

# ***BROWNSVILLE ALMANAC***

## ***THE STORY OF THE THREE TOWNS***

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More than 130 years ago in Brownsville or Bridgeport or West Brownsville, once each week, a newspaper was delivered to many homes in the Three Towns. In that newspaper, which was called the *Brownsville Clipper*, was a summary of the week's events in the Three Towns, advertisements for local services and products, and many opinionated comments by the editor. It made for some interesting after-dinner reading by the light of a gaslight (at first) and later, in the glow of an electric Edison bulb.

What if you could, just for a little while, slip back in time to the year 1889 (the earliest year for which we have microfilm of the *Clipper*)? When you get back there to 1889, pick up the *Clipper* and read it ... or in later years, pick up the *Clipper-Monitor* ... or in ever later years, take a look through the pages of the daily *Brownsville Telegraph*.

Just like that, after a few minutes of reading, you would find yourself immersed in the colorful personalities, the local controversies, the forceful opinions, the big events of that year in the Three Towns, and the editor's predictions of developments for the town in the coming months and years. What a unique experience that would be.

*Brownsville Almanac* can take you back to those years ... right now. Settle back, choose a year, and immerse yourself in the bustling life of a town where once upon a time, "the sidewalks were so crowded you had to walk in the street."

Welcome to the Three Towns.

# The “You Are There” approach

## How to read this *BROWNSVILLE ALMANAC*

### The “You Are There” approach

As you read the articles in these pages, which describe events that happened many years ago, you should imagine as you read that you are living at the time when these events took place. Imagine that you are reading a contemporary newspaper article or report published at that time.

Some have called this the “You Are There” approach. It is the approach I have employed in writing this book.

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### Understanding why some passages are written in *italics* or [in brackets]

Most of *BROWNSVILLE ALMANAC* is printed in “regular type” (not in *italics*). Occasionally, though, you may notice some phrases or sentences that are printed ...

... in [brackets]

... in *[italics in brackets]*

... in paragraphs that are wholly indented from the left and right margins

Below is a key to what those instances of *italics* and [brackets] usually mean in the *ALMANAC*:

#### A. [Words in brackets and not in italics, like this]

Text in regular type and in brackets should be read as if the bracketed passage was written at the same time as the report in which it appears. It indicates that the bracketed word or phrase was inserted by a contemporary of the reporter, such as his editor, to clarify something the reporter wrote.

*Example:*

“It is reported that the building at the upper end of Market street [the Girard House] has been sold.”

In this example, the bracketed phrase was added by the newspaper reporter’s editor to clarify the identity of the building mentioned.

#### B. *[Words in italics inside brackets, like this]*

Text in *[italics and in brackets]* signifies an exception to this book’s “You Are There” approach.

The *[italicized bracketed text]* is clarifying information inserted years after the original report was written. In most cases it is an explanatory comment inserted by the author of this work, Glenn Tunney.

*Example:*

“In this year of 1749, a log cabin, believed to be the first one built in these parts *[in what became Fayette County in 1783]*, has been fashioned along Redstone creek by a man named Colvin. <sup>BC11-13-1900</sup>”

In the foregoing example, the *[bracketed italicized phrase]* was inserted by author Glenn Tunney to clarify that the area where the cabin was built in 1749 was within the boundaries of what later became Fayette County.

#### C. Fully indented paragraphs in italics and not in brackets

For long quotations of more than a few sentences, rather than use repeated quotation marks, the entire quotation is presented in *italics*, and the entire quoted passage is indented from both margins of the page.

*Example:*

“The following editorial appears in the *Brownsville Clipper* that was published today, Thursday, March 9, 1899:

*The Brownsville public library will be formally opened with a book reception Tuesday evening at seven o'clock. The patrons and friends of the library have been cordially invited, and all who can contribute to the collection of books are asked to do so.*

*The board of managers have made all arrangements preparatory to opening the library, and patrons will probably secure any necessary information in regard to the time of its opening and the rules and regulations by applying to them. It is to be hoped that all citizens who have the interest of the library at heart will become patrons and induce others to become so.*

*The library needs help, both in the way of books and money, and it should have the substantial support of the town. Now that it is open, it should be kept so, and not allowed to suffer from lack of funds or public interest.* BC03-09-1899

In the foregoing example, the editorial is written entirely in italics because it is directly quoted from the *Brownsville Clipper* of March 9, 1899, and the left and right sides of the editorial are indented from the existing margins of the main body of the page to signify that the section is a quotation.

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As for documentation of the details described in this book's articles, footnotes appear at the end of the article indicating the source of the information therein, thereby allowing for follow-up research by a curious reader. A guide to deciphering the footnote abbreviations is found on the page that follows this one.

While the *ALMANAC* entries, often one or two brief paragraphs in length, are written in the vernacular of the times, and their sources are the microfilm images of long-disappeared newspapers as well as books and publications of those bygone days, the editing for length of original newspaper articles has been required by practicality.

When condensing the original material, to avoid a blizzard of quotation marks and ellipses (...) that would be engendered by the necessary elimination of words, sentences or phrases from the source material, markings which would annoyingly cripple the flow of the reading experience, the reader may proceed on the assumption that the items presented are *not* direct quotations from the original source material, even though *most of the articles are taken nearly verbatim* from the newspapers of the times, and all are based upon the information gleaned from the source material.

When it is desired to especially emphasize that a particular word, phrase, sentence or paragraph *is* a direct quotation from the source material, quotation marks are often employed for that purpose.

As a final note, the entire introductory section, “Before the Europeans,” is written entirely in *italics*, which signifies that it is written in the “voice” of the author, Glenn Tunney.

After you have read “Before the Europeans,” you are invited to sit back and travel back in time to the year 1738. There you will find that the *ALMANAC* entries are written in the “You Are There” style, as if you are there in 1738, reading the news just as it occurring.

Welcome to *BROWNSVILLE ALMANAC*, the story of the Three Towns – Brownsville, Bridgeport and West Brownsville.

### **Footnote abbreviations**

\* Each footnote citation that follows an entry indicates the date of publication of that item, not the date on which the event in the item actually occurred.

#### **Newspapers:**

BC	Brownsville <i>Clipper</i>
BT	Brownsville <i>Telegraph</i>
BTC	<i>Brownsville Time Capsule</i> (month/year is date item was first printed in the Brownsville <i>Telegraph</i> )
CM	Brownsville <i>Clipper-Monitor</i>
GT	<i>Glenn Tunney column</i> in the Uniontown <i>Herald-Standard</i>
UDNS	Uniontown <i>Daily News Standard</i>
UMH	Uniontown <i>Morning Herald</i>

#### **Other:**

BM	Borough Minutes of meetings of Brownsville borough council (1815 – present)
BRM	Borough Minutes of meetings of Bridgeport borough (1814 – 1908)
SBM	Borough Minutes of meetings of South Brownsville borough (1908 – 1933)
COP	<i>A Century of Progress, 1850-1950</i> , West Brownsville Centennial Historical Committee, 1950
HAER	<i>Historic American Engineering Record</i>
HFC	<i>History of Fayette County, Pennsylvania and Biographical Sketches</i> , Franklin Ellis, 1882
HTT	<i>Hart's History and Directory of the Three Towns, Brownsville, Bridgeport, West Brownsville</i> , J. Percy Hart, 1903
HWC	<i>History of Washington County</i> , Boyd Crumrine, 1882
MNB	<i>National Historical Events and Growth of Monongahela National Bank 1812-1924</i> , 1924
NBD	<i>Nelson's Biographical Dictionary and Historical Reference Book of Fayette County, Pennsylvania</i> , 1900
NSC	"No Source Cited"
TMO	<i>The Monongahela of Old</i> , James Veech, c. 1859

\* Other cited source works not assigned an abbreviation here are specifically described in the footnote itself.

\*\* Text in *Brownsville Almanac* that is written in *[italics inside brackets]* is information inserted as clarification by the author, Glenn Tunney.

## BEFORE THE EUROPEANS

### In the earliest days of the region

*In the mid-1700s, European hunters and traders first arrived in the region of the Monongahela river that would later become part of southwestern Pennsylvania. James Veech, writing in *The Monongahela of Old* more than a century later, described the arrival of these strangers.*

*They entered, Veech wrote, into “the hunting ground of the Mingo Indians, or Six Nations, the seat of whose power and chief population was Western New York. Delawares, whose original home was the western shore of the river of that name, and Shawnese [sic], who came from the Cumberland river, were also found.”*

*These tribes were predated by other Indians of a more ancient time. Those ancient tribes built fortifications all over the territory, structures which, judging by their remains, were very different from those constructed by the successor tribes named above.*

*“These remains of embankments, or ‘old forts,’ are numerous in Fayette county,” wrote Veech. “That they are very ancient is shown by many facts. The Indians known to us could give no satisfactory account of when, how or by whom they were erected; or for what purpose, except for defense. ... We have examined some which indicated an age of from three to five hundred years [backdated from 1850], and they evidently of a second or third generation, as they were standing amid the decayed remains of their ancestors. ...*

*“These embankments may have been originally composed of wood ... No stone was used in their construction; and among their ruins are always found some remains of old pottery, composed of clay, mixed with crushed muscle [sic] shells, even when far off from a river. ...*

*“These old forts were of various forms, square, oblong, triangular, circular and semi-circular. Their superficial areas range from one-fourth of an acre to ten acres. Their sites were generally well chosen, in reference to defense and observation. ...*

*“A very noted one,” Judge Veech observed, “and of most commanding location, was at Brownsville, on the [later] site of ‘Fort Burd,’ but covering a much larger area. Even after Col. Burd built his fort there, in 1759, it retained the names of the ‘Old Fort,’ ‘Redstone Old Fort,’ or ‘Fort Redstone.’”*

*And as for the builders of these ancient fortifications, who have faded into the misty shrouds of time?*

*“Who they were, and what became of them, must perhaps forever be unknown.” TMO, Pp. 17-18*

*Who they were, and what became of  
them, must perhaps forever be unknown.*

James Veech

## 1738

### Thomas Brown born

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Brown of Queen Anne Knolls in Prince George's county, Maryland, have announced that they have become the parents of another son, whom they have named Thomas II (Jr.).

Thomas was born on Monday, December 8, 1738. He has an older (half) brother, Basil, who is six years old, and a sister, Ruth, who is two years old.

*[The Browns' second son was destined to become the founder of the town of Brownsville, Pennsylvania. Queen Anne Knolls, his birthplace, is located 24 miles east of Washington, D. C.]* TOMBSTONE and CEMETERY REGISTRY, Christ Episcopal Church, Brownsville; Photograph of original tombstone in the town's first cemetery; Findagrave.com; wikitree.com

## 1748

### Col. Thomas Cresap blazes trail to Redstone Old Fort

A new land company, the Ohio Company, has been formed [1748] with the purpose of trading with the Indians in the region of the Monongahela, a region claimed by both Pennsylvania and Virginia, and encouraging settlement in those western lands.

Hoping to go into the Ohio Indian trade on a large scale, the company has recognized the need for a passable route for pack-horses to the area west of the mountains. The company has hired Colonel Thomas Cresap of Oldtown, Maryland to improve an old Indian trail through the mountains, a trail that is sometimes called the Nemaquin Trail.

Col. Cresap, in need of a guide to mark and clear the pathway, possibly with the help of other Indians, has engaged Nemaquin for the task, "a well-known Delaware Indian, who reside[s] at the mouth of Dunlap's creek [which, in early times, was called Nemaquin's creek]."

*[The memorial plaque shown here is in Cumberland, Maryland, near Oldtown.]*

BT09-21-1928; TMO, Pp. 26-27; PlaqueImageFromNationalwarmemorialregistry.org

## 1749

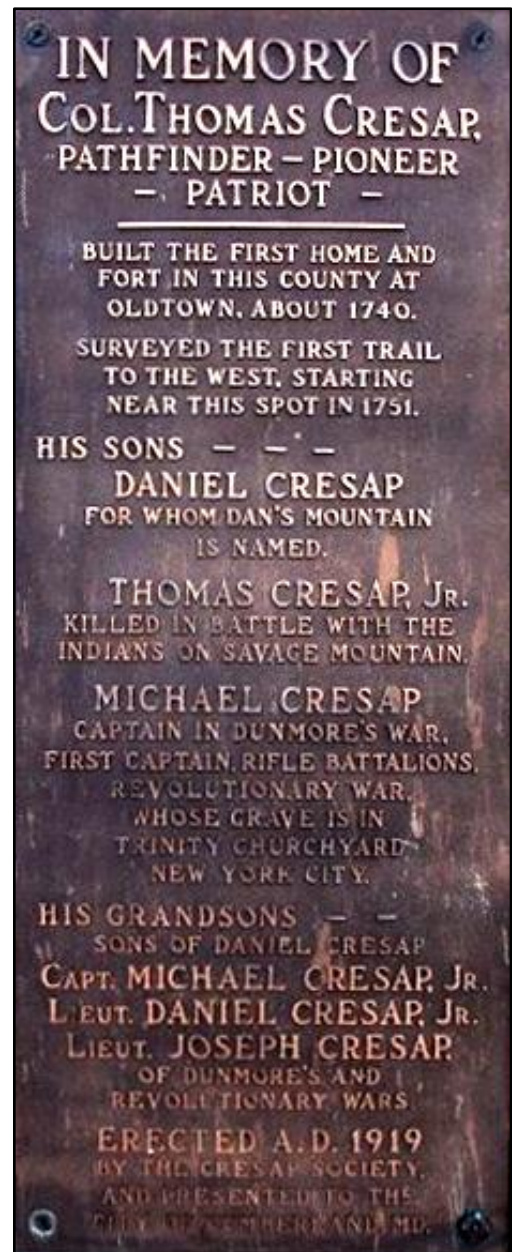
### First log cabin here

A log cabin, believed to be the first constructed in these parts *[in what is now Fayette county]*, has been fashioned along Redstone creek. The cabin was erected by a man named Colvin. BC11-13-1900

## 1750

### Pack horse trail to Redstone Old Fort developed

Col. Thomas Cresap, "with the aid of other Indians, [has] executed the work [of creating a pack horse trail] in 1750, by blazing





the trees, and cutting away and removing the bushes and fallen timber, so as to make it [Nemacolin's path] a good pack-horse path."

*[In truth, Cresap's and Nemacolin's path was little more than a bridle path for pack horses, and certainly not a "road" that could be readily navigated by a loaded wagon. In 1754, Washington's men passed over this route and improved it somewhat, making it passable for light wagons and artillery.]* TMO, P. 27; HTT, P. 71

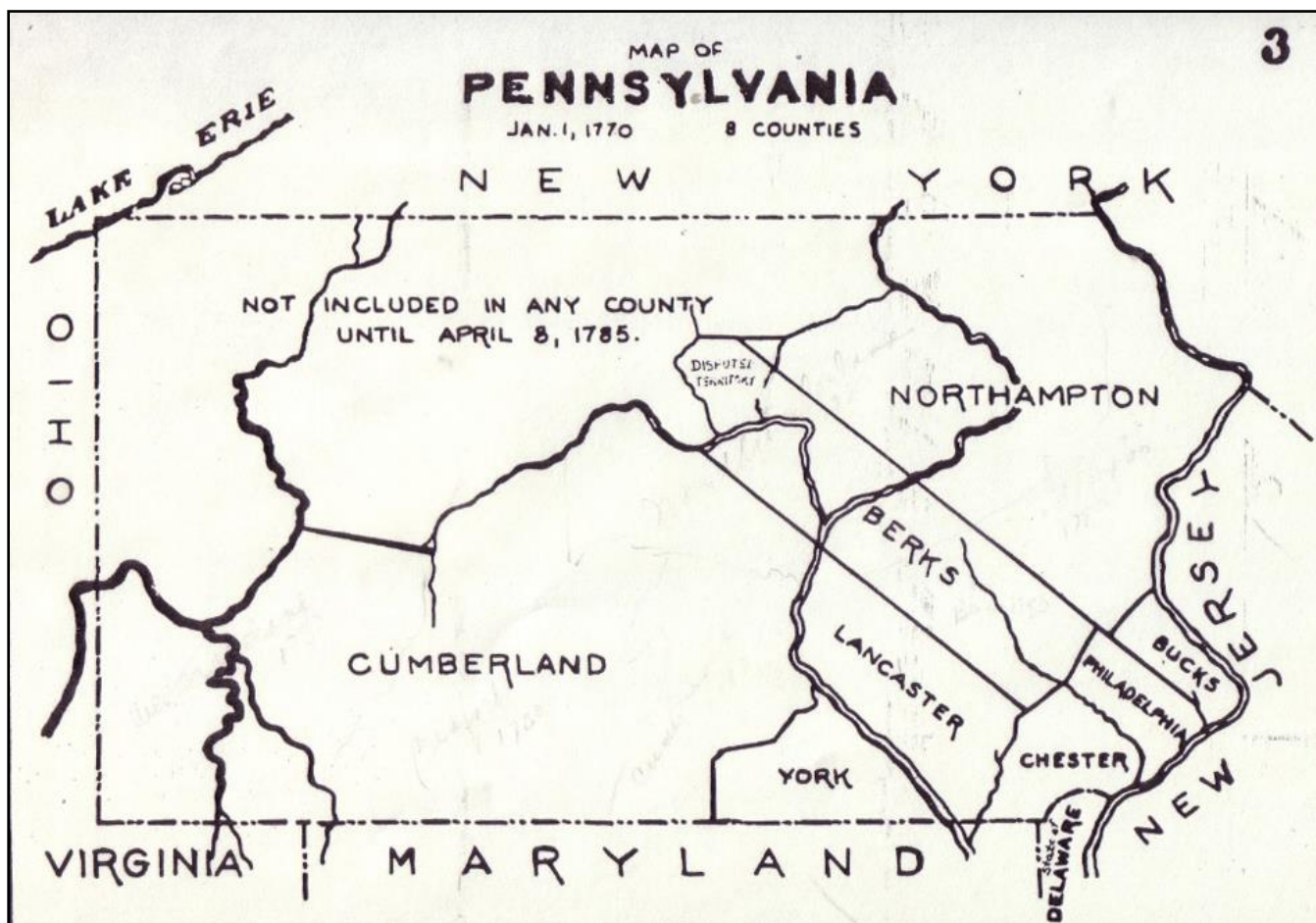
### Local area now part of Pennsylvania's Cumberland county

The Assembly of Pennsylvania, acting on January 27 of this year [1750], has erected Cumberland county, the sixth county of Pennsylvania. This act comes as "the earliest settlers [are reaching] the valley of the Monongahela."

The new county embraces "all the lands lying westward of the Susquehanna River and north and west of the county of York, extending by a shading of inhabitants growing lighter and lighter with the approach to the Western wilderness.

"The seat of justice being for a little while at Shippensburg [and afterwards at Carlisle], it is apparent that its jurisdiction [is] not felt to any extent by the settlers of our county.

*[The map below shows Cumberland County as it appeared in 1770. In 1771, the map changed when Westmoreland County was created, carved from Cumberland County.]* HWC, P. 147



Maps Showing the Development of Pennsylvania, The Land Office Bureau, Department of Internal Affairs, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1920

### Brownsville's early settlers named

A 1928 Brownsville Telegraph article by William D. Gladden cites an 1883 book, The Old Towns (no author mentioned), at that time in the possession of James Risbeck of Brownsville.

*The book identifies five individuals as the first five settlers of Brownsville: James Crawford, Abraham Tegard [sic], John Province, John Hardin and Michael Cresap, who came to the vicinity of Redstone Old Fort at least 15 years before the Revolutionary War started in 1775.*

*“Cresap was an adventurer rather than pioneer as the other five preceded him three years.” This was in the days of “corn rights” and “tomahawk rights” when planting an acre of corn gave a man right to claim 100 acres while girdling a few trees and erection of a hut would allow him to possess unlimited land.*

*Cresap secured from Virginia a deed for a large tract including the site of “Redstone Old Fort,” as it was then believed this section was a portion of western Virginia. Nearly all of the first settlers were Virginians.*

*Cresap’s land was sold some years later to Thomas and Basil Brown, brothers from Maryland. Cresap died of yellow fever in New York City while traveling through there after serving with the American Revolutionary forces in New England. He was buried in Trinity church yard in New York City.* BT09-05-1928; BT09-06-1928

## 1754

### **Captain William Trent improves trail to Redstone Old Fort**

Captain William Trent has greatly improved the trail [1753-54] that was blazed four years ago by an expedition led by Ohio Company employee Col. Thomas Cresap and his Indian guide, Nemacolin.

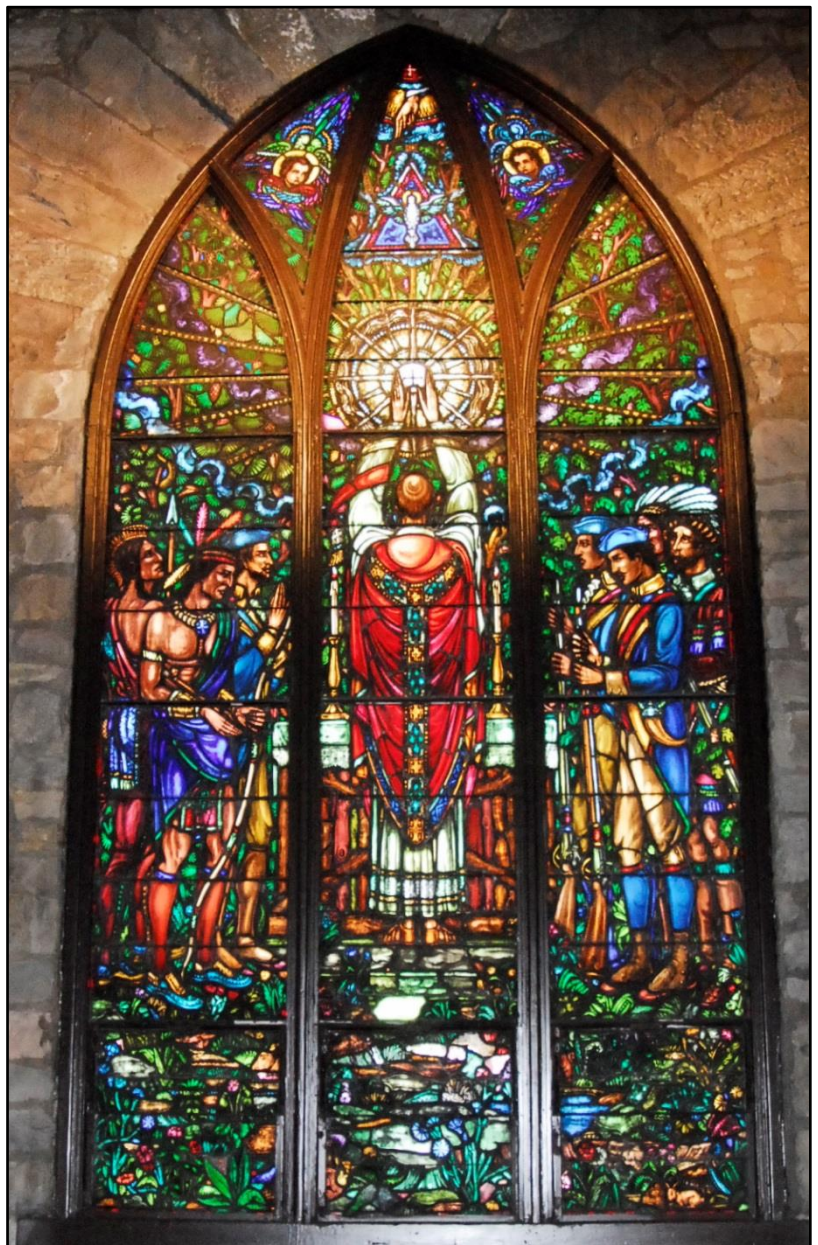
The original Indian trail led from Wills Creek [later Cumberland] to the summit of Laurel hill, on to Gist’s plantation [near modern-day Mount Braddock], and from there on to the mouth of Redstone creek.

During this military mission, Captain Trent has constructed a supply building [later referred to as the “old Hanguard”] at the mouth of Redstone Creek. BT09-21-1928; BT07-01-1929; TMO, P. 28

### **First Roman Catholic Mass west of Alleghenies is held near here**

The first Roman Catholic Mass to be celebrated in this region has taken place [June 30, 1754]. It occurred when soldiers of a French military force from Fort Duquesne [at present-day Pittsburgh], accompanied by their Indian allies, marched through the area in the vicinity of the mouth of Redstone creek.

The French soldiers and Indians are on their way to the mountains to seek retribution against the British Virginia colonial forces commanded by Colonel George Washington. Five weeks ago, a squad of Washington’s men, accompanied by Indians loyal to the British colonies, surprise-attacked a small party of French soldiers who were camped in the shelter of





high rocks near the summit of the mountains [*a site now known as Jumonville cliff*]. Several of the French were killed in the attack.

At the time of the Jumonville skirmish, the British colonial force had been further improving Captain William Trent's crude road to Redstone Old Fort. The army had been working its way westward with the goal of establishing a good military road all the way to the Monongahela River where the Redstone creek enters the river.

The French have vowed revenge for the deaths of Frenchmen in the attack in the mountains. The French and Indian force left Fort Duquesne late this month (June), and having arrived in the Redstone country, it will be turning east, seeking out the forces under Col. Washington.

Accompanying the French in the march is a Roman Catholic priest [*whose name has not survived*]. On the final day of June, the soldiers stopped here for a few moments near the mouth of Redstone creek, where the priest celebrated Mass for the Indians and soldiers.

*[This is believed to be the first Roman Catholic Mass celebrated in this wild country. This scene of the celebration of the first Mass is depicted in a large stained glass window in the Historic Church of St. Peter in Brownsville. Several days after that Mass, the French and their Indian allies surrounded hastily-built Fort Necessity, not far from Jumonville cliff.*

*The photograph of the stained glass window shown here was taken by Brianne Bayer Mitchell of Brownsville.]*  
BT10-25-1928; 1904 study by the Rev. A. A. Lambling of Pittsburgh; TMO, Pp. 28-29; Photo from Carolyncholland.files.wordpress.com

### **Hostilities have resulted in a state of war between France and England in their American colonies**

The deadly May 28, 1754 incident in the mountains of western Virginia [later southwest Pennsylvania], which the French describe as an assassination of Ensign Coulon de Jumonville, the deaths of nine of his soldiers from Fort Duquesne, and the capture of twenty-one others, has precipitated a state of war in America between the military forces of Great Britain and France, including colonial troops. TMO, Pp. 46-47

### **Washington is defeated, retreats**

The outnumbered forces of Virginia militia Colonel George Washington, their inadequate stockade hopelessly surrounded deep in the mountain wilderness and their force in imminent peril of complete destruction, have surrendered [July 4, 1754] to the French and Indian armies that were dispatched from Fort Duquesne to engage them.

Under the terms of surrender, Col. Washington has agreed to leave the disputed region west of the mountains, being permitted to take all of his army's baggage and stores, except artillery.

On July 4, the garrison filed out of the fort [*later named Fort Necessity*]. They left behind two hostages, Captain Van Braam and Stobo, in the hands of the French. These hostages will be held by the French until those French prisoners who were captured in the skirmish in late May [at Jumonville cliff] are returned.

*[Col. Washington returned to Wills Creek (Cumberland), then went on to Alexandria, leaving the French colors, for the time being, flying unchallenged over the entire Mississippi and Ohio valleys.]* TMO, Pp. 50-52

### **Hanguard destroyed**

The British-built Hanguard, a storehouse constructed earlier this year [1754] by Captain William Trent and his men, has been burned to the ground by the victorious French forces as they passed through this region on their way back to Fort Duquesne. The destruction took place at about 10 a.m. on the 6<sup>th</sup> of July, two days after the surrender of Colonel Washington [at Fort Necessity]. TMO, P. 42

## **1755**

### **General Braddock's forces decimated**

A combined British and colonial army has been defeated by a smaller French and Indian force in a forest battle several miles south of the forks of the Ohio.

British General Edward Braddock's forces had departed from Wills Creek [Cumberland] in the second week of June [1755]. Their intended destination and target was French Fort Duquesne. They marched westward and northward and ultimately passed through a forested site along the Monongahela river where they were ambushed

on July 9, 1755, by a combined French and Indian force.

In the terrible rout less than ten miles south of the confluence of the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers, where stands French Fort Duquesne, General Braddock was mortally wounded but did not die for several days. He was transported by wagon with the army as it retreated eastward along the road it had just built.

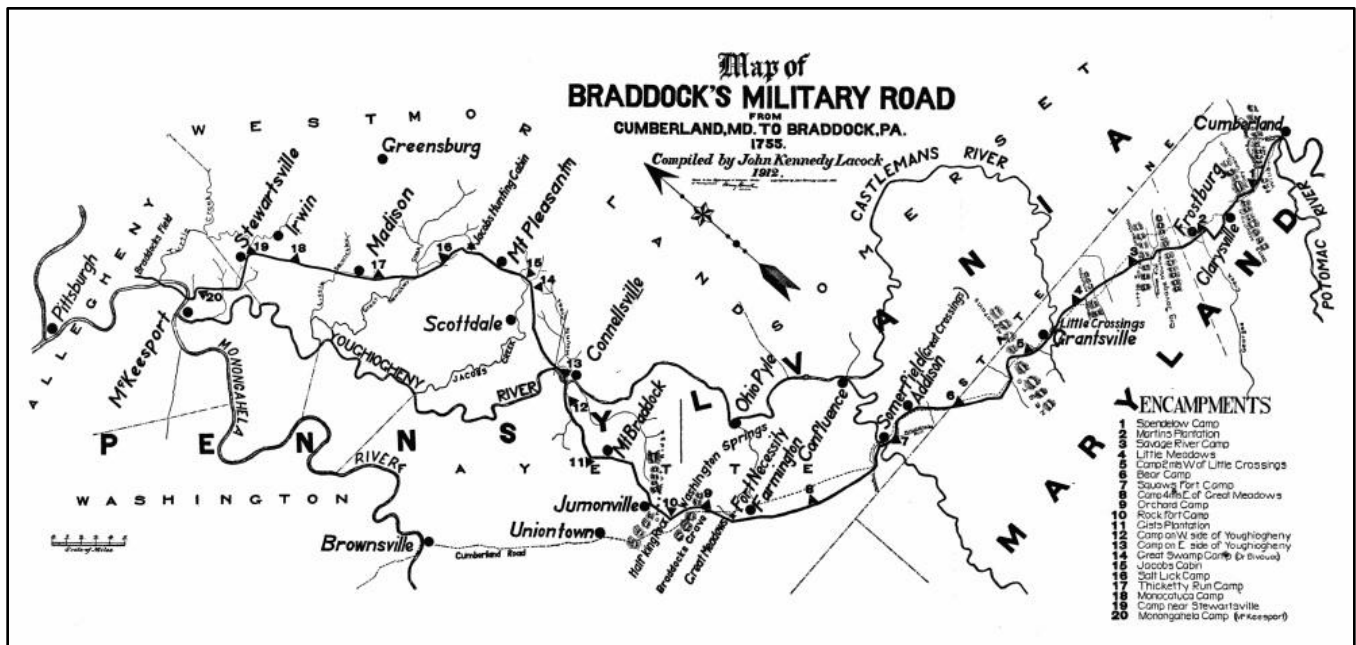
When the army had nearly reached the Great Meadows, site of Col. Washington's defeat last year [at Fort Necessity], General Braddock died. The general's body was interred in the military road that his troops had so recently constructed, after which the army marched over his grave to disguise its unmarked location.

*[The British-French conflict, which began in 1754 in the mountains of what is now southwestern Pennsylvania, eventually spread to the European continent. War was officially declared between France and England in 1756, with the contested prize being an American colonial empire.]*

*The "official" war between the nations lasted seven years in Europe (1756-1763) – nine years in America (1754-1763) – and has the unusual distinction of being known by two different names. The conflict was called the Seven Years War in Europe, but in America, where it lasted two years longer, it is known as the French and Indian War.*

*As for the effect of the combined defeats of Washington in 1754 and Braddock in 1755 on the British settlers who were already living west of the mountains prior to the twin defeats, those losses, in the words of Judge James Veech, "put an end, for some time, to all efforts by the English colonists to settle west of the mountains; and all that were here at and before those events, were forced to retire for a time to the eastward, or south. ...*

*"The French never attempted any permanent settlements in this part of the country, and during their sway universal desolation reigned. Many of the old settlers returned after the expulsion of the French [by General Forbes] in 1758, and resumed their possessions. Among these were the Browns and the Gists." ]* TMO, Pp. 80-81



Map From Braddock Road, John Kennedy Lacock, 1912, via gutenburg.org

## 1758

### Forbes captures Fort Duquesne

British General John Forbes, commanding a force of approximately 6,000 troops, has marched his formidable army across Pennsylvania, building a new road as he advanced, and his army has captured French Fort Duquesne near the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers.

Considered a key point in guarding the river gateway to the western lands, the French fort, mostly destroyed

by a fire started by the retreating French, will be replaced next year by a British fort [*Fort Pitt*] that is to be much larger than the French installation it will replace. TMO, P. 29

## 1759

### British have constructed Fort Burd at Redstone Old Fort

As war between Britain and France and their American colonies continues, forces under the command of British Colonel James Burd have completed construction of a military fort at Redstone Old Fort. The new structure overlooks Nemacolin [*Dunlap's*] creek.

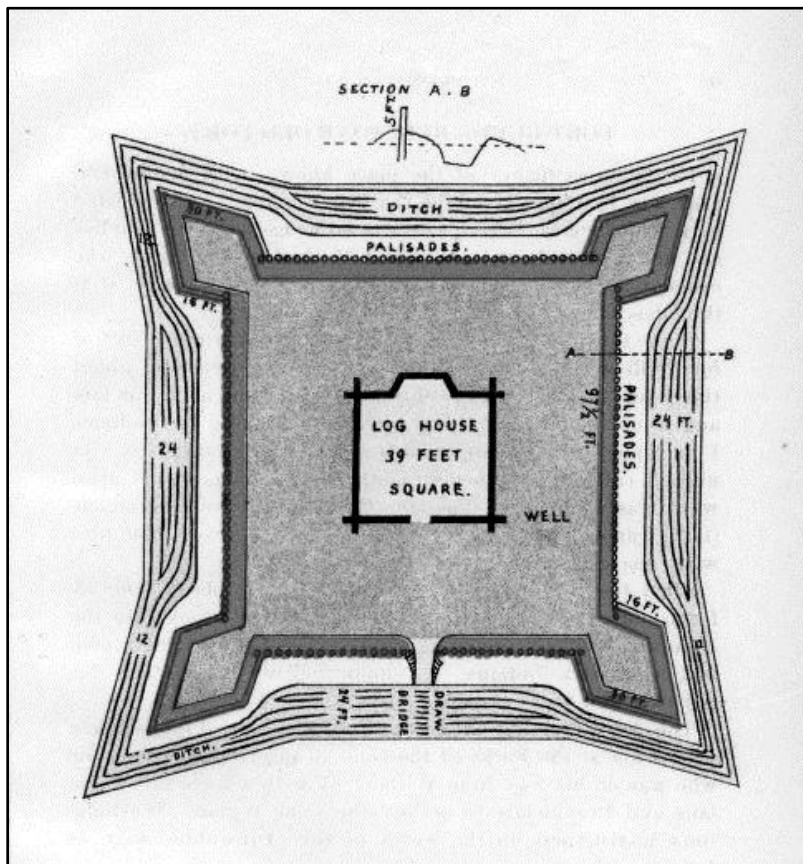
Begun in October by a work force of 200 soldiers, the fort has now been completed [November 1759]. Col. Burd has departed eastward, leaving behind a garrison of 25 men in the fort.

The purpose of the fort, built as the British - French conflict in America is still unresolved after more than five years of fighting here, is to provide defense against hostile Indians and their French allies in the disputed territories west of the Alleghenies. Fort Pitt, which has also been built this year at the confluence of the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio rivers, will likewise strengthen the British colonial defense of its newly won lands.

*[These two British forts were, in the words of historian Franklin Ellis, "the earliest defensive works reared by English-speaking people in the Ohio River valley."]*

While the French have largely departed the region since the surrender of Fort Duquesne last year, the Indians have not been soundly defeated on the battlefield, and they are not of a mind to tolerate British colonial appropriation of their ancient lands.

While there has been little hostility from the Indians in the Redstone region, Fort Burd nevertheless symbolizes British claims to the area and offers sanctuary to nearby settlers should it be needed in times of Indian hostilities. HFC, P. 471



### What does Fort Burd look like?

Fort Burd at Redstone is built in the form of a square, except for the bastions at the four corners. The curtains are formed of palisades, set firmly in the earth and embanked. The bastions are constructed of hewed logs, laid horizontally one above another.

In the center of the fort is a large house also of hewed logs, and near this, within the inclosure [*sic*], a well. The whole is surrounded by a broad ditch, crossed by a draw-bridge, communicating with a gateway in the centre of the curtain in the rear of the work.

*[According to Franklin Ellis in his 1882 History of Fayette County, Pennsylvania, from which the fort's description above is derived, the location of the fort "may be described as west of the property of N. B. Bowman, and nearly on the spot now occupied by the residence of J. W. Jeffries.*

*"South of the fort," Ellis continued, "was the bullock pen; and a short distance, in a direction a little south of east, from the centre of Fort Burd was the central mound*

of the prehistoric work once known as Redstone Old Fort.

The image of Fort Burd shown here was drawn many years ago based upon the description and measurements found in the journal of engineer Joseph Shippen, who accompanied Col. Burd. The drawing graces the cover of the 1896 publication, "Report of the Commission To Locate the Site of the Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania, Volume Two" by Clarence M. Busch, State Printer of Pennsylvania." ] HFC, P. 53; usgwarchives.org

### The location of Fort Burd

No remnants of Fort Burd have ever been discovered, leaving its exact location a matter of dispute. The description of its location in Franklin Ellis' History of Fayette County, Pennsylvania, published in 1882, may plausibly have been based upon oral accounts of individuals in 1882 whose grandparents may well have seen the fort during their youth and later shared stories of it with the younger generations.

Some people contend that the fort stood on the site of Nemacolin Castle, which was built some time after the fort was no longer an active installation. Others contend that it was located on or near the site of the Commons, where excavation to build a public school later took place, possibly destroying evidence of its former presence.

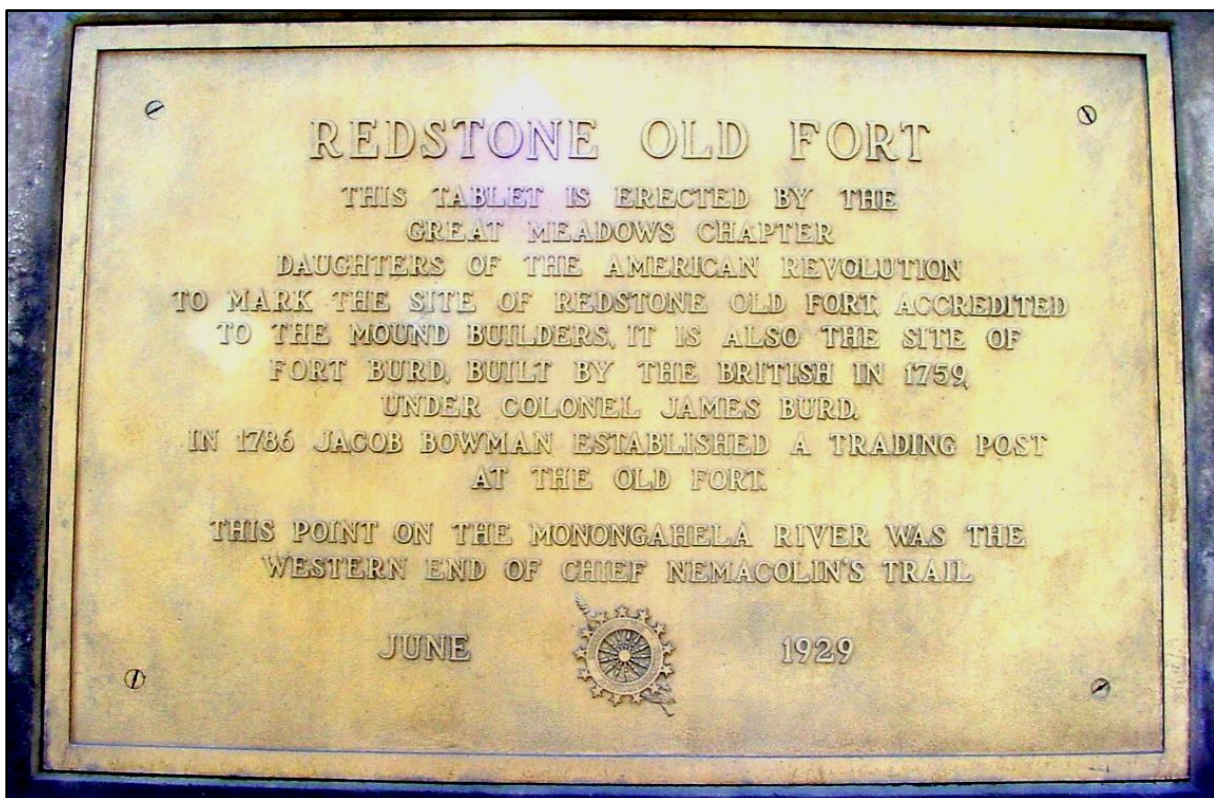
For geographical reference, the J. W. Jeffries property that is cited (above) in the 1882 Ellis book later included the Crawford funeral home and had previously housed some or all of the town's first cemetery.

It is also possible that the site of the fort straddled present-day Front Street, which was the original road leading into Redstone/Brownsville and may have led to the fort's gate.

Fort Burd was never attacked, as major combat in the French and Indian War ebbed after the fort was built in 1759, although the peace treaty between France, Britain and late-entering French ally Spain was not signed until February 1763. The year of the fort's abandonment is uncertain.

According to a document called the Strayer pamphlet issued about 1883, reprinted in the February 8, 1907 issue of the Clipper-Monitor and supposed to be correct when published in 1883, "the first burial ground in Brownsville ... was donated to the town at the time that it was laid out [by Thomas Brown, c. 1785]. It afterwards, in some way, became private property and is now owned by J. W. Jeffries, on whose home grounds it forms a part. In it are still to be seen [as of 1883] the stones which marked the graves of Thomas Brown, Basil King and other ancient worthies."

The plaque pictured here is mounted on the stone wall along Market Street hill, just down the hill from Nemacolin Castle, the former Bowman estate. BT07-01-1929, TMO, P. 29; HFC, Pp. 52-53; CM02-08-1907; usgwarchives.net





### First Episcopal service held here

The first Episcopal religious service ever known to be held in Redstone Old Fort has been conducted at newly built Fort Burd here by the chaplain of the British garrison under Colonel Burd [October 1759]. The name of the chaplain who conducted the Episcopal service is the Rev. Mr. Allison.

*[It is believed that many of the soldiers building and manning Fort Burd were of the Anglican / Episcopal faith, which was the Church of England.]* BT 09-1958, BT10-26-1928

## 1763

### Land near Fort Burd changes hands

William Colvin has in this year [1763] acquired settlement rights to lands in the vicinity of Fort Burd. *[This right was subsequently sold by Colvin to Thomas Brown.]*

In addition, Marylander Capt. Lemuel Barrett has this year [1763] obtained *[according to Judge James Veech]* “a military permit from the commander at Fort Pitt, for the purpose of cultivating lands within the custom limits of the garrison . . . called Fort Burd.”

In one of the official surveys, because the land on the river just upstream from the later site of Bridgeport, embracing some three or four hundred acres, was in early days the subject of long and angry controversies from 1769 until 1785 between claimants under military permits, the land was called “Bone of Contention.”

*[According to Franklin Ellis, “The land embraced in this ‘military permit’ was the site of the town of Bridgeport, but no patent covering it was ever issued to Barrett, nor did he ever hold any title to it under Pennsylvania warrant or Virginia certificate, his being merely a ‘claim’ which the later owner of the land thought it expedient to purchase in order to secure an unquestioned title.*

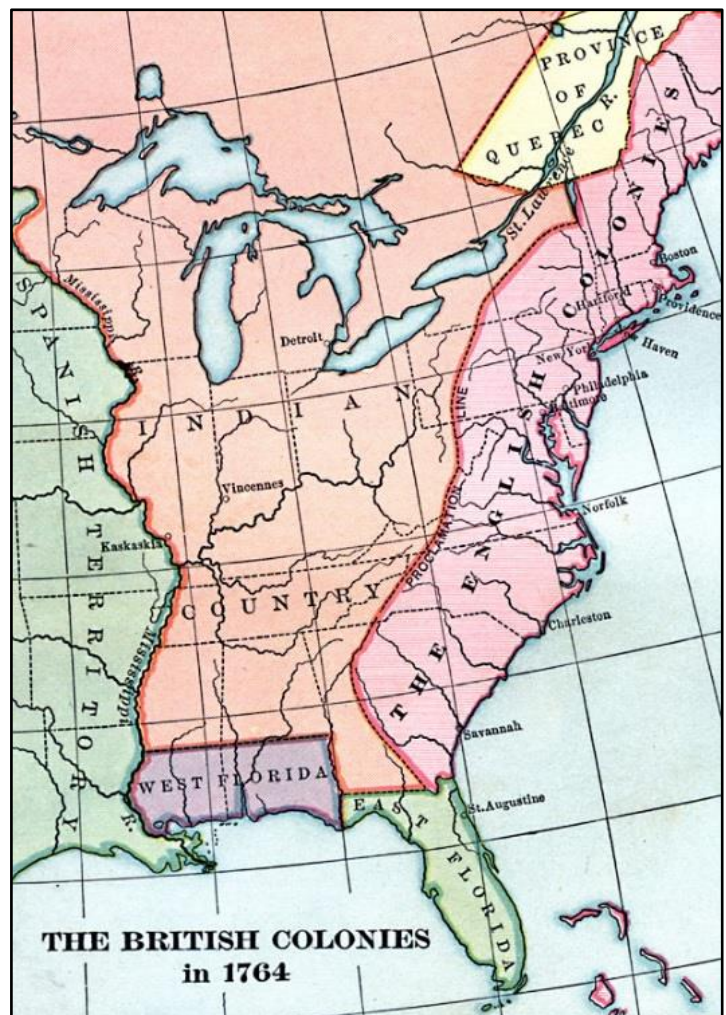
*“In fact, there were other claims, resulting from the same class of military permits, which adjoined and to some extent overlapped and conflicted with that of Barrett. These were chiefly and south of the present territory of Bridgeport borough, yet there was one, Angus McDonald, who asserted his ownership, under such claim, of lands embracing a considerable part of the land now embraced in Bridgeport.”*

*Rees Cadwallader, founder of the town of Bridgeport, eventually secured this land from McDonald and others.]* TMO, P. 81; HFC, Pp. 465-466

### Act of Parliament is unpopular in Redstone country

With the end of the French and Indian War, which was called the Seven Years War in Europe, the British Parliament has moved to try and pacify the Indians west of the Appalachians by passing a law reserving those lands for the Indians alone. Britain hopes to thereby end hostilities with the Indians, because the expense of this long war has greatly depleted the British treasury and will doubtless lead to the need for more taxation upon British subjects.

To achieve this end, Parliament has enacted [October 7, 1763] the Proclamation of 1763. By



this law, Parliament has agreed to ban colonial settlement in the lands west of the Appalachians that were recently won from the French. Among the lands declared off limits to Britain's colonial settlers are those in the vicinity of Redstone Old Fort, which is located well within the territory that France ceded to Britain earlier this year as the spoils of war.

This Parliamentary Proclamation of 1763, banning American colonists from settling on these lands just won in the bloody conflict with the French and Indians, is proving to be understandably unpopular with early settlers in the Redstone area.

The problem is that these settlers have already established themselves in the vicinity of Fort Burd. Some have recently acquired from officials at Fort Burd military permits granting settlement rights. There appears to be inconsistency between settlement policies as envisioned by Parliament and the practices underway here in Redstone country.

*[The accompanying map clearly shows the "three rivers" area, including Redstone Old Fort and Fort Burd, lay west of the Proclamation Line of 1763. The 1763 Parliamentary declaration banned colonial settlement west of the line in an effort to mollify the discontented Indian tribes and lessen the cost to Parliament of defending the frontier against Indian attacks.]* NSC; Map from A History of the United States, Charles Kendall Adams, 1909

## 1765

### Settlers coming to Redstone country

The recent Indian war, known to some as Pontiac's War, saw many Indian raids on "the frontiers of Pennsylvania, Virginia and Maryland, [which] were overrun by scalping parties, marking their way with blood and devastation."

Many British forts west of the mountains were vigorously attacked during Pontiac's War, but Fort Burd at Redstone was an exception to this pattern, never experiencing an attack by any enemy. Settlers around Fort Burd did not flee as did those of neighboring territory. However, the Indian attacks west of the mountains discouraged additional settlement here until the conflict with the Indians ended last year.

Now, with peace with the Indians at hand for now, conditions for settlement have improved. When "this barrier [the threat of Indian attacks] was removed, the tide of immigration rolled in with rapid and steadily-augmenting force, so that 1765 may be set down as the era of the settlement of [what became] Fayette county. ... The first settlers, almost without exception, came from the frontier counties of Virginia and Maryland, chiefly from the former. ... [There was] a general belief, among the people of those counties, that this was Virginia territory."

These settlers are largely disregarding the ban on settlement in these parts that was enacted under Parliament's Proclamation of 1763. As "its violations were visited by no specified penalties, it was disregarded by settlers, and even, to some extent, by the Government of Virginia . . ." TMO, P. 85

## 1767

### Another attempt to force settlers here to leave

Another attempt has been made this summer by military leaders at Fort Pitt to remove the settlers who have taken up residence here in the Redstone country.

Although settlement here has been legally banned by Parliament since 1763, colonists have continued to cross the mountains to this place, aware that the Proclamation of 1763 is not being enforced. Not surprisingly, this has upset the Indians west of the mountains.

In the latest instance this past year, troops from Fort Pitt did temporarily remove settlers from this region. However, "no sooner was the soldiery withdrawn than the settlers returned with reinforcements."

In addition, the extension "of Mason & Dixon's line, our Southern boundary, in 1767, [has shown] that the new settlements [are] all within Pennsylvania; and Virginia, under the Governorships of Gauquier and Botetourt,

did not pretend to gainsay it.” TMO, P. 89

## 1768

### **Pennsylvania Assembly threatens death penalty to colonists settling west of mountains**

The Pennsylvania colonial legislature has enacted a drastic law designed to ease growing tensions between English colonists and Indians west of the Appalachian mountains.

The law threatens with death any settlers who are notified by authorities that they and their families must leave the western lands, and who do not do so within thirty days, or who leave and then return. In the words of the law,

*Any settlers refusing to leave the  
Redstone country “shall suffer death  
without benefit of clergy.”*

*Pennsylvania colonial legislature, 1768*

any such persons “being thereof legally convicted by their own confession, or the verdict of a jury, shall suffer death without benefit of clergy.”

There is an exception to this law, however, that benefits settlers here at Redstone Old Fort.

“Specially excepted from the operations of this law [are] all settlers, past, present or future, upon the main, or army roads to fort [sic] Pitt, or in the neighborhood of that post, by virtue of military permits. ... These exemptions [have] saved many of our settlers, along Braddock’s and

Burd’s roads, and around Fort Burd, from the terrors of the law.”

Nevertheless, Governor Thomas Penn has attempted to convince settlers – estimated to be about 150 families scattered among the Redstone, Youghiogheny and Cheat regions – to leave their respective areas, in order to appease Indians who feel their rights under the Proclamation of 1763 are being ignored.

He sent a delegation to the Redstone settlement, which arrived here on March 23 [1768]. The delegation of four men met with the settlers here. Initially, at a meeting on March 27<sup>th</sup>, many settlers agreed to move off the land if they were given preference to reobtain it when a treaty was reached with the Indians to compensate the Indians for those lands into which settlement was expanding.

Then, a delegation of Indians came to Indian Peter’s [across the Monongahela] and gave a speech which left the impression that they had no intention of waging war over the matter. Hearing this, some of the Redstone settlers resolved to stay until the issue could be resolved with the Indians, while others declared they would move away.

After visiting several other settlements in the area and getting the same response from the settlers there as that they had received at Redstone, the Pennsylvania delegates returned east. They reported to Governor Penn, “It is our opinion that some will move off in obedience to the law; that the greatest part will await the treaty, and if they find the Indians are indeed dissatisfied, we think the whole will be persuaded to remove. The Indians coming to Redstone, and delivering their speech, greatly obstructed our design.”

*[In April and May of the same year, 1768, in a meeting at Fort Pitt attended by several thousand Indians, the Indians refused to cooperate with Pennsylvania authorities in an attempt to force the settlers to abandon their lands, not wishing to alienate those settlers against them.*

*“This brought to an abrupt termination all efforts to enforce the non-intrusion law,” stated Judge James Veech. “Henceforth, the settlers were let alone.”]* TMO, Pp.90-93

### **Treaty at Fort Stanwix opens this area to land purchases**

An important meeting has been held at Fort Stanwix [New York] between Indian leaders and colonial leaders. Its purpose was to settle a general boundary line between the Indians and their neighboring colonies, in hopes of ameliorating the anxieties of the Indians caused by strife between themselves and colonists who they feel have intruded upon their lands.

Pennsylvania Governor Penn had hoped to attend the treaty meeting but was obliged to leave before it began. The council began on October 24 [1768], “and on November 5 was transacted the business which more

immediately concerns us, to wit, the purchase by the proprietary government of Pennsylvania of the Indian title to a large part of the lands of the province.”

*[According to Crumrine’s History of Washington County, Pennsylvania, “This purchase include[s] all of the present counties of Washington, Greene, Fayette, Westmoreland; all of Allegheny and Beaver south of the Ohio River, and then extended northeast to Susquehanna and Wayne.”]*

The signing of this treaty has opened up the opportunity for settlers in this region to purchase property here without fear of Indian complaints or questioning of their title. It is expected that a land office will be opened soon to facilitate the purchase of properties here. HWC, P. 145

## 1769

### Land office opens

On February 26 of this year [1769], as a result of last year’s treaty with the Indians, who sold to the province a large tract of territory in the western lands of Pennsylvania, a notice has been given by advertisement that a land office will be opened on April 3 to receive applications for lands within the new purchase at the rate of five pounds sterling per one hundred acres, and one penny per acre quit-rent. No person is allowed more than three hundred acres. HWC, P. 145

### Land granted to “Indian Peter”

As of today, April 5, 1769, a large tract of land on the west side of the Monongahela river has been granted to William Peters, also known as “Indian Peter” or “Indian Pete.”

Peters has been living on the banks of the Youghioghene river *[near Connellsville]*, but his frequent disputes with a German neighbor – Peters has written to the proprietaries’ agent that he cannot ‘get along with the d—d Dutchman’ – have prompted Peters to write to officials about his troubles.

The proprietor’s acquiescence to Peters’ request to swap land grants comes just two days after the land office opened for the sale of land in this newly purchased [by the legislature] territory. Officials have granted him warrant No. 2844 “for a tract containing three hundred and thirty-nine acres situated on the west side of the Monongahela river.”

*[Indian Peter’s land was surveyed on October 7, 1769, by James Hendricks, deputy surveyor-general, who named it ‘Indian Hill.’]*

*According to Boyd Crumrine in History of Washington County, despite the official opening of the land office, “... before the 3d of April, when lands west of the Alleghenies could lawfully be acquired, – indeed, before the council at Fort Pitt and the treaty at Fort Stanwix, – there were many settlements made west of the Monongahela River, and extending well towards the Ohio. It is now believed, indeed documentary evidence has made it clear, that in and prior to 1767 settlers had made improvements here and there all over the beautiful country extending from Fort Pitt southward to the boundary line and between the two rivers named.”*

*Part of Indian Peter’s tract later became West Brownsville. By 1882, “Indian Hill” was part of a tract known as Krepps’ Knob. According to Jesse Coldren, historian of Brownsville, “Indian Hill” was also known as Krepps’ Knob. Indian Peter’s holdings extended “as far north as Pike Creek at Greenfield, now known as Coal Centre, including the site of California.”]* BT09-17-1928, BT07-01-1929; HTT; HWC, Pp. 145, 636; COP, P. 5

### Michael Cresap arrives here

Michael Cresap has arrived at Redstone Old Fort as a trader and may make this place his base of trading operations in addition to his family residence in Maryland.

The 27-year-old is the son of Colonel Thomas Cresap of Oldtown, Maryland, who was an agent of the Ohio Company who was associated with Nemacolin nearly twenty years ago and who accompanied Colonel Burd to this area in 1759.

*[“Michael Cresap discovered at that early day that this location would become exceedingly valuable as emigrants flowed in and the country was gradually opened. Accordingly, he took measures to secure a Virginia title to several hundred acres, embracing the fortification [Fort Burd], by what at that time was called a ‘tomahawk improvement.’]*



*“Not content, however, with girdling a few trees and blazing others, he determined to insure his purpose, and in order that his act and intention might not be misconstrued, he built a house of hewed logs with a shingle roof nailed on, which is believed to have been the first edifice of this kind in that part of our great domain west of the mountains. ... [this] is supposed to have occurred about 1770.”* <sup>HFC.</sup>  
 Pp. 421-422; Mayer, Brantz, Logan and Cresap

*During the next few years, Cresap established a trading post at Redstone and was granted permission by a Virginia court to operate a ferry across the Monongahela River. It crossed the river from a site below his house at Redstone Old Fort to the land of “Indian Pete.”*

*At that time, the colonies of Virginia and Pennsylvania both claimed ownership of the Redstone region. The 1767 Mason-Dixon Line only extended westward to the western terminus of the Pennsylvania-Maryland border, the point at which the Mason-Dixon Line stopped.*

*It was not until a subsequent survey in 1782 extended the Mason-Dixon Line further westward that, with Virginia’s agreement, the Redstone region and more indisputably became part of Pennsylvania and not Virginia.*

*Property deeds and grants in southwestern Pennsylvania that had previously been recorded in or granted by Virginia (including Thomas Brown’s land purchase from Michael Cresap) were accepted as valid by Pennsylvania.]* <sup>BT09-18-1928</sup>



Brownsville's First Hotel, Brownsville, Pa.

## 1771

### First resident of Redstone township arrives

George Kroft has arrived in the area, coming to this region from the eastern shore of Maryland. Mr. Kroft has tomahawked a claim of 800 acres of land.

*[The area in which Kroft settled later became part of Redstone Township. His 800-acre claim adjoined the lands on which Dunlap Creek Presbyterian church was built.*

*Mr. Kroft, whose family name was later changed to Craft, is said to be Redstone Township’s first settler. On his land he established a home and reared a large family. His descendants kept the homestead in the Craft name until it was sold in 1923.]* <sup>BT07-06-1938</sup>

### Justice moves a little closer to Redstone country

This area, the jurisdiction of which is still disputed between Virginia and Pennsylvania, has been part of Cumberland county (Pennsylvania) since 1750, according to Pennsylvania officials. Since 1769, when the land office opened and settlers began securing official property rights to their lands here, the need for a seat of justice that is closer to us than the distant county seat at Shippensburg *[and later Carlisle]* has now resulted in creation of a new county, in which we here at Redstone Old Fort are included.

As of March 9 [1771], a new county, Bedford county, has been carved out of Cumberland county. The reason given for its formation is attributed to “the great hardships the inhabitants of the western part of the county of Cumberland lie under from being so remote from the present seat of jurisdiction and the public offices.”

*[“An examination of the records shows that the settlers west of the mountains had much more to do in the administration of justice [than] when they were within the jurisdiction of Cumberland County with its seat of justice at Carlisle.*

*Still, for the reason that it was not yet definitely established that that portion of the county lying between the Monongahela and the Ohio was within the boundaries of Pennsylvania, the then inhabitants of that locality seem not to have received much notice from the county authorities.”]* <sup>HWC, P. 147</sup>

### **Newcomer from Ireland**

A recent immigrant to America’s shores, Neal Gillespie, has traversed the distance from his former home in the north of Ireland to the banks of the Monongahela river here, where he intends to become a land holder.

*[In 1778, Gillespie moved to the west side of the Monongahela near Redstone and built the first stone house beyond the stream, on Indian Hill farm, in Washington County. This farm is now partly the site of the town of West Brownsville, and it included Krepps Knob. Gillespie’s deed to the estate was acquired from Indian Peter’s widow, Mary, and her son, William.]* <sup>COP, P. 5</sup>

## **1772**

### **Methodist church is founded near here**

People of the Methodist faith have formed a new church this year [1772]. It is called the Taylor Methodist church, and it is located a few miles west of Redstone Old Fort. <sup>InformationalSignAtTaylorUnitedMethodistChurch</sup>

### **Land changes hands**

Angus McDonald, under a military permit from British Col. Bouquet dated April 26, 1763, acquired some or all of the land called “Bone of Contention,” and a settlement on it in 1770. He recently sold his claim to Capt. Luke Collins, describing the land as a place called Fort Burd.

Now Collins has conveyed the land [1772] to Capt. Michael Cresap, “describing it as between Point Lookout and John Martin’s land.” <sup>BC02-11-1904</sup>

## **1773**

### **Redstone is now part of Westmoreland county**

If you have been having difficulty recalling within which county’s jurisdiction our Redstone country falls, your task will become no simpler because the situation has changed again.

You may recall that in March 1771, the area around Redstone Old Fort became part of the newly-formed Bedford county, which had been carved from Cumberland county. Now, less than two years later, the pioneers west of the mountains have become stronger in numbers and so well established here that they have determined to possess, if possible, the machinery of courts of justice and of other offices created for the protection of property and preservation of rights for their own immediate use.

On January 26 of this year [1773], the record of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives reveals the following:

*A petition from a Number of the Freeholders and Inhabitants on the West-Side of Laurel-Hill, in the County of Bedford, was presented to the House and read, setting forth that they labor under very great Hardships and Inconveniences in being so remote from the Courts of Justice, and the public offices in the said County, many of the Petitioners living at the Distance of an Hundred Miles from the County Town, and the Roads so very bad at some Seasons as to be almost impassable;*

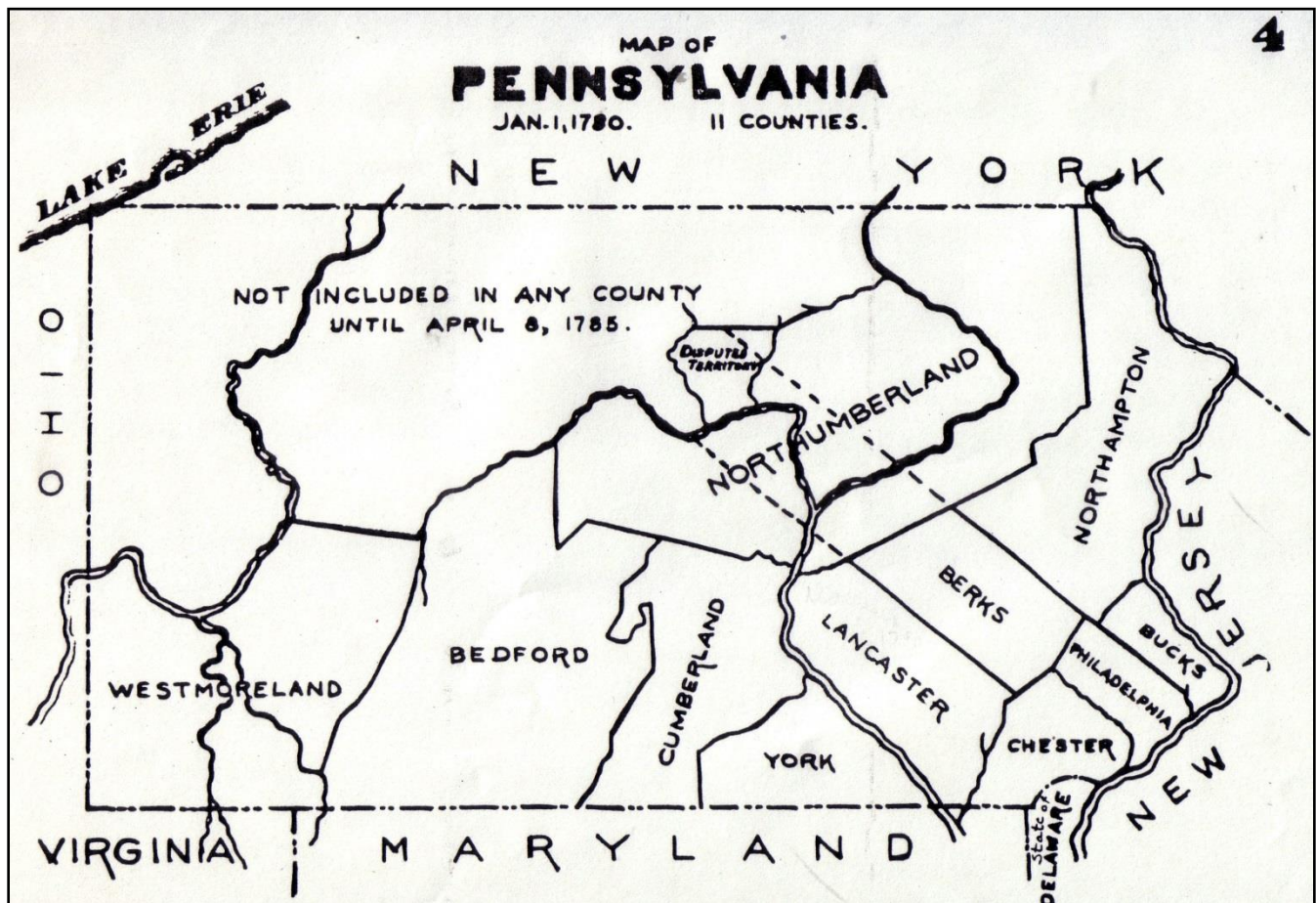
*— that in consequence thereof, the Fees of the Sheriff and other Officers are much increased, and become a heavy Grievance to the Petitioners, who therefore most humbly pray the Honorable House, to erect the said Part of the County of Bedford, West of Laurel Hill, into a separate County.* <sup>HWC, P. 149</sup>

To summarize, there is now an 11<sup>th</sup> county in Pennsylvania, as of February 26, 1773, its name is Westmoreland County, and Redstone Old Fort, our home, is part of the new county. <sup>HTT, P. 20</sup>

*[Another petition of like tenor was presented to the House and read on January 30th, and on the same day the consideration of the petitions was resumed. On February 12th the Governor acquainted the House that he should be ready to pass the bill which had been prepared in accordance with the petitions referred to, when presented to him for that purpose. The act, as passed and approved by the Governor on the 26th of the month, provided:*

*That all and singular the lands lying within the province of Pennsylvania, and being within the boundaries following, that is to say; beginning in the province line, where the most westerly branch, commonly called the South or Great Branch of the Youghioghenny River crosses the same; then down the easterly side of the said branch and river to the Laurel Hill; thence along the ridge of the said Hill, northeastward, so far as it can be traced, or till it runs into the Allegheny Hill [Mountains]; thence along the ridge dividing the waters of Susquehanna and the Allegheny River, to the purchase line, at the head of Susquehanna; thence due west to the limits of the province, and by the same to the place of beginning; shall be, and the same is hereby declared to be, erected into a county, henceforth to be called Westmoreland.*

*Thus Westmoreland County, including, as it did when erected, all of Fayette, Greene, Washington, Allegheny west of the Allegheny River and south of the Monongahela River, and all of Beaver south of the Ohio, as well as all of Indiana and that part of Armstrong east of the Allegheny River, was of magnificent proportions." ]* <sup>HWC, P. 149; HTT, P. 20</sup>



Maps Showing the Development of Pennsylvania, The Land Office Bureau, Department of Internal Affairs, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1920

### **Barrett holds land under permit**

Capt. Lemuel Barrett currently holds the land near Dunlap's creek [*the later site of Bridgeport*] under a "military permit" granted to him by the commander of Fort Pitt. Capt. Barrett was formerly a Marylander. BC02-11-1904

## **1775**

### **Cresap establishes first river ferry here**

Under authority granted by a Court held for Augusta County [Virginia] at Fort Dunmore on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February of this year [1775], which action is recorded as follows:

"On the motion of Michael Cresap, license is granted him to keep a ferry on Monongahela River at Redstone Fort to the land of Indian Peter, and that he provide a Boat." HFC, P. 434; HWC, P. 636

*[Michael Cresap died later that same year, as described below. His lands on the east side of the river came into the possession of Thomas Brown. It is unclear by whom the ferry was operated until 1784, when it passed into the hands of Neal Gillespie.*

*The landing place of the ferry on the east side of the river was in front of the residence of Henry Sweitzer, which later was the United States Hotel (later named the Albion Hotel), and in West Brownsville, it was directly opposite that spot.*

*Around 1820, when the new National Road was opened to the Monongahela River at Bridgeport (later renamed South Brownsville), the ferry was relocated upstream to Bridgeport, just upstream from the mouth of Dunlap Creek. The ferry operated there until a wooden covered toll bridge across the Monongahela opened in 1833.]* HFC, Pp. 434, 473; HWC, P. 638

### **Michael Cresap, influential leader here, dies**

We are sad to learn that Captain Michael Cresap, the pioneer who erected the first hewn log, shingle-roofed house near Fort Burd and who has been an influential figure in the early years of this settlement, has died at the age of 33.

Captain Cresap, who was born on April 17, 1742 in Oldtown, Maryland, was the son of Col. Thomas Cresap, who with Nemacolin developed the horse trail from Will's Creek to this place about 25 years ago.

Captain Michael Cresap was a trader, a land developer, a fighter of Indians, a developer of a ferry that crossed the Monongahela river, a lender of money, a military commander, and an overall pivotal figure in this region's infancy. He first arrived in the Redstone Old Fort area around 1769, when he was in his late twenties. His father Thomas had been with Colonel Burd ten years earlier at the construction of Fort Burd.

Recognizing the strategic location of Fort Burd, Michael Cresap "took measures to secure a Virginia title to several hundred acres, embracing the fortification, by what at that time was called a 'tomahawk improvement.'" To cement his claim, "he built a house of hewed logs with a shingled roof nailed on, which is believed to have been the first edifice of this kind in that part of our great domain west of the mountains. . . . it is supposed to have occurred about 1770."

*[Note from History of Fayette County by Franklin Ellis: "With the possible exception of a few transient squatters who clustered around Fort Burd for a few years just after its erection [in 1759], there is little doubt that Michael Cresap was the earliest white settler within the territory now embraced in the limits of the borough of Brownsville. ... [He] was the first who came here with the intention of making the place his permanent home, though permanent settlers preceded him on the opposite side of Dunlap's Creek, and also at several points not far to the eastward and southeastward of the present borough. One of these was Thomas Brown ... whose settlement in this section antedated that of Cresap a few years."]*

"For about five years after that time [1770], Capt. Cresap made the mouth of Dunlap's Creek the base of his trading operations, but still having his family and home in Maryland." He purchased properties in the Ohio country, built houses and cleared lands, while keeping a store near Fort Burd and purchasing various tracts of land in that locality.



He returned to Maryland in 1774, and in the spring of 1775, when the rebellion began at Lexington and Concord, Cresap was appointed a captain by the Committee of Safety at Frederick, Maryland, assigned to command one of the rifle companies required from Maryland by a resolution of the Continental Congress.

He led his men to Boston, arriving in early July after the initial battles at Lexington and Concord had been fought, to aid General Washington with the Continental army investing Boston.

After serving there for about three months, Cresap became seriously ill. He attempted to “reach his home among the mountains, but finding himself too sick to proceed he stopped in New York [City], where he died of fever on the 18<sup>th</sup> of October, 1775, at the early age of thirty-three. On the following day his remains, attended by a vast concourse of people, were buried with military honors in Trinity churchyard.”

*[Michael Cresap is buried in Trinity Church grave yard, not far from another American notable who died many years later, Alexander Hamilton. This is a photograph of his tombstone in the grave yard of Trinity Church, New York City.]*

HFC, Pp. 421-423; Photo of tombstone, en.wikipedia.org



## 1776

### Methodist church is established in Brownsville

The first Methodist religious service in Brownsville has been conducted by Chadds Chalfant. The service took place on July 4, 1776, the same day as that upon which our nation has declared its independence.

*[It is believed that during the congregation's early years, services were held in a log meeting house. The first substantial edifice to be occupied by the congregation was erected in 1804 on a lot on present-day Church Street, donated by Chadds Chalfant. This structure, 30 x 30 feet, was built of stone and/or brick.]*

*In 1821, the growing congregation required additional room, and the trustees lengthened and widened the building to 36 x 60 feet. In 1858, an even larger edifice, two stories high, was constructed that is still in use by the First United Methodist Church of Brownsville.]*

BT10-20-1928, BT07-01-1929

### Thomas Brown takes up residence in former Cresap house

Thomas Brown, owner and proprietor of the Whisky Path tract of land overlooking Dunlap's creek and the Monongahela river, is said to have taken up residence in the shingle-roofed house built by Michael Cresap.

*[Brown is said to have lived in the former Cresap house from the time of his purchase of it from Michael Cresap until his own death in 1797 at the age of 59. Ellis ascribes this information to "that dubious authority, tradition."]*

HFC, P. 424

### Thomas Brown granted license for an Ordinary

The West Augusta, Virginia, court, held at Fort Dunmore on April 16, 1776, has awarded as follows:

“License to keep an Ordinary is granted to Thomas Brown, at his house at Redstone Fort. Bazel [sic] Brown, on his behalf, entered into bond according to law.”

*[An “ordinary” in colonial times was another term for a tavern, a public place of entertainment, or an inn. It is plausible that Brown's Ordinary was located in the house he had purchased that was built by Michael Cresap, and which has often been identified as the “first hotel in Brownsville.”]*

HFC, P. 436

### **Boundary controversy continues between Virginia and Pennsylvania**

There remains in this year of 1776 a controversy between Virginia and Pennsylvania as to the ownership of the region along the Monongahela river, including Redstone Old Fort, and of the land west of the river.

Virginia has enacted a statute [October, 1776] claiming and exercising jurisdiction over that region of country. Virginia has given legal existence to Dunlap's road (*previously known as Nemacolin's trail, and later named for William Dunlap, a trader*) by making it part of the dividing line between the Virginia counties of Monongalia and Yohogania. TMO, Pp. 253-254

## **1778**

### **Fort Burd now used as military storehouse**

While the British builders of Fort Burd would hardly have anticipated it, the military installation they built in 1759 to protect against the French and Indians is now in the hands of the American forces, who are fighting against their former colonial overseers, the same British who erected the fort twenty years ago.

Fort Burd, while not actively engaged in the fighting, is now being used as a store house and a rallying point for defense, supply and observation against any difficulty with Indians or other enemies. It has never been attacked by any oppositional forces, and it has never been under siege.

Nevertheless, it is comforting to know that Col. James Paull is serving here with his drafted militia company, guarding continental stores.

[According to historian Franklin Ellis, writing in 1882, "nothing has been found showing how long Fort Burd continued to be held as a military post." ] HFC, P. 53

## **1780**

### **New Pennsylvania abolition law spurs exodus of early Redstone settlers to Kentucky**

Pennsylvania's state legislature has passed a landmark law titled "'Act for the gradual abolition of Slavery.'

The new law declares that all colored persons born on Pennsylvania soil after March 1, 1780, should be free, subject to such as would otherwise have been slaves, being servants until twenty-eight years of age, if duly registered.

"The passage of this law, and its becoming a 'fixed fact' about the same time that this was [confirmed to be] Pennsylvania territory [in a 1781 agreement, rather than a territory of Virginia, where slavery would remain legal for decades more], combined to induce many of our early settlers to sell out and migrate to Kentucky, which about this date opened her charms to adventure, settlement and slavery."

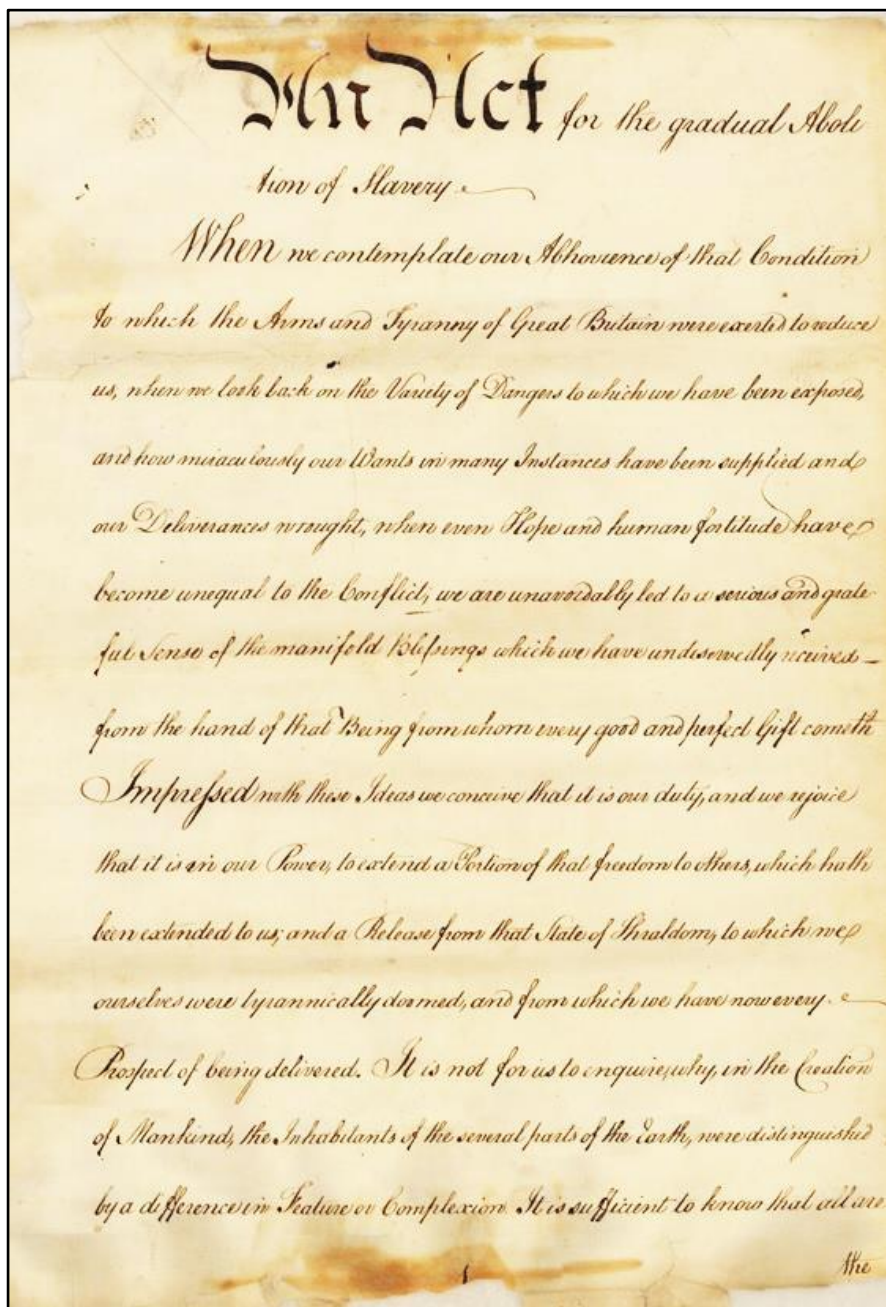
[*"These early removals to Kentucky (by our early settlers from Virginia and Maryland) brought to our county overpowering numbers of settlers from Eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey, who availed themselves of the opportunity to buy out the improvements of the settlers upon easy terms.*

*"Of this class of new settlers were the Friends, or Quakers, who settled about Brownsville, and the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians generally."* ] TMO, P. 99-100; HTT, P. 26

### **Long cold winter is delaying westward pioneers at Redstone**

Crusted snow three or four feet deep finds the road from Sandy Hollow [*near the future site of Redstone cemetery*] to the verge of Brownsville, where William Hogg lives, "lined on both sides with wagons and families, camped out, waiting for the loosing of the icy bonds from the waters and the preparation of boats to embark for the West, the men dragging in old logs and stumps for fuel to save their wives and children from freezing."

The point of the western terminus of Burd's Road, built in 1759, is at Redstone Old Fort. Since that road was completed, "westward bound emigrants [have begun to] pass through this region, making this the end of their land travel and the point of their embarkation in flatboats for their passage down the river [towards the 'Southwest,' particularly Kentucky]. ...



“Multitudes of western bound travelers [have laid] their route over the road which [has] brought them to the Monongahela at Redstone Old Fort. Such as could conveniently make the arrangement usually chose the latter part of the winter for their exodus, because at that season the friendly snow still lingered upon the roads, and mitigated in some degree the horrors of the passage from the mountains to the river.

“If they had rightly timed their journey, and the melting time came soon after their arrival at the place of embarkation, then all was well with them, but if the spring thaws delayed their coming, and the shivering, homesick wayfarers were compelled to remain for weeks [as they are in this winter of 1780] in their comfortless shelters, awaiting an opportunity to proceed on their way, then their condition was pitiable indeed.”

[The image shown here is the first page of the 1780 Gradual Abolition of Slavery law passed by the Pennsylvania legislature. The law's passage, combined with the 1780 concession by Virginia that Redstone country was part of Pennsylvania and not of Virginia, spurred many residents of the Redstone country to head west and south for territory where slavery was not in danger of abolition.] <sup>HFC</sup>  
P. 424

### Boundary dispute between Pennsylvania and Virginia is finally settled

Though the first settlers raised their roof-trees west of the Monongahela as early as 1767 or even earlier, yet not until now, late in the year 1780, has Virginia ceased to exercise an active jurisdiction here by her courts and judicial officers.

And not until now has the Redstone settler known whether he belongs to Virginia or to the land of William Penn.

[In 1774, the proprietary government of Pennsylvania, pending the attempted adjustment of the controversy, proposed to Virginia a boundary line which would have left all of Washington county in her present limits, except a small portion in the neighborhood of West Brownsville, as part of the Virginia Pan Handle.]

It appears that all parties now agree that Redstone Old Fort and much of the nearby region are part of Pennsylvania and are not part of Virginia. As of September 23, 1780, the Pennsylvania legislature has approved an agreement that has already been ratified by Virginia, agreeing to extend the Mason-Dixon Line westward to delineate the boundary between Virginia and Pennsylvania, thereby settling a controversy that has simmered for

years.

Many land titles in what is now agreed to be southwestern Pennsylvania were laid by patents based upon Virginia certificates, and west of the Monongahela there are many Virginia patents. Pennsylvania has now committed to recognizing the validity of those Virginia patents and titles to land that is now agreed to be located in Pennsylvania.

[*“The withdrawal of Virginia from the disputed and ceded territory called for the 1781 erection by Pennsylvania of the county of Washington, comprising all of the State west of the Monongahela and southwest of the Ohio.”*] TMO, P. 256; HWC, P. 195

## 1781

### Land changes ownership again

The land along the east side of the Monongahela river that was conveyed from Capt. Luke Collins to Capt. Michael Cresap in 1772, described then as “between Point Lookout and John Martin’s land,” is changing hands again.

Cresap’s executors have conveyed the land [June 1781] to one William Schooley, a merchant, and he in turn has conveyed it to Rees Cadwallader. It is noted that one Robert Thorn seems to have been a claimant of part of the land, but Capt. Collins apparently bought him out. These lands have been valued by their owners at a very low mark and have often sold for trifling sums. BC02-11-1904

### Widow of Michael Cresap remarries

The widow of Michael Cresap [*whose name is unrecorded*] has remarried. Widowed on October 18, 1775 when her husband, Michael, died of fever in New York City, she has married “her first husband’s friend and employé, John Jeremiah Jacob, who, at the age of about fifteen years, had commenced as a clerk for Cresap in his store at Redstone Old Fort [c. 1769].

Jacob, on his employer’s departure for the army in 1775, was left in charge of the business, and so remained for several months after Cresap’s death, closing up the affairs. Later in life, Jacob “was the author of the ‘Life of Capt. Michael Cresap.’” HFC, P. 423

### Washington county is created

As a result of legislative action effective on March 28 of this year [1781], Washington county has been created. It was carved out from Westmoreland county.

The new county encompasses lands that are south of the Ohio river and west of the Monongahela river. The new county’s southern border is the recently westward-extended Mason-Dixon line separating Pennsylvania from Virginia. HTT, P. 21

### First lawsuit filed in newly-formed Washington county involves local woman

The first civil suit ever filed in the Washington county Court of Common Pleas has been brought [September 17, 1781] against the widow of “Indian Peter,” Mrs. Mary Peters. HWC, P. 636

[*The significance of this information lies in the fact that Indian Peter’s date of death is uncertain, but it is clear that he had died by the date upon which this civil suit was filed against Mary Peters, of whom Crumrine wrote, “this woman, doubtless, was the widow of Indian Peter.”*] HWC, P. 195

## 1782

### Road is laid out from west side of river

Many emigrants who reach the Monongahela river here, traveling here from the east, discontinue the rigorous land portion of their journey when they arrive here and choose to build or purchase a Kentucky or Orleans flat-



boat and float to their destination west of here. However, not all of them transfer their journey to the river here.

Some who do not do so propose going so far as Ohio or Kentucky by land, and they cross the river here on a ferry. Upon reaching the west side of the river, they and their wagons continue toward destinations in the nearby territory *[such as present-day Washington or West Virginia]*.

Therefore, the need for a passable road from the ferry at Redstone to the new county seat at Bassett Town *[Washington]* is urgent. That is why on the first day of this year [1782], viewers were appointed by the Court of Quarter Sessions to lay out a road from Bassett Town to Redstone ferry. <sup>BT09-17-1928; HWC, P. 636</sup>

### **New law to regulate river traffic**

The state has passed an act declaring the Monongahela river a public highway.

There is an immense emigration to Kentucky and other southern regions bordering the Ohio, and as a consequence the channel of the river is crowded with a multitude of every species of river craft, laden with the household effects and merchandise of the emigrants bound for the lower river points.

The starting point is here at Redstone Old Fort, where the emigrant prepares his outfit after his travel on horseback over the rough mountain roads from the east. <sup>BC01-09-1896</sup>

### **Brown registers slaves**

In adherence with the requirements of the 1780 Pennsylvania law providing for the gradual abolition of slavery in the Commonwealth, citizens are to register their slaves with authorities.

It is noted that among the many white settlers who reside in the Redstone country and who have registered their slaves is Thomas Brown, who as of December 27, 1782, has registered six slaves. <sup>HTT, Pp. 26-27</sup>

## **1783**

### **Reese Cadwallader purchases land southwest of Dunlap's Creek**

Reese Cadwallader has purchased tracts of land lying south of Nemacolin [Dunlap's] Creek from Captain Lemuel Barrett, Angus McDonald and others who had earlier settled it under a military permit, although they never held a title to the property. Through a series of transactions aimed at establishing clear title to this property, Cadwallader has consolidated title to the land.

*[Nine years later in 1794, Reese Cadwallader laid out a street plan and founded the town of Bridgeport.]* <sup>BT07-01-1929</sup>

### **Fayette county is created**

As of September 26, 1783, the new county of Fayette has been formed from Westmoreland county in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Over the past thirty years or so, some residents of Redstone, without moving at all, have found themselves residents of four different Pennsylvania counties.

As far back as 1750, Redstone was part of Cumberland county, which had been formed from Lancaster county on January 27, 1750.

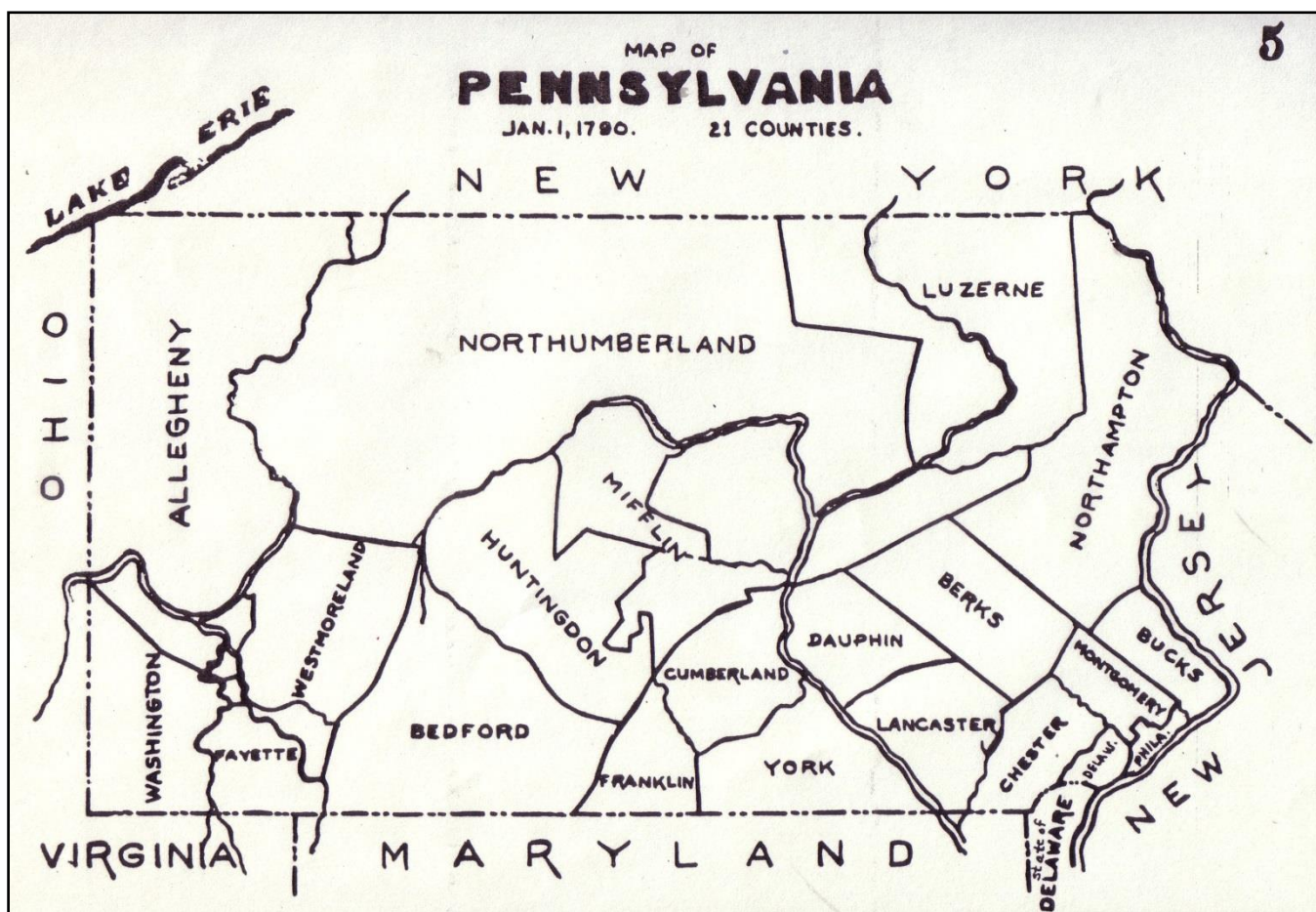
Then, on March 9, 1771, because Carlisle, the county seat of Cumberland, was more than a 100-mile journey from the homes of the county's westernmost residents, Pennsylvania carved Bedford county out of Cumberland county, and Redstone became part of Bedford county.

Just two years later on February 26, 1773, with the population of this region growing fast and Virginia still laying claim to this area, the new county of Westmoreland was created from Bedford county's western lands. It became the eleventh county created in Pennsylvania, and Redstone was part of it.

Now, in 1783, Redstone has become part of yet another newly created county, which is named for the French hero of the American Revolution, the Marquis de Lafayette.

Once again we residents of Redstone Old Fort are changing our county affiliation. We are no longer residents of Westmoreland county. Now we are residents of the new county of Fayette.

*[The following 1790 map shows the newly created counties of Washington (1781) and Fayette (1783).]* <sup>BT07-01-1929; HTT, P. 21</sup>



*Maps Showing the Development of Pennsylvania, The Land Office Bureau, Department of Internal Affairs, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1920*

### **First term of Court of Quarter Sessions and Common Pleas held in county**

Now that Fayette county has been officially created effective this past September 26, the county's courts have been organized.

The first term of the Court of Quarter Sessions and Common Pleas has been held in the schoolhouse in Uniontown. It was held on the fourth Monday of this month [December 1783].

Among the actions of the court is one which has created nine townships in the county. They are Washington, Franklin, Luzerne, Menallen, Union, German, Georges, Spring Hill, and Wharton.

*[Subsequently, more townships were created. Among them are Redstone township, formed in December 1797; Bridgeport township, formed in November 1815, and Brownsville township, formed in November 1817.]* <sup>HTT, P. 27</sup>

## **1784**

### **Fayette county is enlarged**

Westmoreland county has been reduced in size again, as the boundaries of neighboring Fayette county have been extended to include all that portion of the expanded county that lies north and east of the Youghiogheny river. This was done by legislative action effective February 17, 1784. <sup>HTT, P. 25</sup>

*[When Fayette County was created from Westmoreland County in 1783, it originally had 9 townships, all southwest of the Youghiogheny River. They were Washington, Franklin, Menallen, Luzerne, German, Union, Georges, Springhill and Wharton.]*

*The following year, 1784, more land was split away from Westmoreland County and given to Fayette County,*

adding land to the county that was northeast of the Youghiogheny River. From that land, two additional townships (Bullskin and Tyrone) were created, making a total of 11 townships in Fayette County in all.

The map image presented here, somewhat faded, is from the Fayette County Tax Assessment Office.]

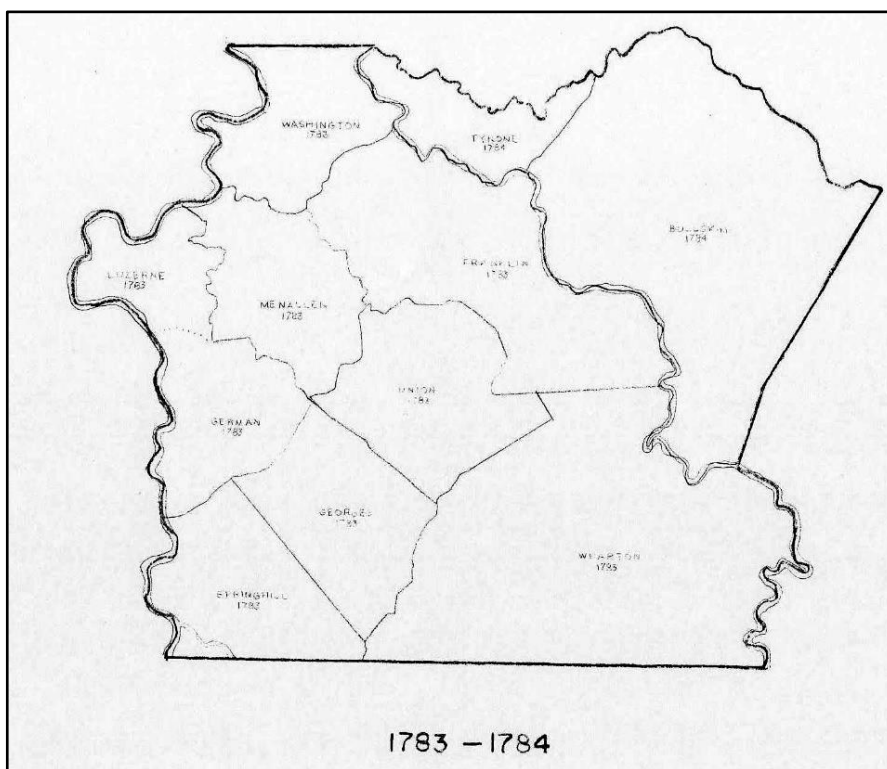
### Boat-building is a common sight along riverbank

The great amount of western emigration centering at the mouth of Dunlap's creek as a point of embarkation has rendered necessary the building of a large number of flatboats and other primitive craft along the banks of the Monongahela here.

These boats are most generally "constructed by the emigrants themselves, at the mouth of the creek and below that point on the river, but [are] sometimes purchased (by such as [have] the means) from pioneer boat-builders, who had come to the place for the especial purpose of supplying this demand."

Some idea of the number of boats being built here "may be had from a petition presented at the September [1784] term of the Fayette County Court ... "for a road from Redstone Old Fort along the river-side to the grist- and saw-mill at the mouth of Little Redstone and to Colonel Edw'd Cook's" [near the future site of Fayette City].

It is represented in this petition that the road is necessary because "the intercourse along the river is so considerable, by reason of the number of Boats for passengers which are almost constantly building in different parts along the River-side." HFC, P. 424



### Indian Peter's land (West Brownsville) sold to new owner

The widow of William Peters, who was also known as "Indian Peter," has sold land on the west side of the Monongahela river opposite Redstone [later Brownsville], amounting to approximately 339 acres, to Neal Gillespie, or Gillespey as it is also spelled, a native of Ireland [and great-grandfather of James G. Blaine] for a price of 45 shillings per acre.

Part payment for this land has been made in two tons of iron and one Negro slave. The record of sale at the Washington county recorder's office reads as follows [not a photograph of the actual record]:

**March ye 3, 1784**

*Memerandom of a Bargain mead Between Marey Petters and William, oldest son and Neal Gillespey, the agreement is thos, that we the above do bargain and seal to sead Neal Geallespie the Tract of land which we now poses and all the tenements and boundries of said Land at forty five Shillings pr. Acker the tearm of Peaments the 15<sup>th</sup> of next October fower hundred Pounds to be Paid in money or moneys worth for this Peament two ton of Iron at teen pence Pr pound and one Negro at Preasment of two men, one hundred pound more to be pead at the same time of this Preasment or Else to Draw In trust for one Year, the Remainder of the Purches money to be Pead in two Peaments – First in the [year] 1786, the Next the year*

*1788, Each of these Peaments to be mead in October 15<sup>th</sup> the above Bound marey Petters and William Petters asserts to meak the said Neal Gillespee a proper Right for said land for which we have seat our hands and Seals.*

*(Signed)*

*Marey XII Petters  
mark*

*William XIX Petters  
mark*

*Acknowledged before Thomas Crooks February 25, 1786*

*[“Indian Peter” had originally settled on property in what was later North Union township. He had been given that land under a grant made to him by the Penns themselves.*

*Unfortunately, Indian Peter’s neighbor at that place was a quarrelsome man named Philip Shute. He made life so uncomfortable for the peaceable Peter that Peter went to the proprietors and asked for a different piece of land. His request was granted and he was given land along the Monongahela River opposite the later site of Brownsville. He and his widow and, after his death, his widow and his son, owned it until 1784, when it was purchased by Gillespie.*

*At the Washington County courthouse in Book B, Vol. i, page 406, according to the book The Old Towns, can be found the original deed transferring the future site of West Brownsville from Mrs. Marey Peters (spelled Petters in this document) and her oldest son William to Neal Gillespie (Gillespey). Both Marey Peters and her son signed the contract of sale by making their mark.]*

BT09-17-1928, BT07-01-1929; HFC, P. 434; HWC, P. 636

### **Gillespie takes over former Cresap ferry at Brownsville**

Neal Gillespie, who recently purchased land on the west side of the river from the widow and son of “Indian Peter,” will operate the flat-boat ferry that was originally established by Michael Cresap in 1775.

*[The landing place of Gillespie’s ferry in Brownsville was opposite a place where the United States Hotel later stood. Gillespie continued this ferry, making his landing at this point until 1820, when the National Road was opened to the Monongahela River. He moved the ferry landing up to the point where the National Road struck the river at Bridgeport.*

*The first bridge across the Monongahela River, a privately owned toll bridge, was not constructed until 1833, more than a decade later.]*

HFC, P. 434

## **1785**

### **Thomas Brown lays out a town plat**

Thomas Brown, an early settler on land east of Redstone Old Fort and a man who in recent years has moved to Redstone and become owner of much land here, has realized the importance of this place in the westward migration of settlers.

Mr. Brown has conceived “the project of establishing a town upon that part of his ‘Whisky Path’ tract lying adjacent to the Monongahela and Dunlap’s Creek.”

Accordingly, Mr. Brown has laid out in late 1785 a town plat within his Whiskey Path tract. He is establishing several streets and cross-streets as well as lots which he intends to sell to businesses or to prospective residents.

He has set aside lots for a public square on the southwest side of Front street. He has not reserved any property specifically for use or purchase by a church. *[A town burial ground was eventually sited between the public square and the crest of the hill overlooking the river.]*

Mr. Brown is “one of the earliest settlers who came to the vicinity of Redstone and Dunlap’s Creeks, his name



being found in the list of 'The names of the Inhabitants near Redstone' reported by the Rev. John Steele as living in this region in the spring of 1768."

[According to historian Franklin Ellis] "... after residing for years east of the future town of Brownsville, he "purchased the right which Michael Cresap had acquired to the land that afterwards became the site of the town, and having also bought out whatever interest the McCulloughs had in the same, he settled here and commenced improvement in 1776.

"The correctness of this date is made certain by the certificate which was given him for the tract by the Virginia commissioners at Redstone Old Fort, Dec. 16, 1779. In that certificate there is added to the description of the tract granted to Thomas Brown the words, 'to include his settlement made in the year 1776.'

"The tract was surveyed to him March 21, 1785. It is described in the survey as being 'situate on the dividing ridge between Redstone and Dunlap's Creeks;' the name by which the tract was designated was 'Whiskey Path.'"

[Thomas Brown's 1785 laying out of a town plat and subsequent sale of lots is considered to be "the founding of Brownsville."

Also of interest is the fact that according to William D. Gladden in a 1928 Brownsville Telegraph article, Thomas Brown owned six Negro slaves. However, these slaves were registered with authorities because a law had been passed in Pennsylvania in 1780 gradually abolishing slavery in the commonwealth by freeing all Negroes born in this commonwealth after the enactment of the law, when they reached the age of 28. ]<sup>BT09-05-1928; HFC, P. 423-424</sup>

## 1786

### **Survey history reveals how Thomas Brown was able to acquire the land that became Brownsville**

In pursuance of an order of survey No. 3583, dated July 3, 1769, a survey of a tract of land [on which the principal part of Brownsville north of Dunlap's Creek is now located] was conducted by Alexander McClean, Deputy Surveyor. In his certificate on the draft he says:

*Situated on the east side of the Monongahela river, between Great Redstone and Dunlaps creeks, including the place where Fort Burd or Redstone Old Fort formerly stood in Menallen township, Fayette county, and surveyed the 15<sup>th</sup> day of August, 1784.*

The application for this tract was made by one John McCullough. But the Surveyor General's return for patenting sets forth the following:

*[W]hereas in pursuance of an application, No. 3583, dated 3d of July, 1769, I have caused to be surveyed on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August, 1784, unto John McCullough a certain tract of land called 'Whiskey Path' [which contained 319.75 acres] situate on east side of the Monongahela river, etc., and whereas the said John McCullough with Samuel McCullough by deed dated 25<sup>th</sup> of June, 1771, conveyed the same with other lands to Bryan Bruin, who by deed indorsed, dated March, 1773, assigned the same to Michael Cresap, Esq., who by deed 18<sup>th</sup> February 1775 conveyed the same to Thomas Brown.*

*Now in pursuance of a warrant dated 24<sup>th</sup> of February 1786 requiring me to accept said survey into my office and make return thereof into the secretary's office for confirmation by patent to the said Thomas Brown, I do hereby certify that said land is bounded as follows ... "*

The records also show that Samuel McCullough made a deed of conveyance bearing even date with that of John McCullough to the same party, and the latter conveyed at the same time to Michael Cresap, whose executors passed the title to Thomas Brown for a tract adjoining the "Whiskey Path" on the east containing 340 acres and allowance and called "Brown's Ramble," and was surveyed on application No. 3591.

These two tracts were patented to Thomas Brown on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February, 1786, and all titles to lands within their limits are unquestionable as far as the commonwealth of Pennsylvania is concerned. <sup>This article reflects research conducted by John H. Campbell in Harrisburg. He submitted the article to *The Brownsville Clipper*, which published it on 01-04-1894.</sup>

### Thomas Brown's ownership of land confirmed by commonwealth official

As a result of an official determination by the Surveyor General, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has recognized that Thomas Brown is the undisputed owner of two tracts of land [see previous item] of which the history of ownership has been examined by the Surveyor General.

These two tracts have now been patented to Mr. Brown as of the 25<sup>th</sup> of February, 1786. Research by John H. Campbell, published in *The Brownsville Clipper* on 01-04-1894

### Sales of lots in new town begin

*[The following information is according to Brownsville councilman/teacher/historian Jesse Coldren, writing years ago in the Brownsville Telegraph and quoting from an article he found in an early Brownsville newspaper]:*

*The town [of Brownsville] was laid out in the latter part of 1785 and the sale of lots began the following spring. The first deed found on record was made the 28<sup>th</sup> day of April, 1786, to Robert Elliott, of Washington county, Maryland. It was for a lot of ground situated in the town of Brownsville and known on the plan as No. 17 on Front street ...*

*It was a warranty deed and not subject to an annual rent. The lot at the time when the [early Brownsville newspaper] article was written belonged to John Johnson (grandfather of Mr. William J. McCormick, who discovered the old newspaper in which the article appeared in a seldom-visited part of the attic in the home of his mother, Mrs. Eliza McCormick) and is situated on the corner of Front Street and an alley immediately opposite his residence. The price paid by Elliott was ten pounds. [Note the use of British currency in 1786 despite the recently won independence of the United States.]*

*Colonel Elliott was engaged here in the purchase of supplies for the United States government, in which business he was associated with Col. Eli Williams and Jacob Bowman.*  
BT[date uncertain]; HFC, P. 425

### There are certain requirements in order to purchase lots from Thomas Brown

If you wish to purchase a lot or lots within the new town plat laid out last year by Thomas Brown, you must agree to certain stipulations as explained by Mr. Brown.

“All dwellings erected on them [are] required to be equal to twenty by twenty-five feet in dimensions, substantially built, and in all cases [must] have a chimney or chimneys of brick or stone.”

Quit-rents are required in nearly all cases, but these have sometimes been waived for reasons which are not made apparent. HFC, P. 424

## 1787

### Lot No. 1 sold; is the town name Brownsville or Washington?

On September 4 of this year [1787], Lot No. 1, Front Street was sold by Thomas Brown to Matthew Campbell of Brownsville, subject to the annual rent of five shillings.

*[This lot later became part of the Bowman property, known as Nemaquin.*

*In the deed to Lot No. 1, executed less than two years after the founding of the town, “the property is described as ‘situate in Brownsville alias Washington,’ by which it is made apparent that an attempt was made about that time to have the latter name adopted for the town in place of Brownsville. No allusion to the name (as applied to this town) has been found in any other place.”]*  
HFC, P. 426; BT08-10-1932

*“situate in Brownsville alias Washington”*

Language in the deed for Lot. 1  
sold by Thomas Brown

### **Jacob Bowman arrives in Brownsville**

Twenty-four-year-old Jacob Bowman, son of Simon and Mary A. Easter Bowman, of English and German ancestry and born in Hagerstown, Maryland on June 17, 1763, has arrived in Brownsville with his wife, Isabella Lowry Bowman, and a relative, Col. Robert Elliott and wife. Mr. Bowman has opened a store in the fledgling community, in which sales of lots began last year. He will commence the business of merchandising.

*[Bowman and William Hogg were the first permanently-located merchants in the town. After establishing himself in the community, Jacob Bowman served as a contractor for the government in partnership with his relative, Col. Elliott, and Eli Williams, in purchasing supplies for the Western army under Gen. Anthony Wayne. He was made commissary to the government troops that were sent across the mountains to suppress the Whiskey Insurrection in 1794.]*

*Bowman held the office of postmaster (appointed by President Washington) for more than 30 years. He and his family were strong supporters of Christ Episcopal Church, where the family burial plot is located. He died on March 2, 1847 (his wife had died two years earlier), and they were survived by nine children.]* BT09-05-1928; BT09-10-1928; HFC, P. 425

### **Lots continue to be sold in new town**

Thomas Brown's new town, formed from a portion of his Whiskey Path property, is growing in population. Here are a few examples of the individuals who have purchased lots from him:

Robert Clarke of Washington County, Maryland, has purchased Lots 17 and 18 on Second Street *[now called Brashear Street]* for 15 pounds. The sale was completed on June 3, 1786.

John Rhodes of Fayette County has purchased Lots 18 and 19 on Front Street. *[This sale was completed on June 3, 1788.]*

Matthew and William Van Lear of Washington County, Maryland, have bought four lots which front on both Market and Second streets, and adjoining a lot of ground not included in the general plan of the town, on the bank of the river, being a part of a larger tract known as "Whiskey Path."

*[Whiskey Path, owned by Thomas Brown, covered the territory between Dunlap and Redstone creeks and extending back six miles or about to the Searight house, it being directly outside of Whiskey Path.]* NSC

### **Cadwallader secures patent**

Rees Cadwallader, whose several purchases in 1783 gained for him control of properties on the south side of Dunlap's creek, has secured a patent for the property from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania [October 1, 1787]. Mr. Cadwallader has immediately begun improving his property by building a house on the creek and a mill on the same site.

The name of the tract, as mentioned in the warrant of survey which secured it and in the patent, is "Peace," a very appropriate designation in token of the final settlement of the conflict of claims to it and contiguous territory. The fact that Mr. Cadwallader is a member of the peace-loving Society of Friends (Quaker) may also have influenced his choice of a name for his tract of land.

*[This patent made Rees Cadwallader the first permanent settler in what is now the borough of Bridgeport. His house was on the bank of Dunlap's creek, and farther up that stream he built a mill, where the "Prospect Mills" later stood.]*

*According to an 1890 issue of the Brownsville Clipper, the Cadwallader children moved to Zanesville, Ohio, and none of the representatives of the family remained in the area as of 1890.]* BC1890,NoSpecificDateCited

### **Gillespie secures control of Indian Hill**

As of January 27 of this year [1787], Neal Gillespie has now obtained full title and control of "Indian Hill" *[part of which later became West Brownsville]*. The property adjoins lands owned by Thomas Swearingen and Ebenezer Lane.

*[According to historian Boyd Crumrine, "It has been stated that Indian Peter's residence was on the hill overlooking the town site, and probably the elder Neil Gillespie, too, took up his abode there. However, during the passing of years the latter was laid beneath the sward of the valley, and the Indian Hill farm came into the possession of his son, also named Neal Gillespie."]* HWC, P. 636

### **William Hogg opens a store on Water street**

William Hogg, a recent arrival in our new town, has established a store in the upper story of a building on

Water street.

*[A reminder that this Water street was in Brownsville, not in Bridgeport, and ran north along the river from the future site of the Flatiron building toward Albany and Redstone creek].*

Mr. Hogg has a colorful past. As an Englishman, he was forcibly “impressed as a sailor on board one of His Majesty’s ships and deserted at Charleston, S. C., whence he traveled to Philadelphia. There he made the acquaintance of an English gentleman named Stokes, who furnished him with a small stock of light hardware, with which he started out as a traveling peddler.

“He continued in this business for two or three trips, and finally, about 1787, came to Brownsville,” where he opened his store on Water street. “He [buys] his goods in Baltimore, making his earliest trips to and from that city on foot, generally starting from Brownsville on Sunday morning, and closing his store during his absence.”

*[According to historian Franklin Ellis, “The first mention found of him in the records is his purchase of three lots in Brownsville, January 28, 1796, after he had been here in business for nearly ten years. The lots which he purchased at that time were Nos. 3, 4, and 5 of the original plat, for the consideration of \$15. Mr. Hogg was a bachelor, and by his industry and perseverance during a long period of merchandising in Brownsville accumulated a large fortune.”*

*Hogg’s nephew, George Hogg, “was an ironworker in Northumberland, England. About the year 1800 his uncle brought him to Brownsville and formed a business partnership with him, which continued until his [William’s] death.”]* HFC, Pp. 425-426

## 1788

### **Land granted to Van Swearington** *[later site of Newell]*

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has conveyed to Mr. Van Swearington a tract of land said to contain 343 acres located in Washington township *[at that time]*. This tract of land forms a peninsula almost surrounded by the Monongahela River, which can be forded at almost any point.

*[Upon the death of Van Swearington, the tract was sold in 1795 to Dr. David Marchand of Westmoreland county, and in 1809, a patent on the land was recorded to Dr. Lewis Marchand.*

*After several more changes of ownership over the next century, in 1893 the land was laid out in lots, with additional ground laid out in lots adjoining Marchand by the Minerva Land and Improving Company. In 1902, the Marchand Land Company purchased the holdings of the Minerva Land Company. (The Minerva land company is also called the “Miners” land company in the same source document.)]* BT07-01-1929

### **New lot owners this year**

1788 has seen numerous purchases of lots in Thomas Brown’s growing little town.

The new lot owners are Stephen Duluth, Jacob Bowman, Andrew Boggs, Mahlon Schooley, Thomas Newport, John McCadden *[sic]*, George F. Hawkins, Amos Townsend, John Wildman, Arthur Dempsey, Gideon Walker, John Restine, Charles Sumption, and Thomas McKibben.

Mr. Boggs’ lot is on Second street *[now Brashear street]*, extending through to Market street, adjoining a lot owned by Nathan Chalfant. Boggs paid 7 pounds, 10 shillings for the property.

Nathan Chalfant purchased his lot on June 23, 1788. It is sixty by one hundred and eighty feet in size, extending from Second street to Market street.

*[On March 19, 1798, Nathan Chalfant sold his lot to Andrew Lynn, who in 1813 or 1815 – records conflict – conveyed it to the trustees of the Presbyterian congregation. It was the site of the first of three successive Presbyterian church buildings that served the Brownsville congregation. This first brick building, built on the Second street end of the lengthy lot, was used from its completion until 1850. The second building was built on the Market street end of the lot.]*

Mr. Chalfant also this year has purchased Lot No. 4 on Water street, adjoining Thomas McKibben and Holborn Hill.

*[On this lot Mr. Chalfant lived for many years and carried on an extensive business in boat-building.]*

Robert Clarke, who purchased a lot this year, has come here from Greene county.

*[The lot he purchased was the later site of the Snowdon House, which became the Storey House in 1885, and*



*which was torn down in 1960. It stood just below the turnoff onto Albany Road halfway up Market Street hill. Clarke was later involved with Neal Gillespie in a grist-mill and saw-mill on the river.]*

Thomas McKibben is a merchant on Market street.

*[He later became a justice of the peace and, in 1821, Prothonotary of Fayette County.]*

In addition, Basil Brown, Sr., who was the purchaser of a large number of lots sold by his brother, Thomas Brown, has sold property in the town plat to Thomas Brown, Jr., his nephew.

*[Jacob Bowman's purchase, the first time his name appears in the Fayette county records, occurred on June 23, 1788. He purchased four and a half acres and four and a half perches of land in Brownsville from Thomas Brown for the consideration of 23 pounds. This was undoubtedly the homestead property called "Nemacolin."]*  
HFC, Pp. 424-425

## 1789

### **First wagon load of freight crosses mountains to Brownsville**

John Hayden has brought to Brownsville the first wagon load of freight ever to come over the Allegheny Mountains. Hayden, who started the journey in Hagerstown, delivered the cargo to local merchant Jacob Bowman.

Until now [1789], all goods brought here over the Allegheny Mountains have been transported by horseback. Residents here have frequently seen large numbers of pack horses standing together in the public square, waiting their turn to be relieved of their burdens.

Hayden's wagon was pulled by four horses and carried a cargo weighing over two thousand pounds at three dollars per hundred pounds. The history-making journey took the trader about a month. BT09-21-1928, TMO, P. 38

### **New settlers here**

1789 has seen additional acquisitions of lots within the town plat laid out by owner and proprietor Thomas Brown. Among those purchasing lots this year from town proprietor Brown are John Yateman, Matthew Van Lear, and Isaiah Ratcliff. HFC, P. 424

## 1790

### **Property owners' list expands**

Four years after Thomas Brown began selling lots in the town plat that he laid out in late 1785, the growing community continues to attract new arrivals.

Joining the growing list of property owners who have settled this year within the confines of the new town's boundaries are James Long and Josiah Tannehill. HFC, Pp. 424-425

## 1791

### **Spirits erupt at a chaotic meeting at the Black Horse Tavern**

Citizens from the region have met in Redstone Old Fort to protest a new federal law that places an excise tax upon all whiskey produced in these parts. The trouble is that the tax is to be paid by the distillers, who are mostly local farmers, not by the consumers of the whiskey.

At a Wednesday, July 27, 1791 meeting held in the Black Horse Tavern on Front street, angry farmers and distillers from four counties – Fayette, Washington, Westmoreland and Allegheny – gathered and vented their dissatisfaction with the new tax, which they feel will be ruinous for them, particularly since the tax must be paid in specie (coin), which is rare in these parts. Many dealings around here are done through barter or possibly using

Spanish dollars or pieces of eight.

*[The Black Horse Tavern was the first inn in Brownsville of which anything definite is known as to its location and landlords, notwithstanding Thomas Brown's Ordinary. It is not certain what year the Black Horse Tavern was opened. The Black Horse was a stone building, just up Front Street from Jacob Bowman's property where his castle-like home was eventually built.]*

*A part of the Black Horse Tavern may possibly still remain as part of a later-erected stone building on the same site, the northeast corner of Front Street and Third Avenue.*

*A second meeting was held in Pittsburgh on September 7, 1791, and among the delegates from Fayette County was Albert Gallatin. The protests caused a modification of the tax law by Congress, which was facing the first challenge to the new federal government's constitutional authority.*

*However, anti-whiskey tax activities, including threatening tax collectors and destroying property continued for three years, including a threatened distillers' march on the excise office in Pittsburgh. Only the real threat of federal military action against the whiskey rebels, in the form of a nearly 13,000-man army that was approaching western Pennsylvania, one that was led personally by President George Washington commanding the combined militia of several states, finally ended the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794 when the "rebels" agreed to sign personal pledges to obey the law.*

*It is believed that the initial 1791 meeting and the 1794 meeting were both held at the Black Horse Tavern. The four counties that participated in the Whiskey Rebellion were Allegheny, Fayette, Westmoreland, and Washington, with the most trouble occurring in Washington county in the Monongahela region.]* <sup>BT09-13-1928</sup>



### **New lot owners**

Property continues to sell in Thomas Brown's plat at Redstone. Charles Ford, Elijah Fredway, and Basil Brown are the latest to purchase lots in the town plat from Proprietor Brown.

Some secondary sales are also occurring. Otho Brashear and Thomas Brown *[sic]* have purchased lots in the town plat from Basil Brown, Sr. <sup>HFC, Pp. 424-425</sup>

## **1792**

### **Additional settlers in town**

1792 has again seen additional purchases of lots within the boundaries of the town plat that is being called Brownsville, named for its proprietor and owner, Thomas Brown.

The most recent purchasers of property are Jacob Bowman, who already owns other lots in town, Ignatius Brown, and Samuel Workman. Additionally, Thomas Newport has purchased property in town from Basil

Brown, Sr.

Samuel Workman arrived here a couple of years ago and started a tannery.

*[Workman's son, James Workman, kept a tavern at the head of Market Street. It was known as the Workman House and later called the Girard House. The building stood at the intersection of Broadway and Market on Brownsville's North Side. It was razed in the late 1960s when a four-lane highway was built from that intersection eastward toward Uniontown.]* HFC, Pp. 424-425, 427

## 1793

### Proprietor's nephew joins property owners in town

Basil Brown, Jr., the nephew of town proprietor Thomas Brown and son of the proprietor's brother, Basil Brown, Sr., has moved to Brownsville.

Brown, Jr. will be living on or near the corner of [Morgan] and Market streets. Being unmarried, he will be living with his sister, Sally Brown, who is crippled and also unmarried.

*[Basil Brown, Jr. died in Brownsville many years later at the age of 75. His sister Sally survived him for a number of years. Basil Brown, Sr. never lived in Brownsville, but lived on a nearby tract of land in Luzerne township on which he settled in 1770 and remained all of his life. However, he is identified as a 1793 Brownsville lot purchaser in Franklin Ellis' History of Fayette County.]*

Also joining the roster of new Brownsville property owners this year are Charles Armstrong, Basil Brown, Sr. (again), Andrew Scott, Nathan Chalfant, John Yateman, Patrick Tiernan, Jonathan Hickman, and James Higginson. HFC, P. 424

## 1794

### Masonic lodge formed in Brownsville



A new Masonic lodge that was formed in Brownsville at the beginning of this year has completed its first year of activity.

On January 23, 1794, local men John Bowles, John McDowell, James Chamber, Jr., William Arbuton, John Farcker, and James Chambers, Sr., along with gentlemen representing lodges from Pittsburgh, Washington, Philadelphia, and Ireland, officially opened the new lodge, No. 60, and appointed John Bowles as secretary.

Applications were received from James Elliott, Jonathan Hickman and Charles Ford for initiation. During the year 1794, twenty seven members have been added to the lodge. BC01-25-1894; COP, P. 51

### Town of Bridgeport is created

During the past several years, Rees Cadwallader, a Quaker, has methodically obtained title, by means of several 1783 purchases, of the land lying south of Dunlap's creek.

Back in 1787, Mr. Cadwallader acquired a patent on that land, which he named "Peace." Long interested in establishing a town southwest of Dunlap's creek, this year [1794] he has acted on that ambition and has laid out a plat for a new town on his property. Lots are expected to begin selling next year.

*[Note: This event, the laying out of a plat with streets and lots delineated, marked the "founding" of the town of Bridgeport in 1794. Bridgeport became a borough on March 9, 1814, was renamed South Brownsville borough in 1908, and merged with Brownsville borough in 1933.]* BT09-15-1928

### Whiskey Rebellion flares up again here; may bring federal militia to quell the disorder

Federal action making changes in the federal whiskey excise tax regulations has resulted in a more stringent application of the tax. That has revived rebellious sentiment among the people of the four counties of western

Pennsylvania who three years ago [1791] had protested the hated tax on producers of whiskey.

Buildings in Pittsburgh have been burned by protestors, the mail has been robbed, and tax collectors have been tarred and feathered. The local militia has joined the rebels, who have now formed an army of as many as 6,000 to 7,000 men. If President Washington responds with military force, what will the local rebels decide to do?

*[This was the first serious challenge to the authority of the United States government to enforce laws passed by the Congress. The U. S. constitution had been ratified in 1789, just five years earlier.]*

*In response to this challenge of his authority and that of the national government, President Washington acted firmly. Using his authority under Article II of the constitution, he called out the state militia from four states, assembled an estimated 13,000 to 15,000 troops, took command of the force personally as Commander in Chief, and marched the army toward western Pennsylvania to deal with the troublesome rebels.*

*Informed of the oncoming army, cooler heads among the rebels finally prevailed. At an August 28 and 29, 1794 extended meeting at the Black Horse Tavern in Brownsville, a secret ballot vote, suggested by Albert Gallatin, was taken. The vote was not unanimous by any means, but in the end, the majority voted to end the rebellion in exchange for presidential amnesty for any past rebel offenses and a pledge by them to obey the law in the future.*

*In 1802, during the Jefferson administration, the hated whiskey tax was repealed by Congress.]* BT07-01-192; HFC, P. 436

### **A second river ferry is established, this one in Bridgeport**

A second ferry across the Monongahela river has been established here. This one is about half a mile upstream from Gillespie's ferry, which is located just down the hill from Mr. Bowman's Nemacolin residence. The new ferry, established by John Krepps, is at Bridgeport, the town whose plat was newly laid out this year by Rees Cadwallader.

The ferry landing on the Bridgeport side of the river is near the foot of Spring street (or alley).

*[This "Spring street" was in Bridgeport, not Brownsville. It was later named Mason Street and today is one block south of Race Street, next to the South Brownsville United Methodist Church.]*

The ferry landing on the west side of the river is directly opposite the Bridgeport landing *[near a stone tavern that is still standing on that side of the Monongahela]*.

Krepps' ferry is the first ferry that crosses the Monongahela river and has a landing that is within the boundaries of Bridgeport, and it is in need of a road leading to it. A petition has been filed with the Fayette county court asking for "a road from Krepps' Ferry to the bridge at the mouth of Dunlap's creek."

*[The ferry remained in operation until sometime after the 1833 completion of the covered bridge across the Monongahela. Towards the last years of its existence, a ferry-boat propelled by steam was used.]*

*The original owner of this ferry, John Krepps, always lived on the west side of the Monongahela. His sons, Samuel J. and Solomon G. Krepps, settled on the east side of the river, the latter being a resident of Bridgeport as early as 1813, when he built a brick house that stood until recent decades when it was torn down to expand the parking area of the South Side Volunteer Fire Department.]* HFC, P. 472; HWC, P. 638

### **Chalfant purchases property here**

Chadds Chalfant, a 39-year-old native of Chester, Pennsylvania who resides on a farm about one mile from town, has purchased several town lots from Thomas Brown, the founder and proprietor of our town. These lots are not within the original boundaries of the 1785 town plat. Despite living outside the town limits, Mr. Chalfant has, during his residency in this area, shown great interest in town affairs.

*[In 1804, Mr. Chalfant donated to the local Methodist congregation the lot on which the Methodist house of worship was built. He also sold to the Masons a lot on the opposite side of Church Street and further down the street. That lot was later the site of the Masonic Hall for many years.]*

Also this year [1794], Samuel Jackson has purchased from Thomas Brown certain lands adjoining the original town plat that was laid out by Mr. Brown in 1785. The Chalfant-Jackson additions to the original town plat have been laid out with streets and alleys; Church and Spring streets are included in this addition to the town.

Joining Messrs. Chalfant and Jackson in purchasing property from Thomas Brown this year are Alexander Nelan, John Ayers, and Robert Ayres, while William Goe has purchased property in town from Basil Brown, Sr.



## 1795

### **Cadwallader begins selling lots**

Rees Cadwallader, who has tediously pieced together a large tract of land south of Dunlap's creek by completing numerous land transactions over the past dozen years, has laid out a plat next to the creek opposite Brownsville and has begun selling lots in the plat. We hear that since they began selling this year [1795], they have been selling with considerable rapidity. <sup>HFC, P. 466</sup>

### **Rees Cadwallader officially gifts property to Bridgeport; it is intended only for public use**

The following deed, listing the transfer of property from Rees Cadwallader to the town of Bridgeport, has been registered in Deed Book C, pages 536 and 537. It is witnessed by Isaac Rogers and Abner Updegraff. The following is an excerpt of the document describing the property being gifted:

*On November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1795, Rees Cadwallader, the founder of Bridgeport [later South Brownsville] having for divers good causes given us there unto moving as well as for the sum of one cent to use in hand paid to proprietors of lots in the town of Bridgeport a certain Lot of ground in the said Town adjoining the River now and bounded as follows:*

*Beginning at the N. W. extremity of Bank street thence along said street S 42 NW east 165 feet to Water street, thence up Water street S 75 W 188 ft. to ... Street thence along said street N 15 degrees W. 148 ft. to the River N 70 degrees E 54 ft. to the place of Beginning containing on the whole one Rod and 3 Perches be the same more or less excepting so much thereof as is now laid out as a Publick Road while it is so occupied – said lot of ground belonging unto the said Proprietor of Lots in the Town of Bridgeport aforesaid forever.*

*Provided likewise and it is the true intent and meaning hereof that the said lot of Ground shall be considered and Applied only for the publick uses for the benefit of the present and succeeding inhabitants of said Town forever; to be by the said proprietors applied or improved in the persons of their delegates or Trustees or otherwise as a majority of said Inhabitants may from time to time order and direct and for no other use purposes or Intent whatsoever.* <sup>BT08-12-1935</sup>

### **Property owners added to Brownsville community**

New purchasers of lots this year in the town of Brownsville, which lies on the northern side of Dunlap's creek opposite Bridgeport, are Christian Yost, Henry Bateman, Basil Brashear, John Fry, and William Cox.

Basil Brashear has built a stone house on upper Market street and opened it as a tavern.

*[For years, the Brashear House was Brownsville's leading public-house. The building, constructed in 1795 and a National Register of Historic Places landmark, is still standing and in good repair on the northwest corner of Sixth Avenue and Market Street.*

*Basil Brashear's grandson, John A. Brashear, was born in the house in 1840 and became a world-famous maker of astronomical instruments, primarily telescope mirrors.]* <sup>HFC, Pp. 424, 427</sup>

### **Bowman named postmaster of new post office here**

Brownsville now has a United States post office, the first in the town's history.

The Brownsville post office was officially established on January 1 of this year [1795]. In consideration of his past services to the government, Jacob Bowman has been appointed under the administration of President Washington to be postmaster of Brownsville.

*[Bowman held the position for thirty-four years until the 1828 election of Democrat Andrew Jackson, when Bowman, like many others, became a victim of the practice of political patronage and was replaced.]* <sup>HFC, Pp. 425, 427</sup>

## 1796

### **Ground purchased for Episcopal church**

Despite the longtime presence of persons here who have expressed the desire to adhere to the Episcopal faith,

looking far back over the decades to the initial Episcopalian service held in 1759 at Fort Burd, there has yet to be built a place of worship where the various itinerant missionaries of the faith might conduct services.

While there is still no such building today, a step has now been taken to secure property on which such a structure could be built. We are informed that Dr. Charles Wheeler, William Hogg, and Jacob Bowman have purchased a lot on Church street, sold to them by Samuel Jackson, for the sum of twenty pounds, seven shillings, and sixpence. The purchase was consummated on August 27 [1796].

It was noted that when the original town plat of Brownsville was laid out in 1785 by Thomas Brown, it was bounded by Market street to the north and Front street to the south. Lots were set aside for a public ground, but no lots were set aside for churches. Mr. Jackson, having subsequently purchased land to the north of Market street from Mr. Brown, has now sold some of it to the aforementioned gentlemen that they might construct an Episcopalian place of worship on it.

*[Note: No steps were taken to build a house of worship on the site until 1814.]*

### Greene county created

As of February 9 of this year [1796], the Pennsylvania legislature has created a new county here in the southwestern corner of the state.

It is called Greene county and is named for Revolutionary War General Nathanael *[sic]* Greene. The new county has been carved from Washington county.

*[The following 1800 map shows the counties of Greene, created in 1796 from Washington County, and Somerset, created in 1795 from Bedford County. In 1802, a part of Greene County was returned to Washington County.]* <sup>HTT, P. 21</sup>



*Maps Showing the Development of Pennsylvania, The Land Office Bureau, Department of Internal Affairs, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1920*

### Property sold by proprietor Brown; Black Horse Tavern auctioned

This year, town founder Thomas Brown has sold lots within the town named for him to John Blackford, Edward Hale, William Hogg, George Kinnear, John Ekin, Amos Townsend, John Christmas, James Hawkins, John Bowman, and John Jaques *[sic]*.

Basil Brown, Sr., brother of the town founder, has this year sold property owned by him to Chadds Chalfant, Samuel Bell, and John Wildman.

Meanwhile, property which includes the Black Horse Tavern, along with four other lots in Brownsville, belonging to Charles Armstrong, Elijah Clark, and Captain T. Shane, have been sold at public auction [December 31, 1796]. Earlier this year on March 29, 1796, the following advertisement appeared in the Washington, Pa. *Western Telegraphe [sic]*:

“Amos Wilson begs leave to inform his friends and the public that he has purchased the house formerly occupied by Mr. Patrick Tiernan, the sign of the Black Horse, on Front Street, Brownsville, well known by the name of Redstone Old Fort, where he has opened a Tavern . . .”

*["It seems probable that, notwithstanding the sale [mentioned above], Wilson still continued as landlord of the Black Horse tavern, and was keeping it in 1799, from an account of the celebration of St. John's day (June 24<sup>th</sup>) in that year by Brownsville Lodge, No. 60, of Free Masons, viz.: 'In the evening repaired to Brother Wilson's, at the Black Horse Tavern, and spent the evening in festivity.' Later it was kept successively by John Sheldon, Josiah Tannehill, Joseph Noble, Mrs. Dr. Lewis Sweitzer, and others. It was discontinued as a public-house during the early or mid-nineteenth century."]*

*The above-mentioned George Kinnear, a Scotchman, came to Brownsville before 1788, and purchased several lots located on the east, south, and west of the Public Ground – the 'Commons,' which is still across the street from Nemacolin Castle. This property passed to Polly Kinnear, and later to William Cock, who sold it to J. W. Jeffries. It was Jeffries who owned the property, which is where the Ross/Crawford funeral home later stood, and it has been said that the original town cemetery, later abandoned, may have partially intruded onto Jeffries property.]*

BT09-24-1928, HTT; HFC, Pp. 424-427

## 1797

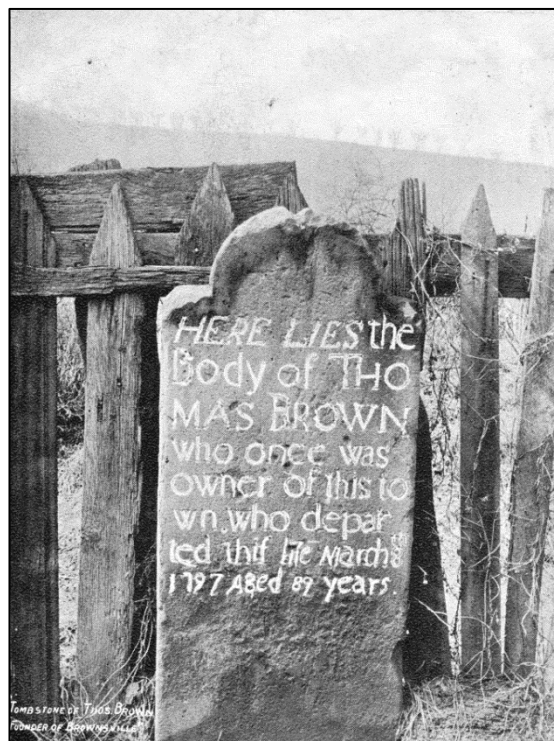
### Founder of the town of Brownsville dies

Thomas Brown, who carved a town out of his larger tract of land called Whiskey Path and named it Brownsville (after considering at least one other name), has died. Brown was born in 1738 and died on March 8, 1797 at the age of 59. He has been buried in the town cemetery on the public grounds on the southwest side of Front Street.

Surviving Mr. Brown are two sons, Thomas, Jr. and Levi, and three daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth Cox, Mrs. William Crawford, and Mrs. Ewing.

*[Thomas Brown's tombstone, although not his remains, was moved in late 1903, along with the tombstones of John H. and Archibald Washington and Edward B. Machen, all three of whom died while transporting slaves through the area. The four tombstones were moved from the original town cemetery near the "Commons" on lower Front Street to the graveyard of the Christ Episcopal Church on Church Street. With the cooperation of the Jefferies family, which in 1903 owned some of the land where the old abandoned cemetery had been located, the stones were donated to the Lafayette Chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution, who arranged and supervised the move to the Christ Episcopal grave yard in late 1903.]*

*Before the Brown tombstone was moved, the stone was*



photographed, and the image shown here was included as one of a set of postcards produced by the Industrial News Co. and sold in local businesses. The postcards portrayed local scenes around Brownsville.

The epitaph on Brown's sandstone tombstone having eroded over the years, it had become difficult to read. To make it more legible on the postcard image, the words were artificially "enhanced" to make them more easily read.

Unfortunately, in doing so Brown's age at death, which was 59, was misread on the deteriorating stone. In the process of enhancing the epitaph on the postcard, Brown's age was mistakenly assumed to read "aged 89," and the error on the postcard image of the town founder's tombstone escaped notice.]

Ancestors.FamilySearch.org; Tombstone, Christ Episcopal Church grave yard, Brownsville; BC11-19-1903

### **Town founder has died, but his namesake town continues to grow**

The founder of Brownsville has died at the early age of 59, but the town he created continues to grow. In this year of 1797, lots in the town have been purchased, either from the proprietor or from his estate, by Thomas Gregg, Andrew Brown, and Amos Wilson.

William Price has also purchased property in Brownsville, his property being purchased from Basil Brown, Sr. HFC, P. 424-425

## **1798**

### **What others are saying about Brownsville**

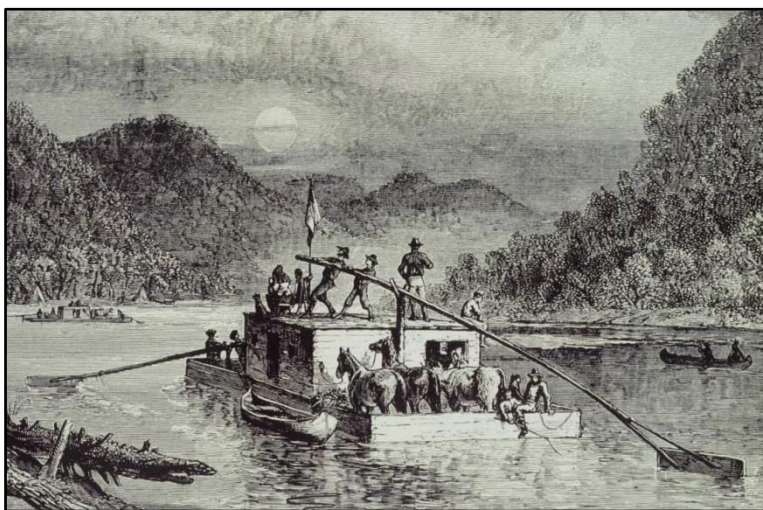
Here is an example of what other persons think about our relatively new town of Brownsville.

This description comes to us from a publication printed in Boston in June of this year [1798]. The publication is called *An Abridgement of the American Gazeteer of the American Continent*. We excerpt the following from its pages:

*Brownsville or Redstone Old-Fort is a flourishing posttown [sic] in Fayette County, Pennsylvania, on the Southeastern bank of the Monongahela river, between Dunlap and Redstone creeks; and next to Pittsburgh is the most considerable town in the Western part of the State.*

*The town is regularly laid out, and contains about 100 houses, an Episcopalian and Roman Catholic Church, a brewery and distillery. It is connected with Bridgeport, a small village on the opposite side of Dunlap Creek, by a bridge 260 feet long. Within a few miles of the town are four Friends' meeting houses; 24 grist, saw and fulling mills.*

*The trade and emigration to Kentucky employs boat builders here very profitably; about 100 boats of 20 tons each are built annually. Byrd's Fort formerly stood here, on the South side of the mouth of Redstone Creek in North latitude 39.58 West longitude 81.12½; 37 miles southerly from Pittsburgh, 23 South by East of Washington, and 341 West of Philadelphia.*



[Of particular interest in this 1798 excerpt is the statement that the wooden bridge that spanned Dunlap Creek at that time, which was the first of four consecutive bridges that were built at that site, was "260 feet long." The current Cast Iron Bridge is 80-85 feet long.



*That is a difference of nearly 200 feet, and if the 1798 figure is correct, it lends support to a theory that the Neck, or the southwestern end of it, was at some point artificially extended toward the creek and is not an entirely natural land formation.*

*The image seen above is an engraving by Alfred Waud. It depicts one of several designs of flatboats that could be built in Bridgeport or Brownsville and used to transport westward travelers north on the Monongahela River to the Ohio River and on to the west and south.]* <sup>BT10-26-1934</sup>

## 1799

### **Quakers purchase more land here**

Completing a transaction on February 29, 1799, Rees Cadwallader has sold to the Friends' society [*Society of Friends, informally known as the Quakers*] three acres of land in Bridgeport. The Quakers had previously purchased eight acres of land in June 1796 from Cadwallader and several others.

*[A portion of the three acres purchased in 1799 on the hill overlooking Dunlap Creek included the future site of the Bridgeport public school building, and even later on that same spot, the Prospect Street School.*

*Also within this three-acre tract was established the earliest burial-ground of Bridgeport. It was just north of a building which later housed the Donald Law Funeral Home, a brick building that is still standing. Quakers often did not mark their graves. It is quite likely that while the graveyard is no longer marked in any way and in modern times was partially paved over— with permission — to construct a school playground, the early Quaker remains may still lie beneath the surface undisturbed.*

*Rees Cadwallader died just a few years after the turn of the century, with many lots still unsold. His sons, who inherited them, eventually emigrated to the Zanesville area, and none of his descendants remained in Bridgeport or vicinity.]* <sup>HFC, P. 466</sup>

### **Masons construct lodge building**

The first building owned by the local Masonic lodge has been constructed [*no location specified in the source material*].

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of May of this year [1799], lodge members Rogers and Miner agreed to furnish 700 planks for use in building the lodge structure. Member Gregg pledged to provide lime, and member Heslip [*sic*] doors and windows. <sup>BC01-25-1894</sup>

### **New property owners in town**

1799 has seen the introduction of more new property owners to our community.

Andrew Sinn, Ayers Sinn, and Isaac Sinn, have each purchased lots in town from the estate of Thomas Brown, who died two years ago. William Hogg and John Laughlin have also purchased lots, their purchases being from Basil Brown, Sr. <sup>HFC, Pp. 424-425</sup>

### **School established by Society of Friends**

The first school for the youth of Bridgeport has been established by members of the Society of Friends [c. 1799]. Joseph Oxley and Eli Haynes are said to be the first teachers in the school. <sup>BC06-26-1890</sup>

## 1800

### **Hezlip Tavern opens for business**

John McClure Hezlip, who arrived in Brownsville three years ago [1797], and N. Hezlip have opened a new inn and tavern, the Hezlip Tavern, at the head of Market street in Brownsville. The establishment opened for business on Sunday, October 26, 1800.

*[The building was located at the intersection of Market and Broadway. As time passed and the building*

changed hands, the Hezlip Tavern was renamed the Workman House, then the Girard House, and finally the Girard Hotel before being converted into an automobile dealership. It was razed in the 1960s as part of the construction of a four-lane highway through the site.

During the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the establishment housed pioneers who were en route to the unsettled west, which then meant Kentucky and Ohio. They would arrive in Brownsville from the eastern cities by stage coach (particularly after the National Road opened to Brownsville in 1820), and from Brownsville they would embark on a steamboat or flatboat for the trip downstream on the Monongahela to Pittsburg(h) and the Ohio River, and then on to Ohio, Kentucky or beyond.

Among the many notables who dined and/or spent the night in this hostelry were Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay. When General Lafayette visited this district in his triumphant journey through the nation, he stayed at a rival tavern, the Brashear House, but after getting a glimpse of the view to be had from the Workman House, mourned that he had not been located there.

In 1902, time took its toll as the northeast wall of the building collapsed. It was rebuilt and the building put into shape.

The historic photo shown here was taken in the late 1800s, after the hostelry was renamed Girard House and before Market street was paved with brick at the beginning of the 1900s.] BT08-28-1928



### **Brownsville of 1800 is Western Pennsylvania's "metropolis"**

As we embark on the year 1800, the final year of the eighteenth century, we can safely observe that Brownsville is the "metropolis of Western Pennsylvania," a thriving settlement of 600 people who are engaged in trading and farming.

It is said by some inhabitants of this town that Pittsburgh will never amount to much because it is too close to Brownsville. Front Street is the important street in our town, with business houses and trading posts lining the street, furnishing employment for about 100 people. BT09-19-1928