

## BEAVER COUNTY PLACE NAMES BY BILL IRION

When I am traveling I like to check the name of the place I am visiting and try to find out how it got its name. On a recent trip to the northeastern part of our state no one could tell me how a nearby town received its name. So I began to wonder if people who were visiting our area and asked the local people how certain names came about, would they be able to tell them?

Let's start with Beaver Falls since that is the location of the Beaver County Research Center. We have all seen the falls and it is on the Beaver River so that makes sense and beavers were plentiful in those early days. It is not always that simple. At one time, Beaver Falls was called Brighton, and it included Patterson, named for James Patterson. The name was changed to Beaver Falls because of the confusion with New Brighton which was across the river. The new town that was incorporated in 1868 also included Adamstown, named for one of the earliest physicians, Dr. Samuel Adams. The north end of Beaver Falls was called Barnard Town. Daniel Barnard purchased land from Dr. Adams and had a hotel there.

Eastvale - on the east side of Big Beaver Creek, opposite Beaver Falls, earlier was known as Fetterman, and was once considered a suburb of Beaver Falls. It was connected by the Fetterson Bridge. Mr. N. P. Fetterman was an early attorney in the county.

Dutch Town - it was a name given to an area of Beaver Falls where a number of German glassblowers lived. They worked at the Flint Glass Company. This area, at different times was defined with different boundaries.

Hippletown - it was a name given to a number of houses and shanties that were partly located in New Brighton and part of it was in Beaver Falls. Most of the people living there were Irish working on railroad construction. It was an area between First and Third Avenues and 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets in Beaver Falls. The residents were called Hippleites for William Hipple, who lived in the area in the 1870's-80's. He was a well-known contractor and borough councilman.

New Brighton - The borough is situated on the eastern side of the Beaver River. It was connected with Beaver Falls by a covered toll bridge that was built in 1834. New Brighton's early settlers were English and western European stock. Two English brothers named Constable, who were surveyors, gave the name Brighton after their English hometown.

Harshaville - This was just a small hamlet situated in the northeast corner of Hanover Township. It was named Harshaville in honor of Robert Harsha who started the post office there in 1859 and was the first one to serve as postmaster. The office was discontinued in 1901.

Boalsville - This was across the Beaver River from Bridgewater. John Boals operated a boatyard there. The town was in the area that later was called Junction Stretch. The village was named for Mr. Boals.

Vanport - this village was formed in 1804, The name Vanport originated from the fact that the Democratic nominee for president was Martin Van Buren. Because much pottery was shipped from there, they called the town Vanport.

Cannelton - a village at the Mansfield Coal mines near Little Beaver Creek in Darlington Township. The name was taken from a type of "cannel" coal which is a soft bituminous coal.

Chippewa - a post office was established here in 1844. This area was opened to the white settlers by a treaty in 1795 with the Chipwayanwok Indians. The name Chippewa comes from Chipwayanwok which means "Tailskin." The Indians used this to decorate their jackets.

Baden - the name is said to have originated because many of the early settlers were from Baden-Baden in Germany. The village is located on the Ohio River on depression land and was incorporated in 1868.

Darlington - the history of this town goes back to shortly after the Revolutionary War. It was first called Greensburg as part of the land was owned by George Greer, William Martin and Thomas Sprott. It is interesting that the owners of the land drew straws to see who got to name the land. Greer won. The name was changed to Darlington in 1830 because it was being confused with Greensburg. The town was a very active community because it was on the direct stage route of settlers traveling north and west.

East Bridgewater - a small village separated from West Bridgewater by the Beaver River. The area is now part of Rochester borough. West Bridgewater is now just called Bridgewater.

Ohioville - once called Dry Run. It was an oil boom town. The oil business was in the vicinity of Smith Ferry and on Dry Run and its tributaries along the Little Beaver Creek.

Fallston - situated on the west bank of the Beaver River - directly opposite to where New Brighton is located at the lower falls of the Beaver River. At one time Fallston was famous for its manufactured products. The coming of the canal, and later the railroad, made it possible to send those products to the eastern and western markets.

Hopewell - The township was created about 1812. The name of Hopewell was taken from a Presbyterian church organized about ten years earlier. Hopewell Township, on the south side of the county in the 1820's, included the territory of Logstown (West Aliquippa,) Woodlawn, Shannopin (South Heights) and what is now Independence Township.

Hookstown - at one time it was described as an industrious and flourishing village with excellent businesses. The village derived its name from Mattias and Benjamin Hook, who very early patented land there. It was earlier called Nineveh, a Biblical name.

Monaca - this town has been known by many names. A part of the area on which the borough now stands was called Appetite. In about 1822 it was called Phillipsburg. Stephen Phillips and John Graham established extensive boat yards there. Seceders from the Harmony Society purchased the townsite from the boatmen and called it New

Philadelphia. Dr. Edward Acker established a Watercure Sanatorium there later and then this town took the name of Water Cure. In 1892 the borough's name changed again. It is now called Monaca after the French and Indian War era Indian, Monacatootha. It was shortened to Monaca by the P&LERR.

Barrisville - as pioneers moved into this area many small villages sprang up. This one was located on Brush Creek near Unionville, named for the first postmaster, F. W. Barris.

Beaver - the borough was laid out and approved by the Pennsylvania Assembly in 1783. Its site is that on which General McIntosh built the fort named for him in 1778. Beaver, or Beavertown, had been the site of the Indian village Sawkunk, and had been visited by both French and English in an attempt to gain them as allies. When Beaver County was formed in 1800, Beaver became the county seat and was established as a borough on March 27, 1802.

Ellwood City - it was formed in 1889 by the Pittsburgh Company of which Mr. Ellwood was one of the chief stockholders. Originally planned as a summer resort, it was later developed as an ideal industrial location. It became a borough in 1892.

Midland - it was formed from four farms of over 1000 acres that were purchased by the Pittsburgh combine, the Midland Steel Company. It began construction in 1905. There is a difference of opinion as to where the name came from. One theory is that the new steel was manufactured midway between Pittsburgh and Wheeling. Another theory, more historical, is that the name came from the English Midlands steel district.

Conway - the history of the borough of Conway goes back to 1825 when Michael Conway purchased land in that area. Conway became a railroad town called Remington and also called Agnue, then Conway. The town was incorporated in 1902.

Ambridge - historically, Ambridge owes its existence to the Harmony Society and the American Bridge Company. The borough was incorporated in 1904, taking its name from the American Bridge Company. In 1903 it began construction of a huge plant to manufacture finished iron and steel products. Many nationalities lived in Ambridge, with about 60% of the people being of immigrant extraction. In 1971 an ordinance was adopted creating an Historic District in Old Economy.

Fairport - Ovid Pinney planned a large city to be called Beaver City. He invested about \$30,000 in lands located around East Bridgewater and Fairport. He planned a city that would encompass the entire Beaver Valley. His dream was never realized but it could happen if all the towns and small villages were merged together.

These are only some of the places in Beaver County. There are many other towns and villages not mentioned. How they got their names is an interesting subject. Many of the names and where they came from have been lost in time. Many at one time were just post offices and got their names from the postmaster. It was a good opportunity to name the town after oneself.

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Life is lived forward, but it is understood backward.