, James Mitchell, Andrew Dixon, Samuel Dixon, G. Doty, Thomas McCray, Samuel Todd—the latter was owner of the land on which the building stood. Thomas Wilkin carried apple trees on his back from Franklin county and planted them on the farm now owned by Robert McKee. The family were forced to flee, and while they were away the Indians came and pulled up all the trees, except three, which are still standing. The family returned again seven years afterward. Thomas Burns settled on the farm now owned by William and Thomas Burns in the year 1791. He brought apple trees from Chambersburg and planted them; they are yet living. The oldest organized church in Indiana county, is in Center Township. It bears the name of Bethel. The Psalm Book used by the Rev. J. W. Henderson is still in existence. Mr. Henderson was the first Presbyterian Minister in the county, and was made Pastor of the Bethel Church at the time of its organization. The association called "the whiskey boys" had their headquarters at the house now owned by Robert Hamill. John Allison built the first Grist-mill in Center Township, the site of which is located on the land now owned by John H. Devers.

CONEMAUGH TOWNSHIP. Conemaugh was formed from Armstrong Township in March, 1807. It lies in the southwest corner of the county, and had a population of 2,155 in 1870, including Saltburg. The soil is a rich loam, well adapted to agriculture. The principal minerals are coal, iron ore and lime-stone. The surface is hilly. It is well watered by the Black Lick Creek and numerous other streams that empty into the Conemaugh and Kiskiminetus Rivers, bordering on the South. Black Lick Creek seems to have increased materially in size since the settlement of this region. An old edition gives as the origin of its unique name. It appears that among the relics that were early discovered along its banks, was an old gun-barrel, upon which were the initials B. L., of the nameless Creek, so they called it Black Lick. Kiskiminetus, the name of the river from the confluence of the Conemaugh and Loyalhanna, is a hard name to spell, and it is quite as hard to find the origin. Saltburg is the principal town in Conemaugh, and is located upon the Conemaugh River at its junction with the Loyalhanna. The first settlers in this locality were principally Scotch and Irish who came from the old counties of the State, and were a very sober and industrious people. From 1770 to 1794 the settlers were quite insecure on account of the hostility of the Indians. A block house was erected on the Dixon farm, as a means of defense. One of the Indian war paths was along the Loyalhanna. There was an Indian Town about one mile below Saltburg, on the left bank of the Kiskiminetus. Notwithstanding the frequent interruptions by the Indians, the settlement was rapidly extended. Among the early settlers born were the Wilsons, Wray, Mullins, Marshalls, Lemons, Pattens, Loves, Drums, Johnstons, Robinsons, Huns, Huns, McKiddes, Colmans, Thompsons and others. A number of these had been raised under Presbyterian influence, and they brought with them the Bible, and held family worship. Robert Robinson, Sr., came to this locality in 1795, and built a cabin in sight of the river opposite Conport, soon after built his residence which is still standing upon the farm now owned by W. J. Brown, where he lived and died. In 1776, the year in which the Declaration of Independence was published, the Rev. James Power, afterward D. D., became pastor of Mount Pleasant and Sewickley Churches, and began to preach as stated supply at Unity. Unity, fourteen miles distant, was the nearest point from Saltburg for public worship, prior to 1783, the close of the Revolutionary war. From that time the Presbytery of Redstone, which then embraced all of this region in its field, sent out numerous supplies into the thinly settled districts, by whom churches were organized. There were no settled Pastors until 1790. On the 22d of November of that year, old Salem Congregational, and Folk Run, obtained Under-Sheriffs. Mr. John McWherrin being ordained and installed pastor of the first in connection with Unity and Mr. Samuel Porter of the other two. The Rev. Joseph Henderson was called to the congregation of Ebenezer, April 9th, 1799, and became their pastor. To these points where tents, and afterwards rude log houses of worship, had been erected, our forefathers from the surrounding country gathered with their families for public worship.

A log Grist-mill was erected on Johnson's Point at a very early day, to which the settlers packed their grain to be prepared for food. From the Indiana side they came from five to ten miles across a region of country, but thinly settled,

and winding through unbroken woodland, in the very edge of the river; they forded it at a point just above the junction of Loyalhanna. Later, there was an Oil-mill, and still-house built upon the point, and business began to center here. Flat-boats were laden at the point with home products for New Orleans. This was the only source of communication for trade until the opening of the Pennsylvania Canal in March, 1826, on the opposite side of the Conemaugh, which did away with flat-boats. From this date there were no more bills of shipment made out at Johnson's Point. The line of trade passed by on the other side and touched at Saltburg. The early rising town faded in the disappointment and went down, and to-day a lone rude dwelling—the oldest in all the country around—marks the place. The early discovery and manufacture of salt in this locality, is accredited to one William Johnson, who came from Franklin county in 1800, and settled upon the point. In 1813 or '14, he bored the first well, in the pursuit of salt, in the bed of the Conemaugh about two miles above its junction with the Loyalhanna. At the depth of 267 feet, he found an abundant fountain, strongly impregnated with salt. He was soon in the full tide of successful experiment, making about thirty bushels per day, all of which found a ready market; and some of it at first sold as high as 64 per bushel. Others soon embarked in the business, and the manufacture of salt was carried on quite extensively for twelve or fourteen years, when the low price discouraged its production. There are but three wells in operation at the present time. These are from one to five miles above Saltburg. The deepest of these wells is 1,000 feet. In 1823 a salt well was sunk on the left bank of the river a short distance above the mouth of the Blacklick; but to the grief of all the parties interested, it only poured forth a stream of useless dirty looking oil. They filled up the well and abandoned it. Of late search has been made to find the only well, but in vain. In the winter of 1848 and '47, Andrew Boggs, who had opened a farm and erected a house and barn on the present site of Saltburg, laid out the town and sold the first lots. The name was suggested by its proximity to the salt works along the river, which gave character to the place and stimulated its growth. Several stores and hotels soon started up and Saltburg began to trade. The first hotel was on Washington street, just below where the Marshall House now stands. James Fitzgibbon was proprietor. He also kept a little store in connection with it—the same, which appears to have been the first store in town. Joseph Anderson, proprietor Anderson House, came to Saltburg in 1828. His father was a settler in this vicinity before 1812. Robert McElwain came to this place in 1829, and started a store in a little framed shop on Washington street. William McElwain came in 1831, and with Robert his brother, established a store on Salt street, in the building now occupied by William R. McElwain as a residence.

The raging canal was now in full blast, business was getting brisk, and matters must be adjusted. Edward Carlton, by appointment, was the first Justice. In 1832, J. B. Robinson came into town. J. B. Robinson came the same year, and is still in business here. The first church building erected in Saltburg was built of stone in 1819, at an expense of \$600. The dedication or opening exercises were conducted by the Rev. Joseph W. Henderson. By order of the Presbytery of Redstone, Thomas Davis appeared August 1st, 1824, and organized the Church. Rev. Joseph Harper was the first pastor. The Church was not finished until the spring of 1831. On the first day of April, same year, it was consumed by fire. The present commodious brick structure, on the same site, was built soon after. In common with the growth of the town, other societies were formed, and churches were built successively. Methodist Episcopal Church, built of frame in 1841; contractors, Robinson and Black First pastor, Rev. Jeremiah Phillips. Associate, now U. P., built of brick in 1843. Contractor, John White. Church organized by Rev. James Lee. First installed pastor, Rev. Oliver P. Katz in December, 1861. Catholic Church, built of brick on margin of the Conemaugh Township, in 1845. First officiating priest, Rev. Stillman. Universalist Church, built of frame in 1870. Contractors, H. & S. Porters. First advocate of doctrine in church, Rev. Andrew Getty, U. P. Church, rebuilt of frame in 1870. Contractors H. & S. Porters. Baptist Church, built of brick in 1843; Contractor, James R. Daugherty. First settled pastor, Rev. Thomas Wedell. The Western Presbyterian Synod was completed to this place in the spring of 1864, and the first railroad car arrived the 18th of June, same year. The first car crossed the river on the magnificent bridge at this point, September 10, 1864. About this time the Pennsylvania Canal gave up its freight, to the more rapid current for trade, and soon went dry. These circumstances changed the direction of things somewhat, but did not discourage the town. A considerable amount of shipping is done here at the present time, and the place is in a flourishing condition. Much salt is secured from the natural advantages of the place; its unsurpassed water power, its mineral springs and the charming scenery.

EAST MAHONING.—Is one of the four townships formed from Mahoning in 1846. Has a population of 1123. The surface is rolling, the soil fertile and has a mixture of Lime stone; in some parts, it is well watered by the Little Mahoning Creek and numerous small streams and living springs. Is adapted to Grain and Stock Growing. Coal is the principal mineral and is found in abundance; among the early settlers, were John Park, Casper Meigs, John Leasure, John Sutton, James Brady, William Work, James Craig, William McCreery, and William McCall. John Park settled on the ground where Marion now stands, about the year 1800. The principal town is Marion situated in the south part of the township and is a prosperous borough with a population of 308. This town has two new churches and numerous stores, mills, factories, shops, hotels, &c.

GRANT TOWNSHIP.—Was formed from Montgomery in 1868. The population in 1870 was 999. This township is one among the Lumbering districts of Indiana County.

GREEN TOWNSHIP.—Was formed from Wheatfield in 1834, and in 1870 had a population of 1991. The soil is a sandy loam, is adapted to Stock and Grain growing, which is followed to some extent, although lumbering is the principal business. Coal, Iron and Lime are found in abundance. The first settlers were of Welsh origin, among whom were Daniel Fearce, J. Butterbaugh, Simon Dana, all of whom settled about 1820. Cookport and Pine Flats are the principal villages, which are still in thirteenth century. At Pine Flats there is a very flourishing academy.

MONTGOMERY.—Was formed from Green in 1835, and in 1870 had a population of 931. It is among the lumbering districts of the County. The principal village is Cherry Tree, which is situated at the Point where Cambria, Clearfield and Indiana Counties corner. It derived its name from the fact that a cherry tree was growing at that corner. This was the point supposed to have been reached by Wm. Peain when he made his voyage up the Susquehanna river in a canoe, to the farthest point that a boat could go, from whence was started the famous purchase line which runs from Cherry Tree to Kittanning. At this point also the Susquehanna River passes over the corner of the three counties.

NORTH MAHONING.—This township was formed from Wheatfield in 1823, and in 1871 had a population of 1263. The soil is sandy loam, is adapted to Grain and Stock growing, which is the chief employment. Lumbering is carried on to some extent in some parts of the township.

PINE TOWNSHIP.—Was formed from Wheatfield in 1850, and in 1870 had a population of 921. This township is among the lumbering districts of the County. Among the early settlers were Hugh Donahoe, F. Mulvihill, John Leonard, James McAffery, John Oke.

WAYNE.—This township was formed from Washington and Green in 1847, and in 1870 had a population of 1731. The soil is a sandy loam, is adapted to grain and stock growing, which is the chief employment. Coal and Iron ore are found in abundance. The first church was built in 1824 and among the first settlers were Hugh Thompson and Hugh Cannon, who settled near the village of Kellysburg, which is the principal village in the township. The Old Block House was built in 1790 upon the farm now owned by Dr. K. Thompson, in which General Wayne and troops were at one time stationed.

WHITE MAHONING. This township is one of the four formed from Mahoning in 1846. It has a population of 1131. It is well adapted to farming and stock growing. Coal is found in considerable abundance, near Plumville, which is the principal village in the township. Among the early settlers were Anda Weaver, Josh Lewis, David Pierce, Samuel Fleming and J. Wadding.

WASHINGTON.—Was formed from Armstrong in 1823, and in 1870 had a population of 1602. The Northern portion of the township is known as the Bradford Lands and of late has not been much improved, but at present is in a prosperous condition. It is well watered by Plum Creek and its tributaries.

WEST MAHONING. This is one of the four townships formed from Mahoning in 1846. It is situated in the North-west corner of the county and has a population of 988. The surface is hilly and broken. The soil is a sandy loam and is adapted to the growing of grain and stock. Coal and Iron ore are found in abundance. It is well watered with the Mahonings and numerous small streams and springs. Smithsburg is the principal town and is situated on the left bank of the Little Mahoning.

WHEATFIELD. Wheatfield Township, was formed soon after the organization of Westmoreland County, and at the formation of Indiana County in 1803. Armstrong and Wheatfield Townships embraced the whole county. It is now one of twenty-four, and occupies the south-west corner of the county. The Conemaugh River flows along the southern boundary, and separates it from Westmoreland County. The State Canal follows along the river. Armstrong, the principal town, is among the oldest towns in the county; it is fifteen miles southeast of the Borough of Indiana, and thirteen miles east of Blairsville. In 1823 it contained forty dwellings, four stores and six taverns. Our Map of Armstrong will show comparison in 1871. Among the early settlers were William Bracken and the Tomb family, who settled about the year 1802.

WHITE TOWNSHIP. White Township was formed three miles around the borough in 1848. J. B. Allison, born in 1796, is the oldest man now living, born in White township. Joseph Thompson, now seventy-four, was born three miles north from the borough. Wm. Leary was one of the settlers that were driven out of the township by the Indians. John Wilson settled here in 1791. Robert Pilon in 1796, Andrew Allison in 1797, Blaney Adair in 1800, John, Robert and Jonathan Agay in 1806. First newspaper published in Indiana, and the first in the county, was the "American," by Jas. McAlhan as early as 1814; and after was located on present site of A. W. Taylor's residence, was burnt down in 1815. Its politics was Federalism. About the year 1821 a Democratic paper "Indians and Jefferson White," was published for a time by Taylor & Wheelock, afterwards by John McFarley and subsequently to this under the title of "Free Press," by John Taylor; and afterwards conducted by others (under various names), and is now published under the title of "Indiana Progress." About 1829 the "American" was published by Jos. & A. W. Moorhead, as an anti-Masonic paper, and was continued for some years. The next was the "Inquirer" (Democratic), commenced about 1832, published by F. Cannon. An abolition paper called the "Clarion of Freedom" was started about 1839, by James Moorhead. The True American, Know Nothing, was started in Indiana by G. P. Reed, about 1854, and was submerged into what is now the "Progress." The "Messenger" started in 1856, is now a decided Republican organ. The "Indiana Democrat" at present in the hands of James B. Sansom, was started in 1862.

The first meetings for preaching were held in the woods, then in the upper room of the old Jail, afterwards in the court house, and at the tent in the woods, near where the public-school building now stands on Mahoning street.

CHERRY TREE. Presbyterian, organized 1849; Rev. James Galbraith first pastor; first church building erected 1825, second 1857. Evangelical Lutheran, organized 1813; Rev. John G. Lambright first pastor, church building erected 1830. United Presbyterian (formerly Associate Presbyterian or Seceder), organized 1816; Rev. David Blair, who is now living, 1871, first pastor; first church building erected 1827 second 1851 and improved 1867. Methodist Episcopal, organized 1831; Rev. Wm. Batt first pastor, church building erected 1839. African Methodist Episcopal, organized about 1844; no church building at present. Catholic, first church building erected 1844, second 1870. Episcopal church building erected 1856. Baptist, organized 1836, church building erected 1859. German Lutheran, organized about 1867, church building erected by the Free Presbyterians about 1854; Rev. Meyer, first pastor Congregational, organized 1879.

WEST WHEATFIELD. West Wheatfield was formed from Wheatfield in 1861. It is situated in the south part of the county. The population in 1870 was 1,318. The Conemaugh River flows along the southern boundary of the Township. The principal village is Centreville, situated in the south part of the Township, on the Conemaugh River, and was laid out in September, 1828, by William Liggett. The Pennsylvania Canal, now obsolete; passed through this village. An old Indian village is said to have stood where Centreville now stands. Robert Liggett settled on the Conemaugh in West Wheatfield Township, on the farm now owned by William Liggett. In the year 1790, David Reid settled on the adjoining farm in the year 1799; he was the first Justice. Samuel Bratten settled on the farm now owned by S. Fulmer, in 1800. John Allen and William Graham settled in 1795. The first permanent settler on the Centreville farm, now owned by William Liggett, was Ephraim Wallace, who came in 1800. The first farm east of Centreville were settled by the Hice Brothers, in 1795. The first Saw-mill was built by George Mabon, and owned by William and Thomas Mabon. The first Grist-mill was Hugh St. Clair's, near the present site of Gambell's mill. The first "hewed log" and "shingle roof" house was David Reid's and was burned by the Indians. The first stone house was Robert Liggett's. The first church was the old stone Church, near Bethel minister was Rev. Johnston. The first Presbyterian Church was at Centreville. The first Methodist Church was the White Church in Germany. The first Lutheran Church was the brick Church in Germany. The first Commissioner was Archibald Johnston. The first Constable was Samuel St. Clair. The first boat yard was David Reid's. The first iron carried from West Wheatfield to Louisville, Ky., was by David Reid and John Bennett. The first Raft of logs was run to Newport by Andrew Reid, Jr., and David Reid, Jr. The first large Orchard was planted by Robert Liggett. The soil of this Township is fertile and the principal productions are corn, wheat, oats, coal, iron, &c.

YOUNG.—This township was formed from Black Lick and Conemaugh in the year 1834, and in 1870 had a population of 1509. The soil is sandy loam, and lime-stone land. Coal and lime are found in large quantities in most parts of the township. It is well watered by the Black Lick Creek and Altman Run, and their tributaries. It is well furnished with schools and churches. The Elders Ridge Academy is situated in the South West part of the township and is now in the 24th year of its successful operation, under the direction of Rev. A. Donaldson D. D. In the early settlement of the township there was a fort erected on the farm now occupied by S. J. Craighead, to guard against the Indians. It was constructed there for several years. The settlers often had to flee to secure their safety. Among the early settlers were William McFarland, James Miller, John Ewing, Tobias Long, James Smith, Allen McComb, James Elder, Robert Elder, Matthew Watson and David Hutchinson. The old election ground of Conemaugh is on the farm now owned by John Neill. The principal village is Jacksonville, situated on the line between Black Lick and Young. Has a population of 140.