

Southampton Township

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General Information

Southampton Township was incorporated in 1801. The township was first settled in 1790 and was formed from Londonderry Township, one of the six original townships in Somerset County (after 1795).

Southampton Township is located in the extreme south eastern corner of the county. It is bounded to the north by Fairhope Township; to the west by Greenville, Larimer and Northampton Townships; to the south by Allegany Co., (Cumberland) MD; and to the east by Bedford County, PA.

The main Borough of Southampton Township is Wellersburg which was first settled in 1830 and was incorporated in 1857. It is located on Route 160 in the southern portion of the township near the Maryland State border.

History of the Township

Southampton township was organized in 1801. As then formed, it included the present township of Northampton and Larimer---that part of Allegheny township that lies south of the Glades road or turnpike, as well as a part of the present township of Fair Hope, or nearly all of the territory that was annexed to Somerset county in 1800. But by the successive formation of the townships named it has been reduced to a rather small area. In its physical features it is nearly as rough and rugged as its near neighbors to the west, but with a better soil.

Of the early settlers Jost (or Joseph) Leydig, who came from Berks county shortly after the Revolutionary war, located on the Emerick farm. Peter Troutman, the Lepleys, John Comp, John Hahn and Jacob Martz were all among the earliest settlers.

In another part of this volume, under the caption of "Londonderry Township Annexed", will be found the names of 90 taxables who lived in the annexed part in 1800. Of course, some of them lived in what is now Allegheny township. Some of them also lived Northampton and Fairhope townships. But it is probable that the greater number of them lived in Southampton township as it is at present

constituted. The date 1800 fixes a time when they certainly were here. It is about equally certain that nearly all of them may have been here from ten to thirty years earlier. Nowhere else in Somerset county are so many of the pioneer names still to be found as in Southampton township. Such readers as are interested are referred to the list itself.

The first gristmill in Southampton township was built near Wellersburg, by Jacob Korn, in 1809. About 1830 William and Daniel DeHaven operated a carding mill in the same building. In 1837 the entire structure, then owned by George Weller, was destroyed by fire, and was never rebuilt. Jacob Uhl built the second gristmill in the township in 1810. In later years this has been known as the Reitz mill. The Kennell gristmill was built by George Leydig about 1818, and rebuilt in 1853, by Jonathan Kennell. This is where Gladdens postoffice is. An old gristmill on the Comp farm, a short distance below the Kennell mill, was converted into a woolen factory in 1873. This was operated by M. L. Tauber until about 1894, when he removed from the township. Since that time it has not been operated.

While it may still be far distant, Southampton township must certainly have a future before it. The northern end of the Frostburg coal field projects into the township from Maryland and covers about one-half of its area. Of the great Pittsburg seam there are less than three hundred acres. The lower productive coal measures underlie an area of about twenty square miles. The region has been rather fully explored, and about 1886 a bore hole was put down to a depth of 1,200 feet. This shows that all of the lower beds of coal exist here, and are of a workable thickness. The estimate of Peter J. Leslie, then State Geologist, was that there were probably four hundred millions of tons of coal in this field. There is also an abundance of iron ore to be found. The average results of eight analyses that have been made show a yield in pig metal of over 35 percent. There are also immense deposits of good fire clay, and in the fullness of time all these resources will be developed.

Wellersburg borough was laid out in 1830, by George Weller. The town lies along the old Cumberland turnpike. So far as we know, the land on which the town is built was first improved by Jacob Korn, who sold the land to Weller. The first house was built by Jeremiah Wingert, in 1834. He also began operating a tannery in the following year. A man named Barnes opened the first store. John R. Brinham succeeded Barnes in the mercantile business. Through good and evil fortune, Mr. Brinham clung to the town, having an abiding faith in the future of both Wellersburg and Southampton township. Upright and honorable in all things, he carried on the mercantile business here for fifty years, as a public spirited citizen giving freely of his time and substance to promote the welfare of the town. It is said that Mr. Brinham was appointed postmaster in 1841, and held the office up to the time of his death, in 1892. While speaking about the postoffice, it may be said there was a postoffice in 1830, or about that time, called Southampton. Peter Boyer was the postmaster. It is very probably that it was where Wellersburg now is. It is very probably that it was where Wellersburg now is. It certainly must have been somewhere along the turnpike. About 1855 there was also a postoffice on top of Savage mountain called "Top Savage."

To return to Wellersburg, the first brick house, and so far as we know, the only one in the place, was built by John R. Brinham. All the raw material entering into the manufacture of iron abounds in Southampton township. In 1855 a furnace was built by the Union Coal and Iron Company. This company succeeded an older company, which had extensive mineral rights. For the time being this enterprise brought great prosperity to the village. The furnace had a capacity of about 300 tons per month, and in various ways gave employment to upwards of 200 men. The furnace was abandoned in 1856, and with it departed the prosperity of Wellersburg, and its population has since dwindled until it has become one of the smallest boroughs in the county.

Wellersburg was incorporated as a borough in 1857. The first election for burgess resulted in a tie between George G. Walker and C. E. Ways. From 1860 to the present time these officers have been as follows: Jeremiah Wingert, I. D. Reese, Jeremiah Wingert (two terms), John R. Brinham, J. R. Shockey, Isaac Augustine, Wm. Uhl (two terms), John Wingert, Henry Moser, Peter Knearam, Adams Trimble (three terms), Joseph H. Luther, W. F. Uhl, John Wingert, Michael Long (six terms), John Wingert (two terms), J. H. Seth, John Winters, John Wingert (two terms), F. Fechtig, J. P. Meyers, C. H. Close, F. C. Fechtig, S. S. Fechtig, F. C. Fechtig, Hiram Stortz, Wm. Long, F. C. Fechtig, S. C. Fechtig.

Resource and Reference Information

Census Records	Cemetery Records
<p>The Somerset County Volunteers did a lot of Census Transcribing for several years.</p> <p>All of that work can be found In a couple of places.</p> <p>In the effort to simplify the old Township Sites that will not be updated further, the link for the Census Transcriptions can be found below:</p> <p>The USGenWeb Census Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boyer Cemetery • Comp Cemetery • Cook Cemetery Tombstone Photos • Fink Cemetery • Fink Congregation • Getz Cemetery • Korn's Brothers Farm Cemetery • Lepley Cemetery * See Also, Lepley Stone House, courtesy of Lannie Dietle, Sugarland, Texas • Reiber-Lepley Cemetery • Sturtz Cemetery • Wellersburg Cemetery • Zion Lutheran Cemetery,

	<p>Wellersburg Tombstone Photos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of the above Cemeteries were transcribed using WPA Records. Please use this Link
Biographical Records	Estate and Wills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USGenWeb Archives: Biographies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See the collection of Wills in the USGenWeb File Archives here.
Family Records	Obituaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kennells Mills Congregation Birth, Marriage, and Baptism Records (1832-1847) Diary of Josephine Emerick 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See the collection of obituaries from the Meyersdale Library here.
Miscellaneous	Somerset County Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lepley Rifle Making Parts - Articles courtesy of Korns.org Water powered mill at Kennells Mills, PA Jacob Knuff, Tavern Petition, 1845 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Somerset Home Page

With Thanks to Carol Hepburn

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