

The Juniata River Valley and the Conrad Geesey Family Development of the Village of Geeseytown, Frankstown Township, Blair Co., Pennsylvania

By

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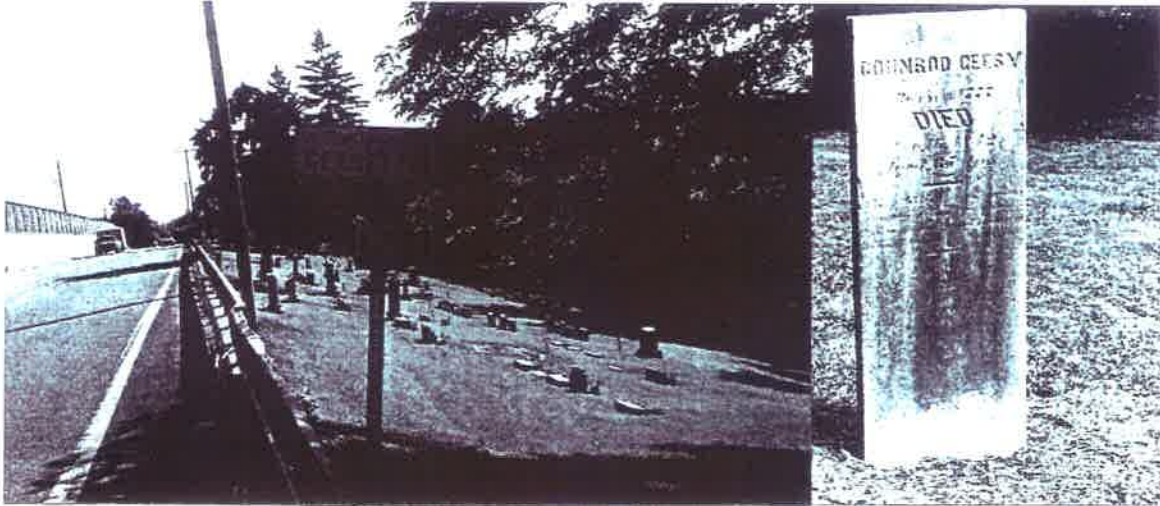


Photo of Geeseytown Cemetery (1992), Frankstown Township, Blair Co., Pennsylvania

The Village of Geeseytown, located East of Hollidaysburg on Pennsylvania State Route # 22, also known as the “William Penn Highway”, has evolved from its early Colonial Period of affiliations with major Indian tribes and expanded the Indian Policies in meeting William Penn’s plans for the Juniata Valley and western development of Penn’s Colony. As you enter the hamlet from the west, it is defined by the “Old Lutheran Cemetery” of Frankstown, however, today it is known as the Geeseytown Cemetery. Driving into the Village from the east, you will see the Fire Station, which did not exist in the early days and the Geeseytown Evangelical Lutheran Church to the left of the highway, a major landmark for the community that recognized the Geesey Family for its early efforts in building a strong community.

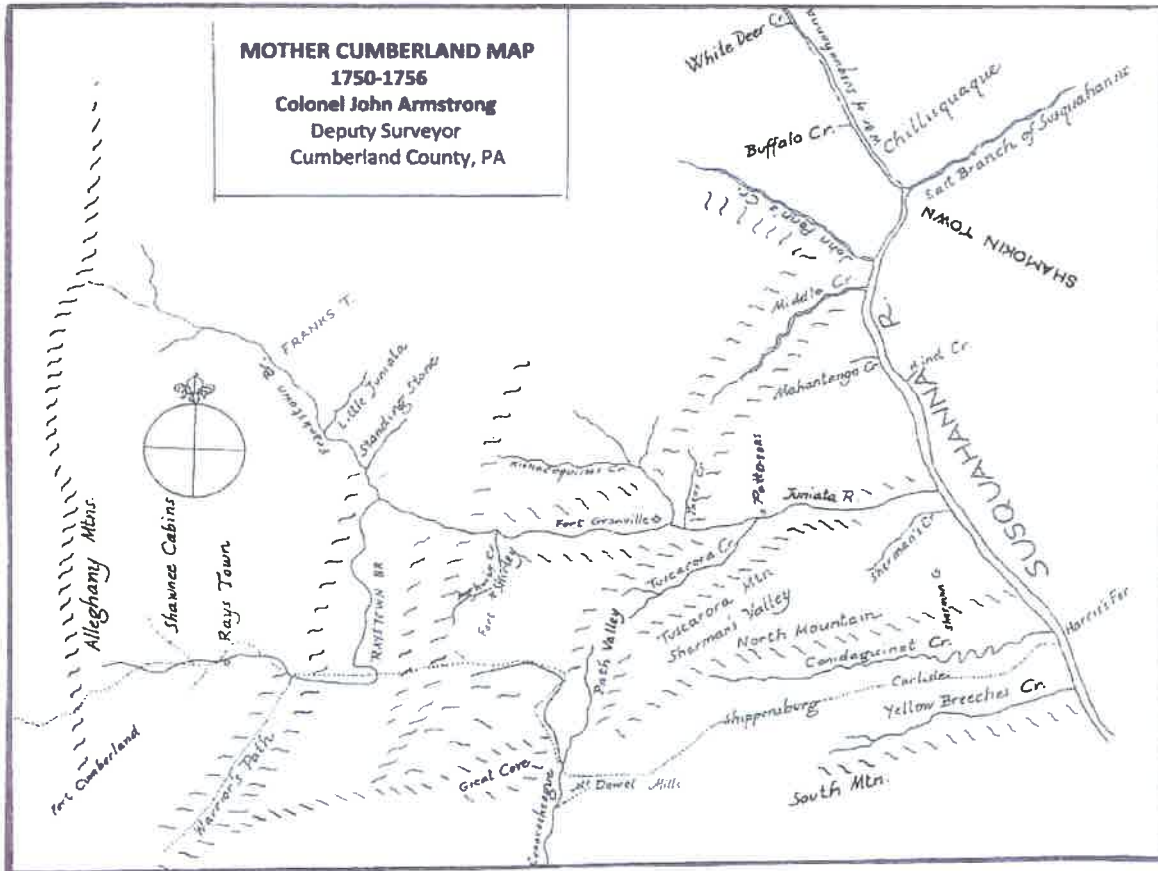
In the Juniata Valley along the Kittanning Path an early German immigrant named Frank established a trading post called Frank’s Fort, abt. 1743/44. This region of Pennsylvania was located in Lancaster County established in 1728. Travelers taking the Kittanning Path, past Frank’s Fort, were natives, pioneers and travelers passing east and west. The path ran west from the Allegheny Mountains, then eastward crossing the Allegheny Ridge, west of Altoona at Kittanning Gap, later the location of the Horseshoe Curve, then to southeast of Altoona to Frankstown on the Juniata River. By 1750, the area was

recognized as being in Cumberland County and later it was changed to Frankstown Township in Huntingdon County by 1787.

These early settlements were part of the greater providence William Penn received by deed in 1681 by King Charles the Second of England, and remained an unexplored forest inhabited by "Native Tribes of Shawnee and Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape residing in the Delaware Valley where they were called Delaware Indians named by European settlers from the early 1600s and tributary to the Five Nations negotiations." ¹ With the influx of pioneers, the area had many small towns and villages developed, especially along rivers and native trails traveled by early settlers during the last quarter of the Eighteenth Century. During this time period, the "influx of German Reformed and Lutherans followed the Susquehanna and Juniata River, while others arrived by way of Forbes Road after 1758 then north to Fort Loudon to Fort Littleton then into what was then the Frank's Fort region." ²

This first 1750s map (see below) drawn by or for Deputy Surveyor, Col. John Armstrong of Carlisle shows the area of Pennsylvania purchased in 1754 in tribal negotiations which expanded his holdings to the western border of Pennsylvania. Penn began immediately to secure the region in building two forts in the region, Fort Grandville and Fort Shirley. Fort Grandville was built in 1755 on the north side of the forks of Kishacoquillas Creek and Juniata River about 35 miles from the Susquehanna River-mileage was listed on the Armstrong Map and Mileage Chart "The second fort, Fort Shirley, was constructed further west on the side of the Aughwick Creek which flowed north into the Juniata-Fort Shirley was 35 miles further West and south of the Juniata River. A third fort, Fort Cumberland, was built on the south side of the southern section of the Rays Town Branch of the Juniata River at Rays Town." ³ Also, noted on the map is Harris Ferry owned by John Harris Sr. an English trader granted the right to operate a ferry service in 1733, which was the second ferry service across the Susquehanna River used by early pioneers.

Armstrong's Map of Mother Cumberland 1755



“In August 1756, Col. Armstrong was accompanied by Rev. Charles Beatty, who served as chaplain of the expeditionary force. A halt was made at the Beaver Dam, at McCahan’s Mill and there on a quiet Sabbath-day in September, religious ceremonies were observed as the first in this area. This worship service was probably within the limits of present Blair County.” 4

Col. John Armstrong, enforcing the tribal negotiation agreement with Thomas Penn in the autumn of 1756, “marched with three hundred men silently west along the Kittanning Path (aka Trail) from Fort Shirley on their way to destroy the Native America village at Kithanink. This action was in response to the Tribe’s unhappiness with the treaties that took much of their land, used the path to wage war against a British settlement at the Juniata River in 1755 and, again in August 1756 as they attacked, took prisoners, and burned Fort Granville (near modern-day Lewistown, Pennsylvania). On

this trip to “Kithanick” ordered by Governor Hamilton, his force camped on the banks of Cush Cushing Creek not far from the future site of Cherry Tree. “By the following night they had reached the vicinity of the “Old Indian Spring” and set camp nearby. The trail then became known as the Armstrong-Kittanning Trail and the spring as Armstrong’s Spring.” 5

South of the mouth of the Juanita River, along the Susquehanna River, about 75 miles, was a place known as, Wright’s Ferry, developed by John Wright, a Quaker. Wright received a charter from the provincial governor Hamilton to conduct a ferry business between present day Columbia and across the river west to present day Wrightsville, then Lancaster Co.-service began in 1730. William Penn promised religious freedom and liberal land policies. He developed laws by September 1727 that required all ship captains to provide a list of their Middle European passengers who were required to sign a Declaration of Fidelity and Abjuration to King George of England. Penn’s policies forbid the immigrants from settling west of the Susquehanna until 1736, when the Indians agreed to land transfers to the new settlers. “The Penn’s established a land agent, “Samuel Blunston at a settlement near Columbia, Lancaster County to control western expansion into the colony. Some early German settlers were permitted to settle at Kreutz Creek near Hellam and Wrightsville by 1730.” 6 Today, the Columbia-Wrightsville Bridge built in 1832-1834 was known as the world’s longest covered bridge and carried east-west travel. Today, it is Pennsylvania State Route 30, the old Lincoln Highway. “Early 1800 tolls were \$1.00 per wagon, passengers 6 cents per person”- history of the bridge can be found on the Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (2015) on the internet. Another historical incident occurred in this crossroad area after the Gettysburg Battle, 4 July, 1863. The Confederate General Robert E. Lee burned the railroad bridge that crossed from Wrightstown to Columbia when his army evacuated Gettysburg on his way back to Virginia on 5 July 1863. The original map can be dated because Fort Granville was built in January 1755 and the French Fort fell to the British In November 1758, however this is not listed on the map.

Braddock’s Road, built in 1755, was cut through the forest following both animal trails and Indian pathways West through the Appalachian wilderness. In the summer 1755 General Braddock started west from Fort Cumberland, Maryland to Fort Necessity then British Territory. “In the Fall of 1758 General Forbes cut and cleared another 300 miles long road west and constructed Forts at regular intervals, Fort Littleton, Fort Bedford, and Fort Ligonier along the new road establishing supply lines between forts.” 7 History of this period shows how difficult it was to secure British control of their land, however,

by November 1758 the French withdrew from the fort, thus opening the roads as trading pathways for travelers and immigrants.

“Col. John Armstrong, son of James Armstrong, was born in Brooke borough, County Fermagh, Ireland, 9 October 1717.” He died in Carlisle, PA on 8 March 1795. He was named Colonel on May 1756 and a General of Pennsylvania Militia in April 1777. **The original “Armstrong Map” is part of the Draper Manuscript Collection (Reference 7 ZZ 53) housed at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin Madison. He included mileage charts (see below) that are remarkably accurate in comparison to modern maps. (Armstrong Mileage Chart)”** 8

Chart 1: Up the Juniata River

Harris’s Ferry -21 miles to
Juniata River -23 miles to
Tuscorora (Tuscarora) Creek -12 miles to
Kishicoquillis (Kishaoquillas) Creek -20 miles to
Aughwick Creek -13 miles to
Rea” Branch of Juniata (Rays) -3 miles to
Standing Stone Creek -6 miles to
Little Juniata -10 miles to
Frankstown

Chart 2: Up the Susquehanna River

Harris Ferry -19 miles to
Sharemans (Shermans) - 2 miles to
Juniata River -17 miles to
Mahantango Creek -8 miles to
Middle Creek -3 miles to
John Penns Creek -9 miles to
Shamokin -10 miles to
Buffalo Creek -12 miles to
White Deer Hole Creek -12 miles to
Muncey (Muncy) Creek -8 miles to
Lywassoch (Loyalsock) Creek -6 miles to
Lycoming Creek 18 miles to
Great Island (Lock Haven)

Chart 3: Overland to the West

Harris Ferry -17 miles to
Carlisle -20 miles to
Shippensburg -24.5 miles to
Anthony Thompson’s (near) Richmond Furnace - 18.5 miles to
Sideling Hill -5.25 miles to
Reas (Rays) Hill -8.75 miles to
Alliquippies (Alliquiplpa’s) Gap -1.25 miles to
Tusseys (Mt.) -5.25 miles to
Pendergrass -1.75 to

Reastown (Bedford) -6 miles to
Shaweone (Shawnee) Cabins -11.75 miles to
Allegheny (Allellgheny) Mountains -6.5 miles to
South Branch of Yohioganie -18 miles to
Three Forks of Yohioganie (Youghiogheny)-50 miles to
French Fort Duquesne (Pittsburgh)

In its geographical development, we find that the Juniata River's headwaters originate on the eastern slopes of the Allegheny Front, part of the eastern Continental Divide, at an elevation of 3000 Feet above sea level. "From there the waters cut through Ridge and Valley Province for more than 150 miles, dropping 340 feet above sea level at its confluence with the Susquehanna River. River's three main tributaries are Little Juniata aka Sherman's Creek, Frankstown Branch and the Raystown Branch. 9 "Juniata River Water Trail," Internet, 2014. 9

The early settlements were: "Water Street, Spruce Creek, Half Moon, Gatesburg, Allegheny Furnace, Sinking Valley, Salem (Antis) Williamsburg, Clover Creek. Allenville and Village of Frankstown. In years of its development, the original Cemetery below the "Kittanning Trail" in front of the "Old Log Church" was the center for religious participation by the Lutheran and Reformed early residents of the area. No specific dates for the establishment of these villages has been located." 10

The early history begins with Frank's Fort in about 1745. Frank's Fort, located on the Kittanning Trail was a stopping place for natives and travelers who used the Kittanning Trail, as lands westward path since 1721 to the Allegheny Mountains. " On 15 August 1748 Conrad Weise Jr., Indian agent and representative of the Penn's and the governor of Virginia stopped at Franks Fort on his way to Logtown to a "council fire" with the Lempe-Delaware, Seneca, Shawnee, and Wyandot Indians who expressed interest in allying with the British against the French in the region." 11 His trip took him to Kittanning then south down the Ohio River (now known as the Allegheny) to the junction of the Monongahela and Allegheny into the Ohio Rivers to negotiate an agreement of understanding. At the Council Fire, Conrad Weiser, as Pennsylvania's ambassador of the Six Nations traveled to Logtown to gain support of tribal chiefs and the allegiance and support in the Ohio Valley region. The tribes compiled a list thus providing Weiser with specific numbers in each tribe for his report to Thomas Penn. Logtown was located in Harmony Township, northwest of the Forks of the Ohio, an area on the east bank of the Ohio River opposite of Aliquippa, PA.

As part of Governor Hamilton's instruction to Weiser, as noted in Conrad Weiser and the Indian Policy of Colonial Pennsylvania, had another difficult task to turn the squatter from the land in the Juniata Valley and those who are along the Kittanning Path. The Indians were very uneasy about white people settling beyond the endless mountains on the Juniata, on Sherman's Creek (aka Little Juniata River) and elsewhere. Weiser's task was very difficult. "He represented the Juniata Indians as being partial to certain settlers and declares that it was not the fault of the magistrates or sheriff that the governors orders were not obeyed. It appears that while on his Logtown journey Weiser was visibly influenced by the Juniata Indian's partial views about certain settlers and with the above excuse, did not fulfill his instructions from Governor Hamilton in reference to squatters." 12

The Juniata River Valley was the hunting grounds of the tribes. "The governor foresaw a future problem and decided to council with the Six Nation Council to sell land east of the Susquehanna. Canassatego, Iroquois Chief of his group, told the Governor that while the Indians appreciate the efforts which had been to remove those settlers, they knew that it was all to no effect. "Canassatego, in behalf of his people agreed to sell a strip of land east of the Susquehanna River parallel with the Blue Mountains to the Delaware River. After this purchase, the squatters were removed to the land east of the Susquehanna River and to the Delaware River. Those who did not apply, then were arrested and the cabin burned." 13

In the History of Blair County" by Charles B. Clark, 1896 and J. Simpson Africa, 1883, present "Frank's town as being no doubt the log hut of Steven Frank or Stephen Frank a Native and perhaps one or two other Native traders and a fur traders of others who came with furs to trade for the white man's tinsel and toys or perhaps a musket and ammunition. However, "Jesse Sell's "History of Blair Co." in 1911, presents Stephen Frank as a German immigrant and trader, by trade, and was the first white man to make a temporary home in this part of the Juniata Valley." 14. John Hart a licensed trader had Hart's Sleeping place in Cambria County near the continental divide during this early period.

Brothers James and Lazarus Lowery, early traders, received a land warrant issued for the upper part of the Juniata Valley purchased in 1754. The Lazarus brothers were licensed as Native Traders in 1744 and were temporary residents as early as 1754 and 1755, about the time of the French War. "It is said that a native village was known in the Juanita Valley as early as 1730 and that its Native's name was "Assunnepachia," meaning "meeting of many waters." 15

In the Iroquois negotiations with Thomas Penn in 1767, the Lenni-Lenape Tribe was added to the Covenant Chain in negotiation for peace. The Lenni-Lenape- meaning Original People Aka Delaware were tributary to the Five Nations until 1753, shortly before the outbreak of the French and Indian War (a part of the Seven Year War in Europe. In 1755 the major part of this tribe went to the Ohio River Valley, and took up the hatchet for their brothers, the French. In 1754 Thomas Penn's purchased the Juniata Valley, besides the greater portion of western Pennsylvania from the Iroquois at Albany for four hundred pounds. Jesse Sells points out, "this purchase angered the indigenous tribe of the valley and a major portion of the warriors of "Assunepachia" took up the hatchet for their brothers, the French." 16 As the settlement between the Nations and the Penn's was confirmed, on 23 October 1758, the Natives who had joined the French returned to the wigwam at Assunepachia and the settlement continued until the army of General John Forbes marched up the Raystown branch of the Juniata in 1758. The Indigenous Tribes became concerned with the warlike appearance and strength of the arms. General Forbes presented a threat, so the entire village broke up and returned west by the Kittanning Path and bade farewell to the Juniata Valley-convinced it was no longer their own. "In 1750 Frankstown Township formed part of Cumberland County to which it belongs until the formation of Bedford County in 1771. During this period, the area was opened for settlement and homesteads were constructed by many settlers located at Monessen's Cove about 1760 and at Hollidaysburg and vicinity in 1768. Some of these early settlers were massacred by Natives living in the area. The early pioneers who entered Frankstown found life had many hardships". 17

Conrad Geesey 3rd and Catharine Etter Geesey **purchased their plantation for Five hundred fifty Pounds (550)**, sold to them by Lawrence Etter Jr. and wife Elizabeth. The land sale contract was initiated 13 May 1812 and final sale completed 22 May 1813 when recordation of the sale was filed in York County and Huntingdon County. The plantation land was awarded to Lawrence Etter Jr. as part of the estate settlement of his father Lawrence Etter Sr, 7 May 1805, probated 11 October 1805. Lawrence Etter's wife, Mary Etter (nee Swing), estate settlement was 14 October 1816, probated 06 January 1818.

Deed release between Lawrence Etter Jr. and wife Elizabeth to Conrad Geesey 3rd and wife, Catharine Etter. " Deed Book of Huntingdon Co., PA. p.285 and 286 states: I, Conrad Geesey and wife of York County, Pennsylvania and Lawrence Etter Jr. and wife were of Shrewsbury Township, York County, Pennsylvania when the deed to buy was 188 acres and 195 perches in Franktown Township, Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania

was made on 13 May 1812. Signed, dated and registered 22 May 1813, provided herewith below. Original Deed. reads:

“To all people, to all these present, will come Lawrence Etter Jr. Shrewsbury Township, York County, Pennsylvania, wagon maker and Elizabeth his wife on one part, and Conrad Geesey and his wife of York Township, York Co., Pennsylvania aforesaid wagon maker of the other part, whereas Lawrence Etter Jr. and Elizabeth his wife, by this indenture, rents and rates duly sworn therein, dated 13 day of May for the signatures herein named for consideration there mentioned. The plantation was on the south side of the Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River in the State aforesaid, containing 188 acres and 139 perches and with allowances of 6% awarded for road improvements and 7 acres and 50 perches of land next to Michael Etter, John Wicks, Jacob Lewis and John Reimer to be conveyed to the hold to said Lawrence Etter Jr. and Conrad Geesey to their heirs and assigns, to them their heirs and assigns of acres as in the said in part indenture notation being them unto had made, make fully and at large appears. “To hold to them and their assigns as in and by the said part in consideration of the sum of Five Hundred and Fifty pounds to them in hand well and duly paid by said Conrad Geesey his heirs exercise and admissible by their presents have made and forever grant and quit claim unto said Conrad Geesey his heirs and assigns.” 18

Deed of the following property sale and transfer 22 May 1813. Recorded in York County and Huntingdon Co., Pennsylvania. Deed details follow: Official Record of Deed Recordation.

Property: “Begins at Hickory stump on the south side of branch bounded by land of Michael Etter and John Wicks, S 18 D, E 190 perches, to a White Oak, cornered thence by land of Jacob Lewis, S 56 D, W 454 perches to a post standing on one of the outside lanes of the whole tract. Thence along the outside line W 2 D, E 36 perches to a White Oak, thence by land of Lynn Wicks remaining D 19 D, E 82 perches to a post standing in the bank of the Frankstown Branch, thence down the said Branch past on the bank S 74 D, E 76 perches to a post and further down the said bank S 63 D, E 88 perches to a place of beginning containing 188 A and 139 perches the usual allowances of 6% for road as well the 7 A and 60 perches to be the same of more of less together will all singular other the building, improvements, write numbers and appearances what too even into belonging or in any wise thereof...County, Pennsylvania. Before me subscribed...Lawrence Etter and Elizabeth, his wife, accepting according to law, the amount of Five Hundred fifth pounds from Conrad Geesey and Catharine, his wife, twenty-second day of May in the year of one thousand eight-hundred thirteen. Signed by: George Parnitz, Huntingdon Co.. Seal. Witness: Andres Leitner, John Leitner. Deed recorded in Huntingdon Co., PA 22 May 1813.” 19

The rapid growth of new settlers caused the Frankstown Township area to changed five times as Pennsylvania gained in population. “Original county of representation was **Chester** formed in 10 March 1680-an original County. The second change was to **Lancaster County** formed on 14 October 1728, then on 27 January 1750 a new county alinement of **Cumberland Co.** was named and established to include Frankstown. Next the Penn’s Colonial Government on 9 March 1771 named the area to be represented by **Bedford Co.**, the fourth change, was completed on 20 September 1787 to became

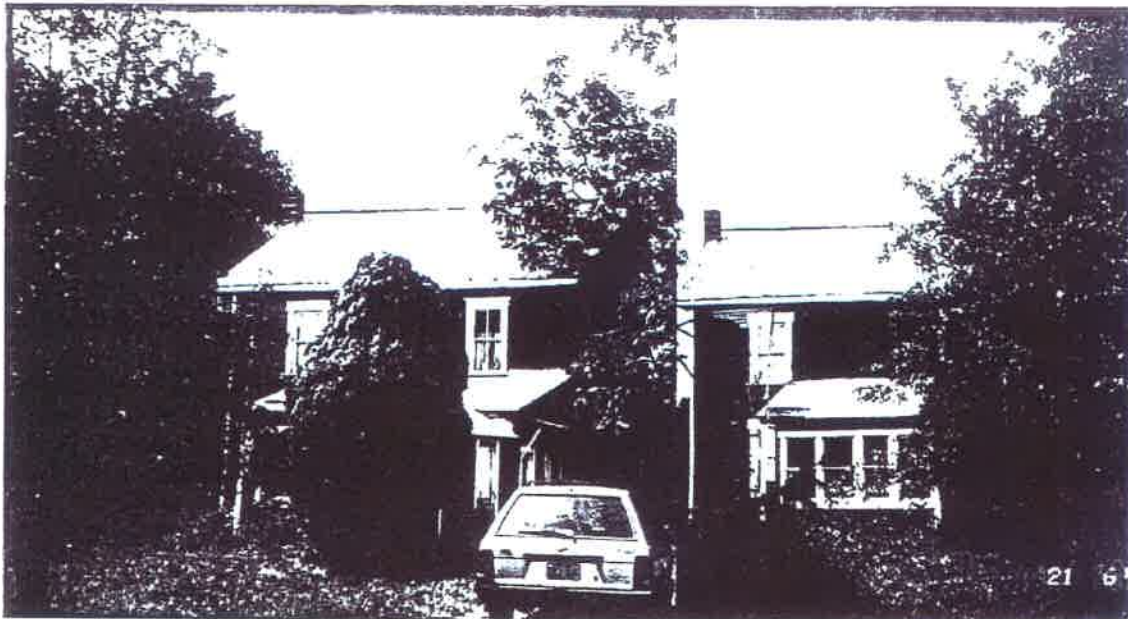
Huntington Co., and the last change for the township was the creation of **Blair County** on 26 February 1846 which we find today.” 20

During the period of the Revolutionary War years, the colonists gained their independence and began to be governed to some extent by laws of their own framing within the great body of English law, as applicable to the business and social relations of the community. During the time of expanded immigration into the Frankstown, an early influx of German Reformed, Lutheran and Presbyterian who had followed the Susquehanna and Juniata Rivers, while others arrived by Forbes Road north of Fort Loudon, to Fort Littleton, and on into what was the Frankstown region. As reported in the 100th Anniversary of the Geeseytown Evangelical Lutheran Church booklet, the early settlements were: “Water Street, Spruce Creek, Half Moon, Gatesburg, Allegheny Furnace, Sinking Valley, Salem (Antis) Williamsburg, Clover Creek. Allenville and Village of Frankstown. These new settlers penetrated the forests and river valleys, hewed out clearings and built their cabins on land which they claimed or purchased. No specific dates for the establishment of these villages has been located. Almost immediately, “they began to hold divine services in their homes, an initiative assumed by laymen.” 21

Conrad Giese 3rd and his son Joseph Henry traveled from York Township north along the Susquehanna Path, east of the river, then took the Juniata Path west following the Juniata River until they reached their land near Franks Fort. With the establishment of the Military Post of Fort Granville and Fort Shirley, it appears that passage along the trail was much easier and their passage was not delayed. They brought tools necessary for cutting trees, sawmill and other tools for building their house and other buildings for their animals. No specific record was found to tell about their trip or timeline, however, in looking at the family birth development of children. It appears, Conrad traveled to the plantation in 1814-until August 1817. His daughter Catharine was born 1811 and Margaret born 3 July 1818 in York Co. In the year 1818, the Huntingdon County Tax Record's did not list a record for Conrad. However, Conrad was listed in the 1819 tax rolls for 200 acres and Joseph was not listed-he was a “Freeman.” Conrad was not listed in Huntingdon Tax Records in 1820 because he returned to York Township and was listed in the 1820 Federal Census for York Co., and Joseph was not listed in York Co. He properly remained in Huntingdon to care for their property. Their task was great in hewing out clearings, cutting timber to build their cabin and outbuildings. Joseph and his father were skilled at building and the project took long days to accomplish. Lydia Geesey, born 1821 was the first child born in Frankstown Township, and sister Sarah Sally was born in 1825, the last child. The Old Geesey homestead was probably built

about 1814 -1817. Plans for the house were never found. It was a two story structure with a fireplace on each floor and a ladder to the second. Gary Cruse, Hollidaysburg, PA. descendant of Eeanor Giese, 2nd child of Conrad and Catharine and Edwin P. "Ted" Geesey descendant of John Henry Geesey, 6th child b. 18 Jul 1807, provided information and the homestead pictures. The original building was of log and wood construction. In 22 February 1992 "Ted" Geesey wrote that a Mr. Hite was the current owner. Over the years, Hite reported that the house was of log construction later enlarged and sided with wooden lap board. J. Simpson Africa's Blair County History book described the old Geesey homestead in Frankstown township over the years served three generations of Conrad III, Jacob, and only son of Jacob, Michael. "All have occupied and owned it since Conrad Geesey, the progenitor came to this county from York County. The old Geesey Homestead in Frankstown Township is one of the familiar landmarks of Blair County and is located on Rt. 2088, just across the bridge and to the left around the bend on the left side of the road." 22 Michael Geesey lived in the Jack's Hill house, his mother lived in the homestead.

" Geesey Homestead"



No record has been found for the first services conducted at the "Old Log Church," however, the Pennsylvania Ministerial (Old Mother Synod) arrived about 1803, and began to administer Communion, baptize children and perform other ministerial duties a couple times a year a people's homes. Historical records, states: " that circuit riding

Lutheran and Reformed ministers from other areas such as LIGON of Aaronburg and WALTER of Middleburg came over long distances by horseback to provide religious services twice a year in individual's homes until the Frankstown families decided to build "The Old Log Church." It is recorded that some years after the congregation was established, a lot of ground about one-half mile east of the village of Frankstown in what is now Geeseytown as deeded on June 6, 1813 by Michael Hileman and wife to Jacob Walter and Henry Leamer, Sr., trustees for the Frankstown German Presbyterian (Reformed Church) and Lutheran congregations, as per deed filed in the Huntingdon County Court House. Christian Gast gave a lot of ground on the south side of the old roadway for a cemetery. John Leamer was the first person buried in it." That same year, 1813, the congregation built two-story log church about thirty feet square and furnished it with slab seats and a small table for a pulpit desk." 23 In this condition the Lutheran congregation and apparently others, worshipped in it until 1825 or 1826, when it was finally completed.

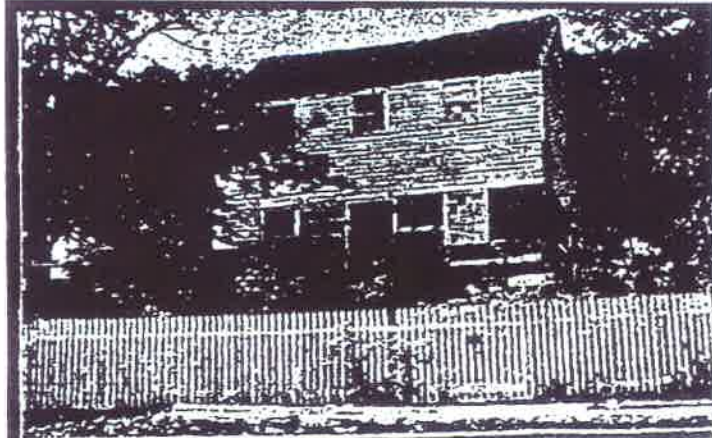
The "Old Log Church" appears to have struggled over the many years and on July 1, 1824 shared Rev. George A. Reichert a pastor with Indiana Co., PA. He began the difficult and dangerous travel in all kinds of weather, which continued until his resignation three years later. The first book, now with the special collections at Gettysburg Theological Seminary, the following is inscribed quite likely in Reichert's own handwriting: "Kirchenbuch der Evangelic, Christlichen Germeinde, Frankstown, Huntingdon Co., Pennsylvania.

A list of those persons confirmed after having been instructed and examined are listed.

"Page dated 1 April, 1825.- List of persons confirmed after having been instructed and examined. David Brau b. Oct. 16, 1793; Marie Brua b. Jun. 1, 1796; Adam Van Alman b. Aug. 6, 1796; Maria Kamerling b. Mar. 16, 1798; Henry Mogel b. May 13, 1800; Elizabeth Lemer b. Apr 25, 1799; Jesse Wolf b. Oct 1, 1804; Susan Lemer b. Feb. 5, 1801; Michael German b. Aug. 7, 1805; Sarah Ketner b. Feb. 11, 1802; David Young Heilman b. Dec 25, 1806; Eliabeth Kuhn b, Jan. 6. 1803; John Steiner b Jan. 11, 1803; Catharine Van Alman b. Jun 28, 1804; John German b. Jul 6, 1807; Susan Mogel b. Jun. 16 1806; Joseph Heilman b. Oct 18, 1808; Elizabeth German, b. Jun. 22, 1809." " The last known communion was administered at the "Old Log Church" on Dec. 18, 1844." 24

Old Log Lutheran Church

Picture below listed in "Geeseytown Lutheran Church Anniversary Booklet 1983



"Old Log Church" Frankstown Township Built 6 June 1813
Finished 1813-1814 Usable- completed 1825-26. (Mansion (2)



The "Old Log Church" of Frankstown as reproduced by Ollie Pottmeyer.

Conrad Geesey 3rd and Catharine were very active in their church. In the Journal of Gabriel Reichert, Lutheran Pastor in Indiana, Armstrong, Huntingdon Counties as reported in "Adjacent Counties 1822-1827, by Paul Ruff". Konrad Giese as listed in the following services: **25 (On his headstone, Conrad is listed as Konrad Geesy).**

Page 28, 22 Aug 1824: Election of Konrad Giese and Jacob German as ,Elders, Frankstown.

Page 39, 01 April 1825: Continuation at Preparation for Communion At Frankstown, Konrad Giese.

Page 46, 10 July 1825: Johann born 15 Mar 1825, Parents: Leonard George Giese and Elizabeth.

Sponsors: Andrew Kopp and Elizabeth. **26**

Pastor Reichert's resignation began a period of intense controversy and turmoil among the Frankstown Lutherans that lasted for more than half a century and caused a downturn in the church's stability which resulted in a situation where, finally there was almost no Lutheran preaching at Frankstown until the Rev. David Ryder's time. Gradually, a transformation took place. The downward trend was turned around when Lutherans living in the vicinity did not want to journey to Hollidaysburg, began to agitate for the reestablishment of the congregation in connection with the old church. The last known communion for the congregation at the "Old Log Church" was December 18, 1844." The congregation, especially the older members, re-established church activities with Rev. David Ryder and he maintained for several years with services in homes. The Congregation eventually voted to build a new church. "Henry Geesey 2nd I deeded his land to his sister Mary Ann Geesey Warfel. She held onto the land and when the church moved back to the Geesey farm, she deeded the land to build a church."27

The **Geesey Homestead** property, was expanded with added acreage to increase the land capacity to two hundred and thirty acres of highly productive land when Michael H. Geesey was deeded the plantation.

Michael H. Geesey was born January 11, 1829 in Woodberry Township, Huntingdon County, PA. At the time of his birth, his father Jacob was working with brother Joseph in the sawmill business. The Geesey family are of Swiss descent, and their name is identified with the early history of the Juniata Valley. His parents were Jacob Geesey, son of Conrad Geesey III, and Margaret GAST.

Michael was the only male out of the eleven children, " He was bred a farmer's boy and his education was gained in the district school. He was a member of the Lutheran Church for thirty-five years and held the church office of deacon. He was active and businesslike in township affairs and served as a school director for eleven years. February 3, 1854 he married Sarah, daughter of Mathias Weaver, of Frankstown. By that marriage there were eight children, seven of whom are living. Mrs. Geesey died November 21, 1873 and January 27, 1876 he married Jane, daughter of Henry Crawford, of Frankstown township. Of the three children born of the second marriage, two are living. Michael was 65 yrs., 6 days old when he died 17 January 1894. Burial: Geeseytown Cemetery, Frankstown Twp., Blair Co., Pennsylvania. 28

Michael H. Geesey



Son of: Jacob Geesey 1802-1857 and Margaret Gast Geesey 1805-1888

The "GEESEYTOWN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH" The cornerstone was laid 19 August 1883 by Pastor Ryder, assisted by Rev. W.W. Criley and Rev. J.W. Henderson. The lot was offered to the Church, by John B. Warfel. On 30 June 1884, the Lot was deeded to the church council-Jonathan Slippey, John B. Warfel Irvin Metzger, John Edgely and Mary Warfel. Church was Dedicated on 14 June 1885, Rev. E. B. Killinger and the sermon preached by Rev. J. H. Menges of Philadelphia. 29 (Ref.: Geesey Evangelical Lutheran Church, 100th Anniversary Booklet, 1883-1983.) **ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF THE GEESEYTOWN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH WAS GRANTED BY THE BLAIR COUNTY COURT ON 12 JANUARY 1885.Official Recordation.** Picture (1992) of the New Church.



It is evident that Michael H. Geesey carried on the Geesey name in honor. It is believed he and the Geesey Family will always be remembered for community involvement and hard work that show it matters when you dedicate your life for the good of others. He served as a church deacon for many years and served as the Frankstown Township School director of education for eleven years. Michael was a vigorous worker in the cause of public education. In searching both Blair Co. and Huntingdon Co. for legal records as evidence of naming the Village none were found excepted as noted herein. The Articles of Incorporation of the Geeseytown Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Geesey Family early History show family involvement and dedication to the future of the Geeseytown community.

The Blair County Genealogical and Historical Society, in a letter received 03 April 1987 from Sylva L. Emerson, Secretary-Curator, stated that Geeeytown is the largest now that