

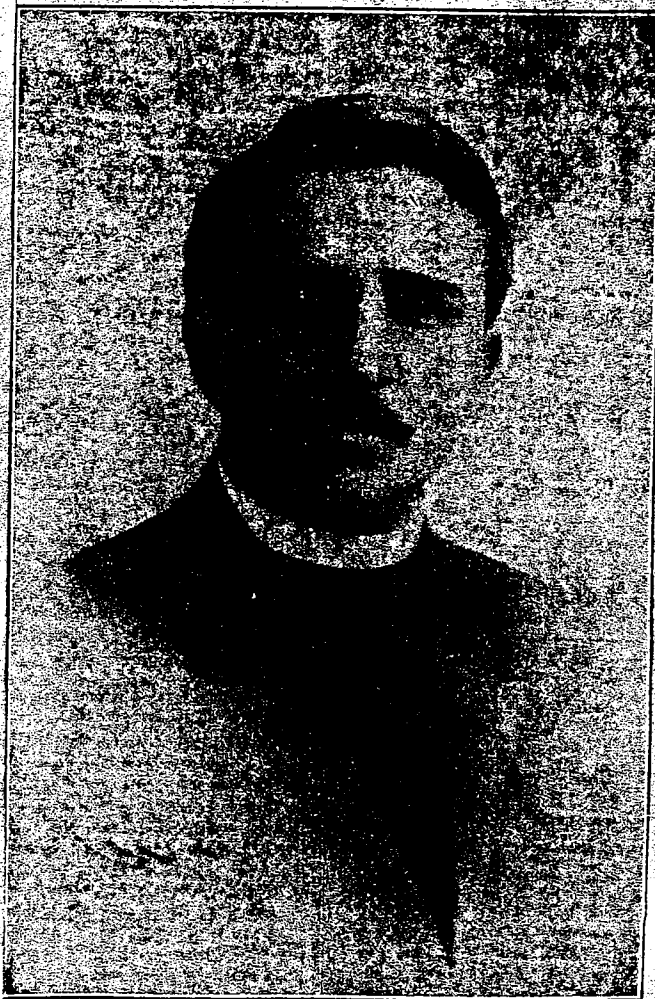
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Greensburg **BURG MORNING** *Review*

Greensburg Morning Review, June 1, 1929

Early History Is Related

COUNTY HISTORIAN



Rev. William A. Zundel, M. A. B. D., of Derry

Pioneers Of Section Helped To Form Policies Of Nation, Speaker Says

First School West of Alleghenies Is Erected Near Present Marker

MET WITH OTHERS AT HANNASTOWN IN 1775

Always interested in historical matters and a close student of Westmoreland county history, Rev. W. A. Zundel, M. A. B. D. of Derry proved himself to be an historian of no mean estate on the occasion of the Memorial Day unveiling of the Fort Allen marker, at Harrold's Reformed church. Rev. Zundel delivered an address taking for his theme, "Fort Allen," and developed his subject to show how the fort came into existence, circumstances that made such a fort necessary, and the far reaching results that grew out of it. He told his story well.

No only did his hearers learn of the actual physical happenings at Fort Allen and in Western Pennsylvania, but they learned of the mighty influence upon American liberties and the development of the Northwest territory that grew out of it. The speaker interpreted for his audience, the spirit of the hardy Pennsylvania German folk who settled about the Harrold's churches, their fine and unselfish patriotism, their honesty, their rugged manliness. The address in full follows:

We have met here to day to stake out a claim in the memory of mankind in behalf of the pioneers who built Fort Allen. They were men of heroic mould and character. Men have misjudged them because they spoke the German language. Historians who were content to write history upon the reports of politicians, have ignored the fundamental things of the frontier life.

Here in this community has laid for more than a century and a half one of the choicest gems of early Pennsylvania life and endeavor.

We are now here assembled to clear away the film from the eyes of men and place this gem in its appropriate and long deserved setting.

Where, in the crown of early American achievement shall be placed this gem of purest quality? In the Hall of Fame, Americans have listed

many notable places. Bunker Hill is crowned with a monument and yet more enduring fame in the orations of Daniel Webster.

Yet Bunker Hill, as a place, is the mere accidental meeting place of contending armies. Any place would have been equally illustrious had that first major battle been fought there.

Westmoreland in Revolution

Philadelphia is crowned because of the immortal Declaration of Independence. Yet, Old Westmoreland County sent more soldiers to fight for that declaration of Independence in the Revolutionary War than did the county of Philadelphia. Yorktown is noted, but not for the work of its native inhabitants.

Pittsburgh is famed in the French and Indian War but not for any special merit of those who lived there. Americans from the outside brought fame to that place.

But here at Fort Allen, not only has there been a work done of national renown but it was done by its home people.

The farmers of this country gathered here to voice in this military activity their conscientious convictions on great national problems and advanced principles of human liberty.

Historic Axe Blows

The axe blows that hewed the logs for Fort Allen were blows from human slavery, separation of church and state, and the various liberties that have ever been fostered by old Pennsylvania.

These axe blows were heard by Lawrence Washington as he vainly endeavored to secure religious toleration in the Province of Virginia. They were heard by Thomas Jefferson as he penned the Immortal Declaration of Independence and the clause for religious liberty in the State of Virginia.

These axe blows have reverberated in every constitutional convention and legislative Hall of the entire north-west system of States. Yea, chips from Fort Allen mingled with the splinters of the Rail splitters of Kentucky and were used to build the fires that blazoned the election of Abraham Lincoln for President.

Lest we seem to praise them above measure, let us say, before going into the heart of our discourse, these

two things—

1st—In the year 1772 these pioneers showed their interest in education by building a schoolhouse in this vicinity,

within fifty yards of this marker. This was possibly the first school and school building west of the Alleghenies. They were men that cherished education. That these settlers did not labor in vain for education is demonstrated by the magnificent consolidated and junior High Schools now being constructed within sight of this marker.

First Declaration of Independence

2nd—Then on May 16, 1775, these settlers assembled at the county seat at Hannastown and adopted the First Declaration of Independence in America.

That these settlers did not talk in vain in their declaration of Independence, is manifested by the graves of Revolutionary Soldiers in this and other nearby cemeteries, and the proud waving of the Stars and Stripes over their schools and over their graves.

In order to get the proper background for the work of these pioneers here in the wilderness, we must go back in their history and take account of their former lives and migrations.

Racial Composition at Harrold's

Dr. Samuel Schmucker, in an article on "The Racial Composition of the Pennsylvania Germans, (Pennsylvania German Society Publications 1923), traces three general migrations of peoples in Europe. He classifies them as the Mediterranean Group; The Nordic Group, in Northern Europe, and the Alpine Group.

This Alpine Group we find first in the Highlands of Europe, in Switzerland.

From there they swept down over Germany and Holland to England, and into France, where we identify them among the Huguenots.

This Alpine race has certain characteristics by which it may be identified in its migrations. Here we have an explanation of the names of the settlers. We have in the early records of this settlement Christian and Frederick Petersing also recorded Frederick Pfersig and now known as Pershing.

This would indicate that the family is of the Alpine Group, with one branch becoming German in language and another branch settling in France for a while.

This Alpine Group in its migrations accumulates a reputation for love of freedom. In the pathway of these Fort Allen Settlers we find the

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First Republic of Europe, and before that the free cantons of Switzerland, Holland, England, and upon entering America we note that they come to Pennsylvania, where in Germantown they made the first protest against slavery made on American soil; and again we find them at Hannastown making the first Declaration of Independence on American soil. Knowing something of their history and traditions we are prepared to expect great things from such men.

In the exploration and settlement of the Ohio country these settlers had a leading part.

Contests for Fur-trade

Business men of both Pennsylvania and Virginia were eager to secure the rich fur trade with the Indians. This trade war accounts for much of the early contests between the two colonies. The organization of the Ohio Company in 1748 was Virginia's way of seeking this trade.

Pennsylvania counteracted by sending Conrad Weiser in 1748 as a special ambassador to the Indians of the Ohio. At Logg's Town on Sept. 3, 1748, he "Set up the Union Flag on a long pole; treated all the Company with a Draw of Rum. The King's health was drunk by Indians and white man." This was the first national flag unfurled in the Ohio country; there, five years before Washington's journey, Weiser raised the Union Flag, the flag of England, and drank the King's health with the Indians.

Celeron, the French explorer first visited the Ohio in 1749.

Weiser's visit to the Ohio brought a full knowledge of that country to the colonies. He gave the Indians gifts sent from both Pennsylvania and Virginia. He made a treaty with the Indians and arranged for further meetings from time to time.

The further story of the contest on the Ohio between England and France is familiar to all school children.

Washington's journey was made in 1753. The building of a fort at the forks of the Ohio followed. The capture of this Fort by the French took place and it was then named Fort Duquesne. The recapture of this Fort was one of the principle objectives of the French and Indian War. While the Ohio Company never received their grant of lands from the King, they were active in behalf of Virginia's claim to the Ohio, and desired to settle that country from Virginia.

and Fourth Battalions were commanded by Col. Henry Bouquet.

It is well known that Forbes captured Fort Duquesne without a battle; but it is not generally known that achievement was due to the work of Christian Post, who was commissioned by Forbes, to alienate his work so well that when the Indians abandoned the French, the French burned the fort and evacuated the place.

Forbes soon returned to the East, but he left detachments of the Royal American Regiment to hold the forts in the West. They were stationed at Macinac, Detroit, Erie, Venango, Pittsburgh, Ligonier and Bedford.

Origin of Name Pittsburgh

Forbes, upon capturing Fort Duquesne called it Fort Pitt, but the German soldiers translated Fort Pitt into their own language and said Pitts-berg and Pittsburgh it is to this day, a surviving memento to the soldiers of the Royal American Regiment.

It has been claimed by Historians that the Scotch-Irish were the pioneers in early American life. We simply cite these facts. An act of Parliament in 1754 stating that the German and Swiss settlers "who for many years past had come to America where waste land had been assigned them on the Frontiers."

The garrisons from Macinac to Bedford were named by Germans and the actual settlements made in this community testify to the fact that these settlers were pioneers.

At the time of Pontiac's conspiracy many of the outlying Forts were captured and the garrisons massacred. Capt. Ecuyer held Fort Pitt and Colonel Bouquet was sent to his relief.

We have an interesting story told of the fight of the Andrew Byerly family from Bushy Run to Fort Ligonier.

Bouquet advanced and met the Indians at Bushy Run and defeated them, thus relieving Fort Pitt in 1763.

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Pennsylvania German's Stand

This Ohio Company sought the services of 200 families of Pennsylvania Germans to settle on their lands West of the Monongahela River and South of the Ohio, should their Charter be granted.

The Pennsylvania Germans refused because Virginia had a State Church and the Pennsylvania Germans wanted their own ministers. Pennsylvania gave them religious liberty, hence they preferred Pennsylvania to Virginia. This is why they took out their patents from Pennsylvania when they settled in the West and is also one of the reasons why they built Fort Allen.

A few settlers came in with Gen. Braddock in 1755. With Gen. Forbes in 1758 there were many German soldiers who were released upon their return, and who came West.

With Forbes were the First and Fourth Battalions of the Royal American Regiment, which were composed entirely of German and Swiss soldiers.

The Historian Smollet says: "This Royal American Regiment was authorized by act of Parliament in 1754. It was to consist of four battalions of one thousand each, and intended to be raised chiefly of the Germans and Swiss, who for many years past, had come to America, where waste land had been assigned them on the frontiers. They were generally strong, hardy men, accustomed to the climate."

In Forbes campaign the First

New Purchase Opened

After the treaty of Fort Stanwix and the land purchase from the Indians in 1768, this "New Purchase" was opened for settlement on April 3, 1769. Thousands of patents were applied for on the first day. Many of the settlers of this community had made their claims as early as 1760 and this spot on which we stand was preempted for church and school purpose in 1765.

Pennsylvania had bought this territory from the Indians in 1768 and opened it to settlement. But Virginia had begun to push her claims to the Ohio country along in 1774.

Westmoreland County was erected in 1773.

Upon this venture of Pennsylvania, Virginia, now ruled by the Earl of Dunmore, resolved to contest the rights of Pennsylvania. He sent Connolly to the West as his agent.

The Notorious Connolly

In January, 1774, Connolly seized Pittsburgh and raised an army from settlers along the banks of the Youghiogheny and Monongahela rivers. Connolly changed the name of Fort Pitt to Fort Dunmore.

Arthur St. Clair was the agent of Pennsylvania in the West. He had Connolly arrested and jailed at Hannastown. Connolly gave bail and returned to Staunton, Va., where Dunmore appointed him a justice, which under Virginia ruling gave him the right to act in Augusta County, Va., and Augusta County was assumed to embrace all Western Pennsylvania.

Coming to the West Connolly was more aggressive than ever. He came to Hannastown with 150 armed men and refused to allow the Pennsylvania Court to meet. He appointed his own sheriff, asserting that no one could derive authority from Pennsylvania because the territory belonged to Virginia and he was

look to
John Minge

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vested with the authority from Virginia.

The Pennsylvania Justices refused to give bail and were arrested and sent in irons to Staunton, Virginia. After some conferences they were released and returned home.

The council of Pennsylvania sent two representatives to Lord Dunmore with the proposition that both colonies lay their claims before the King for settlement; and until the line should be drawn and agreed upon. Dunmore would not agree to this and Connolly became more insolent and aggressive than ever.

Dunmore's War

This dispute, known as Dunmore's War, unsettled the people and caused great hardship and almost a famine because the settlers did not know in the springtime where they would be in the harvest time, hence a full crop was not planted. Moreover, an Indian War was threatened. The Penns had bought their lands from the Indians by the New Purchase in 1769, and the Indians were satisfied to keep the treaty, but the Virginians were not obeying the stipulations of the treaty and the Indians were threatening war on them. Hence the settlers feared an outbreak daily. So, between the outrages of Connolly and the threatened Indian attack the settlers had a hard time indeed.

Why Fort Allen Was Built

It was during these troublesome times that Fort Allen was built, and the attitude of the German settlers was clearly shown in the name they gave their fort. Andrew Allen stood

high in the counsels of Pennsylvania, which shows clearly that the sympathies of the German settlers were with Pennsylvania in the contest. While other settlers were fleeing the country, they decided to stay and maintain Pennsylvania's rights; the rights of freedom of religion, and no slavery.

On June 12, 1774, St. Clair writes to Governor Penn "an idle report of Indians having been seen within the Partys has drove them every one into some little fort or other—and many hundreds out of the country altogether—all that great country, between that road (Forbes) and the River, being totally abandoned."

Fort Allen was erected for a deliberate purpose. It was to espouse the cause of Pennsylvania as over against the cause of Virginia. The German Settlement had many forts and Blockhouses already built. Among these were Fort Ligonier, Wallace's Fort, Barr's Fort, Palmer's Fort, Shield's Fort, Walthour's Fort, Rugh's Blockhouse, Kepple's Blockhouse, Stockeley's Blockhouse, McDowell's Blockhouse, Marchand's Blockhouse, Fort Shippen, Klingensmith's House, Fort Reed, and Fort Pitt.

All these were refuges in time of trouble for the German settlers. Some of these were in possession of Connolly. Others may have been abandoned where the people fled the country.

But Fort Allen was built in defiance of Connolly and his army for the specific purpose of maintaining Pennsylvania's rights. These settlers allied themselves with Arthur

St. Clair, the Agent of the Penna. County Seat at Fort Allen

It seems at this time that the county seat of Westmoreland County was removed to Fort Allen, especially as considered from Pennsylvania's view point. Hannastown was captured by Connolly. He was also in possession of Fort Pitt. So that the settlers assembled at Fort Allen to attend to the county work. In 1774 "the inhabitants of Westmoreland county" assembled at Fort Allen and sent a petition to the Penns for aid. The following names were attached to the petition:

Signers To Fort Allen Petition

Wendel Oury, Christopher Truhy, Frantz Raupp, Nicholas Scheuer, John Lafferty, John Bendeary, Conrad Houck, James Waterms, John Bedeck, Adam George, Nicholas Altmann, Adam Ehrig, Stofel Ulrich, John Golden, Peter Ulrich, Maria Hunts, Michael Konel, Heinrich Meyn, Conrad Hister, Hans Gupke, Peter Kassner, Petter Uber, John Krausher, Heinrich Schmitt, Jacob Schmitt, Jacob Kuemel, John Mofey, Adam Bricker, Peter Wannemacher, Philip Klingelschmitt, Peter Klingelschmitt, Peter Altman, Anthony Altman, Joseph Pankher, Brent Reis, Baltzer Mayer, Jacob Hauser, Peter Altmann, Christian Baum, George Crier, Peter Rosch, Joseph Kutz, Adam Mefre, Daniel Willers, Thomas Williams, Michael Hatz, George Mondart, William Hanson, William Altman, Marx Breinig, Johannes Breinig, Samuel Lerch, Anthony Walter, Jacob Welcker, George Bender, Nicholas Junt, Michael Hann, David Marshall, Heinrich

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First School West of Alleghenies Is Erected Near Present Marker

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Sil, Richard Archbold, Conrad Linck, Friedrich Marschal, Hannes Breinig, Kasper Mickendorf, Jacob Schrabner, Daniel Matiss, Heinrich Schram, Peter Schelhammer, Jacob Meylin, Dewalt Macklin, Hannes Kostwitz, Jacob Schram, Ludwig Aterman, Hans Sil, Jacob Stroh, Christopher Herolt, Gerhart Tames, Archy Stuart, Jacob Maheys.

Are we to infer that these were all the inhabitants of Westmoreland County that were left after the exodus?

There were doubtless many others but they couldn't leave their homes at this time. Other men may have been in Connolly's militia which he called out at this time and stationed at Kittanning, as a protection against the Indians. The Church records of this time record hundreds of names of early settlers in this vicinity.

But whoever else may have been in the county, these were the men that braved the dangers and assembled at Fort Allen, and are known as "the inhabitants of Westmoreland County" at this time.

A Villanous Crew

Dunmore war was carried down the Ohio Valley to the Kanawha. There were gathered Dunmore, Connolly, Cresap, Simon Girty, and Alexander McKee. We doubt if history discovers a more villanous crew than these five men.

In November they returned, and again marched to Hannas Town.

The winter of 1774-1775 was a hard one with threatened famine.

The gathering clouds of the American Revolution began to overshadow boundary disputes. Soon Dunmore becomes the hated and despised "hair buyer" of the Red—Revolutionary war. Connolly was likely with the Indians when they attacked Hannas Town in 1782. Simon Girty and Alexander McKee went over to the British and instigated the Indians to attack the settlers.

On July 25, 1775, the delegates in the Continental Congress united in a petition asking the people of the disputed territory to use as much forbearance as possible and not to keep armed men.—On August 7th, the Virginia Convention directed Captain John Neville with one hundred men to take charge of Fort Pitt. Neville held the Fort till 1777. This was contrary to the petition of the Continental Congress but Pennsylvania, for the sake of peace, did not contest the action.

Pennsylvania Wins

It was finally agreed in 1779, that the Mason and Dixon line should be extended Westward five degrees from the Delaware River.

From the end of this line, a line directly north to Lake Erie, should be the Western boundary. The rights of all actual settlers should be secure. This was ratified by both states in 1780.

During 1784 the boundaries were surveyed and staked. Thus the boundary was fixed as we have it today, and all that disputed territory was won for Pennsylvania.

Why for Pennsylvania

Beneath the surface of the contest of the two Provinces for this territory there were certain deep seated convictions based upon fundamental principles which determined the attitude of the German Settlers, which made them pro-Pennsylvania and anti-Virginian.

The German settlers knew the religious tests in the province of Virginia. They had fled from religious persecution in Europe and were opposed to State churches such as they had at this time in Virginia, Massachusetts and Connecticut. The German settlers were also anti-slave people.

These settlers in coming to America deliberately chose Pennsylvania because it afforded them the greatest liberty. These facts attached them to the Province of Pennsylvania and led them to oppose Virginia.

The Liberty granted by the Province of Pennsylvania was appreciated by the German Settlers in the West and they reciprocated by espousing Pennsylvania's cause in the Dunmore War.

They thus held the Gateway to the West secure for Pennsylvania liberties when other settlers fled the country when the peace loving Penns might have lost hope. Surely the province of Pennsylvania would have had little hope of gaining this territory if no settlers had espoused her cause.

Influence on Subsequent Events

Since this territory became the gateway to the great Northwestern Territory, it is significant to subsequent events of national importance that Pennsylvania laws and liberties governed the great masses of settlers as they went westward. The Forbes Road became the great highway for Westward immigration.

The Virginian would be careful not to bring his slaves into a state that abolished the slave traffic in 1780, and provided for the general emancipation of its slaves. The slave-holding immigrant would be more likely to keep south of the Mason and Dixon line.

President Wilson's Conclusion

Woodrow Wilson says: "However, mortifying it may be to them or to us, America did not come out of the South, and it did not come out of New England. The characteristic part of America originated in the middle states of Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey, because there, from the first, was that mixture of populations, that mixture of antecedents, which is the singular and distinguishing mark of the United States."

These qualities that make America were taken Westward along the Forbes Road, through Pittsburgh, that great Gateway to the West.

Copied Pennsylvania Government

Not only was Gen. St. Clair the first governor of the North West Territory, but every state that was taken from that territory has copied the form of political govern-

ment and the liberties of the old mother state of Pennsylvania.

From Fort Allen Westward, all states north of that line have followed Pennsylvania's form of government. Significant for future events was the diversion of slavery from these states so that when 1860 came it was this group of states that cast the deciding vote for Lincoln as President.

The Mason and Dixon line became a byword during the Civil War. Its extension West of the mountains had more significance than its existence Eastward thereof.

What place shall we then assign to these heroic men in the wilderness, who made no pretense to greatness, who maintained no press agency to herald their doings, who wrote no official reports, but who went about their daily tasks with honest convictions and true fidelity. Whether that task was wresting America from French dominance, whether defeating Pontiac's conspiracy at Bushy Run, whether opposing the state church and slavery in Virginia whether proclaiming the first Declaration of Independence on American soil at Hannastown, or whether planting the first church and school West of the Alleghanies.

These men did their simple duty. As their ancestry was dedicated to liberty before them, so they in their time, maintained their principle.

That Fort Allen has been a nursery of patriotism is attested by the array of waving flags and decorated graves all about us this day.

We have living to day, at least two veterans of the Civil War that attended school in the Old Fort in the Fifties, Alpheus Altman of this place and John Baughman of Jeannette.

Another Veteran Harry Stroble also told me he had attended school in old Fort Allen in his early days.

Nor would we infer that the influence of the Fort Allen people is all in the past.

Pershing, Mellon, Frick Descendants

When the war clouds grew dark and threatening and our national chief, President Wilson, was seeking a leader to command the legions of American Soldiers, going to France, he sought out one who by training and habit was obedient and trustworthy. One who could retreat from Mexico at the head of his unsuccessful regiment, and yet could face the Marshall of France and the Commander-in-chief of all the Allied Forces and insist that the American Army should not be brigaded into a nonentity, but should fight as a unit in the hardest sections of the battles front.

I speak of him, a descendant of these settlers, who brought success in the World War to the Allied troops and the glory of victory to the American Flag, Gen. John J. Pershing.