

LUMBERVILLE

300 YEAR HERITAGE



2006

Willis M. Rivinus

LUMBERVILLE

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Cover Photo: RIVER ROAD OVER PAUNACUSSING CREEK
ca. 1930 by Edward W. Redfield.
Courtesy of Solebury Township Historical Society.



Three themes that define Lumberville

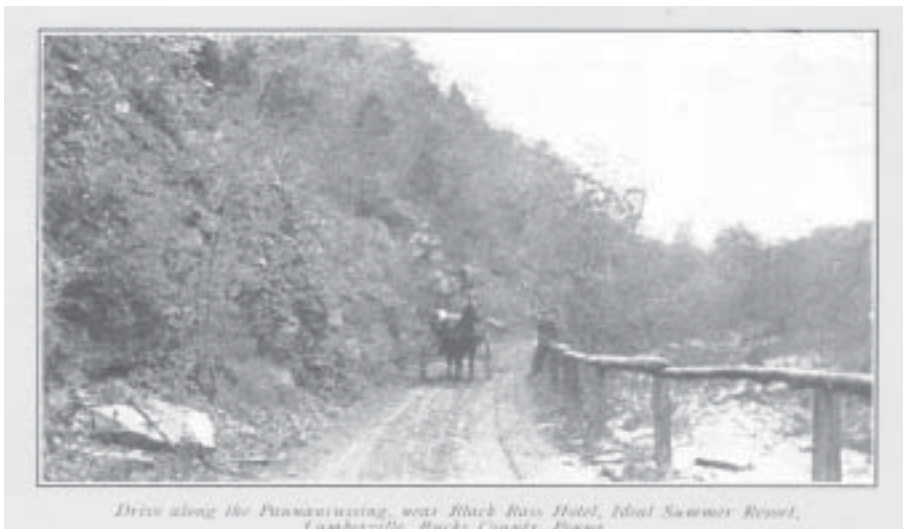
Lumbering

(Tinsman family collection)



River floods

(Tinsman family collection)



*Drive along the Pinawanung, west Black Bass Hotel, Hotel Summer Resort,
Lumberville, Bucks County, Penna.*

Development

(Steve Cohen collection)

The Big Picture

Lumberville is a unique self-contained village with a three hundred year heritage — perhaps sixty houses, two hundred residents (in summer), two inns, a post office/general store, and a lumber yard. No school, no church, no grocery, no gas station. Just an extraordinarily picturesque village nestled beside one of the most beautiful rivers in America at the northeast corner of Solebury Township, near the middle of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Hemmed in by hills and woods, the site was so seemingly remote that the land was not even surveyed and deeded until the middle of the eighteenth century, long after William Penn was dead.

The wealth that built and sustains Lumberville over the past three centuries came from a succession of sources that developed in parallel with the growth of America. No one industry or activity can totally account for the handsome homes, the exotic trees, or the continuous affluence of this river town. Timbering, lumber dealing, woodworking, grain milling, art and culture, tourism — all played a part.

By happy coincidence the neighboring village of Lumberton on the Cuttalossa Creek, a mile downriver, developed a huge quarrying industry, employing up to a hundred and twenty men in the late nineteenth century. Many workers lived locally; others found housing in Lumberville.

The first white men to disturb the peaceful Lenape in the early eighteenth century were mining speculators, hoping that there would be a fortune in copper in ‘them thar hills’. There wasn’t, so they quickly sold their stakes and moved on.

Then came the lumbermen, starting with Col. George Wall, Revolutionary officer, civic leader, inventor, and entrepreneur who built two sawmills at the mouth of the Paunacussing Creek. Suddenly, Wall’s Landing became important in the early nineteenth century not only for its own wood products but also because lumber brokers from Philadelphia came here to bid on log rafts floating down from the Lehigh and Upper Delaware Rivers.

Prosperity came to Lumberville. Raw lumber cutting led to early manufacturing — board lumber and flooring works, sash, blind and door factories to satisfy the emerging demand for prefabricated building materials, five diversified mills along the Paunacussing Creek, the introduction of ‘stone coal’ anthracite from the Pocono Mountains, and the construction of the Delaware Canal in 1831.

The Methodist Episcopal Church was built, as was the school up Green Hill Road. The Lumberville Hall hosted political meetings, concerts, and a public library was founded. Handsome cut-stone ‘mansions’ were built at the base of Old Carversville Road. And, small businesses, including the general store, an inn, and a couple of taverns, satisfied the local needs.

The Delaware Canal dislocated the town in 1831. It had to be built right along the river, precisely where the main River Road had been situated. Some businesses down by the river had to be eliminated. The existing houses built to face the river had to create new front doors on their opposite side. The new (present) road was cut and a building boom produced all the houses on the west side of the road. By 1870 the town was ‘built out’, constrained by the river, the canal, and the steep hillsides.

The dawn of the twentieth century saw Lumberville slowly go to sleep. The timber lands to the north had been stripped. Industry moved to the cities. Even the local sawmill ceased turning, a victim of the disastrous 1903 Delaware River flood. The young people wandered away to find jobs or join the military for more excitement.

Just as industrial twilight set in, a new culture ‘discovered’ Lumberville — artists, writers, commuters, and tourists who had been liberated by the automobile began to appear. Retirees settled in. Weekenders arrived from New York and Philadelphia. The retail lumber yard is still there, but the economy is now driven by creative arts, Social Security and the stock market. Lumberville greets each dawn peaceful, content, fully occupied, and poised for the next hundred years.

Acknowledgement

Two assets have been to Lumberville's advantage over the past three hundred years. First, the village has been able to develop slowly and logically without the massive changes and pressures that are characteristic of most of America. Second, the town has been blessed with people who have preserved, guarded, and recorded its story . . . people who have shared their knowledge, and to whom I am most grateful —

Cyrus Livezey — resident, postmaster, and storekeeper who wrote his Historical Sketches or Annals of Lumberville about 1873. One hundred and thirty years ago he could personally recall the prior half century of the community, and know that his vision was going to be of value to future generations.

Gwen Davis — researcher and recorder of the important architectural history of the area for the Pennsylvania Historic District designation on behalf of the Solebury Township Historical Society. Lumberville was officially approved in 1983, largely as a result of her efforts.

Ned Harrington — historian, archivist and recorder of the early history of Solebury Township. He says modestly, that he only brings his history up to 1900, 'the beginning of the calamitous twentieth century'. Everything since then is modern. In the process he corrects and expands on the township histories published by Eastburn Reeder in 1900 and Col. Jack Richardson in 1958. Ned's 'bible' is 700 pages thick, and growing.

The William Tinsmans, father and son, who are the third and fourth generations of the lumber marketing family who gave the area its principal industry. But, their contribution is substantially broader, since both have been for many years township supervisors. They share a unique perspective of what makes Lumberville move.

Many others have helped in extraordinary ways —

Col. Bob Fallon researched and transcribed his property records.

Carl and Cam Matthews supplied a shopping bag of old wills, deeds, and mortgages covering the south end of town.

Paul Bogen collected copies of dozens of deeds for Lumberville and Cuttalossa.

Steve Cohen had early postcards and pictures of town.

Mike and Nancy Shanley, as the latest proprietors of the Lumberville Store, found a hundred and fifty years of postal records in their attic.

Margery Bush continues the tradition of the Founders Day Picnic each June.

Bruce Katsiff records it all with his giant box camera.

Geography

Lumberville is happily located on the eastern edge of Bucks County in the fertile Piedmont region, between the Appalachian and Pocono Mountains to the north and the level sand and gravel plains of the New Jersey shore to the south. The soils are productive; the streams are pure and frequent. It is an ideal location for human habitation.

Even the rock formations are rewarding. Local quarries produce a gray or black argillite known as trap rock for road construction. Other quarries produce red Stockton sandstone that was cut for the Brownstone facades of Philadelphia townhouses. A conglomerate fieldstone is to be picked up on the farmland to be used for building local homes and barns in the eighteenth century.

In the earliest geologic history this part of Pennsylvania was covered with some of the oldest mountains on earth. These were gradually worn down to almost a level plain, and then they were covered with ice to the depth of almost a mile in the Ice Age of some 15,000 years ago. As the ice melted it cut the streams and valleys we see today. And, it deposited the outwash boulder fields we find upriver at Ringing Rocks and elsewhere in the valley.

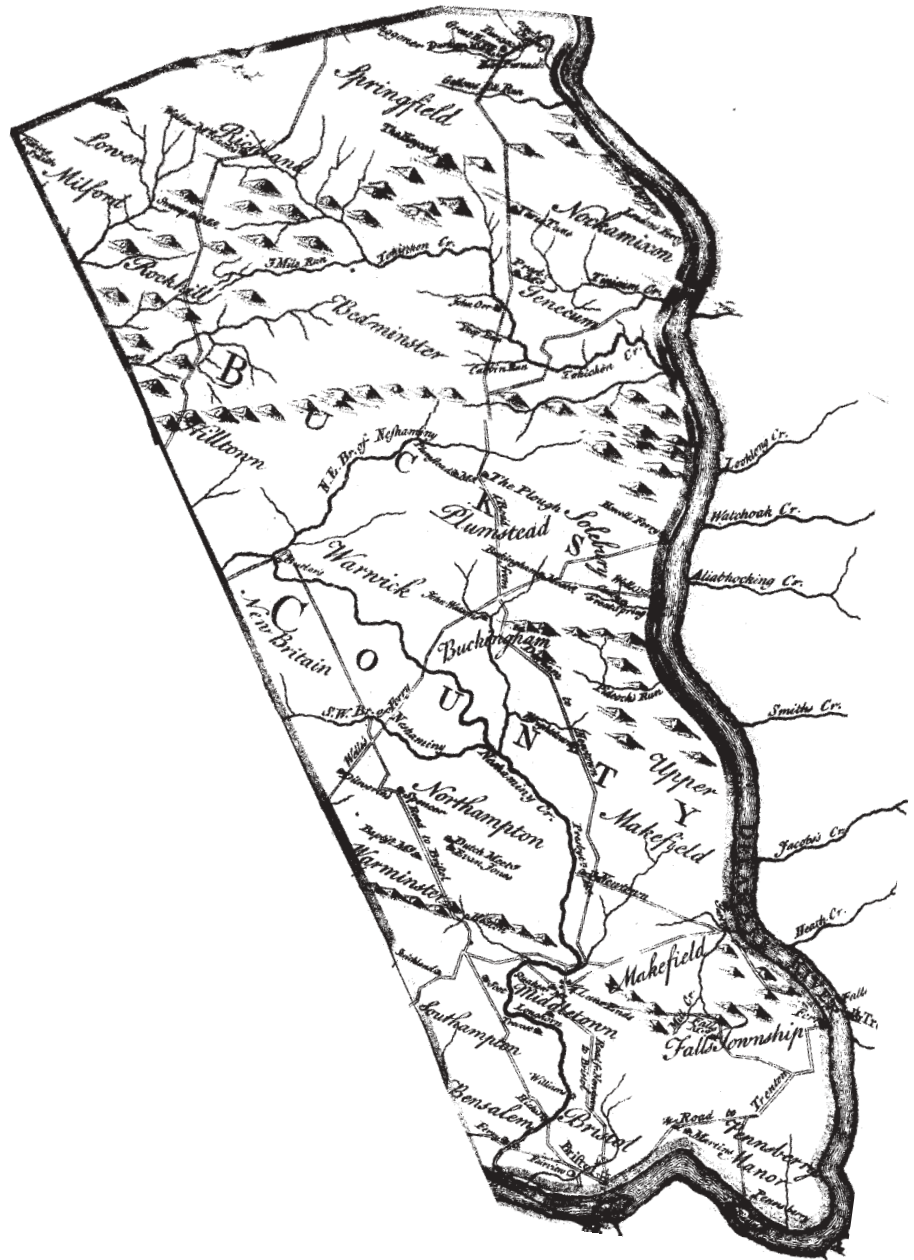
To the south of the village is 'Coppernose', the hillside where seventeenth century Dutch and English attempted to prospect for their fortunes. There is no known deposit of ore, here or on Bowmans Hill, south of New Hope.

The village of Lumberville lies on a geologic fault line. To the north in Plumstead Township is a band of Locketong shale. Along the Paunacussing Creek begins the sandstone shale formation that is common through the rest of Solebury Township to the south.

The Delaware River is a defining, and sometimes disrupting, feature of the town. Most of the time a thing of great beauty, calm, and serenity, the river carries water draining two mountain ranges via the Delaware and Lehigh Rivers that merge twenty-five miles north in Easton. But, there are also the floods that are so familiar to residents in our time — 1955, 1972, 1999, 2004, 2005 — causing inestimable damage to homes, properties, and businesses.

Along the river bed are shifting deposits of rounded boulders, coarse gravel, and sand, which probably account for the earliest name for the community — Temple Bar.

In addition to the road along the river, three roads were cut in from the west. The first road from Carversville to the river was laid out in 1730. Greenhill Road, at first called State Road, followed in 1764. Fleecydale Road along the banks of the Paunacussing was created in 1844.



Map of the
Improved Part of the Province
PENNSYLVANIA

prepared for
Thomas Penn and Richard Penn
dedicated by
Nicholas Scull 1759

(Note line of hills marking the fall line above Lumberville adjoining Plumstead Township)

Indian Heritage

Lumberville was an Indian settlement in 1681 when King George II gave the province of Pennsylvania to William Penn. We do not know what these natives called the area, or when they arrived, or how many families there may have been.

However, we do know that Indian campsites/fire pits/artifacts were identified and roughly mapped along the Paunacussing Creek by Mrs. Anna G. Shoemaker in the early years of the twentieth century. Her original data and maps are at the Bucks County Historical Society in Doylestown. Here were many Indian sites along the streams of what we know today as Solebury, Buckingham, and Upper Makefield Townships. These Indians took advantage of the fertile farmland, ample game, the lush woodlands, and the clear flowing streams.

These Indians were Lenni-Lenape who occupied the mid-Atlantic from eastern New York State, through eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey, down to Maryland. The Unami, or Turtle Clan, settled in the fertile farmland of central Bucks County. Their brothers, the Minsi or Wolf Clan, lived to the north in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, where they lived primarily by hunting game. Their other brothers, the Unlactgo or Turkey Clan, lived on the sand and gravel plains of New Jersey, where they enjoyed seafood from the Atlantic Ocean. It is thought that about five thousand Indians lived in the Delaware Valley, with a family group of perhaps a hundred near Lumberville when William Penn arrived.

Definitive records do not exist, but it is thought that the Lenape came from the west and spread out along our rivers and streams within a few centuries before Penn arrived. There is growing evidence of even earlier encampments of Red Men along the Delaware River going back a thousand, maybe even tens of thousands of years. It is thought that the East Coast was well populated in the centuries before the arrival of Christopher Columbus. But, with the land contouring of the White Men and the periodic washouts from river flooding, any trace of these Woodland Indians has long since been obscured.

The Lenape for the most part lived a stone-age culture based on farming corn, squash and beans, and hunting deer or beaver for their own clothing. The White Men introduced the Indians to the insatiable European demand for fur-bearing animals. They paid the Natives with European manufactured goods — cloth, axes, iron kettles, and later firearms and alcohol for which the Lenape had no tolerance. Tribal authority and harmony soon broke down as foreign diseases decimated the native populations. By the time of the American Revolution there were virtually no Indians left in this part of Pennsylvania.

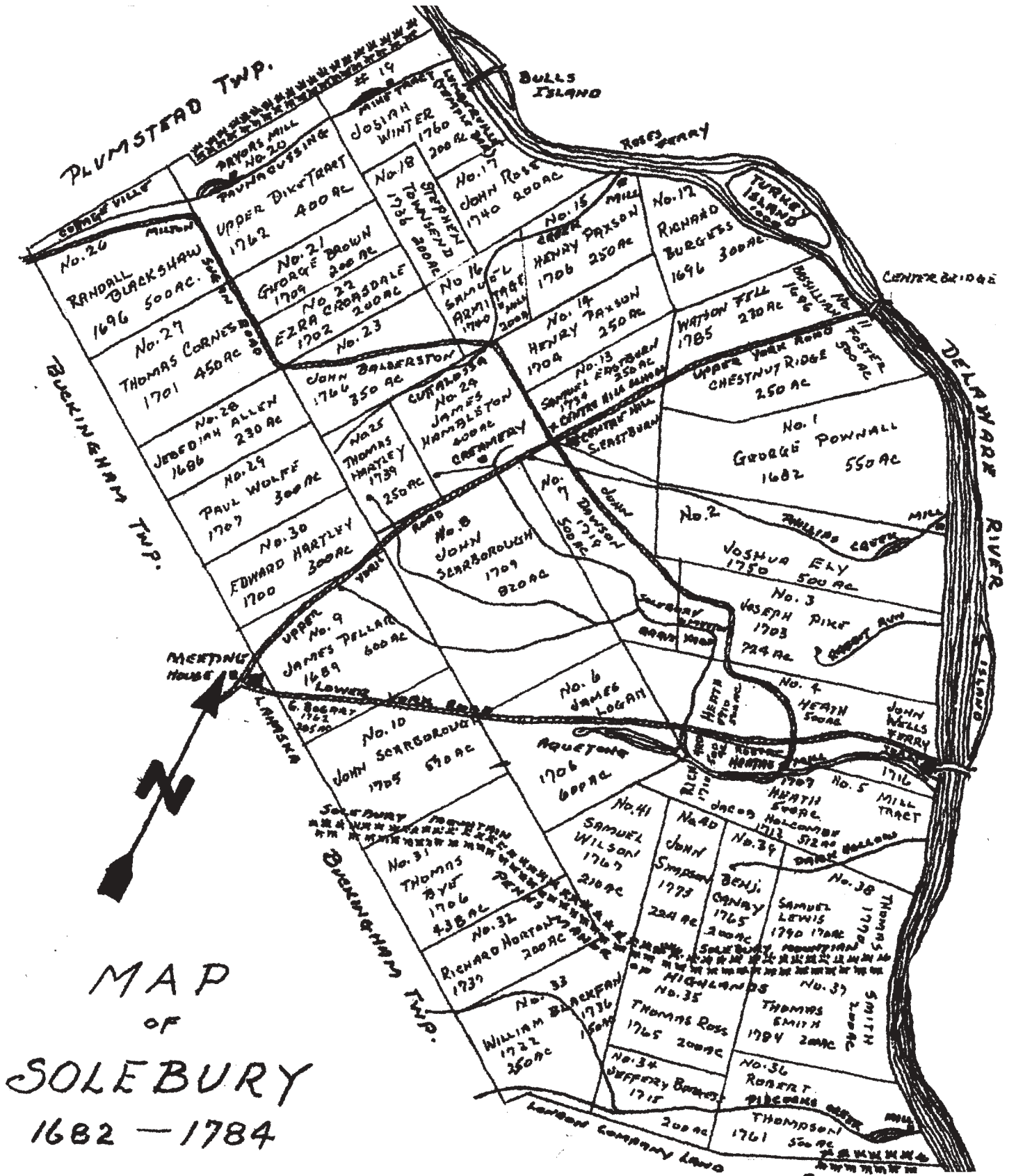
William Penn's first purchase of Bucks County land from the Lenape was sealed by treaty in 1682. This included the land between the Delaware River and Neshaminy Creek, from the Bristol area northwest to near Wrightstown. The next major purchase was sealed by Penn's sons with the Walking Purchase of 1737. However, by that time much of central and northern Bucks County had been purchased in small homesteads, or was claimed by land speculators. The Lenape were on their way out, headed north and west to merge with other tribes. From the south the Lenape were squeezed by the Colonists. From the north they were harassed by the Iroquois, a more aggressive hunting people who labeled the Lenape 'women' because of their sedentary agricultural lifestyle.

Land had a sacred significance for the Indians and its use was to be shared by all people, just as we share the air. By contrast, the English who settled here held that land was to be owned exclusively for the use and enrichment of the settler. In most cases these settlers came from parts of England where they could not inherit or purchase land owned by the nobility, so they were all the more covetous of their new farms.

The only lasting reminder of Lenape occupation is in the name of the stream, the Paunacussing, which is thought to mean 'where powder was given to us'. Their village was probably situated in the fertile valley around Carversville, a couple of miles west of the Delaware River. The primitive Lenape settlements lasted into the early eighteenth century by which time the White Man had passed along his European diseases — small pox, chicken pox, flu, (and rum) — for which the Indians had no natural resistance. Besides, the new settlers needed those corn fields that had been cleared by the Indians.

It is traditional history to think that William Penn introduced a more egalitarian social structure to his colony than was to be found in England or any of the other colonies. Recent research into Indian society suggests that these Native Americans had a much more equal society in which all men and women were equal. The Indians were actually horrified by how stratified the English social community was. Did the Indians unwittingly have an impact on the concepts behind the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution?





Map of Solebury Township, 1682-1784, showing original land grants.
 Drawn by John Elfman for Eastburn Reeder's 'Early Settlers of Solebury, PA' 1971.

Original Settlement



While the region was still an uncharted wilderness, occupied by an Indian village or two, speculative visions were developing overseas.

The first dreamers were Dutch who came from settlements in New York and on the lower Delaware River and envisioned fabulous copper mines along the Middle Delaware River. In the 1670s they dug test holes into the hillside known as Coppernose on the south side of what is now Green Hill Road. Unfortunately, there just is not any copper in this part of Pennsylvania.

The next speculators were Englishmen who were convinced that they could make money in land sales, even if they never left London. Ned Harrington, having extensively researched the early settlers of Solebury Township, describes the earliest land ownership of Lumberville as follows:

“William Bacon obtained a warrant from William Penn about 1700 for 5000 unlocated acres, considered to include the unsurveyed northeast corner of Solebury Township. Bacon soon transferred his right to Humphrey Marrey and John Budd. They were in business in Philadelphia and Chester Counties, and sold the right to John Wilson in 1723, by then surveyed down to 200 acres. John and Sarah Wilson lived in Middletown Township, and the same year sold what became known as Tract #19 to a consortium of eleven speculators, who thought there was a copper deposit to be mined on the tract. The group gradually died out or lost interest, until only Thomas Leech remained in control. He, as owner, sold Tract #19 to Josiah Winter in 1760. Josiah and wife Christiana were of Dutch descent, from north Jersey. They were the first homesteaders, building along the Paunacussing, on what is now Tinsman property. Only footings remain today. In 1770 he sold 15 acres at the southern end of town to William Hambleton, and in 1775 33 acres along the river to brothers Joseph and Andrew Ellicott and their half-brother George Wall, Junior. George bought out the others’ shares in 1776, and bought 15 more acres from Winter, including the homestead. Josiah and Christiana departed the area about 1780, and the developing village came to be called Wall’s Landing.”

Technically speaking, William Penn’s first purchase of land from the Lenape in Bucks County came up to a line from Wrightstown to the mouth of Pidcock Creek where it enters the Delaware River, about half way between New Hope and Washington Crossing. This was the area surveyed by John Cutler in 1702 so that land grants could be confirmed. The next survey, including the townships of Buckingham and Solebury was conducted in 1723. This survey identified eighteen tracts in Solebury which had, or were about to have, settlers in residence. But, Tract #19, the ‘Mine Tract’ and future site of Lumberville, was not surveyed because only speculators had shown passing interest in it.

The Mine Tract was bordered on the east by the Delaware River; on the north by Plumstead Township on the hill above Paunacussing Creek. The southern boundary was the Rose Tract, just below Green Hill Road. The western boundary bordered on the Townsend and Upper Pike Tracts.

Reading the early land deeds for Lumberville can be both frustrating and entertaining . . . “Commencing at a white oak on the banks of the River Delaware, and proceeding NNW 38 ½ perches to a stone on the side of the road . . .” The problem is that the oak was washed away in a flood, and that road along the river was obliterated when the Delaware Canal was dug a half century later.

On the other hand, there are also some real treasures buried in the flowing calligraphy of those eighteenth century documents. Consider the occasional alliteration . . . “to include all mines, minerals, meadows, and marshes . . .” or “all ways, woods, and watercourses . . .” Not all of these forms seem applicable to Lumberville, but one can see a conscientious clerk copying them out from a Medieval form book.

There are moments of high drama in American history. John Sebring of Lumberville entered into a Mortgage in 1788 with Catharine Greenleafe of Philadelphia to be paid off “in Gold Coin of the Kingdom of Portugal commonly called half Goes each weighing at least nine Pennyweight at the rate of Three Pounds, and Spanish milled silver dollars each weighing seventeen Pennyweights and six grains at least.” Such was the stability, or lack thereof, of our American currency immediately following the Revolution.

And, the date on one Deed was not merely 1752, but rather . . . “In the twenty-sixth year of the reign of our sovereign lord George the Second of Great Britain, France, Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, anno domini 1752.” How archaic those terms sound today.

Lumbering

This was believed to be the forest primeval in 1703 when John Cutler published his survey of Bucks County for William Penn. Stately white pines, as much as thirty-six inches in diameter — important wood for His Majesty’s ships’ masts or to saw into boards for building construction. Spruce trees that made up into ships’ spars. Hemlock, oak, beech, American chestnut — trees that once were common. Straight-trunked poplars and cherry used for furniture. The hardwood forests must have been an extraordinary sight for Englishmen who had been stripping their woods at home for centuries.

The earliest timber market was for naval stores, for ships being built either in Britain or in Philadelphia and Bristol. The virgin trees were cut along the Lower Delaware River and floated individually down to the city. As the area was denuded, the loggers moved up the Lehigh and Delaware Rivers, clearcutting the hill-sides as they went. As the easy forests were stripped, logs had to be cut and skidded by oxen to the waterside. With seemingly endless forests, the Colonists had plenty of work, and plenty of woodlots to supply firewood and stovewood.

Logs were sawn into board lumber as soon as two-man saws, and later water-driven sawmills, became available. Most of the sawmills were located near the woods where the trees came from, and where streams could provide waterpower. By the time the board lumber and other wood products reached Lumberville, they were ready for sale.

Timber buyers and brokers realized that they could improve their deals by riding a horse from Philadelphia to Upper and Lower Black Eddy to secure the latest shipments. Lumberville and nearby towns became the site of this lively trade. This stretch of the Delaware River became noted for the number of early sawmills — at Erwinna, Lumberville, Bulls Island in New Jersey, Lumberton (Cuttalossa Creek), Hendricks and Eagle Islands in the river.

One reason the rafters were willing to sell their loads at Lumberville had to do with avoiding Wells Falls, five miles downriver at New Hope. These were the most dangerous rapids on the Delaware River. Locally skilled guides frequently charged an extra \$5 to navigate the rocks at these Falls. These men then rode the rafts down to their destination in Philadelphia.



*Bringing a log to the sawmill, 1895.
Tinsman Family collection.*

Lumbermen of Lumberville

North — Paunacussing Creek

- 1785-1814 Col. George Wall built two sawmills at the mouth of the Paunacussing Creek
- 1814-1832 William and Joseph Dilworth took over Wall’s sawmills and lumber business
- 1832-1842 John E. Kenderdine (1799-1868) lived in Lumberton on the Cuttalossa, but was active in Lumberville
- 1842-1847 Lukens Thomas leased the operation, until he bought it in 1846 from the estate of William Dilworth
- 1847-1869 Lukens Thomas
- 1869- Tinsman family (See accompanying chart)

South — Coppernose Creek

- 1812-1832 Jonathan Heed and Samuel Hartley were engaged in lumbering and the sale of ‘stone coal’ south of town at a site on the river, taken over by the Delaware Canal. They were the first to call the community ‘Lumberville’, rather than continue to give credit to their competitor ‘Wall’s Mills’.
- 1846-1847 Quinby & Webster were lumber dealers in Lumberton (Cuttalossa)



Log hauler about 1900. Tinsman Family collection.

The peak of the river rafting industry was reached in the decade between 1875 and 1885. In 1880 more than 3000 rafts were reported on the Delaware. But, by 1903 the number had fallen to 130 and continued to drop. The river flood of that year destroyed the Tinsman sawmill and carried away virtually their entire lumberyard.

The huge and prosperous lumbering industry slowly died. The virgin forests were stripped. The rafters could no longer compete with the finished dry lumber arriving via the canal or the railroad. By the dawn of the twentieth century only a few sawmills, like the one in Lumberville, could still make a sparse living off locally-cut trees.

By the late nineteenth century local entrepreneurs such as Lukens Thomas found that they could make a better profit by sawing their logs into finished products, like doors and windows. The age of prefabricated components and standardized units had arrived. For instance, wooden window frames and sash were made for standard 8 x 10" glass panes, set in 6-over-6 double-hung frames. Homebuilding became easier, faster, and more economical.

Here are the impressive production numbers for the yards at Lumberville, as reported by a local resident:

"Lumberville mill was owned by John E. Kenderdine in 1832, and transferred to Lukens Thomas by lease in 1842, the latter selling out his stock to Quinby & Webster in 1847. There was but about an acre for two mills, board-yard and log-pond. I find that before the spring stocking-up, and besides the manufactured, seasoned lumber in the yard, there was a transfer of 230,000 feet of logs, by estimate, lying in the pond, a place now filled with mud and connected with an idle mill, as has been the case for years, so that it is a wonderment where that amount of logs could have been stowed. But the water then was deep. In addition to this 150,000 more feet of logs were bought that season of nine months during which over 400,000 feet of boards and scantling also was bought, the boards for seasoning and selling the coming year, the sawed lumber of the former tenant being available for present use. The boards were mainly white pine, the floatings ranging in bulk from 160,000 in double rafts, to frisky 'colts' of 26,000 to 40,000 feet. In the seven years the amounts bought went from 400,000 to 900,000 from rafts, besides shingles and the better lumber from the Susquehanna which came around by Philadelphia. During the time mentioned, seven years, the yard had dealings with sixty-three up-river lumbermen, mainly rafting from the New York counties of Broome, Orange and Sullivan, although Wayne and Monroe counties of this state furnished a few rafts.' *

*Kenderdine, Thaddeus S. Lumbering Days on the Delaware River. Proceedings of the Bucks County Historical Society, Volume IV, P251.

Tinsman Lumber Heritage

The Tinsman family has owned the retail lumber business for a hundred and thirty-five years, since William Tinsman (1821-1902) took over the business. The family was of Dutch origin, and William is known to have been in the lumber business at Durham PA from 1846 to 1854.

- 1869-1873 William Tinsman (1821-1902) purchased the business from Lukens Thomas
- 1873-1890 William Tinsman & Son (Daniel 1859-1910)
- 1890-1898 Daniel Tinsman (1859-1910)
- 1898-1918 Daniel Tinsman & Son (William 1873-1967)
- 1903 Sawmill, logs and lumber washed away by flood
- 1918-1940 William Tinsman (1873-1967)
- 1940-1970 William Tinsman & Sons (William Junior 1918- and Daniel W. 1919-)
- 1955 Office and yard moved up Old Carversville Road after another river flood
- 1971-2002 Tinsman Bros. Inc. (William Junior 1918- and Daniel W. 1919-)
- 2002 Tinsman Bros. Inc. (William E. 1948- and Thomas F. 1950-)



Restocking the yard in 1957, after the Delaware River flood of 1955. Tinsman Family collection

Life on the River



*Rafts of hemlock logs from
Downsville, NY at
Lumberville landing about
1892.
Tinsman Family collection.*

The Delaware River was the main route of travel long before there were roads. Floating on the river was easier than following Indian trails through the dark woods. Besides, the early wagon roads, known as turnpikes, went different directions—the Old York Road (PA 263) ran east-west connecting Philadelphia with New York through Center Bridge or New Hope, the Durham Road (PA 413) and Easton Pike (US 611) extended up through the center of Bucks County. None of the early roads came near Lumberville.

The earliest river travelers were Indians crossing the river to their various settlements. Then came the lumbermen. They cut giant trees in the virgin forests, cleared off their branches, and rolled the logs downhill into the river. Along the Lehigh the hemlocks were additionally stripped of their bark that was soaked to make tannin for curing leather. Here were tanneries along Monocacy Creek in Bethlehem, at the town of Lehigh Tannery, and even along the Paunacussing Creek.

Most of the loose logs made it down river to the cities during the spring floodwaters, but a lot of valuable timber became hung up on islands, on sandbars, rocks, or along the river banks. Some was even stolen by enterprising sawmills. It is claimed that one Daniel Skinner was the first to lash logs into a river raft in 1764, but there may have been others with the same idea somewhat earlier. Certainly loggers about that time began to lash their winter's harvest into rafts which two to six men could maneuver and protect en route to the cities. It was a rough and dangerous job steering a raft through the rapids, but it was rewarding. Accidents were common when rafts caught on sandbars or hit bridges.

“In his History of Bucks County General W. W. H. Davis records that the first raft to navigate the Delaware started from Cocheton, some 40 miles or more above Point Jervis, in 1746, under the man-

agement of one Skinner, aided by a man named Parks. The hazardous run of nearly two hundred miles brought the adventurers to Philadelphia, where the importance attached to the event was such, that the two men were given the ‘freedom of the city’, of which they doubtless made good use, and that Skinner was created (by what authority it is not stated) ‘Lord High Admiral of the Delaware’, a title which he is said to have borne until his death in 1813.

Davis further states that this raft consisted of six pine trees, or logs, seventy feet in length, to be used as masts of ships then building at Philadelphia. Holes were made through the ends of the logs and all were strung on poles, called spindles, with a pin at each end to keep the logs from spreading apart. This proved to be the beginning of an enormous business to supply the ever increasing demand.”*

At first, whole logs were rafted together. As sawmill machinery became available, logs were cut upriver into board lumber that could fetch a better price in the market. Rafts varied in size, but could be 100-200 feet long and 16-36 feet wide.

Buoyant lumber, such as pine and hemlock, was the foundation of a raft. Unfloatable lumber, such as ash, maple, or white oak, as well as cherry boards, ax and shovel handles and hemlock bark, was stacked on deck. By 1770 great armadas of rafts were being floated down the Delaware each spring. Here is a succinct summary of rafting at its height:

*Anderson, John A. Navigation on the Delaware and Lehigh Rivers. Proceedings of the Bucks County Historical Society Volume IV, P285

“Throughout the latter part of the eighteenth century and most of the nineteenth century, the forests that thrived along the banks of the Delaware were cut to produce timber for the construction of buildings, ships, and wagons, and to supply fuel for iron-smelting furnaces. From 1764 until 1913, timber cut from the region of the Upper Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers was floated down the Delaware to centers of population like Easton, Trenton, and Philadelphia. The heart of the rafting industry was Hancock, New York, located at the confluence of the west and east branches of the Delaware River. Rafts, or rafts coupled as a fleet, transported large quantities of white pine, hemlock, white oak, and cherry down the stream. A double raft could contain as much as 150,000 board feet of lumber. In addition, fabricated wood products, such as railroad ties, ship’s keels, hoops, and pails, were top-loaded on the rafts.

“The length of the Delaware from its source in the Catskill Mountains to tidewater at Trenton was approximately 280 miles during which the river fell 1886 feet. The average fall was 6.7 feet per mile. Rafts floated downstream during a high freshet at a velocity of 3.6 to 4.3 miles per hour. Thus a raft from Delhi, New York to Easton, Pennsylvania, 160 miles, would take from 40 to 48 hours. A raft from Walcot, New York to Easton, 165 miles, would also take from 40 to 48 hours. A raft from Hancock to Easton, 125 miles, would take from 30 to 35 hours. A raft traveling the entire distance from Walcot or Delhi to Trenton would take 50 to 60 hours.”*

Rafting was not for the faint of heart, or body. Racing down the river at four miles an hour sounds like fun, but it was an all day job. Rafters had to endure periods of broiling sun, sudden rain or sleet storms, high penetrating winds, with the constant risk of running aground or hitting a submerged rock. That called for a quick jump in the freezing waters to free the raft, followed by hours in cold wet clothes and boots. A hot dinner and a dry bed sound appealing, provided the rafter had his load secured against sudden storms or river level variations. By the time the rafts reached Lumberville, they had passed the quiet waters of Upper Black Eddy and were on to Lower Black Eddy, both popular sites for raftmen to tie up for a hot meal and a night’s sleep, and a place to meet timber buyers from the city.



*High water 1955 on the Delaware.
Tinsman Family collection.*



*Skating on the Delaware River at Lumberville, about 1890.
Tinsman Family collection*

With the discovery of anthracite coal in the Poconos in the 1790s, came the necessity to move large volumes of that coal downriver to market. Horses and wagons were impractical, so arks were invented. These were log rafts with a bin on top for the coal. With luck a steersman could navigate the rapids and reach Philadelphia with a full load, or at least most of it. There the coal was sold, the ark was broken up for lumber, and the steersman began the long trudge back to the mountains for a summer of farming, a fall and winter of logging, and another load to be rafted next spring..

A far more successful vessel was the Durham boat, about sixty feet long, eight feet wide, flat bottom, and capable of carrying as much as twenty tons of coal or pig iron from the Durham Furnace, about ten miles above Lumberville. The first Durham boats are thought to have been built about 1748. Modern replicas of the Durham boat can be seen at Washington Crossing Park where they enjoy use annually for the reenactment of George Washington’s famous crossing of the Delaware on December 26, 1776. The particular importance of the Durham boat was that it could be poled back upriver by two or four men for another load. Durham boats were in constant use on the river until the Delaware Canal offered safer and more reliable transport starting in the early 1830s.

The upper Lehigh and Delaware Rivers could be treacherous where the rivers were narrow and the water fast. Normal spring high water was fine, but there has been a long history of floods — 1692, 1768, 1798, 1801, 1814, 1836, 1839, 1841, 1861, 1885, 1903, 1928, 1936, 1955, 1973, 1996, 1999, 2004, and 2005. The flood on the Delaware in 1996 occurred in winter when large blocks of ice, three feet thick, were deposited along the shoreline and on the canal towpath. The floods of 2004 and 2005 disabled more than twenty miles of the canal towpath.

*Chronology of the Belvidere Delaware Railroad by Warren F. and Catherine T. Lee.

Revolutionary Warriors

George Wall, Senior and Junior, were prominent figures during the Revolutionary War and for decades thereafter in Bucks County political life.

George Wall, Senior, was probably born about 1720 and is known to have been a schoolmaster in Bucks County in 1743. A year later he married, and a year after that his son was born. He organized the 4th Company of the 4th Battalion of Foot, Bucks County Associators, enlisting young men from Solebury, as war with England loomed. Finding willing patriots was a challenge in an area populated with pacifist Quakers and Tory sympathizers. He was Captain of the Militia, and its only officer. He was appointed 2nd Major of the 2nd Battalion of the Revolutionary Army in July 1776, only a few days after the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. Among the twenty-seven privates in the militia was his son, George Junior. No record of their military achievements has yet been uncovered, but clearly they were dedicated Patriots who followed Washington in many campaigns. Because of their familiarity with the region, it has been thought that the Walls were involved with protecting Washington's upriver flank at the time of the Crossing in 1776. George Wall, Senior must have died shortly after the war was over.

George Wall, Junior, "the fourth of the name", was born in 1745. In 1770 he married Sarah Kitchin in Amwell, New Jersey. In due course they had twelve children — four sons and eight daughters. He obtained a legal degree which became important in his future career. He settled in Lumberville in 1775 where he built and operated two sawmills near the mouth of the Paunacussing Creek. By 1785 Wall had become the prime landholder around Lumberville.

From his early days in his father's unit, George, Junior was commissioned Sub-Lieutenant in 1778 and gained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel by 1783. One official document even refers to him as General.

George, Junior, became Agent for Forfeited Estates in Bucks County from 1778 to 1787. These properties of Tories, enemy sympathizers, and people convicted of treason, included: Samuel Biles in Southampton for whom Biles Island in the Delaware below Morrisville is named; Joseph Galloway of 'Trevose', an investor in the Durham Iron Works, and a substantial landholder who was the conservative Speaker of the Provincial Assembly in Philadelphia. Galloway collaborated with the British occupation, being designated 'City Administrator'. Afterwards, he fled to England and his property was confiscated. Additionally, there was Joseph Doan, Senior, who was father of some of the Doan Outlaws that called themselves 'Bucks County Volunteers'. George Wall's job must indeed have been challenging in a time of turmoil and strained loyalties.

Wall went on to become Sheriff of Bucks County from 1779 to 1782, at the height of the Doan Outlaw activity. Among other crimes these Tory sympathizers broke in and robbed the County Treasury in Newtown and generally terrorized the peaceful farmers of Central Bucks. During Wall's first term of office the first of the Doan Gang was caught, tried and sentenced to hang, but before the execution could take place, this outlaw revealed the identity of the rest of the Gang, who continued as marauders for the next six years.

From 1782 to 1785 Wall represented Bucks County on the Supreme Executive Council in Philadelphia. This was the ruling body, before the creation of a single Governor, that was set up in the state's Constitution that went into effect just a couple of months after the drafting of the Declaration of Independence. Each county supplied two leading citizens to the Council. Pennsylvania was the first state to establish a Constitution for its governance. Wall was commissioned a Justice of the Peace in 1791, a post he held until his death in 1803.

According to William W. H. Davis' History of Bucks County, in "1787 George Wall invented and patented a new surveying instrument called a 'Trigonometer'. The Legislature granted him a patent for 21 years, the act being signed September 10, 1787. Among those who recommended the instrument were John Lukens, Surveyor General of Pennsylvania, David Rittenhouse, the astronomer in Philadelphia, and Andrew Elliott, Wall's nephew and subsequently Surveyor General of the United States as well as city planner for Washington, DC. On the side Wall ran a surveying school on the grounds of his sawmill and general store.

Among his students was John Ruckman, who started his career, according to Cyrus Livezey, running a store in Lumberville about 1802-03. He purchased the 'Forst Estate' about 1806 at the corner of Green Hill and Upper York Roads. Ruckman was appointed deputy county surveyor in 1805. He was elected County Commissioner in 1826 and afterwards appointed Associate Judge of Courts of Bucks County. Local elections were held in his house until they moved to the village of Solebury in 1854.

For his many accomplishments George Wall was elected a member of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, an organization of thinkers and leaders founded by Ben Franklin.

George Wall, in company with Richard Backhouse, entered into a contract with the State of Pennsylvania about the year 1790 for the improvement of the navigation of the River Delaware from Trenton Falls to the Northern boundaries of the State. They presented quite a lengthy Report of their Proceedings to Gov. Thomas Mifflin in 1793 — in concluding which they express a wish that the work might be viewed as soon as convenient — so that if any thing further was required to fulfill the contract, they might have an opportunity to do it in the fall of that year. Considering the potential magnitude of this challenge, one wonders how much they could have done with even a thousand laborers.

Wall was active in creating the first wing dams in 1791-1793 in order to facilitate navigation in the Delaware River. The wing dams were built at what was then known as Bull's Falls. In 1801 he acquired Bulls Island, now part of New Jersey, for the purpose of expanding his sawmill operations.

On a map of 1792 the area was identified as 'The Honorable G. Wall's Saw Mill and Plantation'. But, by 1814 the name was changed to Lumberville by Heed and Hartley who ran a competitive lumber yard at the south end of town.

Notwithstanding his Patriot sympathies, George Wall, Junior was buried in Buckingham Meeting Cemetery upon his death in 1803. He has long been hailed as the Founder of Lumberville.

Culture

Long ago, before radio and television, the residents of a community had to create their own entertainment and intellectual stimulation. So it was in Lumberville.

During the winters of 1822 and 1823 a literary and debating society held weekly meetings in Hambleton House, located approximately at the foot of Green Hill Road. The group achieved a celebrity in the neighborhood, but neither the society nor the house survived the arrival of the Delaware Canal in 1831.

Poetry writing and public reading were popular in the mid to late nineteenth century. A Poets' Rock was designated along the upper stretch of the Cuttalossa Creek, a couple of miles to the south. Poets William Satterthwaite and Thaddeus Kenderdine have been identified, though their work for the most part seems to be forgotten. John Greenleaf Whittier lived for a while on the hill above Green Hill Road, but no local poetry by him has been identified.

A library was founded and sponsored by Samuel Hartley, and kept in his home along the river. But, upon his death about 1832, the library could not find a new home. The 300 books were subsequently sold at auction.

Lumberville Hall, initially the Methodist Episcopal Church, overlooking the canal and the river, hosted the meetings of the Union Building and Loan Company, and the 'Good Templars'. Religious meetings, lectures, concerts and exhibitions were held here periodically.

The Blooming Lodge of Good Templars, No. 593 was organized in May of 1868 at Lumberville Hall. So long as the charter members remained active, the group met weekly. But, time moved on and the members began to die or move away until the Lodge discontinued meeting in 1876.

Culture may be an overstatement for it, but during the 1930s there was a large summer camp for hundreds of kids from Philadelphia up on the hill above Old Carversville Road. This was run by Workers International Relief (WIR), an active Communist organization.

Culture as a community activity may not have made much of an impression on society at large, but Lumberville's individual creative genius certainly did, as will be seen below.

MARTIN JOHNSON HEADE

Martin Johnson Heade (1819-1904) was a brilliant and successful nineteenth century painter who is probably best remembered for his extraordinary oil renderings of orchids and hummingbirds. He was born in Lumberville, but gained his fame in New York City, Rhode Island, Brazil, and finally Saint Augustine, Florida, where he is buried. He painted continuously over a period of 67 years.

According to William W. H. Davis' History of Bucks County, the Heeds (he changed his spelling to Heade about 1843) were "early settlers in Solebury but we have not the date of their arrival. Abraham Heed, who died May 19, 1843 at the age of 102, was a remarkable man. Beginning his life as a farmer, by indolent habits he became bankrupt in a few years. This did not discourage him and he started anew as a gunsmith, his trade; then bought real estate, built home and mill, ran lime kilns, carried on lumbering and



Martin Johnson Heade by Thomas Hicks. Heade was 18; Hicks was 14 years old.

other occupations, being successful in all. He held the office of Justice of the Peace, and at his death he left 142 descendants." * The Heed family continued to live in Lumberville where Elsie operated the General Store into the 1960s.

*Davis, *History of Bucks County*, Volume I, page 287.



SAMUEL D. INGHAM, ca. 1855 by Martin Johnson Heade. Courtesy Mercer Museum, Bucks County Historical Society.

Martin Heade's father was listed as a 'prosperous farmer' and lumber dealer. About 1837 this father sent his promising son to learn painting with Edward Hicks (1780-1849) in Newtown. There he met Edward's nephew Thomas Hicks (1823-1890) who painted the portrait of Heade that now hangs in the Bucks County Historical Society in Doylestown. At the time of the sitting Hicks was an 'infant prodigy' at fourteen; Heade was eighteen.

Heade's long and productive life may be divided roughly into three periods: the first, from 1837 to 1858, when he wandered over the eastern United States and Europe, mastering the popular styles of genre, portraiture, and allegory; the second, from 1859 to 1883, when he was based in New York doing great landscapes and marvelous still lifes, interspersed with trips to Brazil where he painted hummingbirds; and finally, from 1884 to 1904, when he lived in Saint Augustine where he created the dramatic series of magnolia and Cherokee Rose paintings.

Once he had left Lumberville at the age of seventeen, there is no evidence that he returned to paint the local scene or its inhabitants. He was remembered only for his love, and abilities, in hunting and fishing.

Heade painted a portrait of Samuel D. Ingham about 1855. Ingham was successively a Pennsylvania legislator and US Secretary of the Treasury under Andrew Jackson. In 1855 Ingham had retired to his family home on York Road and commuted to his office in Trenton, New Jersey where Heade maintained a studio for a couple of years.

It would be very satisfying to count Heade as a forebear of the Pennsylvania Impressionists — Daniel Garber, who lived a mile south of Lumberville along the Cuttalossa; Edward Redfield, who lived in Center Bridge; or William Lathrop, who lived another two miles south at Phillips Mill. But, all of these men discovered the area nearly a century later. All we can say for Martin Johnson Heade, one of the most interesting and varied painters of the nineteenth century, is that he was born here. A Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission sign across from the Lumberville Store commemorates that event.

WILLIAM SATTERTHWAITE

According to Cyrus Livezey's Historical Sketches of Lumberville, "William Satterthwaite, school teacher and poet, was probably one of the earliest settlers in Solebury. His place of residence was at the lower end of the village. The exact time at which he settled here is unknown, but it was probably before 1740. He married before he left England, and tradition says that 'he was unhappy in his conjugal relations'. He had one child, a son named George, but no record is extant concerning him. While Satterthwaite lived at the above mentioned place, he undertook digging a road up the north side of Coppernose. While engaged in this enterprise, he was bitten by a copperhead snake, and he was relieved from the effect of the poison by an old Indian Doctor named Nutimus.

It appears that he taught school in several different places, first in Durham, and afterwards in Solebury and Buckingham. He composed several poems, among which was one entitled 'Mysterious Nothing', another 'Providence', and another on 'Life's Futurity'. He also wrote an Elegy on the death of his friend Jeremiah Langhorne. Concerning school teaching he wrote:

Oh! What stock of patience needs the fool
Who spends his time and breath in teaching school;
Taught, or untaught, the dunce is still the same;
But yet the wretched master bears the blame."

A verse addressed to a young lady in reproof for singing was preserved in the writings of fellow-poet John E. Kenderdine:

"Though singing is a pleasing thing,
Approved and done in Heaven,
It only should employ the souls
Who know their sins forgiven."

Deeds in the early eighteenth century indicate that the strip of land along the river, separate from the Mine Tract and adjoining the lands of George Wall, was bought in 1733 by William Satterthwaite. It was sold to pay his debts upon his death in 1752.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892), the New England Quaker spent two or three summers on a farm off Green Hill Road, on the hill known as Coppernose. From 1838 until the fall of 1840 he was living and doing editorial work on the Pennsylvania Freeman, an abolitionist periodical in Philadelphia. It was during this time that Pennsylvania Hall, where the periodical was published, was burned by a mob that was enraged at the gathering there of an anti-slavery convention. It is probable that Whittier found it convenient to leave town until the excitement subsided. In 1840 he returned to his home in Amesbury, Massachusetts.

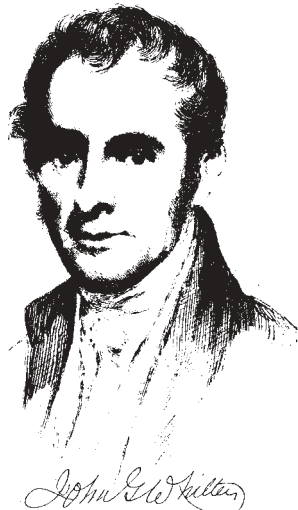
Why did Whittier come to Solebury? What poetry did he write while here? That he came out here from the city might be explained by the fact that he had Greenleaf forebears from this area. The earliest record of ownership of the land between the Mine Tract and the river lists Isaac Greenleaf of Philadelphia, prior to 1769. He sold the land to Josiah Winter, who in turn sold to George Wall, the builder of two sawmills. The poet has left us no written record of his motivations. Whittier stayed in Solebury on the farm then owned by his boss, the abolitionist publisher Joseph Healy of Philadelphia. Healy was the financial agent of the Anti-Slavery Society of Pennsylvania. In 1839 Healy published a volume of Whittier's poems.

What poetry did Whittier write here? There are none of his works that contain identifiable names or clues. He was probably recovering from the trauma of the city and protecting his health, which was never robust.

William J. Buck, in his articles about Cuttalossa for the Doylestown Intelligencer in 1897, writes that Whittier spent at least a portion of his time in 1839 and 1840 on a farm off Green Hill Road. In 1835 the poet had become interested in the proceedings of the Anti-Slavery Society and was invited to become editor of their newspaper, the Pennsylvania Freeman. The publisher, Joseph Healy, purchased the farm where Whittier stayed in April of 1840. The poet later commented that he came here to spend 'some pleasant summer days at the old stone farm house'.

Whittier, dressed in a plain coat and dark brown clothes after the current style of the Quakers, was in the 'general practice to attend the post office himself at Lumberville, which was nearly a mile from his residence, on the arrival of the mail . . . He was in the daily practice of giving a portion of his time to useful exercises on the farm, no doubt with a view to improve his physical condition so as to give increased energy to his intellectual powers'.

In a letter to William J. Buck in 1873 Whittier wrote, 'I well remember the little river, its woodlands and meadows, and the junction of the Cuttalossa with the Delaware'. Whittier doubtless wrote poetry while he lived on the Healy farm, but none of his works have been authoritatively identified with this area or period.



John G. Whittier, sketch from a collection of his poems.



OCTOBER by Daniel Garber, ca. 1915. Depicts the house above Coppernose where Whittier stayed in 1838-40. Courtesy Mercer Museum, Bucks County Historical Society.

The following poem has been popularly credited to the poet when he was here —

INDIAN CORN

Let other lands exulting glean
The apple from the pine,
The orange from its glossy green,
The cluster from the vine.

We better love the hardy gift
Our rugged vales bestow,
To cheer us when the storm shall drift,
Our harvest fields with snow.

Through vales of grass and meads of flowers,
Our plows their furrows made,
While on the hills the sun and showers
Of changeful April played.

We dropped the seed o'er hill and plain,
Beneath the sun of May,
And frightened from our sprouting grain
The robber crows away.

All through the long, bright days of June,
Its leaves grew green and fair,
And waved in hot midsummer's noon
Its soft and yellow hair.

Let vapid idlers loll in silk,
Around their costly board;
Give us the bowl of samp and milk,
By homespun beauty poured.

Where'er the wide old kitchen hearth
Sends up its smoky curls,
Who will not thank the kindly earth,
And bless our farmer girls!

Let earth withhold her goodly root;
Let mildew blight the rye.
Give to worms the orchard's fruits,
The wheat field to the fly.

But let the good old crop adorn
The hills our fathers trod;
Still let us for his golden corn,
Send up our thanks to God!

William Buck also claims that Whittier 'while here revised his poems of Moll Pitcher and The Minstrel Girl, published by Mr. Healy in the fall of 1840'.

FERN I. COPPEDGE

“People used to think me queer when I was a little girl because I saw deep purples and reds and violets in a field of snow. I used to be hurt over it until I gave up trying to understand people and concentrated on my love and understanding of landscapes. Then it didn’t make any difference.”

Fern Coppedge (1883-1951) was one of the most successful women painters in the Delaware Valley. Her images and colors were as strong, or stronger, than those of her male contemporaries.

A friend and student of Daniel Garber and Henry Snell, Coppedge purchased a home in Lumberville in 1920. She grew up in Illinois, but moved east to study art at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia where Garber taught. From her studio in the city she joined with other women to form The Ten Philadelphia Painters.

In Lumberville she lived for nine years in what is reputed to be the oldest house in town, surrounded by black oak trees along the Delaware Canal. Her barn was built to house mules that drew the coal boats on the canal. Then in 1929 she built a new home, known as Boxwood Studio, on Main Street in New Hope. That year she participated in the inaugural art exhibition at Phillips Mill.

In terms of her subject-matter — landscapes of the Delaware Valley with small homes, the river, and the canal — she was very much part of the New Hope School. But, her structures and colors were frequently more dominant, even more primitive. Like Edward Redfield, Walter Baum, and others, she was known for her winter scenes with snow, which she sometimes painted out of the back of her car.

Although Coppedge painted primarily in the Delaware River Valley, she was the only woman associated with the New Hope School who was recognized on a national level. She was a member of many art associations and won several national prizes and awards. Perhaps Dorothy Craftly, an important Philadelphia art critic of the period, best explains why Coppedge was so noted in her time, and why her work appeals to us still:

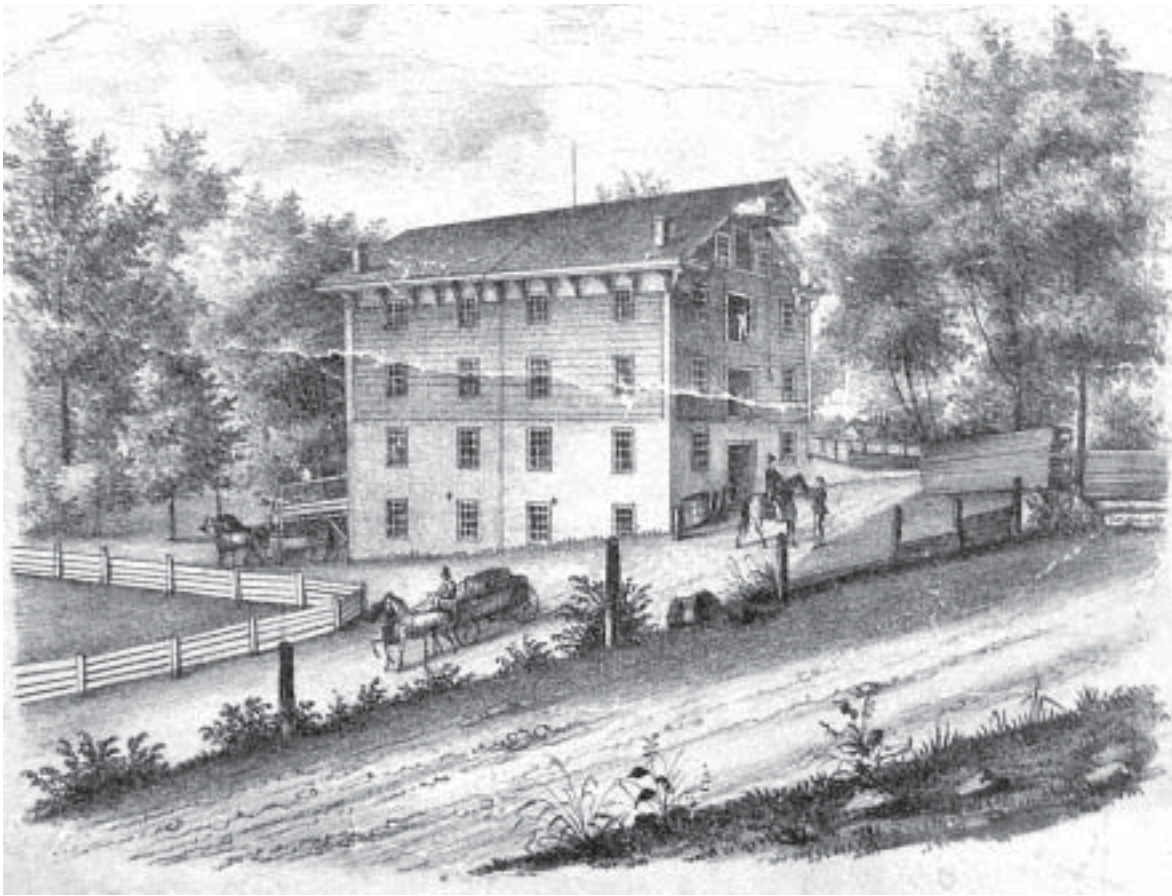
“There was in her paintings no hint of social conflict; of man-made tensions and tragedies. Although she lived through a tense period in history, she felt more keenly the quiet that falls with snow, and the boundless contrasts that follow it. For that reason, perhaps, what she had to say of life cannot be dated so long as rivers run, snows fall and boats lie in harbor. The sense of timelessness in everything that she did may, as the years pass, prove more lasting in importance than the prizes she won or the collections, public and private, in which she is represented.”

Fern Coppedge’s home is reputed to be the earliest house in Lumberville, although this has not been verified. According to background research by Gwen Davis’ architectural study of Solebury:

“Since 1918 the history of this structure has reflected Bucks County’s continuing connection with the arts. The Broadway production ‘Boy Meets Girl’ was written in this house during the period when the authors, Samuel and Bella Spewack, rented the property. That would have been in the early 1930s since the production is dated 1935. Featured in the Broadway run of the play were Ronald Reagan and James Cagney. Landscape artist Edward Redfield painted the house in the early 1940s. Fern Coppedge lived there in the later 1940s. Redfield’s depiction of the house shows clearly how little the structure has altered over the years.”



*“Road to Lumberville” 1938 by Fern I. Coppedge.
Courtesy of James A. Michener Art Museum.*



Lukens Thomas Door, Sash & Blind Factory from Matthew Hughes Farm Map of Solebury Township, Philadelphia 1859.

Kenderdine was an entrepreneur who built an experimental gristmill, and erected a sawmill that turned out between 400,000 and 900,000 feet of lumber a year between 1847 and 1854. He even purchased the patent right to use a planing machine to finish floorboards and cut tongue and grooves. This was such a revolutionary idea that local carpenters and cabinetmakers set up a boycott, but it did not last long. In addition, Kenderdine set up a sash and door factory and a fertilizer works using local potash.

Horse-drawn transportation was a bottleneck for a while until the Delaware Canal opened to traffic in 1832. The first bridge from Lumberville to New Jersey was built in 1856. There in Raven Rock, the Bel-Del Railroad was completed down the Jersey side of the river in 1855 from Belvidere above Phillipsburg to Trenton. The potential for industrial development appeared unlimited.

Sawmills were the first factories to become successful. According to Ned Harrington's *History of Solebury Township*, "James Skelton built a sawmill in Lumberville in 1770, which was taken over in 1776 by George Wall, Junior and his half brothers, the Ellicotts. George then bought them out, and continued to operate the mill, in what was called Wall's Landing. W. J. Dilworth took over in 1824, at which time the village was renamed Lumberville. Kimble Skelton built a grist mill nearby in 1820, but it was displaced by the canal ten years later. Lukens Thomas came to town in 1847, bought out the sawmill and lumber yard. He sold to William Tinsman in 1867, and so it continues to this day in the Tinsman family."

Jacob Fretz (1811-1897) came from up-country in 1789, bought a fine residence along Fleecydale Road, and a nearby mill that had been built a few years earlier by Jonas Ingham. It became a mill

for cleaning clover seed, and a woolen factory. Philip Fretz inherited and operated a fulling mill besides. The complex burned in 1833, and ownership passed to others, until about 1882 it ceased operations and became a residence.

In 1791 David Michener built a sash and door mill farther down Fleecydale Road. It was purchased by Joseph and William Dilworth and expanded, who sold it to Lukens Thomas in 1847. He ran it successfully for twenty years, also producing milled lumber. It was sold to James Flack in 1868, and continued in operation until the flood of 1885, when it was converted to steam power. About 1900 it closed and was converted to a residence.

George Wall built two mills shortly after 1775 at the mouth of the Paunacussing Creek. In their heyday there were five mills along the creek. Farthest upstream was a large grist mill in Mill Town, later known as Milton, and since 1833 known as Carversville for Joseph Carver who bought the mill. That mill was initially powered by both undershot and overshot water wheels and turbine power. It was converted to steam in 1895 and then kerosene, and finally to electricity, until it ceased operation in 1967. But, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the forests were decimated, water power from the streams had proved unpredictable and unreliable, so industry moved to the cities.

In support of the business development, the Union Building and Loan Company of Lumberville was organized in December of 1867. Seven years later the Secretary, Cyrus Livezey, reported that the Company had thirty-five loans of \$200 each amounting to \$7,000, and three promissory notes amounting to \$500. The number of shares was 81, valued at \$92.59 ½ each. Banking was clearly an important, if hardly big time, business.

Significant Homes

The economic and social success of Lumberville through most of the nineteenth century can be credited to six entrepreneurs, whose handsome homes crown the rise of land along the River Road just south of the Paunacussing Creek. These were the men who built and operated profitable mills nearby and used their wealth to create the impressive homes that are their legacy, now that their mills are long gone:

George Wall, Junior built his home overlooking his sawmills above the Creek, but it was torn down to make way for the more elegant homes of —

Lukens Thomas who built his sash and blind factory, and then bought a large amount of land up on the hill west of town.

Jacob Fretz, who ran a fulling mill up toward Carversville.

William and Joseph Dilworth, previous to Lukens Thomas in the lumber business.

Josiah Quinby, who started with his brother-in-law John Kenderdine (married to Martha Quinby), and came to own their sawmill a mile south along Cuttalousa Creek.

Lumberville is uniquely fortunate in having a collection of handsome homes, industrial row housing, and quaint cottages, giving testimony to the continuous prosperity of the village. Every house has its own history. What follows here is merely a teaser, to be amplified by future writers.

Hambleton House, which once reared 'its rude majestic form' was probably the first major residence in Lumberville. It stood on a flat piece of land next to the river and just below the mouth of Copper Creek. This was called the Temple Bar property, which name was probably suggested by the gravel bar in the river. According to Cyrus Livezey, the house 'was of good sized dimensions, two stories high and composed of the most substantial pointed walls, and appeared to be well calculated to bid defiance to every opposing element, except modern innovation and improvement.' Both the house and the gravel bar disappeared when the Delaware Canal opened in 1832. This property had been owned by Josiah Winter and had been sold by him to William Hambleton (Hamilton) in 1770. William was the son of Thomas Hambleton, whose father William owned two hundred acres, a creamery, and a distillery at Creamery Road and Upper York Road in Solebury. The family owned the river property for thirty-seven years.

In passing, it is interesting to note that the late eighteenth century was a time of large families. William Hambleton, who acquired the creamery in 1758 had five siblings and nine children. His brother Stephen who died in 1804 had ten children. And, Stephen's first-born James, Junior born in 1754 had eleven children.

The original Col. George Wall Homestead stood on the rise of land overlooking his sawmills and office located in the lowlands, just south of the Paunacussing Creek. Unfortunately, this house is long gone.

The large two story stone mansion surrounded by beautiful shady lawn, situated at the northwest corner of Carversville and River Roads, was built by Lukens Thomas in 1850. This house at 3815 River Road is now occupied by Daniel Tinsman. The original George Wall mansion stood on this spot, but was torn down to make way for this building.



Residence of Lukens Thomas, built about 1850, on the site of the George Wall residence, sometimes known as 'Old Red House'. The Thomas residence was pictured on Matthew Hughes Farm Map of Solebury Township 1859.



Lukens Thomas house today at 3815 River Road. Now the home of Daniel Tinsman. Photo by Carol Lansill.



Old Dilworth Mansion, 3799 River Road, built about 1815. Now a private residence. Photo by Carol Lansill.

Lukens Thomas (1812-1892) was a successful mill operator in the valley. He was born in 1812 and learned his trade in New Hope where he is recorded as a miller in 1833. He started a flour mill with John E. Kenderdine in Lumberton about 1840, but sold out to Quinby & Webster in 1847 after he bought the Lumberville sawmill from the estate of William Dilworth. He dealt in retail lumber, as well as starting a sash, door and blind factory. As an active civic leader, he was a subscriber to the Lumberville and Delaware Bridge Company, completed in 1857, and an organizer of the Excelsior Normal Institute, which opened in Carversville in 1859. He retired from lumber retailing in 1867 when the business came into the hands of the Tinsman family. Thomas also owned the large tract of farm land on the hill above town, as shown on the Bucks County Map of 1876.

The Old Dilworth Mansion, 3799 River Road, is located at the southwest corner of Old Carversville Road, facing out to the river. William and Joseph Dilworth had succeeded to the ownership of Wall's sawmills in 1814. They built this house in 1815, probably having moved here from Philadelphia. This house gained its stylish mansard roof and piazzas, front and rear, in 1879, when the property was acquired by Jacob Fretz (1811-1897) from the estate of Catharine Heed, widow of Jacob Heed. Jacob Fretz at various times operated a wool carding mill and a clover hulling mill up the Paunacussing. (The mansard roof was removed in 1945.)

James Dilworth and his wife Ann arrived from Liverpool in October 1682 aboard the Lamb, one of the twenty-three vessels that brought settlers, including William Penn, to Philadelphia that year. The invasion of America was in full swing.

The Dilworths settled in Langhorne, then known as Middletown, and quickly became important factors in the community. In 1685 James became a Member of the Provincial Assembly. The following year his house became the place of religious meeting for Friends in Southampton. As a minister of the faith, he traveled extensively.

Only a few facts are yet known about the family in the century that followed. John Dilworth, a brother (?) settled in Langhorne by 1687. James Dilworth had purchased a thousand acres, of which 500 were along the Neshaminy Creek, before he died in 1699. Some members of the family drifted over to Chester County, giving their name to Dilworthtown.

Martha Dilworth (1777-1831) married Daniel Parry, the successful miller in New Hope. Their son John died in infancy and was buried with his parents in the Solebury Meeting Burying Ground.

Then there were William and Joseph Dilworth who bought the sawmill business of George Wall in 1814 and owned it until 1846 when it appears to have been sold by William's estate to Lukens Thomas. During that time the sawmill seems to have been rented by John E. Kenderdine of Lumberton from 1832 to 1842. Though the details are incomplete, it is clear that the Dilworths were successful lumbermen in Lumberville.

It was probably Jacob Fretz who planted a collection of unique trees on this property about 1850. Today they are a joy to behold, according to Prof. David Benner, formerly of Delaware Valley College — a rare Chinese Chestnut (*Castanea mollissima*) a tree that was introduced into America in 1853, a huge Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*) that is the largest in Bucks County, a 90-foot high Oriental Spruce (*Picea orientalis*) that is the second largest in Pennsylvania, and perhaps the largest Umbrella Magnolia (*Magnolia tripetula*) in Bucks, Pennsylvania and the US. Fretz was obviously a man of some means because Eastburn Reeder reported that he bequeathed most of his estate of \$100,000 when he died in 1897 to George School in Newtown.



'Bridgeview House' at 3786 River Road, built by Isaiah Quinby in 1858. Photo by Carol Lansill.

Bridgeview House at 3786 River Road, next to the Dilworth Mansion, was built by Isaiah Quinby in 1855. Quinby was born in 1814 and came to Solebury in 1834 from Amwell, New Jersey, and was in the milling business with John Kenderdine, his brother-in-law. He held the office of school director in Solebury for nine years. This is a handsome stone home surrounded with mature plantings.



Twin Houses in 'White Row' at 3695-97 River Road. The three remaining twins, of the original four, were built about 1835, probably as worker housing for the lumber yards or the stone quarries. Photo by Carol Lansill.

A block of three twin homes rise on the west side of the River Road, just below the former Methodist Episcopal Church. Of the fourth twin at the north end only the foundation stones remain. It is believed that this 'White Row' was built about 1835-1840 as worker housing either by the factory operators along the Paunacussing or by the operator of the stone quarry in Lumberton.

Some of the additional homes in the village have acquired colorful tales recorded by Adi-Kent Jeffrey in her book 'Ghosts in the Valley'. Others were homes at one time to artists — Martin Johnson Heade was said to have been born in the house at 3658 River Road, the portrait painter Stanley Reckless (1892-1956), Morton Tobias (1906-ca 1965) painter and antique dealer, RAD Miller (1905-1966) an active member of the community at Phillips Mill, Clarence Johnson (1894-1981) a noted Delaware Valley Impressionist, as well as Ben (1896-1986) and Faye (1904-1991) Badura. He is remembered for his ornate picture frames which he produced in his New Hope studio, while she is recalled as a sensitive oil painter. Up along Green Hill Road there was the home for half a century of Charlie and Freddy Child. She was a bookbinder: he was a noted commercial artist and illustrator, and incidentally a brother-in-law to Julia Child, the popular gourmet cook.

A two and a half story residence at 3894 River Road, backing on the canal, and just north of the Paunacussing was formerly a general store, built by Ingham Smith in 1836. To the rear of the building is a scale for weighing wagons of hay, lumber, stone, and grain. The residence became a tavern in the 1940s and 1950s, known as Hurry Back Harry's.

There are many houses along the River Road and up along the Paunacussing Creek which have respectable credentials and histories in their own right. Their stories over the past hundred and fifty years are left to future historians and writers.

Schools

The first public elementary school was built in 1824 at the corner of Greenhill and Sawmill Roads, one of the more than a hundred octagonal schoolhouses in the Delaware Valley. At first it was run by neighbors. Not until 1834 did Pennsylvania pass a law providing for tax-supported public education. At first elementary school attendance was voluntary; after 1854 it became mandatory through the eighth grade. This school was taken into the township system in 1852.

The location of the school, at the junction of Greenhill and Sawmill Roads, on a hillside with no space for playing fields, seems at first to be somewhat inconvenient for pupils who had to trudge up from Lumberville village. But the thinking at the time called for schools to be equidistant from each other, and no more than a mile apart. The nearest other one-room schoolhouses were in Point Pleasant, Center Bridge and Solebury. Besides, in those early days the upland farm families had many more children to educate than the village residents.

Ned Harrington describes what school was like in those days — ‘School sites were selected so that there would be one within about a mile of every family. Buildings had to be sound and safe, with separate rest facilities for boys and girls. Most had rows of desks, with one up front for the teacher, except the eight-sided school on Greenhill Road. Heating was by wood stove, later by coal. There was a spring or well nearby. Boys did the chores, and girls the tidying up. There were books for spelling, reading, grammar, geography, history, arithmetic, and a Bible. Also a blackboard, a world globe and a thermometer.’ What more should a student need?

School stayed in the octagonal building until a new building opened a hundred yards down Greenhill Road and stayed in operation until 1938, when the consolidated school opened in Solebury and this building became a residence. The old eight-sided school was demolished.

The first Sunday School was organized by John Steelwagon Eisenbrey in 1835, and was conducted in his home at the lower end of town. He was a minister of the Baptist Church and used Baptist Sunday School publications from the church in Point Pleasant. He moved the Sabbath School to the Methodist Episcopal Church when it was built in 1836. In 1858 school was moved to the basement of the Methodist Episcopal Church.



Eight-square school house, 1823-1868 at Greenhill and Sawmill Roads. Drawing by Thaddeus S. Kenderdine.



Green Hill High School on Greenhill Road above Lumberville. Built before 1858 and operating until 1938 when the consolidated school began in New Hope. Now a private home. Drawing from Matthew Hughes Farm Map of Solebury Township 1859.

Churches

It is noteworthy that although the primary religious affiliation through central Bucks County was Quaker, there never was a Friends Meeting in Lumberville.

The Lumberville Methodist Episcopal Church originated in 1831, and in 1836 a building was constructed on the river side of the present River Road. Services began there in 1837. At times it was yoked with other Methodist churches in central Bucks County. In 1968 it became the United Methodist Church, and in 1992 it merged with the New Hope United Methodist Church.

This structure was a Methodist meeting house for 34 years, after which time it was sold to the Lumberville Hall Company for \$600. Meetings of the Union Building & Loan and Good Templars were held there regularly, as well as religious meetings, lectures, concerts and exhibitions. Political meetings also were held here, such as the Fremont meeting of September 30, 1856, at which Mr. Forker and Mr. Huey had their shirts stolen. They offered \$5.00 reward for their return. The Buchanan meeting, which took place here on September 16, 1856 was, according to the Daily Intelligencer, 'a complete failure, 30 to 40 of the unterrified were present'. The Hall was used for a time as a school until the opening of Green Hill School in 1858. In 1910 a barbershop and pool hall were located on the first floor, with a basket shop in the basement. The building was ultimately converted to a residence that is still known as Kirk House.

A larger church on the landward side of the River Road was built in 1870. In 1968 it became United Methodist Church, and in 1992 it merged with the New Hope United Methodist Church. At that point the building was sold to become a residence.



'Kirk House' at 3740 River Road, the first Methodist Episcopal Church built in 1836. Now a private residence. Photo by Carol Lansill.



Methodist Church at 3737 River Road. Built in 1870, it is now a private residence. Photo by Carol Lansill.

Bridges

There have been three bridges across the Delaware River at Lumberville. Each was quite different in origin and intent.

The first bridge was erected in 1856. The Lumberville-Delaware Bridge Company had been approved by the legislatures of Pennsylvania and New Jersey in 1836. The delay before the start of construction must have been frustrating at the time, but it turned out to be fortunate, as the bridge escaped the worst river flood of the century.

The covered wooden bridge was built with \$22,000 of private funds. There were tolls. Only persons going to and from church were exempted. The length of the bridge was 700 feet in four spans supported on stone piers. That crossing was unhurt during the next great river flood in 1862, but it lost one wooden span in the flood of October 1903. That span was washed away and was replaced in steel.

In 1932 the bridge was purchased from the private company by the two states, who soon discovered that while the steel span was sound, the rest of the wooden structure was steadily rotting beyond repair. The bridge was declared totally unsafe for vehicular traffic after the US Army used it (see below) and was closed in 1944.

Wartime shortages of steel, combined with the record of low traffic, persuaded the Joint Bridge Commission that replacement with a full scale vehicular bridge was not warranted. In 1947 the Trenton firm of John A. Roebling & Sons was hired to design a second bridge — a pedestrian bridge built on the original piers and supported by steel cables. It became a suspension bridge in the great Roebling tradition. That the pedestrian bridge was well built was proven when it was hit by the disastrous river floods of 1955, 2004 and 2005. It suffered only minor damage. Today, the 'walking bridge' is one of the most popular tourist attractions in the area.

The third bridge in this location was a World War II experiment of the US Army Corps of Engineers. The war was only five months old, in the spring of 1942, when the Engineers began planning for the invasion of Europe, and the march to Berlin. No one knew what to expect, but they did know that they had to be prepared for anything, including the crossing of many rivers after all the existing bridges had been bombed out or blown up.



Vehicular bridge with steel span replacement section after flood of 1903. Note canal boat heading north. Photo by John A. Anderson, September 1910. Courtesy New Hope Historical Society.



Bridge tender's house about 1935. 'Free Bridge – No Toll'. Steve Cohen collection.

Strong, flexible, easy-to-construct pontoon bridges seemed to be the answer. Once designed, they needed to be tested on a real river. What quieter or more convenient location than on the Delaware River at Lumberville?

The Lumberville pontoon bridge was a success from the military point-of-view, but it was a disaster from the local point-of-view. During the construction exercise a parade of heavy Army vehicles also used the wooden covered bridge, then nearly a hundred years old. In a word, they wrecked it, rendering it unsafe for local traffic from then on.

The Army was not interested in replacing the wooden bridge in the midst of wartime. Neither Pennsylvania nor New Jersey would come up with adequate funds, especially as the old bridge had a record of light usage. Only when John A. Roebling & Company came up with an economical design for a demonstration cable suspension bridge was there a compromise — the walking bridge built in 1947.

On the New Jersey side of the river crossings the route is grounded on Bulls Island, which name is a corruption of the earlier Bool's Island. The route continues across the Delaware and Raritan Canal feeder, the now-abandoned right-of-way of the Bel-Del Railroad, and State Highway 29. The crossing comes to an end in an isolated village of perhaps a dozen early nineteenth century houses. Originally it was known as Saxtonville after Nathaniel Saxton, an early landholder who is said to have had a mill and a Revolutionary-era tavern. Today, the tavern is a modest residential stone structure, but it is sufficiently characteristic of vernacular architecture to have been recorded and published by the Historic American Building Survey of the US Department of Interior.



US Army Engineers – Pontoon Bridge Across the Delaware River at Lumberville, PA 7-16-42. Note canal lock to left; covered bridge to right. Tinsman Family collection.



Walking Bridge across the Delaware River, built in 1947 by John A. Roebling & Company. Photo by Carol Lansill.

Canals



*Canal Lock #12 at Lumberville. Unique 'dog house' at left controls the heavy wheels to raise and lower the gate's wickets. Sketch from *The Delaware Canal* by Robert J. McClellan.*

In 1829 the entrepreneurs Josiah White and Erskine Hazzard opened their slackwater canal to move anthracite coal from Mauch Chunk (now renamed Jim Thorpe) in the Poconos down the Lehigh River through Allentown and Bethlehem to Easton. There, the coal boats could cross the Delaware River to enter the new Morris Canal and proceed across northern New Jersey to the New York marketplace. The Lehigh Canal was called 'slackwater' because the boats floated down the open and deep river until they needed to enter a series of locks where there were river falls or rapids.

The entrepreneurs posed a dilemma for the legislators in Harrisburg, who could not allow New York to succeed in receiving coal at Philadelphia's expense. But, the builders could not afford to construct another canal over sixty miles from Easton to Bristol. Further, the Pennsylvania legislators were unwilling to allow a potentially less expensive slackwater canal down the center of the Delaware River, because the system would come under the partial operational control of a foreign state — New Jersey. Pennsylvania decided to build the enclosed, or landlocked, canal at state expense, entirely within the borders of the state.

The northern half of the canal opened to freight from Easton to New Hope in 1832. Two years later boats could proceed the rest of the way to Bristol, located on the Delaware River at tidewater. Lumberville now had access to hard coal to burn to produce the steam that drove the mills. And, it had a low cost means to move its agricultural and manufactured wares to market. The town experienced a boom.

By 1835 Lumberville had a post office, a tavern opened in 1828, a general store, and a Methodist Church built in 1836. The Lumberville Library was founded in 1823, but the books were sold

at public auction ten years later because there was no place to keep the three hundred and fifty volumes that had accumulated.

The greatest era for the Delaware Canal was around the time of the Civil War. As many as 3000 canal boats were kept busy carrying hard coal, building stone, lumber, lime for mortar, prefabricated windows and doors, as well as agricultural products. But, the advent of the railroad and the automobile doomed canal transport. The last canal boat on the Delaware Canal went south in 1931.

Across the river another canal had a modest impact on Lumberville. The Delaware and Raritan Canal was built to connect tidewater Trenton, through Princeton, Kingston, Belle Mead, and Bound Brook to New Brunswick, Raritan Bay and New York Harbor. In part it facilitated the movement of coal boats and in part it carried general commerce.

The main D&R Canal was a direct route from Trenton to New York, but it quickly revealed a design flaw. The route was cut through the sand and gravel coastal plain, which meant that it had difficulty maintaining enough water to keep boats afloat. A feeder canal had to be built to bring in a substantial additional flow from the Delaware River. That feeder was built in 1834 from an inlet just above Lumberville and behind Bulls Island on the New Jersey shore. The water flow was further enhanced when a pair of wing dams was constructed to hold back what amounts to a small lake. Today, that deep water is a boon to summer fishermen and pleasure boaters. Freight boats have long ceased to ply the D&R Canal. But, this canal's continued water flow at nearly 100,000 gallons a day provides drinking water to central New Jersey towns and processing water for the region's numerous pharmaceutical plants.

The fall of Pennsylvania's Delaware Canal, 165 feet over sixty miles, necessitated a lock (Number 12) in Lumberville. This lock has had to be reconstructed a number of times following the various river floods. Without doubt the most destructive flood occurred in June of 1862 when large rafts of timber on the Lehigh River broke loose releasing several hundred thousand logs to batter down locks, bridges, buildings, or anything that got in their way. Just as threatened as the lock was the aqueduct over the Paunacussing Creek. Mules, canalboats, and men could pass back and forth peacefully, until the swollen creek went on the rampage, taking everything before it.



Canal lock, coal boat approaching, about 1914. Steve Cohen collection.

Flooding and deterioration, matched with declining revenue, over time caused the authorities in Harrisburg to suggest filling in the Delaware Canal in order to create a four-lane highway along the river. In barely the knick of time in 1933, the Delaware Valley Protective Association was formed to preserve this historic canal. That organization was succeeded in 1982 by the Friends of the Delaware Canal. With more than 1400 dedicated and active members, and a Legislative Caucus from the seventeen communities en route, the Friends organization is the most effective support group for any park in the state.



Flood damage in 1903 near Lumberville. Photo from Canal History and Technology, Easton, PA.

Since 1974 the Delaware Canal has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and in 1978 it was designated a National Historic Landmark. The Delaware and Lehigh Navigation Canal National Heritage Corridor between Wilkes-Barre and Bristol was established by the US Congress and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan in 1988. The Corridor has been declared a State Heritage Park. In 1995 'Scenic America', a conservation organization based in Washington, DC named the Delaware River Scenic Drive (River Road) as one of America's '10 Most Scenic Byways'.

Lumberville Store

The Lumberville Store at 3741 River Road is an institution — the town’s only grocery, delicatessen, lunch room, post office, newsstand, and tourist mecca. A total anachronism in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, it is stoutly defended and faithfully patronized by residents and visitors alike.

The older, northern, portion of the building was built in 1803 by William Closson and has been used primarily as a residence. The adjoining portion was erected in 1848 as a replacement for an earlier wooden structure built in 1813. The first post office was established in 1825 with William L. Hoppock as postmaster.

A recent newspaper article described the Lumberville Store’s continuing role in the community as follows: ‘In a world of turmoil and hurry, the place to draw a deep breath of perspective and restore your soul is the Lumberville Store . . . The store opened then (ca. 1770) and is open for business now, but at a pace that matches the soft ripple of the Delaware River, out front, in its patient journey to the sea. At the store, sitting around the stove as villagers have done for two centuries, it seems improbable that tomorrow will bring any surprises to Lumberville. The villagers seem to sense that reassuring fact, just as they know, with calming certainty, that the red oak out back, older than the store, will add another growth ring next spring just as surely as it shed its brown leaves this fall. ‘The common bond of the 500 residents of Lumberville,’ said the store’s proprietor Gerald Gordon, ‘is the area itself. We love the peace and the solitude. We’re not looking for headlines. We’re not looking for change.’



‘Political Discussion’ From Bucks County Traveler, July 1953. Steve Cohen collection.



Lumberville Store, post office, and home at 3741 River Road. Built at various times starting in 1803. Photo by Carol Lansill.

Lumberville Store Proprietors

George Wall (office)	1800-1803
John Ruckman	1803-1807
David Livezey	1807-1811
Elizabeth Olden	1811-1814
Jesse Roberts	1814
Hoppock & Stryker	1815-1836
William Hoppock	1836-1842
Livezey & Hartley	1842
Cyrus Livezey	1842
Elias Livezey	1842-1844
Albert Livezey	1844-1846
Cyrus Livezey	1847-1873
William Kitchin, Jr.	1873-1876
George S. Reading	1887-1889
E. Stanton Kitchin	1889-1892
John R. Johnson	1892-1897
E. Stanton Kitchin	1897-1898
Samuel J. Heed	1898-1918
Asher K. Anders	1918
Elsie R. (Heed) Housley	1939-1973
Gerald Gordon	1973-2003
Mike & Nancy Shanley	2003-

Black Bass Hotel

Few hotels in America can trace their heritage back two hundred and sixty years, but Lumberville has one. It started in the 1740s to serve the village and the lumbermen who rode rafts and boats down the Delaware River. Business picked up when the Delaware Canal opened in 1832, particularly as Lumberville became a convenient halfway stop on the two-day run from Easton to Bristol.

On Saturday, January 17, 1833 there was a particularly lively party at the hotel, attended by river boatmen, canal engineers, and locals. They had such a good time that they set the building on fire, cheerfully oblivious of the fact that large quantities of blasting powder were stored in the basement. The building and the merry-makers were saved from being blown up by the bravery of the proprietor, Major Anthony Fry who, at the risk of his own life, broke open the cellar door and carried out the powder.

The famous tavern has had many lives. In chronological order, it was a tavern at Wall's Landing, the Temple Bar, established by William Closson about 1745. It later was called the Lumberville Inn and Lumberville House; then the Rising Sun in the 1820s and 1830s. It burned while owned by Anthony Fry in 1833. Rebuilt, it was the Lumberville House or Hotel until, for a time in the 1860s, it was the Pennsylvania House. For a few years in the 1890s it was the Black Bass; then again the Lumberville Hotel in 1910, and after repeal of Prohibition in 1933, ongoing as the Black Bass.*

In the late nineteenth century the Black Bass fell into decline and passed through several owners until it was purchased in 1949 by Herbert Ward. He rescued the business, renovated the building, improved the menu to cater to tourists from New York and Philadelphia, and maintained a high level of operation until his death, some fifty-four years later.

'Herbie' Ward was interested in history and was a devoted Anglophile. Just examine the old dining room on the left as you enter the inn. It is an authentic barroom of Medieval design with a cage to protect the spirits. A collection of punched tin lanterns hangs overhead. The large open fireplace is equipped with antique tools. In the main barroom at the other end of the building there is mounted behind glass Queen Victoria's Coronation Coach in miniature, complete with all the outriders, more than one hundred figures.



Black Bass Hotel, (Front View,) Summer Resort on Delaware River, Lumberville, Bucks County, Pa., G. W. Wynkoop, Proprietor.



Black Bass Hotel pictured by illustrator Charles Hargens of Carversville.

Upstairs the guest bedrooms are uniquely named — Federal, Empire, Victoria, Gibson, and of course Cleveland, named for the President who stayed here when fishing in the Delaware. Each room is furnished to the period. The old guest register lists visitors from many parts of Europe and Asia, as well as notables from all over this country. They come here for the charm, and the consistently fine food.

The particularly attractive dining porch with its panoramic view of the river has been supported by major stone reconstruction of the wall leading down to the canal. When the old wall began to disintegrate a few years ago, the Black Bass won an out-of-court settlement in 1991 with the State by claiming that the Inn, built about 1745, preceded the Delaware Canal, built in 1832. It was claimed by the Inn that the canal waters were slowly eroding the wall and threatening the future safety of the Inn. The State Park rebuilt the wall soundly enough that it withstood the devastating flood waters of 2004 and 2005. At this rate the Black Bass should survive for another two hundred years.

*Edwin Harrington. History of Solebury

The Future

If the recent past is any indication, Lumberville's future is thoroughly secure. The physical boundaries of town are fixed by steep hills and a river that only occasionally misbehaves. People talk about hundred-year floods, but the Delaware River recently managed two within seven months. Notwithstanding the mess and inconvenience, no homes were destroyed and no permanent residents moved out. There have been periodic renovations to existing houses, but no new *McMansions* have been built and none are known to be planned.

The flowing waters of the Delaware River and the Paunacussing Creek add beauty and serenity to the community. In recognition of their importance to the region, the federal government has designated the Lower Delaware River, from Delaware Water Gap to the outskirts of Philadelphia, as part of the National Scenic Rivers System, thus protecting it from encroachment and development.

The 7.87 square miles of the Paunacussing Watershed are being protected by the recently-formed Association that 'seeks to be a positive voice in controlling growth, so that the fine rural and historic character of the area need not be lost. It should never be invaded by through highways or rampant subdivision, which bring about further paving, spreading commercial facilities, and destruction of natural qualities. A reasonable proportion of open space needs to be maintained for the benefit of present and future inhabitants.'

Meanwhile, the land area through Lumberville is protected and preserved along the Delaware Canal State Park, a National and State Historic Landmark and a section of the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor from Wilkes-Barre to Bristol in southeastern Pennsylvania.

Most important in predicting the future of Lumberville is the character of the residents — stable, creative, friendly and conservative. Consider just a few of the residents —

The **Tinsman family** has been in the retail lumber business for more than 135 years. William Tinsman, Junior, the current patriarch of the clan became Solebury Township Supervisor for six years starting in 1954. He pioneered the introduction of real estate zoning in the Township, a very contentious issue at the time. Where would we be today without it? His son William E. followed his father's civic lead and became Township Supervisor from 1999 through 2005. His unique contribution was pushing for conservation easements throughout the Township, preserving farmland and woodlands from sprouting housing developments on every corner. Solebury currently has more than 25% of its total land area in



Lumberville Annual Picnic — June 18, 2005. Photograph by Bruce Katsiff.

perpetual easements, a higher proportion of the land preserved than anywhere else in Bucks County or Pennsylvania.

Gerald Gordon gave up the postmastership and operation of the General Store after thirty years of cordial relations with residents and visitors. He was a one-man store operator, postmaster, and public relations director.

Herbie Ward recently passed away after playing host to dignitaries and ordinary visitors from all over the world for more than half a century at the Black Bass Hotel. His near neighbor, the late Harry Nessler, created the 1740 House as a successful bed and breakfast. Harry will be remembered for his promotional slogan that regularly ran in *The New Yorker* — 'If you can't be a guest in a Bucks County home, be ours.'

Bob Faron added a bit of culture to the community by writing three erudite books on the works of William Shakespeare. Bob and Paul Bogen vie as amateur historians of the village.

For many years from the 1950s through the 1980s **Elsie Housley** and **Bertha Goss** chronicled the social news of Lumberville in their weekly column in the *New Hope Gazette*. The social news was modest by big city standards, but it gave a lot of entertainment to the locale. These two had an inside track in collecting news, as they sorted the mail in the post office.

The biggest social event of each summer season is the Founder's Day Picnic, instituted in 1982 by **Rowland Barker** and **Bruce Dupuis**. Each year the party grows, until the number now exceeds 150, all faithfully captured in a community photograph by resident **Bruce Katsiff**, otherwise known as the Director of The James A. Michener Art Museum in Doylestown. The picnic brings together residents, and a few friends, in a heartwarming celebration of life in Lumberville. Long may it continue!

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