

# "LAND O' THE LEAL."

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## Home of Roosevelt's Ancestors in Bucks

The Story of a Sturdy People. Little Colony of Ulster Scots who were Prominent for their Piety and Courage. Sketch of the Home Life of a Self-Reliant Race.

The fact that the foremost citizen of America, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, sprang from Buck county ancestry, lends at this time additional interest to the history of his progenitors and their contemporaries, our early Scotch-Irish settlers. History has touched lightly upon the home life of the little colony of Ulster Scots, who settled on the banks of the Neshaminy in the townships of Warwick, Warrington and New Britain, but these people were none the less worthy of a prominent place in the records of the past. Driven by religious persecution from their native highlands in the Seventeenth century, the remnants of many a noble clan sought temporary refuge in the province of Ulster, Ireland, from whence, between the years 1720 and 1740, thousand of them migrated to America and peopled the hills and valleys of Pennsylvania's frontier with a sturdy rugged race that was destined to play an important part in the formation of our national character.

Clannish by nature and tradition, they clung together in small communities of two score or more families, a majority of them related by ties of blood or marriage. They took up the unsettled portions of the new province. Accustomed for generations to the rugged mountain sides of their native land, the roughness of the new territory did not discourage them. In fact the steep hillsides on the banks of our rivers and smaller streams, shunned or neglected by the earlier English settlers, seem to have had an especial attraction for them. Thus we find the two most considerable settlements of Scotch-Irish in our own country, the one on the banks of the Neshaminy in Warwick, Warrington and New Britain, and the other along the Tobickon in Tinticum.

There were several distinct trends of migration in the settlement of our county. The English Quaker element, welling up from the Falls and Middletown in the closing years of the Seventeenth and the beginning of the Eighteenth century, kept to the east of the Neshaminy, up through Wrightstown and the Makefields, into Buckingham and Solebury and overflowed into Plumstead, while the Dutch settlement in North and Southampton expanded into the lower half of Warrminster, and the Germans and Welsh Baptists worked their way over our borders from the westward, through the upper half of New Britain, Hilltown and the territory farther north. The greater part of Warrington, Warwick and New Britain was owned during the first quarter of the century by non-resident land speculators, rather than by actual settlers.

To this section, between 1720 and 1740,

came two score or more families from the Province of Ulster. The Longs, Griers, Jamesons, Kerrs, Millers, Stewarts, Finleys, Darrochs, Walkers, Wallaces, Grays, Craigs, Creightons, Polks, Barclays, Weirs, Hairs, Barnhills and a score of others all more or less connected by ties of consanguinity or marriage. The Jamesons, Longs, Polks, Breadys, Mearns, Brackenridges and Millers purchased large tracts in the lower end of Warrington and Warwick between 1720 and 1730. Just north of these tracts, and lying between the Bristol and Street roads, was a tract of nearly 2000 acres, patented to William Allen in 1730. The whole of this tract was taken up by Scotch Irish families prior to 1740, as well as the strip of land lying between it and the County line and large tracts in New Britain and Warwick.

Upon these various tracts, comprising a compact area of probably 10 000 acres, was established a community as unique as it was interesting. Looked upon with suspicion, regarded as little better than barbarians by their Quaker neighbors on the east, and having little intercourse with the Germans on the north by reason of alien customs and language and having within its borders, all the necessities of a primitive life, owing to the diversity of trade and calling of its individual members, this community became sufficient unto itself.

Here were transplanted and cherished, so nearly as their primitive environment would permit, the customs of their native land. The quaint dialect of the Scotch yeomanry, was used for generations. So isolated were they in a sense, and so tenaciously did they cling to the mother tongue, that many of their descendants now living, can recall the "dinna ye ken" and like expressions of their grandparents, to whom they were always the "byes and lasses." Also tenacious in their peculiar religious views, those of the Presbyterian Kirk, of Scotland, one of their first concerns was the establishment of a Kirk of their own, which survives to-day in the Neshaminy Church of Warwick, built in 1727.

Possessed of a character as stern and uncompromising as the granite of their native mountains, this little colony did not concern itself in the affairs of its neighbors. Indeed there was no occasion to do so. They had brought with them the things they needed, and had inherent in their nature that which made them a people separate and apart from the communities by which they were surrounded. In their lives and characters was a declaration of independence in itself, that nourished the spirit of freedom, which was to carry these people into the thick of

the fight when the time arrived to bid defiance to the mother country. This spirit was further augmented by their independence and resources in the development of the material affairs of the colony. As previously stated, there were among the first settlers men of every trade and calling calculated to make the colony self-sustaining. There were husbandmen, weavers, smiths, masons, joiners, cord-walkers, millers and tradesmen, whose industry and thrift made it possible for the schoolmaster and preacher to devote himself exclusively to the intellectual and spiritual needs of the community. But with true Scotch economy, the teacher and preacher were often one and the same. As an illustration may be cited the founding of Pennant's famous Log College as an adjunct to the Neshaminy Church of which he was pastor.

The stimulus given to civil and religious freedom by the uninterrupted exercise of these liberties, in strong contrast to the repression and persecution in the old country, cannot be overestimated. Princeton, as well as like institutions elsewhere, had its inception in our own Log College and Emley, its first President was akin to those of the same name in Warrington.

The sons of Bucks county's sturdy pioneers were constantly pushing on beyond our frontiers, carrying with them the lessons of frugality, piety and independence, learned in this primitive community. They formed new colonies and engendered therein the love of freedom, which, when the Revolutionary war broke out, easily made the Scotch Irish element the dominant party in the struggle for national independence in our State. And independence accomplished they returned to their homes and again took up the business of self government, broadened and refined by contact with the outside world—the primitive characteristics of their early life gone—but retaining the independence and courage of their forefathers which had developed in them the best elements of citizenship.

It may not be amiss here to give some detailed account of a few of the leading families of the Bucks county colony and the places of their abode a century and a half ago.

Among the most prominent were the Craigs, ancestors of President Roosevelt. This family comprised four brothers, Thomas, Daniel, James and William, and at least four sisters and their husbands. Of these Thomas and Daniel Craig and Richard Walker and John Gray, (who had married Sarah and Margart Craig, respectively) all took up land in Warrington though Thomas Craig probably never lived there but removed with his brothers and brothers-in-law to Allen township and founded what was long known as "Craigs," or the "Irish Settlement," near Bath, in what became Northampton county in 1752.

The tracts taken up by the Craig brothers and that of John Gray adjoined each other, all of them abutting on the Bristol Road. That of Gray, purchased in three separate tracts aggregating 236 acres comprised on the lower southeast corner the site of "Craig's Tavern" now Warringtonville. Daniel Craig's 250 acre tract lay next above that of Gray, and Thomas Craig's purchase of 212 acres adjoined his brothers' on the northwest, while the 250 acres of Richard Walker lay along what was then the New Britain line, the 175 acre tract of William Crelighton intervening between it and that of Thomas Craig. The tract taken up by John Barclay, the emigrant ancestor of the Barclays of Bucks county, lay to the west of Walker and Crelighton and included the farm now occupied by Eli L. Ciymer.

As before stated, Thomas Craig, Sr., removed to Allen township, and in 1753 conveyed his Warrington farm to James Barclay, who had married his niece, Margaret, the daughter of Daniel Craig. This tract comprised the present farm of John H. Walter and extended northward to the public road running through the George Garner farm. The Daniel Craig farm comprised the present farms of Charles Cadwallader, Joel Haldeman and J. R. Patterson. The homestead was located on Elbow Lane, the present home of Joel Haldeman. This was the birth place of Sarah Craig, the great-great-grandmother of President Roosevelt.

These three men, Richard Walker, John Gray and Daniel Craig, were among the most prominent of the pioneers of the Scotch Irish settlement. All were trustees and elders of Neshaminy church. Richard Walker was probably the most prominent, and enjoyed more civic honors than any one of his nationality in Bucks county. He was a member of Provincial Assembly from 1747 to 1760, Justice of the Peace and of the several courts of Buck county from 1759 to 1775, and was commissioned a captain in the provincial service February 12, 1749. He died April 11, 1791 aged 89 years. His wife, Sarah Craig, died April 2, 1781 aged 78 years. John Gray was a true disciple of John Knox. He was one of the first trustees of the "New Lights" of the Neshaminy Church after the separation in 1741, and was one of the most active in the propagation of the Gospel "according to the rites and usages of the Presbyterian Kirk of Scotland." He died April 27, 1749, aged 57 years. By will dated two days prior to his death, he devised 15 pounds to his niece, Sarah Craig, "and if she marry with the consent of her parents & her Aunt Margaret, with whom she now lives, I do bequeath to her five pounds more." After making small bequests to cousins in Ireland and elsewhere he devised all the balance of his estate to his wife Margaret for life when one half of it is to go to the use of Neshaminy church so long as Charles Beatty is its pastor and the other half is to be devoted to the preparation of youths for the ministry. He entirely ignored his two sons John and James, who had become pioneers in the valley of the Juniata, whence the former returned to the home of his mother in Warrington to die in 1759 after his wife and child had been carried into captivity by the Indians.

Daniel Craig lived to an advanced age and died one month before the Declaration of Independence, having been totally blind for several years. His widow Margaret and eight children survived him. His sons Thomas and John were among the most prominent in the defence of their country in the war of the Revolution. Thomas was commissioned a Captain October 23, 1776, and commanded a company in Col. William Baxter's Regiment of the "Flying Camp" in the battle of Fort Mifflin, Nov. 1776. His certificate of the death of Col. Baxter in this battle is on file in the Orphans' court office of Bucks county in connection with the widow Baxter's application for "half pay." He served through the entire war and at its close was Commissioner of Purchases for the army with the rank of Colonel. His cousins, Thomas and John Craig, of Northampton, were also among the most prominent of Pennsylvania's soldiers in the Revolution, the former retiring with the rank of General. The other children of Daniel Craig, were William, evidently a "ne'er do well" pensioned by his father, and five daughters, Margaret, wife of James Barclay, before referred to; Sarah, wife of John Burnhill; Jane, wife of Samuel Barnhill;

the property of his descendants for 100 years and much of it for nearly half a century later. Richard Hough died in 1705 and by will dated May 1, 1704, devised the whole tract to his son, Joseph Hough who settled thereon and became a very prominent man in the community. On January 10, 1761 Joseph Hough and Elizabeth his wife, conveyed the above mentioned tract in about equal tracts to his sons Joseph Jr., and John Hough, respectively, the division line running a northwest course directly across the tract several perches southwest of the Neshaminy, the southwestern end going to Joseph Hough and the northeastern end containing about 450 acres, to John Hough. It was on the last-mentioned tract that the ancient mill was erected. It stood directly on the southwest bank of the Neshaminy, near the late residence of Thomas Fries, about one mile northwest of the almshouse, on land now the property of Charles B. Krause, of Doylestown. Not the least remnant of the walls of the old mill are now visible on the surface of the ground, but the present appearance of the site clearly indicates that the mill was built against the steep sloping bank of the creek so that the second story was easily entered from the surface of the lane which led to it down the bank of the Neshaminy and a remnant of the road which led around to the mill to give access to the lower story is still plainly visible as is also the ancient tail race, running almost in northeasterly direction to the Neshaminy at a point directly opposite the buildings on the present Krause farm. This tail race is still mentioned in the deeds as the division between the Krause and Fries farms.

When this ancient mill was built and how long it continued to supply the early settlers with the staff of life, is very much a matter of conjecture. But that it was one of the earliest mills erected on the upper Neshaminy is beyond a doubt and it probably antedates the old Turk mill which was built about 1750. The Hough's though of two distinct families were pioneer millers in this vicinity. John Hough, of another family, was one of the builders of the Carversville mill in 1730, another John Hough was the owner and operator of the mill at Mechanics Valley as early as 1754, and John Hough, of the Warwick family, became the owner of the Turk Mills in 1797.

The first authentic record we have of this ancient mill is in the year 1768, when Robert Tompkins, petitions the Court of Quarter Sessions of Bucks county, setting forth that he had rented the old grist and sawmill of John Hough in Warwick and asks for the opening of a road from the Bristol road at George Hair's meadow to the said mill. George Hair's meadow was at the present village of Tradesville and the road laid out in pursuance of the petition above referred to probably followed the old line of the Hough tract straight down to the Neshaminy about three-eighths of a mile above the mill, where it intersected the

present road from New Britain to the Almshouse. From the point where the almshouse road makes a detour to the right a private road still leads down to the old mill site. The first mile of the new road is the present State road from Tradesville eastward. The dam which supplied the water for the old mill probably extended across the Neshaminy but a few yards above the mill, but very little trace of it can be discerned at this time, the frosts and floods of a century having well-nigh obliterated all trace of it.

On January 20, 1802, John Hough conveyed to his son Thomas what purported to be "about 150 acres" of the 414 acres conveyed to him by his father in 1761, but which was really 184 acres and 9 perches as shown by later conveyances comprising the present Krause and Costello farms. The description in this deed beginning at the Wells road is as follows: "Thence by other land of sd John Hough an old southwest course to the middle of Neshaminy Creek, thence up the middle of the same the several courses thereof to the end of the old tail race of the old mill, where it formerly emptied into said creek, thence up along the middle of said tail race to the old mill seat." &c, &c. This clearly demonstrates that the "old mill" had become a thing of the past one hundred years ago and it probably was abandoned somewhere between 1783 and 1790 when the present Reed mill a mile further up the Neshaminy was erected by David Grove.

These are what some may term the dry records concerning this ancient mill, but they supply the foundation for fancy to build anew the old structure and to re-people with folks long since dead its charming environment. The site is at the present time one of the picturesque spots in the county. The Neshaminy, winding down from Castle Valley, courses along a high, spruce-clad bluff and no doubt on the roadway at the foot of the rocky hill there could have been seen in by-gone days the slow-moving ox cart or the old farm horse with the barefoot boy astride bearing home the bag of meal. There were no big towns at hand or railways to carry one to the distant cities in those days, and social conditions were devoid of the formality that makes this or that class to day. But now and then there would come among these early inhabitants of the county some person distinguished from the common folk whose eccentricities would long be remembered. Thus it was with Thomas Meredith said to be study-crazed who dreamed that he was building a great castle overlooking the beautiful valley that bears that name. The kind hearted people humored his fancy and conveyed logs from the mill to the castle site, that the old man might continue his child's play. This is only one incident of the many that could be recalled to lend additional charm to the story of this long forgotten mill.

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Mary Lewis and Rebecca, wife of Hugh Stephenson Sarah, the second daughter of Daniel and Margaret Craig seems to have spent at least a portion of her girlhood days with her uncle and aunt John and Margaret Gray, as evidenced by the will of the former in 1749. Whether she "married with the consent of her parents and her Aunt Margaret" is not disclosed. She did marry, however, about 1752, John Barnhill, of New Britain township, a son of Robert Barnhill, a Scotch Irish immigrant who was a resident of New Britain as early as 1738, and probably a decade earlier.

As Robert Barnhill was one of the petitioners for the laying out of the Ferry Road, (the present line between Doylestown and New Britain townships) in 1758, he was probably the holder under lease of the 212 acres he purchased six years later of John Kirkbride. This tract lay to right of the New Galena, extending from the Ferry Road to the New Galena Road between the Wigton and Stewart tracts, the latter being the present Arthur Chapman farm. Robert and Sarah Barnhill conveyed it to their son, John Barnhill, November 11, 1761. In the year 1755 John Barnhill purchased 316 acres in Warwick lying on both sides of the York road comprising all that part of the village of Jamison lying east of the Amshouse road and extending eastward to a point near the present residence of Patrick Brown. It was part of the great Rodman tract of 3225 acres. In the year 1749 James Ratcliffe was granted a license to keep a tavern on the York Road within the bounds of this tract, presumably at the present site of the Jamison Hotel, and five years later David Lindsey who was a tenant of Rodman petitioned for and was granted a license to keep the "Public House of Entertainment lately kept by James Ratcliffe, the same having been licensed ever since it was built." At the March sessions, 1755, the petition of John Barnhill sets forth that he "has purchased the house where David Lindsey liveth and that the said House hath been kept in the use of a Tavern" and asks that he be recommended to the Governor for a license. His petition was granted and he continued to keep the tavern until 1761, when he sold the prop-

erty to Isaac Hutchinson and removed to Philadelphia, where he continued to be known as an "Innkeeper" as late as 1767. On July 22, 1762, he purchased of Benjamin Davis two brick houses on the south side of Elm street, between Second and Third streets, which we suppose to be the site of his inn. In 1765 he purchased a tract of 85 acres in Oxford township, on the banks of the Delaware. By 1772 he had become a merchant and purchased in that year the site of 42 North Third street, where he continued to keep a store until his death in 1797. His widow Sarah survived him. They had three children, Robert, the great-grandfather of President Roosevelt, born in New Britain township in 1751, Margaret, who married first a Henry and second a Burgess, and Sarah, wife of Henry Toland. Robert Barnhill married Margaret Potts, daughter of John Potts, of Germantown, and like his father engaged in the mercantile business. In 1791 he was located at 62 North Third street, but at his father's death, in 1797, purchased the store formerly occupied by the father. He died in 1811. His daughter Margaret married Cornelius Van Schuleh Roosevelt, grandfather of the President.

There were many other members of the Scotch Irish colony on the Neshaminy quite as worthy of mention as those referred to in this brief article, some of whom achieved distinction either here or in other parts of the country. A number of the sons of the Warwick settlers were pioneers in the settlement of the "dark and bloody ground," on the banks of the Ohio.

Among the Revolutionary heroes from the Neshaminy settlement might be mentioned Col. William Baxter, whose heroic death has been referred to in this sketch, and Capt. Henry Darroch, of Warrington. Col. Baxter was an innkeeper in Warwick prior to the breaking out of the war and lived where Nelson DeCoursey now lives at the bridge over the Neshaminy at Bridge Valley.

The Antiquary may in the future give the readers of The Republican an account of some of these worthy people and the places of their abode.

THE ANTIQUARY.

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## A Long Forgotten Mill.

An Ancient Structure that Stood on the Bank of the Neshaminy, in Warwick Township, More than a Century and a Half Ago.

Some weeks ago the attention of the writer was arrested by a reference in a deed to an old mill on the Neshaminy in Warwick township, the existence of which no one now living remembers. The local antiquary is always interested in preserving the records of the past while some evidence yet remains to verify them, and he at once began an investigation as to the location of the ancient mill. After a careful examination of the records and two or three trips of exploration along the banks of the historic stream the following facts were deduced:

One of the earliest tracts surveyed under warrants from William Penn near

the present site of Doylestown was a tract of about 850 acres patented to Joseph Clowes. It lies on both sides of the Neshaminy a short distance above the present village of Edison where the old Dyer's mill road, now the Doylestown and Willow Grove turnpike, crosses the Neshaminy. It extended from the Bristol road to the Wells road, and was bounded on the southeast by the Rodman tract, then John Gray, alias Tatham, now the Amshouse tract, and on the northwest by the land of the Free Society of Traders, later James Meredith and George Hair. This tract was conveyed by Joseph Clowes to his son-in-law, Richard Hough in the year 1702 and the entire tract remained