

## Excerpts from the Robinson Twp. Historical Society History Book

### "Ancestors' Lifestyle in Moon, Fayette and then Robinson Townships, Part VII"

Each issue features an excerpt from the Robinson Township history book. This excerpt continues with a n overview of the western suburbs and its split into various counties before Robinson emerged as its own township.

In 1798 Henry Uery was the first white settler living on the Sewickley side of the Ohio River. He operated a ferry for crossing the Ohio. The main road from Pittsburgh came out on what is now Beaver Grade Road and down the valley to what is now Stoops Ferry. People brought products to sell to the flat boatmen on their way to New Orleans.

Benjamin McCormick was born in Ireland and came to America in 1735, first settling in Maryland. He then came to Moon Township and acquired a Virginia certificate in October 1785. He developed his property into the large family farm on Beaver Grade Road.

Joshua Meek, Sr. was born in Virginia. He was the father of Joshua, Jr. and John Meek who received patents from Virginia in 1788 on the site of Sharon Church and Carnot School. They were forced to flee from raiding Indians for safety. They returned after four years. The early Meek families had a number of Negro servants who are supposed to be buried in Sharon Cemetery. A young Meek couple and their baby lived in a cabin near Carnot. They had shelled some corn to take to a gristmill and had wheat to be ground into flour. The husband put one sack in front and one behind him on his horse and went to the mill. Some hours after he left several Indians came to the door and wanted to enter. The young wife saw them coming and dropped the bar across the door and refused to let them enter. When they started to force their way into the cabin, she raised a section of the floor that led to a cave under the cabin. She wrapped the baby in a quilt and fled through the underbrush to the log stable. There she mounted her horse and fled with the baby and eluded the Indians.

After riding awhile she arrived at an outpost, probably Vance's Fort. Although there is no verification of this story, it is certainly possible.

Joseph Scott had 400 acres along Montour Creek patented in 1785. His farm was in the present Scott's Station. In

1999, it was sold and the graves were moved.

The Stoops family had a home on the banks of Chartiers Creek, five miles from Pittsburgh. James Stoops built himself a log cabin where he lived with his wife and three-year-old son. When he returned, he discovered that in his absence, someone had set his cabin on fire and taken his wife and son captive. The clues told him the culprits were a small band of Indians on horses. He followed them on the old Indian Trail that led northwest paralleling the Ohio River on the south until it reached the Narrows Run ravine. Here he turned south following the ravine to the river, crossing the river and continued toward Ohio. Sam Brady, a scout for General Brodhead from Fort Pitt, was returning from a trip to the North Country. He heard something that caused him to hide in the underbrush. An Indian carrying a child came along, followed by several other Indians. The last Indian was a distance behind, but when he came into view, Sam Brady saw a woman behind him on a horse. The scout could not see the woman taken captive. So he killed the Indian, saving the woman. While Sam Brady and the woman were still hiding from any other Indians, James Stoops came by trailing the Indians. He was extremely glad to find his wife unharmed but he was sorrowful for his son. The baby was not found for three years. The boy was the grandfather of Captain Stoops who bought the ferry that bore his name in 1875.

There is much to be told about the lifestyle of the early Moon Township settlers concerning the way they lived, their early education in the homes and later in the schools, their church life, their industries, and their determined adjustment to pioneer life. Many things have taken place since the colonial times that led to Moon Township's growth and subsequent formation of Fayette Township from which Robinson Township was formed in 1801. The Scott Family owned property on both sides of the Montour Creek. The settler's

lifestyle in colonial times was a far cry from today. Shopping centers and large residential homes have replaced the log cabin in the wilderness. Coal mines, oil/gas wells, and farms are almost a thing of the past. It is our past and should never be forgotten. The Scott Home in Moon Township was sold in 1999 for commercial use and the Meek home was destroyed for a new development at the resistance of many historically minded people. Wonderful historical homes that reflect our ancestors' work and hardships such as the Scott and Meeks residences were lost as a result of commercial development.

#### BEFORE ROBINSON BECAME A TOWNSHIP

In 1774, the District of West Augusta was formed out of the Virginia Territory. In 1776, the District of Augusta was divided into three counties and of these three, one was called Yohogania. A Provincial Government created Westmoreland by an act from Yohogania County. Washington County was formed by an act on March 28, 1781 out of Westmoreland and then Allegheny was subsequently incorporated by an act on September 24, 1788 out of Westmoreland and Washington. Allegheny County was named for the Allegheny River, which is an Indian name meaning "fair water." Fayette Township was formed out of Moon Township in 1790. Fayette was named after a French General, LaFayette. Because of unfair road tax being charged by the citizens on the western part of Fayette, they went to court to form Robinson Township in 1801. The land went from Montour Creek east to Chartiers Creek, south to Robinson Run and west to Pinkerton Run and then north on Montour Creek. Robinson Township was named after Robinson Run.

Excerpted from the Robinson Township Bicentennial Book. Complete copies of the book can be purchased for \$25 by calling Dick Story at 412/264-2733 or the Historical Society at 412/788-6795 on Tuesday or Thursday between 1 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.