

New Centreville

New Centreville is a town of from two hundred and fifty to three hundred inhabitants, beautifully situated on a sloping eminence in the western part of the township. It is as neat and pleasant a town as one could find in months of travel. Its inhabitants are industrious, moral and upright. There are no licensed public-houses in the borough, and thrift and good order hold sway.

The town was laid out in 1834 by Michael Freeze, who gave it the name it now bears, excepting the prefix, "New," which was added when the village became a borough. John Witt made the survey of lots. John Freeze erected the first house. It is still standing and is now owned by Reuben McMillen. The first hotel was built by Michael Freeze, in 1836. It is now the dwelling-house of Leonard Ferrel. The first store was erected by Francis Phillippi in 1835; the first wagonshop by Aaron Will in 1843; the first blacksmith-shop by Michael Freeze in 1830, and the first shoemaker-shop by William Aughinbaugh in 1835.

New Centreville now contains one store, one tannery, two blacksmith and three wagon shops, two shoemaker shops, one saddleryshop, two cabinetmaker-shops, two ministers, one physician, three churches and a schoolhouse.

The town was incorporated as a borough on March 6, 1854, and on March 17, the following were elected the first borough officers: Burgess, Aaron Will; councilmen, Josiah Miller, Daniel Dull and W. S. Harrow; street commissioner, Peter Brubaker; assessor, S. H. Dull; constable, Jonathan Gnagy; justice of the peace, A. S. Will; judge of election, John A. Snyder; inspectors, Jacob L. Meyers, Jacob Knable; school directors, William Scott, Joseph Smith, Daniel Shrock, John Parson, George Brant and Henry Freeze; auditors, Reuben McMillen, Wm. B. Freeze and Josiah Phillippi.

The first schoolhouse at Centreville was built about 1800. It was a log building, slab-seated. The first teacher was Jacob Weimer. The house was town down, after the adoption of free schools, and replaced by a frame , which afterward burned. The present school-building was erected in 1869 and enlarged in 1874.

The first tannery in the place was built by Josiah Miller, who came to the town from Berlin, about 1843. He ran the business until 1869, and then retired. Mr. Miller is still living, and is an aged resident. He was born in Berlin in 1809.

Josiah Miller, whose ancestors are mentioned in connection with the history of Brother's Valley, is now living in Centreville at the age of seventy-five. He came to this place in 1838, and the same year erected a tannery, which he operated until 1873, when he sold out to his son, William H., the present owner of the property.

Michael Freeze came to Centreville in 1830, and is therefore among the oldest residents of the place. Mr. Freeze was born in Martinsburg, West Virginia, in 1798, and came to Milford township with his parents in 1804. At the age of seventeen he learned blacksmithing, which trade he followed fifty-three years. Mr. Freeze has a remarkable memory, and is well versed in history, both local and national. His wife Hannah, is still living, and is four months older than Mr. Freeze.

John McMillen, one of the early settlers, lived in Turkey-Foot township. Among his children were: John, James, Samuel, Jane (Bays), Sarah (Davis) and Margaret (Lenhart). John was born in Turkey-Foot, and resided there until his death, following the tanner's trade. his first wife was Mary, daughter of Jacob Rush. Rush was an early settler, and lived to be about ninety-eight years old. John McMillen's second wife was Sarah Critchfield, and his third, Clarissa Williams. His children; Jacob, Jehu, Reuben, Eli, William (deceased), Silas and John (deceased). Reuben McMillen learned the saddlery business in the shop of Michael Snyder; purchased the shop in 1849, and still conducts the business.

Samuel H. Dull, Esq., son of Peter Dull, was born and reared on the Dull homestead, in Milford township. When eighteen years of age he began learning the wagonmaker's trade in the shop of Aaron Will. In 1851 he started in business for himself. In August, 1862, he was mustered into service in Co. H, 142d regt. Penn. Vols.; mustered out in June, 1865. He has been justice of the peace ten years, besides holding other minor offices.

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