

Robinson Twp. (pp. 900-910)
History of Washington County, Pennsylvania*

This township is the eleventh in the original thirteen township formed by the trustees appointed under the act erecting the county of Washington. It began its legal existence on the 15th of July, 1781. The territory comprised in the original township of Robinson was bounded as follows: "Beginning at the head-waters of the North Fork of Raccoon Creek; thence down the creek to its mouth; thence up the Ohio River to the mouth of Chartiers Creek; thence up the creek to mouth of Robinson Run; thence up the main branch thereof to the head-waters; from thence in a straight line to the head-waters of the North Fork of Raccoon Creek, the place of beginning." The erection of Allegheny County in 1788 cut off that portion of the township from the mouth of Flaherty's Run on the Ohio to the mouth of Miller's Run on Chartiers Creek, then in Cecil township. In 1786, when Allegheny County was enlarged by territory from Washington County, this township was again reduced, and the slight change in 1836 was brought to its present territory. The township as it now exists is bounded on the west by Hanover; on the northeast by the county of Allegheny; and on the southwest, south, and the southwest by townships of Cecil, Mount Pleasant, and Smith. The boundary between Robinson and the last-mentioned three townships is Raccoon Creek; and this stream and Robinson's Run, which is the principal southeastern boundary of the township, are its principal waters. Small tributaries enter these streams from the east through the township, which is in general well watered, undulating in surface, of good soil, and excellently adapted to the purposes of agriculture.

From the erection of the township in 1781 it was an independent and separate district till May 4, 1803, when it became part (with Smith township) of District No. 4, and so continued until 1838, when it again became a separate and independent district. The names of justices of the peace having jurisdiction in Robinson during the time it was a part of District No. 4 (1803 to 1838) will be found in the list for Smith township. The names of the justices prior to 1803 and after 1838 are give, viz.:

James Irvine, April 15, 1782 James Pollock, April 14, 1840

Alexander Wright, April 15, 1782 James Pollock, April 15, 1845

Joseph Scott, Sept. 25, 1787 Richard Donaldson, April 15, 1845

Samuel Scott, Feb. 8, 1709 Robert McBirney, Aug, 14,1846

Richard Donaldson, April 2, 1803 James Pollock, April 9, 1850

Richard Donaldson, April 14, 1840 James M. Clark, April 15, 1851

James McCalmont, April 11, 1854 Thomas Donaldson, March 29, 1870

James Pollock, April 10, 1855 James Pollock, March 29, 1870

James McCalmont, April 12, 1859 Thomas Donaldson, Jan.29, 1874

James Pollock, April 10, 1860 James Donaldson, May 24, 1874

Joseph McNall, April14, 1863 Thomas Donaldson, March 17, 1875

James Pollock, June 3, 1865 James Donaldson, March 27, 1879

Thomas Donaldson, July 12, 1865 Thomas Donaldson, March 30, 1880

Settlements.-Capt. Samuel Beelor and his son Samuel were settled in 1774 upon land where the village of Candor now stands, as is recited in a Virginia certificate granted in February, 1780. An additional tract of land of four hundred acres adjoining this was granted to Samuel Beelor July 17, 1782, "to satisfie the said grain right." On the survey accompanying this statement is shown a house two stories high and situated on a road from Dillo's Fort to Turner's Fort. Dillo's Fort was in Hanover township, on the farm of Matthew Dillo, on fort Dillo Run. The road from there ran southeasterly to Beelor's, and from thence east to Turner's Fort.

What was known as Beelor's Fort was his own house, two stories high, made large and strong. The survey of 1782 shows no other. Capt. Samuel Beelor and his family, and Samuel Beelor, Jr., and his family lived on the place until 1789, when they sold and removed. The lands are now owned by J.M. Clark, trustee, John G. Smith, Mrs. Cully, Samuel Neill, the Raccoon Church, and embrace the site of the village of Candor.

The fort is said to have been erected about a hundred yards southwest of the Raccoon Church. It must have been some years after Mr. Beelor's settlement before the Baileys, McCandlesses, Shearers, and others came to this section. Beelor's house was the rendezvous for all the people of the vicinity in time of danger.

On the 21st of March, 1789, James Clark, of Mercersburg, Franklin Co., Pa., came to this county and purchased the tract of land in Robinson township known as "Big Levels," containing four hundred acres, and other lands in Canton township, in this county. David, a son of James, settled in Canton township on the lands purchased there, and which are now owned by Samuel Weirick. Another son, John, came to this township and settled upon the "Big Levels." Thomas, a brother of John, purchased the lands of him and settled there. His son William inherited them, and lived there until his death, Jan. 31, 1881. His son Thomas also lived and died on the farm. William Clark, who came into this county at an early day, always insisted that the Beelor Fort was on the "Homeside Farm" below the spring, and not by the church, as is the general impression. The property owned by William Clark was conveyed by him to Kate E. Clark, a daughter of J.M. Clark, Esq., who conveyed it to the Clark Trust Fund, by which it is now held. J.M. Clark was for many years a justice of the peace in this township.

Robert Shearer, with his brother Hugh, came to this county from Lancaster with the Baileys, and settled upon lands now owned by John Christy, William Dornan, and William Russell. Robert lived here a short time with this family, and was killed by Indians in the summer of 1780, about two miles northwest of Capt. Beelor's Fort. Robert Shearer left a widow, Elizabeth, and two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth. Mary became the wife of Richard Johnston, and settled on a part of the land now owned by William Dornan. Their children all moved West. Johnston died, and the widow married Samuel Christy, a brother of James Christy. They had one son, James, who now resides in Cleveland. Elizabeth, the other daughter of Robert Shearer, married James Christy, and settled on the part of the Shearer tract now owned by their son John Christy. Mrs. John Andrews and Mrs. Samuel Neal, both of Smith township, are their daughters. A son of John and Elizabeth Christy is a physician in Florence, Hanover township.

Robert Shearer, Sr., the father of Robert Shearer who was killed by the Indians in 1780, came out soon after his sons, and lived with Robert. Some time after Robert's death he was taken prisoner by the Indians one Sabbath morning while in his own cabin, and was taken down the Ohio River to Mehickon. He was kept eleven weeks, and then escaped. After many trials and hardships, he reached the fort at Wheeling, and from there came home.

Hugh Shearer was unmarried, and lived with his brother Robert. Some time after Robert's death he too was killed by Indians while working in a cornfield.

William McCandless was the first of his family to come to this section of the country. He came with the Baileys and the Shearers, and took up two hundred acres of land north of Robert Shearer. At that time his land was the northernmost tract on which settlers were living in this section. He lived and died on the place. Two of his sons were killed at the same time with Hugh Shearer. A son, Hugh, lived on the farm many years and died there. He left a son, Hugh, who inherited the property, and after his death the heirs sold to James McBride, who now owns it.

Alexander Bailey was a native of Scotland, and in early life went to Ireland, where he married Jane Brown. After the birth of Matthew, their oldest son, in June, 1749, they emigrated to America, and settled in Emmetsburg, Md. Here they remained till about 1785, and there all the children were born, who afterwards became early settlers in this township. In the year 1784, Matthew Bailey, the oldest son, came to this township, and settled upon the tract of land now owned by William Bailey. After building a cabin in 1784, and clearing up more land, he returned to his father's house. In the spring following, Alexander (his father) and brothers, William and James, came out to the new settlement. Alexander took out a warrant for one hundred and sixty-two acres of land, which was surveyed to him as "Disappointment." Matthew Bailey never married. He died on his father's tract about 1830, and was buried in Raccoon churchyard. Alexander, the father, settled with his family on the tract "Disappointment," and lived there many years. His wife lived to be one hundred and six years of age. He had ten children. Jane, the eldest (Mrs. William Galbraith), now lives at Candor, eighty years of age; Matthew, a son of John, settled on the tract which his uncle Matthew first settled; John, his oldest son,

became a minister of the United Presbyterian Church, and is now preaching at Wellsville, Ohio; Samuel is also a minister of the same denomination, and is pastor of a church at Pittsburgh; William S. Alexander, and Carlisle, also sons of Matthew, reside on the homestead; Sarah, a daughter of Matthew, became the wife of Jerry Andrews, and now resides in Hanover township.

Nancy, a daughter of John (youngest son of Alexander), married George Morrison, and settled in Indiana County, Pa. Alexander and Peggy, children of John, died young. James settled on a part of Matthew's tract, "Plenty Without Care," and sold to Matthew (2d), and went West. Mary became the wife of Silas Ewing, and now lives in Mount Pleasant township. John and William, also sons of John, inherited the land of their father. William still retains his portion; John lived upon his farm until 1880, when he sold to John M. Bailey, a son of James. Ann, a daughter of John, and sister of John and William resides on the homestead with the latter.

William Bailey, born May 2, 1752, and a son of Alexander (1st), purchased a part of the tract of his brother Matthew. His house was where William S. Bailey's house now stands. He died on the farm, and left three sons-Joseph, Alexander, and Andrew-and two daughters,-Jenny and Margaret. Alexander and Joseph settled on part of the homestead. It now belongs to Joseph (a grandson of Joseph) and William S. Bailey.

Thomas Biggert (now written Bigger), his wife, mother, and sister emigrated to America from Ireland in 1773. After remaining in the East a short time, they came to what is now Robinson township, and settled upon land now owned by Matthew Bigger. Here a cabin was built, and improvements commenced, but the Indians were so troublesome that they removed down to the Washington lands, and with twelve others located, being induced to do so by Col. George Croghan, who insisted Washington had no rights there. He lived here until 1784, when he became dispossessed by the success of Washington in the ejectment suits. After being thus summarily turned from the fruits of his eight years' labor, he went back to his first stopping-place, and took out the warrant for a tract, on which he settled, and lived the remainder of his days. This was surveyed to him as "Horse Neck," containing four hundred and twenty-three acres. Other large tracts were purchased later, and by his industry and energy he had accumulated over a thousand acres at the time of his death, which occurred in 1829, at the age of eighty-nine years. His sons have added to these lands, and now are in possession of two thousand five hundred acres of land in the neighborhood of the homestead, and considerable landed property in the West.

Thomas Biggert left six sons,-Matthew, James, Samuel, Thomas, Andrew, and John. Matthew lived on a portion of the farm and died unmarried. James married and settled in Beaver County near Frankfort Springs. Daniel lived and died on the homestead part of the farm. A portion of it was left to his youngest son, Andrew, who exchanged for a portion north, on which his son, Thomas M. Biggert, now resides. Mary, a daughter of Andrew, married Richard Donaldson, and Martha married John Donaldson. Both settled in Robinson township. Matthew, a son of Samuel, lives on part of the homestead, and James, also a son of Samuel, lives on a farm his father purchased of the Chestnut heirs.

Thomas Biggert, Jr., son of Thomas, lived and died unmarried. On the property now owned by Thomas Biggert, Sr., he built a tan-yard, which was situated between the stone house of Thomas Biggert and the residence of Thomas M. Biggert. It was continued in operation as late as 1850. Mr. Biggert was a practical tanner, and brought up many young men to the business, and did much to promote their prosperity. Among those who worked and for a time carried on the tannery were John Ewing, James Hood, David Strours, and William Hall. Of the property of Thomas Biggert, Matthew Biggert now owns the homestead and central portion, Thomas Biggert the upper or southern part, and Thomas M. Biggert the northern portion.

Josiah Scott obtained a warrant for a tract of land on Raccoon Creek Aug. 6, 1784, which was surveyed to him in March the next year as "Dispute," containing three hundred and forty-seven acres. On the 1st of June, 1791, he sold this tract to his sons, Samuel and Abraham Scott. Abraham owned two hundred and forty-seven acres, the land on which his son Holland now resides. On the stream he had a grist-mill and a horse-mill. Finley Scott, a son of Abraham, married Margaret Stevenson, and became wealthy. They lived on the old Judge James Edgar farm in Smith township. Their sons Samuel and John now own the property. Robert K., another son, lives on one of the original tracts taken up by Sebastian Burgett, near Burgettstown. Josiah Scott, Jr., owned sixty acres, now owned by the Widow White. He was shot by the Indians and died about a year afterwards. His daughter Peggy became the wife of Andrew McFall.

John Donaldson, a native of Chester County, came to this region of country in 1781, and purchased a tract of land called "Ross's Patent," containing four hundred acres, which Richard Donaldson and the heirs of James Donaldson now own. He built a cabin on the farm, and died there unmarried. The property came to his brother, Capt. Richard Donaldson. He lived with his brother, being also unmarried. He was a member of Assembly from this district in 1811, and died about 1813. The property was inherited by two nephews, John and Richard, son of James. John inherited the north part and settled upon it and spent his days there, leaving the property to his son James, who also died there. The property now belongs to his heirs. Richard settled upon his portion, a spent a long and useful life. He was a member of Assembly in 1845-46, and justice of the peace many years. He died in 1879, in his eighty-first year. Of his children, Richard now owns the homestead; James and Andrew settled in Rock Island, Ill., in 1852; Mary (Mrs. David Walker) settled first in Allegheny township, and now lives in Robinson township.

James Donaldson, brother of John and Richard, the first settler, and father of John and Richard, who inherited the property of their uncle Richard, came to the county about six years after his brothers, and purchased one hundred acres of Josiah Scott, and later purchased one hundred and fifty more; lived upon his homestead and died there. Thomas, a son, lived unmarried, and died upon the farm. Andrew settled on the Steubenville pike in this township, where his son now owns. Thomas, another son of Andrew, lives on the old James Donaldson homestead. John McDonald emigrated to America from Scotland, and came to this territory about 1780. He was living here when the county was organized in 1781. He took up in different warrants sixteen hundred acres of land, which in due course of time were patented. Upon the division of Washington County in 1788 and

1789, a part of these lands were thrown in Allegheny County. In addition to this large body of land he owned a tract of four hundred acres in what is now Union township, eight hundred acres in West Virginia, and two thousand acres in Allegheny County. He lived upon the home tract in Robinson township till his death, leaving six sons,-Andrew and William (twins), John, James, Alexander, and Edward. Andrew and William settled on land in Beaver County, where they lived and died. John studied law, settled in Pittsburgh, and died about 1832. James settled on the west part of the home farm, where his sons, John J. and Noble K., now reside. Alexander settled in Pittsburgh and died in Beaver County. He left no family. Edward, the youngest son, settled on the homestead part of the farm where his father lived and died. Of his children, John N. lives on the old mansion farm, and has been for many years successfully engaged as a prominent breeder of Shorthorn cattle. Dr. Nesbit McDonald resides in the city of Pittsburgh, and Margaret N. resides in the town of McDonald. Edward died in Kentucky in 1858, in the twenty-third year of his age.

James McBirney and his son John, natives of Ireland, emigrated to this country at the close of the Revolution, and settled east of the mountains. It was not until 1814 they came to this county, and on the 15th of February of that year James purchased one hundred and forty-three acres of land of William McClain. James McBirney sold this place to his son John, who lived and died upon the place. He had three sons,-James, John, and Robert. James resided on the homestead, and left it to his son, John R. McBirney, who still owns it. A part of the Robbins Block Coal Company's works are on his lands. John now lives in Hickory. Robert lived on the tract, "Blackberry Plains," his grandfather, James McBirney bought later (and where he passed the remainder of his days). It is now owned by Mrs. Robert McBirney, and occupied by William Dixon, a son-in-law.

John Witherspoon, from Maryland, came to this county with his wife and one son, Jonathan, and lived on land of Thomas Biggert, near the site of the Robinson Church, for a period of five years. Afterwards they made several removals. About 1824 he rented the Hollingsworth improvement, now owned by Samuel Witherspoon, grandson of John Witherspoon. Within a short time after their removal to this place the father died, leaving a widow and four sons,-Jonathan, John, Azariah, and Joshua. They united in the purchase of two hundred acres of the tract, including the improvement, which tract was all sold at this time, the Witherspoons, Andrew, Samuel, and Thomas Biggert and Isaac Donaldson purchasing the whole tract. Jonathan had no children, and later sold to Joshua, whose son Samuel now owns the property. John Witherspoon, the oldest son of Joshua, has resided in Bavington since 1855. Rev. James W. Witherspoon, also a son of Joshua, is a minister of the Fifth United Presbyterian Church in Allegheny City. William H., also a son, is a merchant in Burgettstown.

James McBride took up a tract of land, now owned by Alexander and James K. McBride. He built his cabin and lived there many years; later erected the house his grandson, James K., now occupies. He had ten sons. All are dead except Alexander, the youngest now over eighty years of age, and who still occupies a part of the homestead. The farm was divided between Alexander and William, whose son, James K., owns the land of his father. Nathaniel, the eldest son of James, lived on a farm adjoining his father's, but in

Allegheny County. Samuel, Isaac, David, and John all settled near their father's place. Matthew moved to Canonsburg. James lived to be eighty-four years of age, and was buried in Robinson Church.

Samuel Pollock took out a warrant for one hundred and forty-eight acres of land March 16, 1786. This tract was on Chartiers Creek. He had two sons, James and John; the former married a daughter of Hugh McCoy, and for a second wife married a daughter of Nathaniel McCoy, of Hanover township. He was a surveyor and justice of the peace, and lived on the Hugh McCoy farm, in Robinson township, many years and died there. His brother John was a practicing physician in Clinton for nearly forty years.

Peter, Alexander, and William Kidd, three brothers, came from Dauphin County about 1781. Alexander Kidd lived unmarried, and about 1818 went to New Orleans in a produce boat, and was never afterwards heard from. William Kidd took up a tract near Midway. He married a Miss Hull. After her death he went West and married again. Alexander, a son of William, moved to Burgettstown, where he was justice of the peace for many years. Two of his daughters reside in Burgettstown. William A. Kidd, a son, also many years a justice of the peace and clerk of the courts of Washington County from 1863 to 1869, is a son of Alexander. Peter, brother of Alexander and William Kidd, remained some years in this township, then removed West.

Christopher Smith purchased forty acres of the Beelor lands of Thomas Clark. On this farm Mr. Smith kept tavern many years at the sign of the "Green Tree." His son John now owns the property. William Duncan owned fifty acres in the southeast part of the township, where his daughter Polly and granddaughter, Eleanor Connolly, now reside.

William Aten about 1800 purchased a farm of one hundred and twenty-six acres of James Bailey. It was part of a tract taken up by Seth Greer about 1785. William Aten lived here all his day, and reared a family of three sons-Aaron, William, and Henry-and four daughters. Aaron bought the property of the heirs and lived there till his death; the property is now owned by his children. William settled in Smith township, where John Stevenson now lives. Henry is teaching school in Midway. Of the daughters, Martha became the wife of Robert Stevenson, and lives in the township; Jane married Ephraim Boyle; they reside in Mount Pleasant township.

Midway.-This town is on the line between Robinson and Smith townships, and situated in both. The tracts of land on which it is located were taken up by the William and David Elder. The land was sold by the Elders to Samuel McFarlane, who sold to Thomas Mitchell & Co., by whom the village was laid out. The plot was surveyed Nov. 20, 1865, and was divided into fifty-three lots and four outlots. James Bell bought the first lot and erected a saw-mill, now owned by Samuel F. Bell. The first hotel was built by George Campbell in 1869, and is still owned and occupied by him. John Kennedy was the first postmaster, about the time the railroad was opened and this place became a station. The town at present contains ten stores, Methodist Church, Odd-Fellows' Hall, drug-store, school-house, hotel, millinery-store, railroad station, express and telegraph-office, post-

office, two coal-works, and two physicians. Years ago the place was called Egypt, and a store was kept here as early as 1844 by William Smith.

Methodist Episcopal Church.-Services of the society were first held in the mill of George W. Peacher, and the organization was perfected in 1874 under the charge of the Rev. J.E. Wright. He has been succeeded by the Revs. M.S. Kendig, S.W. McCurdy, D.K. Stevenson, J.F. Murray, J.H. Hickman, and W. Johnson, the present pastor. The society has a present membership of thirty. An edifice was erected soon after the organization. The church is included in the charge with Burgettstown and Noblestown.

Baptist Church.-John Moses, a Baptist minister of Sharon, Pa., came to Midway in 1873. There being no Baptist society here at that time, he commenced preaching in the school-house. A Bible class was organized in his house, which was well attended. A hall was rented, and a Sabbath-school organized with one hundred and thirty scholars. On the 17th of July, 1877, a church was organized with nine members; the Rev. John Moser was called to the pastorate, and accepted. He remained as pastor until April 20, 1881, at which time he resigned. It was accepted June 4th the same year. The church is at present without a pastor, and has a membership of eighteen. Services are held in the school-house.

Societies.-Midway Valley Lodge, No. 888, I.O.O.F., was chartered with the following officers: Hector Cochran, N.G.; William Higley, V.G.; William J. Riggs, Sec. Meetings were first held in a building owned by Thomas Woods. In 1877 the society erected a three-story building at a cost of about two thousand five hundred dollars, with rooms for a store in the first story, a public hall on the second floor, and lodge-room on the third floor. Present number of members, sixty.

McDonald.-The land on which this village is located was originally a part of the McDonald lands. The plat for the town was laid out in November, 1871, by M. O'Hara, under direction of Mrs. F.A. O'Hara, W. A. Edelbum being the surveyor. It contained four hundred and thirty-eight lots, each twenty-five by one hundred and twenty feet. An addition of forty lots was made to the plat July 7, 1873, by Michael and Francis O'Hara, and of one hundred and nine lots July 11, 1873.

Before the town was platted, Henry C. McEwen (about 1860) built a saw-mill and "chopper" at the place, and two years later a grist-mill was added. About the time of the grading of the railroad through this section William Johnson built the first house in the town, and started the first hotel. The post-office was established at this place first under the names of Havelock, and later changed to McDonald. Henry C. McEwen was the first postmaster appointed. He was succeeded by William Johnson, James Ewert, Jerry Fife, John Larimer, Theodore McD. McCloy, and J. D. Sawters, who is the present postmaster. William Johnson opened the first store. The town at present contains three stores, post-office, church (Episcopal), express- and telegraph-office, depot, grist-mill, and academy.

McDonald United Presbyterian Church.-About twenty-five persons gathered at the school-house in McDonald, Nov. 1, 1875, and united in a petition asking the Presbytery, who were to meet Dec. 1, 1875, to grant them an organization. The application and

petition was granted. Application for a supply had been made to the Presbytery in September, previous to the above action, and S.W. Cook was sent as a commissioner. This request was granted, and the Rev. W.G. Nevins was sent. The society was organized in February, 1876, by the Rev. Dr. Greer, of Robinson's Run Congregation. Rev. W.G. Nevins acted as a supply about one year and a half after organization. Rev. John McArthur then acted as a supply for nine months; he was called to the pastorate, and remained one year and four months. Except with a supply, the pulpit was vacant for seven months. On the 1st of January, 1880, the Rev. W. D. Irons received and accepted a call, and is still the pastor. The church contains at present one hundred and eight members. A neat church edifice, thirty-five by sixty-five feet, was erected in 1876 at a cost of four thousand one hundred and fifty dollars. It was finished in the fall of 1877, and dedicated in December of that year by Dr. W.J. Reed, of Pittsburgh. A Sabbath-school of sixty pupils is connected with the church, of which the pastor is superintendent.

Engleside Academy.-On the 2d of January, 1877, an academy was opened by Edward Haws in the basement of the United Presbyterian Church. Fourteen pupils were in attendance. Mr. Haws was succeeded by G.R. Anderson, George W. Slater, and the Rev. W. D. Irons, who is now the principal. The school contains at present forty pupils.

Village of Candor.-The land on which this village is located was part of a tract taken up by Col. Samuel Beelor on a Virginia certificate in 1780, he having settled there in 1774. The cause of the settlement of people at this place was that the Raccoon Church was located here. But few habitations were erected here before 1817. At that time the Rev. Moses Allen became the pastor of the church, and it was by him the village was begun. His son, Watson Allen, started the first store. It is related of him that while buying goods in Philadelphia he was asked the address to send them to. After a little thought he replied "Candor, Washing Co." The goods were sent, and the name became generally adopted. A post-office was established, and the following have been postmasters: Samuel Scroggs, W. Bigham, Hamilton J. Cook, Benjamin Kelso, Dr. B.F. Hill, and Samuel Wasson, who is the present postmaster, and is also the merchant of the place.

The Presbyterian Church of Raccoon(1) is located in Robinson township, in the northern part of Washington County. It derives its name from a creek called "the Raccoon." The congregation being situated on the head-waters of that stream. The origin of this church dates back towards the earliest eras of the history of this county. No records can now be found, either in the archives of the session or the Presbytery, that reach back to the very beginnings. The Atens, Baileys, Crooks, Dunbars, Dunlaps, Donaldsons, Kerdecks, Mongomerys, McFarland, McDonalds, and Scotts were among the first members and the first settlers of the neighborhood, and their third and fourth generations are among the names now on the church roll. Among these there is a vast amount of family tradition current that is curious and interesting enough to live, but generally that precision of date and circumstances is wanting which is necessary before it could be considered reliable and valuable history.

(1) By the Rev. G. M. Kerr.

From the records of the old Presbytery of Redstone, under whose jurisdiction most of the early churches in this region came into existence, it appears that on April 19, 1785, there was "a supplication for supplies for Raccoon." This is the first mention of the name Raccoon on those records. One year previous to that date, April 13, 1784, there was "a supplication for supplies for a vacant congregation near Robinson's Run," and on April 18, 1786, Rev. Mr. Clark was appointed to supply Potato Garden on the fourth Sabbath of May. These three names Raccoon, Robinson's Run, and Potato Garden, seem to be interchangeable. No two of them ever obtain supplies at the same time. Sometimes the application is from one, and the supplies are sent to the other. When Raccoon obtains a pastor, the other names disappear from the record. Robinson's Run rises two miles east of this church, Potato Garden is four miles north, and the Raccoon has one branch three miles south, and another one-half mile north, and the main stream is three miles west. In early times any of these names would designate this locality. At that time the outside limits of this congregation approached Hickory on the south and Clinton on the north, and included Burgettstown on the west and Noblestown on the east. According to these records the first sermon preached here was by Rev. Joseph Smith, pastor of Cross Creek and Buffalo, on the first Sabbath of May, 1784.

But in the diary or journal of Dr. John McMillan, now in the hands of Mr. M.R. Allen, of Burgettstown, his great-grandson, reaches farther back than the records of the Presbytery. There the following memoranda are found:

"The first Sabbath of Dec., 1778, preached at Raccoon, from Rom. 8, 6, and received L7 10s. 6d.

"1779, Tues. after 3d sab. June at Mr. Bailies place on Raccoon & Received L13 17s. 3d.

"1780, 3rd sab. Of June at Raccoon. Recd L47 11s. 6d.

"1780, 4th sab. July at Mr. McDonalds place on Robinson Run & Recd L22 12s. 6d.
1782, Oct., 2nd Sab. At Raccoon," etc.

The first leaves of this private journal, like the first leaves of the Presbyterian records, are worn out or torn off. But from this we know Raccoon Church was in existence and able to "take up a collection" (thirty-five dollars in amount) at least as early as December, 1778.

Of the first house of worship, its size, dimensions and date of erection, nothing is know. It gave place to a large and commodious hewed log structure, built in 1786. On each of the longer sides of this building was a recess of considerable size-an architect's device-to furnish a corner to support the ends of the timbers, two lengths being necessary. The pulpit was in one of these recesses, and the one on the opposite side was appropriated to the use of a few colored slaves then owned in this neighborhood. This house continued in use until 1830, forty-four years.

Rev. Joseph Patterson was the first pastor. He received the call on April 21, 1789, and was ordained and installed Tuesday, Nov. 10, 1789. Mr. Patterson was in many respects a remarkable man. He was born in the north of Ireland in 1752. At the age of twenty-five years he married and emigrated to America. After a short stay in Pennsylvania he settled in Saratoga County, N.Y. In 1774 his parents arrived in Pennsylvania, and he returned to this State. He is spoken of as a weaver, farmer, and school-teacher. In 1776 he was teaching near Philadelphia, and was present at the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence. He left his school and volunteered in the American army. After leaving the army he resided a short time in York County, Pa. In 1779, through the influence of Judge Edgar, he came to Cross Creek, Washington Co. He was then a Seceder, with strong prejudice against the use of hymns in the worship of God. His neighbor, Squire Graham, succeeded in changing his views on that subject, and he became very fond of singing hymns. At Cross Creek he became an active leader of social prayer-meetings. In 1783 he was appointed an elder of the church there, and in the fall of 1785 was received by Presbytery as a candidate for the ministry at the age of thirty-three years. He studied three years under his pastor, Rev. Joseph Smith, was licensed to preach Aug. 12, 1788, at the age of thirty-six, and eight months afterwards he was installed pastor of Raccoon and Montour's Churches. In 1798 he resigned Montour's, but remained pastor of Raccoon till 1816, twenty-seven years and six months in all. He soon after removed to Pittsburgh, where his two sons lived, and fourteen years after died there at the age of eighty years. He was pre-eminently a man of faith and prayer. There is no register of the names of the members and officers during this long pastorate.

The deed for the church grounds shows that in 1793 the trustees were William Rankin, Peter Kidd, William McCandless, Matthew Bailey, John Dunlap, and Alexander Wright. Records of Presbytery show that Samuel Riddle was an elder in 1793, and at the close of this pastorate the session consisted of William McCandless, Thomas Hays, John Riddle, Thomas Miller, Benjamin Chestnut, William Moore, and Archibald McCandless.

On the 27th of May, 1817, Rev. Moses Allen was installed second pastor of Raccoon. He continued in that office twenty-two years. He was born in Westmoreland County Sept. 5, 1780. In his youth he obtained a knowledge of the millwright business, which he pursued diligently and successfully some years. He received his classical education at Jefferson College, and studied theology with Dr. John McMillan. In 1805 he was united in marriage with Catharine, youngest daughter of Dr. McMillan. He was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Ohio, June 23, 1807. In November of the same year he was ordained and installed pastor of the united churches of Providence and Jefferson, in Green County, Pa. In 1838 he left Raccoon, and was afterwards pastor at Crab Apple Church in Ohio for nine years, where he died Jan. 16, 1847, aged sixty-six. From memoranda made by his own hand it appears that his labors were abundant. He writes: "I was pastor of Raccoon twenty-two years, during which I preached 2685 times, administered the Lord's Supper 75 times, admitted to communion of the church 324, baptized 15 adults and 558 children, and solemnized 190 marriages."

Mr. Allen was a man of decided and positive character, of strong mental ability. He was a sound theologian, and is always spoken of as a very logical, instructive, and forcible

preacher. And the records of session show that he regarded discipline as an ordinance of God and a means of grace.

During his pastorate a new house of worship was built. It was a large brick edifice sixty-six by seventy-six feet, capable of seating six hundred adults. Some of its peculiarities were a very high pulpit on the side, instead of at the end of the building; an outside door at the right and left of the pulpit and three others at the opposite side; a very broad transverse aisle in front of the pulpit, in which the communion table was spread; a roof of four similar sides, all tapering towards the centre, upon which stood a modest belfry. This building continued in use forty-two years.

In 1830, Robert Wallace, Garret Vaneman, and Edward McDonald were elected and ordained elders, and in 1836, John Sturgeon, David Miller, Robert Smith, and Richard Donaldson were added. Under this administration the church grew in numbers and strength, and at its close was regarded as among the largest and most important country charges in the Synod.

The third pastor of Raccoon was the Rev. C. V. McKaig. He was installed in June, 1841, and continued in charge until December, 1865. This was another pastorate of prosperity and usefulness for this church.

On account of an obstinate and protracted affection of the throat, Mr. McKaig felt constrained first to take a vacation, with hope of restoration and recovery, but finally requesting a dissolution of the pastoral relation. At a meeting of the congregation, Dec. 18, 1865, a paper was adopted containing a very beautiful and touching testimonial of their regard and affection for him, and signifying to Presbytery their acquiescence in his request to have the pastoral relation dissolved.

In a thanksgiving sermon preached a short time before his resignation, Mr. McKaig said, "During my labors here four hundred and thirty have been added to the church, three hundred and twelve of these on examination. The average increase has been twenty per year. The highest number received any one year was thirty-three. Four hundred and sixty-five children have been baptized. Contributions to benevolent objects have amounted to six thousand one hundred and twenty-six dollars. In our meetings of session differences of opinion have been freely expressed, but no unkind or offensive word has been uttered. This session has always been a peacemaker, while living at peace among themselves, no vain eulogy. 'Blessed are the peacemakers!'"

Since his resignation of this charge Mr. McKaig has been for several years pastor of Bloomfield, a small suburban church in the city of Pittsburgh, but that same trouble with his throat and voice has obliged him to demit that charge. At present he resides in East Liberty, Pa. During his pastorate there was but one election of elders. In 1857, John Simonton, Thomas Wilson, John S. Russell, J.L. Moore, and Joseph Wallace were elected to that office. After this, this church was without a pastor for almost six years, but there was no intermission of the regular services. Regular and orderly calls were made out and sent to the Presbytery for the pastoral services of Rev. John Kerr, of Pittsburgh,

Pa., Rev. J.J. Beacom, of Forest Grove, Pa., Rev. J.B. Dickey of Steubenville, Ohio, and Rev. R.K. Campbell of South Salem, Ohio. Rev. Mr. Dickey and Rev. Mr. Kerr both came and labored here for a time, but for various reasons none of these calls were accepted. There was one election of elders during this time, June 26, 1869. John Farrar, I. M. Stevenson, and John Kennedy were duly inducted into that office.

The present pastor is Rev. Greer McIlvain Kerr. He is a native of Washington County, but his parents removed to Mercer County, Pa., when he was very young, and have lived there ever since. He received his collegiate education at Westminster College, Lawrence Co., Pa., where he graduated in 1867, and his theological education at the Western Theological Seminary, Allegheny, Pa. On March 27, 1871, while he was a member of the senior class in the seminary, having been licensed by the Presbytery of Chenango at Beaver Falls on the 28th of April of the year before, he received a call to this pastorate. He was ordained and installed by the Presbytery of Pittsburgh, June 14, 1871. S.J. Wilson, D.D., presided; Rev. John Gillespie preached a sermon; Rev. W.W. McKinney delivered the charge to the pastor, and Rev. S.M. Henderson the charge to the people. During this pastorate there have been two elections of elders. On March 26, 1875, James Meloney and W. S. Russell were made ruling elders, and Sept. 20, 1879, George C. Smith, S.C. Farrar, and Dr. B.F. Hill.

The present house of worship was built in 1872. It is built of brick, is fifty-two by eighty feet, with a basement story eleven feet, and the main room twenty-two feet to the square, with combed ceiling seven feet high in the centre. It is tastefully frescoed, carpeted throughout, and all the seats are cushioned. It was dedicated Nov. 26, 1873. Its total cost was \$14,093 including furniture.

This people surely have been highly favored. They have enjoyed the ordinances of the gospel for more than one hundred years without interruption. They have had exemplary leaders. No pastor, elder, or trustee has ever betrayed his trust, or been involved in any scandal, so as to become a reproach to the cause of religion or a stumbling-block in the way of the weak. The people have always been unusually intelligent, upright, industrious, and moral. Many worthy sons of noble sires still continue to hand down to those after them an ecclesiastical record unsullied, a spiritual inheritance without mortgage or incumbrance.

On the 24th of August, 1882, the centennial of Raccoon was held in the church, a great concourse of people being present from all the surrounding country, and the exercises of the day (which were intensely interesting) being conducted by the pastor, the Rev. Greer M. Kerr, the Rev. John M. Barnett, D.D. Rev. Richard Lea, D.D. Rev. S.C. Jennings, Rev. C.V. McKaig, Rev. J. D. Moffit, D.D., Rev. John Kerr, and others, and among those present were Revs. Fredericks, W.H. McCaughey, Ross Stevenson, Alexander Rockwell, Bruce, D.W. Carson, James Campbell, Hutchinson, McKnight, Fulton, Irons, and Rev. Robert Patterson (a grandson of Rev. Joseph Patterson), two children, three grand-, and several great-grandchildren of the Rev. Moses Allen. An excellent report of the proceedings of the day was published in the Burgettstown Call of Aug. 29, 1882.

United Presbyterian Congregation of Robinson.-The people of this section of country were for many years members of the Associate congregation of Montour's Run (now the United Presbyterian congregation of Clinton) and the Associate congregation of Burgettstown (now United Presbyterian). But feeling it an unnecessary burden to travel so far every Sabbath, and realizing the importance of having ordinances dispensed in their own midst, they met in the fall of 1830, around a log-heap fire, on or near the site of this building, and then and there resolved to build a "meeting-house", raised considerable money on the spot, and appointed a committee to solicit subscriptions from others. From the nature of this action, and also from their expectation of receiving aid from Montour's Run in return for aid afforded by them in building a house of worship in Clinton, it evidently was not their design, then at least, to seek a separate organization, but simply to erect a second house of worship in the congregation and secure a part of the pastor's labors. Several informal meetings were held at the house of Samuel Bigger, which finally resulted in a petition which was presented to the Presbytery of Chartiers, April 6, 1831, for an "organization, and liberty to build a church." Against this petition the congregation of Montour's Run remonstrated, and Presbytery by an almost unanimous vote denied their request. Again, in March, 1832, we find them before Presbytery with a similar petition. At this time Burgettstown congregation joined Montour's in their remonstrance. This petition occupied the attention of Presbytery for three consecutive meetings, when it was again refused. With all these discouragements in the way they continued, as they were able, to press forward the work on their church building, which was completed in the spring of 1833 at a cost of \$1374. We find them again before Presbytery in August, 1832, with a petition for a supply of preaching. This petition Presbytery seems to have regarded as a contempt, and handed it back to the commissioners. But still they were not discouraged; but, with evident faith in importunity, they again asked Presbytery in March, 1833, for "disjunction from Montour's Run." This was subsequently changed to a petition asking for liberty to build a church in their own neighborhood, for a part of Mr. Wilson's time, and also asking Presbytery to take measures to heal the division in Montour's Run congregation. This petition the Presbytery referred to a commission chosen from sister Presbyteries, consisting of Revs. John Walker and Thomas Hanna, from the Presbytery of Muskingum and the Rev.----Murray, with two elders from the Presbytery of Ohio. This commission, after a careful hearing of the case, recommended to Presbytery that Mr. Wilson be directed to organize the congregation under the name of Robinson, and that he take charge of it as a part of his pastoral charge. This report was unanimously approved by Presbytery, August 27, 1833. At the suggestion of the commissioners Mr. Wilson entered on his pastoral duties here before the meeting of the Presbytery, and shortly afterwards proceeded with the formal organization of the congregation, and continued to labor in it as its pastor until his death, though he had never been formally called by the people or installed by the Presbytery. At the organization the following ruling elders were elected: Thomas Bigger, Esq., Samuel Wallace, William Donaldson, James Pollock, Benjamin Bubbet, Esq., Richard Donaldson, Sr., Andrew Donaldson, Alexander McBride, and James Smith.

The connection of Montour's Run and Robinson remained until Sept. 21 1847, when it was dissolved by Presbytery. Since that time Montour's Run has been known as Clinton. The land on which the church was erected was donated by Alexander McBride, Matthew

Bigger, and William McBride. The land for the cemetery was donated by Matthew Bigger. The first burial was Maria, the daughter of John and Sarah Wilson, May 22, 1833. The contract for building the church was given to John Lowry. The first sermon was preached by the Rev. Joseph Banks, from the carpenter's bench, before the house was completed.

The Presbytery of Chartiers held a meeting in the church July 1, 1834. Rev. William Wilson took charge of this congregation in June, 1833, some months before its formal organization, and continued his labors here as fixed pastor until his death took place, April 30, 1842. He was a native of Ireland, born in 1772, educated at Glasgow University, where he graduated; was licensed to preach in 1795, emigrated to this country, and preached for forty-seven years.

In June, 1843, Rev. John Scott, D.D., began his labors as pastor of the congregation. The relation was dissolved in July, 1845, in consequence of his appointment by the Associated Synod as missionary to the Island of Trinidad.

Rev. Mr. Scott was a native of Jedburgh, Scotland, and was born on the 7th February, 1807. In 1818, with his father's family, he emigrated to America, entered Franklin College at New Athens, Ohio, after which he entered the theological seminary at Cannonsburg in 1838, under Dr. Ramsey. He was licensed to preach in June, 1842, and soon after received a call from the united congregation of Montour's Run and Robinson's Run.

Rev. James G. Rankin took charge of the congregation in April, 1849. His relation as pastor continued till his death, which occurred Nov. 6, 1868. He was born in 1821 at Warren, Ohio. Educated at Washington College, Pa., from which institution he graduated in 1842, he entered the theological seminary at Canonsburg, and after graduation was licensed in 1847 by the Presbytery of Chartiers. He accepted the call from this church in 1848, and commenced his labors the next spring.

The present pastor, the Rev. W. R. McKee, commenced his labors with this congregation on the 1st of August, 1869, and is a faithful and acceptable pastor. The elders since the first are as follows: May, 1849, Samuel Bigger, William Smillie, Joshua Witherspoon; May 18, 1854, John W. Stewart, Mathew Bailey; April 25, 1860, James Ackleson, James McNall, James Gilliland, William Witherspoon; Oct. 25, 1867, James Donaldson, John M. Donaldson, John Witherspoon; Feb. 3, 1872, Thomas Bigger, John Ackleson, Samuel Witherspoon, William Donaldson.

The church has at present one hundred and ninety-two members, and a Sunday-school containing one hundred and ninety pupils, of which William Donaldson is the superintendent. The present church edifice was erected in 1874. The information for this sketch was obtained from John Witherspoon and from a sermon preached by the pastor March 7, 1875, the Sabbath before leaving the old church building.

Schools in Robinson Township.-The first school-house in the township was a log building, built about 1800 on land of Richard Donaldson, near the spring, on the farm next to James Close. The school was taught by John Elliott, an Irishman, and continued for more than ten years. From 1810 to 1813 a school was taught in a log house that stood on the Morland farm, now the land of James Maloney. The first teachers in this place were Thomas Crawford and William Geary. Douglass Geary, was born near the township line in 1800, recollects attending this school at the period mentioned. He (Douglass Geary) himself taught a school in 1830 in a school-house that stood on the McNall farm. John Donagho, John P. Ewing, and others taught at the same place. Another school-house was in Smith township, on the John Stevenson farm. In this one of the teachers was Henry Robinson, father of Finley Robinson, of Midway.

After the enactment of the school law of 1834, the township was divided into districts as follows: Bigger District, No. 1; Pike, No. 2; Beech Hollow, No. 3; McAdam, No. 4; McDonald, No. 5. One of the school-houses previously mentioned (Beech Hollow) was used for schools under the new system. The McAdams and McDonald houses were built anew. The Bigger house was used till it was destroyed by fire some time afterwards, then built anew. Its location was changed three-fourths of a mile south, to its present site, where it is now called Robinson. Douglass Geary was one of the first teachers under the operation of the law of 1834. Under that law the township of Robinson, having accepted the requirements of the statute (in 1835), reported two hundred and ten persons liable to taxation for school purposes. Amount collected in that year for that purpose, \$173.04, as returned by Josiah Chestnut, treasurer. In 1836, \$56.86 was received from the state, and \$386.81 was collected on taxes levied in the township for school purposes. In 1837, \$375.95 was collected in the township for the same purpose. Matthew Bailey was treasurer in this and the previous year.

In 1863 the school report shows school-houses in Districts Nos. 1, 4 and 5 "small unventilated, and poorly seated." The number of districts reported five, with five teachers and one hundred and ten scholars. Total amount levied in township for school purposes, \$463.87; State appropriation, \$93.20; received from other sources, \$390; total expenditures, \$460.

In the year 1873 the township had six districts, six teachers, and two hundred and forty-six scholars. Amount of tax levied for all purposes, \$2352.98; State appropriation, \$155.36; expenditure for school-houses, building, purchasing, etc. \$1004.50

In 1880 the township contained seven districts; number of scholars, two hundred and thirteen; amount of tax levied for school and building purchases, \$1488.43. Total receipts, \$2049.94; total expenditures, \$2008.34. The present school districts of the township are:

Robinson, No. 1, near Robinson Church.

Pike, No. 2, near John Donaldson's.

Beech Hollow, No. 3, near Candor.

McAdam, No. 4, near McAdam farm.

McDonald, No. 5, at McDonald

Nos. 6 and 7, at Midway; two (graded) schools in one house.

Physicians- Dr. John Martin, of Beaver County, was a practicing physician in the township from 1830 to 1847. He lived with Squire Miller. After his death he married his widow, and lived in the house now occupied by Dr. B. F. Hill.

Drs. Matthews, John Clendenning, -Patterson, and John Coburn all lived in the township, the latter about 1848. He lived in the house now occupied by Dr. B. F. Hill, and remained till about 1863, and removed to Beaver County. Dr. Goshorn came here before Dr. Coburn, and died in Candor. A Dr. Weaver was a resident at Candor a short time, and moved away about 1860. Dr. George Shillitos practiced a year or two. Dr. W. V. Riddle came here in the spring of 1869, but did not remain long. Dr. B. F. Hill studied medicine with Dr. Bradley, of Burgettstown, attended lectures at Sterling Medical College, Columbus, Ohio, in the spring of 1856, and commenced practice at Candor in the fall of that year. Upon the breaking out of the Rebellion he joined the One hundred and Fortieth Regiment of Pennsylvania volunteers as assistant surgeon, and remained in that capacity till the close of the war. He returned to Candor, and still continues in practice.

Dr. Caleb McNulty, of West Middletown, studied medicine with Dr. John M. Wilson; graduated at Cleveland Medical college in he winter of 1868-69, and commenced practice at Bethany, Va; practiced there a year, then spent a year in the West; and came to Midway in October, 1870 and opened an office and commenced a practice in which he still continues.

Dr. A.C. Stevenson, of Cross Creek township, came to Midway in the spring of 1871, and practiced about five years, and removed to Oakdale, Allegheny Co. He sold out his practice to Dr. George W. Miller, who remained two years and removed to Mansfield, Allegheny Co., Pa. Dr. David McMasters, of Pittsburgh, a regular physician, came to Midway from Pittsburgh in January, 1881, and is in practice at the present time.

Pittsburgh and Walnut Hill Coal Company. - In 1869, E. A. Wheeler, of Sharon, Pa., and Rapalye & Gulick, of New York, purchased six hundred acres of the Johnston, Elder, and McBirney tracts. An opening was made in Smith township, on the Johnstown tract. The tittle and tracts are in Robinson township. The main entry extends (1881) half a mile in a southerly direction. Nine side entries, averaging a quarter of a mile each, extend east and west. Coal at first was shipped east, but at the present time it is all shipped west. From fifty to one hundred and sixty men are employed. The works are at the east end of the village of Midway, and the tract connects with the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and St. Louis Railroad tracks. A company store is in operation at the offices. In 1873, John Arnot, of

Elmira, and T. Burr Robbins purchased the entire interest of the company, and still own and conduct it.

Midway Coal Company. - In 1870, John and Thomas Taylor purchased the coal rights of two hundred acres of land, parts of the Elder tract and the Peter Kidd tract. A main drift was opened, and now extends about half a mile in a southerly direction. The works are now owned by Joseph Crawford. The vein of coal worked at this mine is four and a half feet thick. An average of one hundred men are employed. These mines are located at the west end of Midway village, and are also connected with the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and St. Louis Railroad by tracks.

Robbins Block Coal Company. - In 1873, T. Burr Robbins purchased two hundred acres of the Jacob George and Cochran farms, and that portion of the John McBirney farm lying south of the railroad. Operations commenced in 1874, and a main entry opened in 1875 that extends at present (1881) about one-third of a mile southerly. Five side drifts extend east and five west. In 1881, Mr. Robbins purchased two hundred acres of coal right from the Kelso farm. Most of the land used is in Mount Pleasant township, but the delivery station is in Robinson township. Every engine that passes over the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and St. Louis Railroad is coaled at the chutes of this company. From Saturday night to Monday morning it is not uncommon to use two hundred and sixty tons for that purpose. About one hundred and forty tons per day on the average are used. A store is maintained at Primrose for Robbins Block, and another at Willow Grove. The Willow Grove Mines are in Allegheny County, below the Laurel Hill Mines, and are also owned by T. B. Robbins. From the three, Walnut Hill, Robbins Block, and Willow Grove, from six to seven hundred tons of coal are mined per day.

Briar Hill Coal Company. - These works are situated at McDonald Station, on the south side of the railroad, and east of the station. They were started in 1869 by Dougherty and Richardson, and are at present operated under a lease by J. D. Sawyers and Alexander Patterson. The main drift extends southwesterly about half a mile; two sides extend about one-quarter of a mile southwesterly. About one hundred and twenty men are employed, and an average of two hundred tons per day are mined. Coal-banks used only for private purposes are in all parts of the township.

*Boyd Crumrine, "History of Washington County, Pennsylvania with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men" (Philadelphia: L. H. Leverts & Co., 1882).

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