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# The Jameson Raid (1758) as a Focus for Historical Inquiry

## **Abstract**

Each year the Adams County Historical Society receives inquiries either in person or by mail from persons asking for information about a young woman who with the rest of her family was seized and carried off from their home in what is now Adams county during the French and Indian War. She was the only member of that family who was not slaughtered as the raiding party and its captives moved into the western part of Pennsylvania. The subsequent life of this woman among the Indians was deemed of sufficient historical importance that she was chosen to be among some 13,000 well-known Americans who were included in the prestigious Dictionary of American Biography, a reference work of twenty volumes published between 1928 and 1937, and still being updated today. The volume containing her sketch, the tenth, was published in 1933. [excerpt]

## **Keywords**

Adams County Historical Society, ACHS, Adams County, Pennsylvania History, French and Indian War, Kidnap, Mary Jemison



**Fig. 1. Buchanan Valley Statue.**

This statue of Mary Jameson at St. Ignatius Loyola Roman Catholic Church in the Buchanan Valley was dedicated on October 13, 1923. Father Will Whalen, pastor of the church from 1917 to 1938, was largely responsible for making it possible. In the same year as the dedication he published *The Red Lily of Buchanan Valley*, which he described as “a romance founded on the life of the Irish girl stolen by the Indians from Buchanan Valley, Adams County, Pennsylvania, in 1758. A story too strange and grim not to be true.” (Photo in the Adams County Historical Society.)



## The Jameson Raid(1758) as a Focus for Historical Inquiry

by Charles H. Glatfelter

Each year the Adams County Historical Society receives inquiries either in person or by mail from persons asking for information about a young woman who with the rest of her family was seized and carried off from their home in what is now Adams county during the French and Indian War.<sup>1</sup> She was the only member of that family who was not slaughtered as the raiding party and its captives moved into the western part of Pennsylvania. The subsequent life of this woman among the Indians was deemed of sufficient historical importance that she was chosen to be among some 13,000 well-known Americans who were included in the prestigious *Dictionary of American Biography*, a reference work of twenty volumes published between 1928 and 1937, and still being updated today. The volume containing her sketch, the tenth, was published in 1933.<sup>2</sup>

The young woman in question, in the *Dictionary of American Biography* sketch, and almost everywhere else, is called Mary Jemison. In the autumn of 1823, a group of residents of western New York, where she was then living, persuaded Dr. James E. Seaver to interview Mary at length and prepare an account of her eventful life. The two spent almost three days together. The first of many editions of *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison* was published in Canandaigua, New York, in 1824. In this and later versions of the book additional material was included, some of which had little or nothing to do with her. What was labeled a twenty-second edition was published as late as 1925. The long title of one of the editions referred to Mary as the White Woman of the Genesee, a designation which has persisted. For this essay, a 1967 reprint of the first edition was used. Added material in this reprint was copyrighted by Charles C. Kelsey and Allegany Press.

In the preface of his work, Dr. Seaver stated, incorrectly, that Mary was "destitute of education." Whether she knew how to spell her last name, whether indeed after so many years she even remembered how to pronounce it as her family once had, we do not know. In any event, Seaver spelled it *Jemison*, and virtually everyone since 1824 has followed his example. There is overwhelming evidence that the eighteenth-century spelling in Pennsylvania, and presumably also in Ireland, was *Jameson*. For the purpose of this essay, it will be *Jameson*.



In deciding whether to accept the Seaver narrative as a credible source for Mary's life in Adams county, one needs to remember that it was not intended to be an exact transcription of what she told her interviewer. We do not know to what extent his own ideas entered into the composition of the finished work. Nor do we know how accurately Mary could remember events which had occurred in her life years earlier, before it was radically and irrevocably changed from that of a colonial American youth of Ulster-Scots origin into that of a Seneca Indian woman. In his introduction, Seaver wisely reminded his readers that "it cannot be reasonably supposed, that a person of her age has kept the events of seventy years in so complete a chain as to be able to assign to each its proper time and place." Actually, one of the remarkable things about his narrative is how much of it which relates to Mary's life before her capture has the ring of truth about it.

According to what Mary Jameson remembered in 1823, eighty or eighty-one years earlier she was born while her parents, Thomas and Jane Jameson, were crossing the ocean on their way from Ireland to Pennsylvania.<sup>3</sup> Accompanying them when they left home were two sons and a daughter: John, Thomas, and Betsy. There may have been other

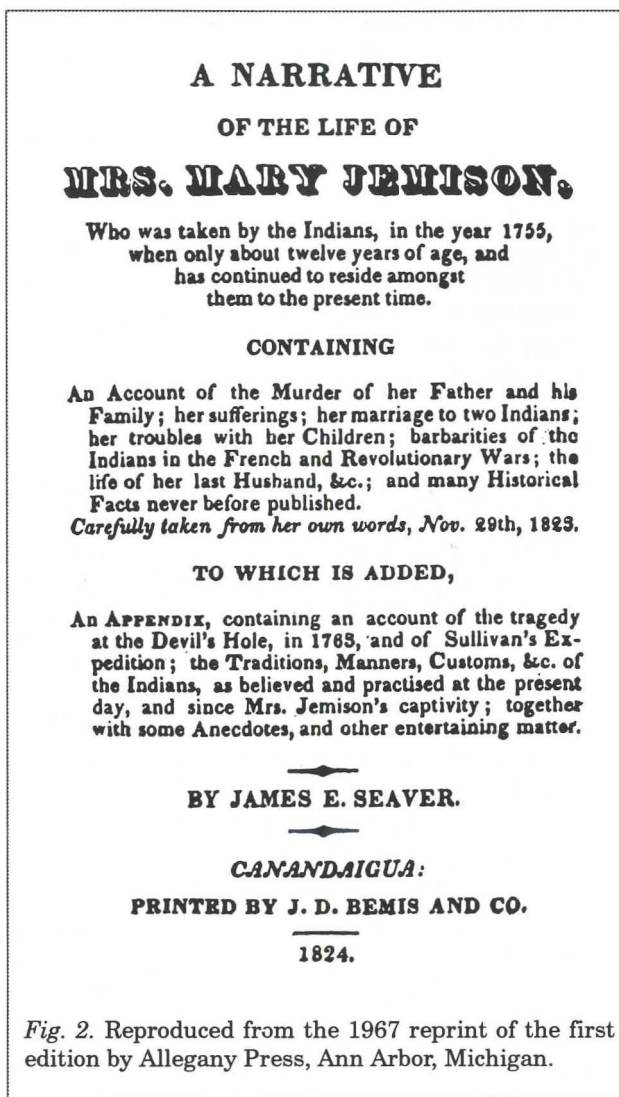


Fig. 2. Reproduced from the 1967 reprint of the first edition by Allegany Press, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

family members in the party, including Jane's parents, whose family name was Ervin or Erwin, and a brother of Thomas, whose name was John.

As Mary recalled, whatever her father may have been in Ireland, he was a farmer at heart. Soon after arriving in Philadelphia, he took his family toward the western frontier, choosing a tract of land along the banks of Marsh creek in Adams county. Here he built the necessary buildings and cleared some of the land. Here Jane gave birth to two more sons, who were named Matthew and Robert.

Mary attended school, where she learned to read. Under the direction of her parents, at home, she read the Bible and studied the catechism. In all probability it was the Presbyterian Westminster Catechism. It is evident that, to the end of her life, she remembered with fondness the days she had spent with her family in Adams county. She called them her "childish, happy days" and told Dr. Seaver that she still often dreamed about them.

After about a decade living on their first American homestead, along Marsh creek, Thomas Jameson moved his family some miles to the west, into the mountains. There will be more about this move later.

\* \* \* \*

Within less than a decade after the Jameson family arrived in Pennsylvania, the rivalry between the French and English for control of the vast and valuable Ohio river country had reached serious proportions. In 1753 the French built a string of forts along the upper Ohio to assert and defend their claims to the region. Virginia, which then insisted that western Pennsylvania was part of their province, sent Colonel George Washington (he was twenty-two years old at the time) with a small force of Virginia militiamen and others to assert the British claim to the Ohio country. After a brief contest at Great Meadows in July 1754, Washington surrendered Fort Necessity to the French. His casualties were about one hundred men, of whom about one-third were killed. The Fort Necessity National Battlefield is located about ten miles east of Uniontown, Fayette county, on U.S. Route 40.

Mary Jameson told Dr. Seaver that her uncle, John Jameson, was one of the men who lost their lives at Great Meadows. According to her, the uncle had been married and was the father of one child. After his wife died, Jane Jameson took care of the infant "in the most tender manner, till its mother's sister took it away, a few months after my uncle's death." No evidence has yet been found to explain how John Jameson became a

member of the forces which Washington commanded at Great Meadows; his niece offered none.

Soon after Washington's defeat, and in anticipation of full-scale war, the British government sent General Edward Braddock to America to seize a series of French forts, stretching southward from Canada to Fort Duquesne, at the present Pittsburgh. While attempting to seize the latter fort in July 1755, the British were defeated by a force of Frenchmen and their Indian allies, suffering a loss of about 1,000 men killed and wounded. Braddock himself was among those killed. His successor retreated with his remaining troops all the way to Philadelphia, leaving the entire Pennsylvania-Maryland-Virginia frontier open to cruel attacks by the French and Indians.

The expected raids began as early as September 1755. From Easton southwestward into the valley of Virginia, along a frontier of about 180 miles, no settlement was safe from the ravages of a war party, usually small in number, which might suddenly burst upon a family, pillaging; setting fire to buildings; murdering innocent men, women, and children; and carrying off whomsoever they chose. With a legislature still dominated by Quakers, the provincial government was slow to act. Tardily, it built a chain of forts along the frontier and attempted to make peace with the Indians, but relative freedom from attacks had to await the destruction of the Indian stronghold at Kittanning in September 1756 and the occupation of Fort Duquesne, which the French had just abandoned and destroyed, in November 1758. General John Forbes, who commanded the British expedition, wrote the governor of Pennsylvania a few days later from "Fort Duquesne, or now Pittsburgh," that his forces had "totally expelled the French from this Fort and this prodigious tract of Country" and "in a manner reconciled the various Tribes of Indians inhabiting it to His Majesty's Government."<sup>4</sup>

\* \* \* \*

At least as early as the summer of 1756, the threat of imminent attack had reached Adams county. In sending the governor a petition from residents of York county in August of that year, Rev. Thomas Barton, the local Anglican minister, declared that

the complicated Distresses of these poor Creatures are beyond Expression. What few Inhabitants remained in Cumberland are daily flying from thence, so that in three or four days it will be totally relinquish'd. Marsh Creek is now the Frontier, and such a Panick has seiz'd the Hearts of People in general, that unless we have soon



some favourable Turn in our Affairs, I am affraid the Enemy need not long be at the Pains to dispute a Claim to those two Counties.<sup>5</sup>

Although the South Mountain did offer some protection to Adams countians, it was not enough to shield those living in the western townships from a determined band of French and Indians who were on the warpath. The nearest frontier forts were miles away and not nearly close enough together to prevent enemy incursions. In fact, they were most useful as places of refuge for those who had some warning of an impending raid.<sup>6</sup> In the summer of 1757 there were several attacks in Hamiltonban township, but apparently no one was killed or carried away.<sup>7</sup> When Colonel Hance Hamilton, one of the leading local figures in defending the frontier, secured a survey in 1768 for his mill property along the Conewago creek in Menallen township, the surveyor noted that "this Tract had been Settled a considerable Time ago & a small Improvement made, & in the Time of the last Indian War had been Deserted."<sup>8</sup> Only recently had anyone reoccupied it.

On Thursday, April 13, 1758, seven months before the several efforts to achieve peace along the frontier had succeeded, some nineteen Delaware Indians descended upon the mill property of Richard Bard. It was located at the present Virginia Mills, northwest of Fairfield, in Hamiltonban township. The all-too-usual sequel was repeated here: pillage, burning, torture, and murder. Of the nine persons who were in or near the house at the time, four were killed as they fled westward, including the Bards' six-month old baby. Three young people, who were not their children, were eventually liberated. Richard Bard, who was then twenty-two years old, miraculously escaped from his captors and then spent most of the next two and one-half years searching for his wife. In September 1760 he found her near Sunbury and paid forty pounds to gain her release. During her long captivity she had traveled about 500 miles on foot, first west to Fort Duquesne and then east to the upper Susquehanna valley. Once free and reunited, Richard (1736-1799) and Catherine (1737-1811) Bard spent the rest of their lives in Franklin county, where they had at least four more children. Their graves are near Mercersburg.

Richard Bard left behind a rich primary source for what happened to him and his family during the war. On May 12, 1758, less than a month after his abduction and escape, he made a deposition before George Stevenson, the chief Penn representative in York county, in which he recounted the facts of his seizure and escape. The importance of Bard's deposition warrants quoting it completely:

York County, ss.

The Affirmation of Richard Beard, of Hamilton's Bane Township, aged twenty-two years, who saith, that his Habitation being at the Foot of the South Mountain, on the South-East side thereof, on Thursday the thirteenth day of April last, about 7 o'clock in the morning, He, this Deponent, was in his house with Katharine his Wife, John his child, about seven months old, Thomas Potter, son of the late Captain John Potter, Esq., Deceased, Frederick Ferrick, his Servant, about fourteen Years of age, Hannah McBride, aged about Eleven Years, William White, about nine Years old; in his Field were Samuel Hunter and Daniel McMenomy, Labourers, when a party consisting of nineteen Indians, came and Captivated Samuel Hunter and Daniel McMenomy in the Field, and afterwards came to the dwelling house of this Deponent, and about six of them suddenly rushed into the house, and were immediately driven out by this Deponent and Thomas Potter; the Door of the house was thrown down by our pressing to keep the Indians out, and their pressing to come in, they shot in the house at us, and shot away Thomas Potter's little finger. We then had time to know their Numbers, and in a little time surrender'd, on the promise of the Indians not to kill any of us, they tied us, & took us about Sixty Rods up the Mountain, where their Watch Coats lay, for they were naked except the Britch Clouts, Legins, Mocasins and Caps; then they brought the two men that had been at Work in the Field, and in about half an hour, they order'd us to March, seting me foremost of the Prisoners. We marched one after another at some Distance; at about seven miles they kill'd my Child, which I discovered by seeing its Scalp, about twelve o'clock I saw another Scalp, which I knew to be Thomas Potters. I have since been informed that they killed him at the Place where their Match Coats lay. Fryday the 14th, about twelve o'clock, they murder'd Samuel Hunter on the North Mountain, they drove us over the Allegheny Mountain a day and an half, and on Monday Night about ten o'clock, I escap'd, they having sent me several Times about three Rods from the fire to bring Water. In nine Nights and Days I got to Fort Lyttleton, having had no food other than four Snakes, which I had kill'd and eat, and some Buds and Roots, and the like; three Cherokee Indians found me about two miles from Fort Lyttleton, cut me a Staff, and Piloted me to the Fort.

In conversation with the Indians during my Captivity, they informed me that they were all Delawares, for they mostly all Spake English, one spake as good English as I can. The Captain said he had been at Philadelphia last Winter, and another said he had been at Philadelphia about a year ago; I ask'd them if they were not going to make Peace with the English? The Captain answered, and said they were talking about it when he was in Philadelphia last Winter, but he went away and left them.

RICHARD BAIRD.

Affirmed & Subscribed at York, }  
the 12th May, 1758,

COL. GEO. STEVENSON.<sup>9</sup>



\* \* \* \*

A letter dated York county, April 5, 1758, and published in the Philadelphia *Pennsylvania Gazette* eight days later, reported on an enemy raid into York county just eight days before the one on the Richard Bard family:

three Indians were seen this Day by two boys near Thomas Jamieson's, at the Head of Marsh Creek; upon which they gave the Alarm, when six Men went to said Jamieson's House, and found there one Robert Buck killed and scalped, also a Horse killed, that belonged to William Man, a Soldier at Carlisle, whose Wife and Children had just come to live with Jamieson. This Woman, and her three Children, Thomas Jamieson, his Wife, and five or six Children, are all missing.

It is evident that, at this point in her story, Mary Jameson's memory failed her, a lapse for which she can surely be excused. She referred to "Indian barbarities inflicted upon the whites" as early as the spring of 1752, and then told Dr. Seaver that the attack on her family occurred "in the spring of 1755."<sup>10</sup> That was before the Braddock defeat in July of that year and his successor's retreat across Pennsylvania, the event which exposed the frontier to attack. While there may have been occasional raids on frontier settlements before that time, the letter in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, as well as other evidence, clearly fixes the date of the raid on the Jamesons as occurring three years later, at a time when all but a few such incursions were about to end, at least until a brief return of Indian warfare in 1763-1764.

According to Mary's account, the raiding party of six Shawnee Indians and four Frenchmen had little difficulty in subduing the ten persons who were then in or near the Jameson house. These included Thomas, Jane, Robert, Matthew, Betsy, and Mary Jameson, as well as a woman, her son, and two daughters, whose names Mary did not remember. All she could recall was that, while the woman's husband (identified as William Man in the newspaper account) was in the military service, she and her children were staying with her brother-in-law (identified in the same account as Robert Buck), who lived somewhere near the Jamesons. Perhaps for added protection, the five of them had just come to remain for a time with Mary's family.

After gathering up as much food as they could carry, the French and Indians headed with their ten captives back into the west from which they had come, leaving behind the corpse of Robert Buck, whom they



had shot down as he returned from a brief visit to his house. They also left behind Mary's two older brothers, who she remembered were working in the barn when the attack occurred. Years later, a man named Fields visited her in New York and told her that John and Thomas had somehow escaped and gone to live with their Ervin grandparents in Virginia.

As the little band moved westward, prodded by the captors to keep a rapid pace, neither Mary's father nor mother had much to say. Both undoubtedly knew too well what was about to happen to them. Thomas Jameson, she said, "lost all his ambition in the beginning of our trouble, and continued apparently lost to every care - absorbed in melancholy." He refused to eat, and the only thing she heard him say from the time they were captured was to utter the name of a small fort which they passed. Jane Jameson, on the other hand, "manifested a great degree of fortitude, and encouraged us to support our troubles without complaining."

Toward the end of the second day, the party arrived at what Mary described as "the border of a dark and dismal swamp, which was covered with small hemlocks, or some other evergreen, and other bushes." Later that evening, when Jane Jameson saw the Indians remove Mary's shoes and stockings, and then place moccasins on her feet, she interpreted this act as a sign that her daughter's life would probably be spared. Years later, Mary recounted to Dr. Seaver the substance of her mother's farewell advice to her. After expressing her great pain and anguish, Jane urged her daughter always to remember her own name, the names of her parents, her English tongue, and the prayers she had been taught as a child. Any effort to escape, she warned, would be unsuccessful, indeed fatal.

After the Indians did to the young Man (more properly Mann) boy what they had done to Mary, one of them took the two ahead of the rest of the party, to a spot where they spent the night. Remembering her mother's admonition, she rejected the boy's pleas that they try to escape. The next morning, when the other French and Indians joined them, there was no sign of Mary's relatives and friends. "It is impossible for any one to form a correct idea of what my feelings were at the sight of those savages," she told Dr. Seaver. Later that day, she saw the "wet and bloody" scalps which she immediately recognized. "My mother's hair was red," she said, "and I could easily distinguish my father's and the children's from each other." There was no comfort for her in the captors' assurance "that they should not have killed the family if the whites had not pursued them." The emotion of this experience was still evident some sixty-five years later. "The manner in which I was deprived" of my family "all at

once," she told Dr. Seaver, "affects me so powerfully, that I am almost overwhelmed with grief, that is seemingly insupportable."

When Fields visited Mary in New York, he told her that he was living near her family in 1758. Upon hearing of the raid, he said, "the whole neighborhood turned out in pursuit of the enemy." Eventually they located the bodies of the slain, "stripped and mangled in the most inhuman manner." Finding no trace of French or Indians for them to follow, and believing that all of the captives had been killed, the would-be rescuers called off any further efforts and returned home.

Mary Jameson and young Mann were kept together until they reached Fort Duquesne, which was still in French hands. Here they were separated. Mary told Dr. Seaver that she never saw the boy again and had no idea of what happened to him. Undoubtedly, she never learned that in June 1761 General Jeffrey Amherst, British commander-in-chief in America, informed the governor of Pennsylvania that he was returning eight children who had been held captive by the Indians and Canadians, with the request that the governor deliver "deliver them to their parents or relations." One of these children was identified as John Mann, "of Marsh Creek, in pennsylvania, taken in 1758, by Indians."<sup>11</sup>

Once she and John were separated, Mary Jameson was given to two Seneca women. After spending several years somewhere in the Ohio river valley, she was taken to an Indian town near the present Geneseo, Livingston county, in western New York. Twice married to Indian men, she became the mother of eight children and never took advantage of several opportunities to leave her new community and return to life among the whites. In time she acquired a large tract of land along the Genesee river, but she was living on a Seneca reservation when she died in 1833, aged about ninety years.

About 1859 William P. Letchworth began developing the area around Mary's river property. He moved her remains there in 1874 and the cabin in which she had lived, six years later. He gave this property to the state of New York in 1907, and it is now Letchworth State Park in Livingston county. A statue in Mary's memory was dedicated there in 1910 (see cover illustration).

\* \* \* \*

We have a considerable body of generally credible information about Mary Jameson from the time her family was seized in April 1758 until her death seventy-five years later. Unfortunately, what we know about that family between the time of its arrival in Philadelphia in or about



the year 1743 and 1758 is based upon a regrettable scarcity of credible facts.

As previously noted, Mary remembered that her father was at heart a farmer. That being the case, he decided not to remain in Philadelphia and make his living there as an artisan, craftsman, or laborer. Instead, he joined many other Scotch-Irish families already located in what are now Adams, Cumberland, and Franklin counties. Mary told Dr. Seaver that Thomas Jameson "soon left the city, and removed his family to the then frontier settlements of Pennsylvania, to a tract of excellent land lying on Marsh creek. At that place he cleared a large farm, and for seven or eight years enjoyed the fruits of his industry."<sup>12</sup> It is remarkable that after so many years Mary still remembered the name of the stream along which her family made its first American home. The community of which they became a part was known as the Marsh Creek settlement.

It is more than probable that the first Jameson homestead was located somewhere within the Manor of Maske, a large tract which the Penns had tried, unsuccessfully, to survey, first in 1741 and then on several subsequent occasions. One will look in vain for any record of a deed given to Thomas Jameson for his "large farm" in the manor. Because of the standoff existing between the Penn proprietors and the manor residents between 1741 and 1765 (the latter date being seven years after the Jameson family was carried off), during that quarter century, with only a very few exceptions, there were no warrants issued for the survey of land, no actual surveys made, and no patent deeds issued to confer clear titles. If, as is possible, Thomas Jameson was not the first settler on his "large farm," any document the seller would have given him would not have been in the form of a regularly executed deed which could then have been recorded, but rather it would have been an informal piece of paper transferring whatever right the seller believed he had in the property. After more than two and one-half centuries, no evidence has come to light, and probably none ever will, to indicate where in the Manor of Maske the Jamesons may have lived, except that it was in what became Cumberland township when York county was created in 1749.<sup>13</sup>

Apart from a deed, another valuable source of information about the Jamesons would be the lists of taxables which the Lancaster county commissioners probably began preparing annually for the Marsh Creek settlement sometime in the 1740s and which those in York county began compiling late in 1749 for use in 1750. Unfortunately, the earliest known lists for the latter are for the year 1762.<sup>14</sup> The name of Thomas Jameson does not appear on any known tax list.

It is probably that the Jameson family established some relationship



with, which may have included full membership in, one of the three Presbyterian congregations which were in existence in or near the Marsh Creek settlement by 1750. The two oldest, Upper Marsh Creek (now represented by the Gettysburg Presbyterian church) and Great Conewago, can date their beginnings to 1740. Lower Marsh Creek church dates from 1748. Because no records of early ministerial acts performed in these congregations have survived, we cannot turn to them for the baptisms of Matthew and Robert Jameson or for any other evidence of family participation in the life of one of these congregations.

When Thomas Jameson arrived in the Manor of Maske, there were already some 150 tracts on which families were living. In addition, there were so many families already west of the Susquehanna river in what was then Lancaster county that it was only a matter of time before the provincial legislature would be obliged to establish a new county. Finally, in August 1749 it created the fifth county in the province and named it York.

One of the little-known features of British rule in colonial North America was its reliance on wide participation in performing the tasks of local government. Some county officers (for example, commissioners) were chosen by popular election and others (for example, sheriffs) by a combination of election and appointment. Each township had constables, supervisors of highways, overseers of the poor, and tax collectors, chosen from the body of local residents by the county court or commissioners. The terms were one year and incumbents were usually not reappointed. Few aspired to any of these burdensome positions. Once appointed, however, each incumbent was expected to do his duty or face unpleasant consequences.

The first known evidence that Thomas Jameson had been summoned for public service is contained in an action by the Lancaster county commissioners in June 1749, several months before there was either a York county or a Cumberland township. They issued an order against him, and later imposed a fine, for failure to perform his important duties as constable of what they called the "Mashcreek" [sic] district. It was his duty to prepare a list of taxables for use in levying county taxes for the ensuing year. Unfortunately, efforts extending over many years to find early Lancaster county court and commissioners' records which might shed some light on this incident have been unavailing.<sup>15</sup> We do not know why Thomas Jameson did not do his duty, nor do we know when he was first appointed constable. Since these officers were usually named at the October court of quarter sessions, it may have been in October 1748 or possibly even a year earlier.

When the court of quarter sessions of York county held its first meeting in October 1749, the justices named Thomas Jameson constable of the newly formed Cumberland township. At their next session, in January 1750, when he and all of the other constables were expected to be present and make their required reports, Jameson's absence on this occasion was excused because he was reported to be "sick."<sup>16</sup> It is apparent that he was then relieved of his duties. Neither the county court nor the county commissioners ever again named him to a township office, but it is significant that by the late 1740s Thomas Jameson, still something of a newcomer to the area, had established himself sufficiently in the Marsh Creek settlement that the Lancaster county and then the York county courts would appoint him to the responsible position of township constable.

In 1823 Mary Jameson told Dr. Seaver that one autumn "my father either moved to another neighborhood, a short distance from our former abode." Even after many years, she said, "I well recollect moving, and that the barn that was on the place we moved to was built of logs, though the house was a good one."<sup>17</sup> Given Mary's imperfect memory of the actual chronology of this period in her life, it is not possible to determine with any certainty when the family move occurred. She gave conflicting evidence on that point.

Just as it is more than probable that the first Jameson homestead was within the Manor of Maske, it is more than probable that the second one was outside the manor, somewhere in the mountains to its west.<sup>18</sup> Mary recalled that the family had gone to a place where there were already existing buildings, but whether constructed by a previous owner or by her father before they moved is not clear. In any event, why Thomas Jameson wanted to move his family out of the Marsh Creek settlement, with its community of many other Scotch-Irish immigrants, into a very sparsely populated place in the mountains remains a mystery.

At the time of his death, Thomas Jameson was indebted in the amount of some sixteen pounds to Robert Work, who appealed to the York county court of common pleas for assistance in collecting what was due him. The court responded by ordering a levy on the only available Jameson family assets. On August 1, 1759 Sheriff Zachariah Shugart acknowledged in open court that, in pursuance of the order which the court had issued, he had sold the real estate of a "certain Thomas Jameson, late of York County, yeoman." The purchaser was Hance Hamilton, to whom on that day Shugart had issued a deed for "an Improvement and Tract of Land where on . . . Thomas Jameson lately Dwelt, situate in the South Mountain, in Cumberland Township."<sup>19</sup> The



proper legal language of this deed established that it covered the real estate on which Thomas Jameson had recently lived and that he was now deceased. As one would expect, the deed was completely silent concerning the circumstances of his death and that of all his known heirs.

Sheriff Shugart sold the Jameson property for thirteen pounds, fifteen shillings. Some indication of how prospective buyers valued the abandoned Jameson homestead is conveyed by the fact that, had Robert Work been paid the full sixteen pounds of his claim, he would have been able to buy two good horses and have a little change left over. The purchaser, Hance Hamilton, was one of the leading figures in York county. He was its first sheriff, for many years a justice of the peace, an officer during the French and Indian War, a businessman, and a large landowner. The fact that his deed for Jameson property mentions no acreage, no courses and distances, no adjoining landowners, and no warrant from the Penns on which a claim could be based, proves conclusively that the Jameson family, as well as anyone who might have preceded them, were pure and simple squatters, as indeed the Jamesons had been on their first homestead in the Marsh Creek settlement.<sup>20</sup>

Most early sheriff deeds were simply exhibited in open court and never recorded. Unless they were consistently passed along to succeeding owners, one can know little more about the sale than that it took place. Fortunately, Hance Hamilton recorded his deed and all of the valuable information in it remains available for study. Unfortunately, we do not know when and how he disposed of the Jameson property: that deed was not recorded. There is no evidence from his voluminous estate papers that he still owned it when he died in 1772. There is evidence that he sold it very soon after purchasing it in 1759.

\* \* \* \*

Although there is no evidence either to show that Thomas Jameson ever established a formal claim to any land in Adams county or to suggest how and when Hance Hamilton disposed of his homestead in the South Mountain, and although most of the appropriate tax lists before the Revolution are missing, is it still possible to determine from existing, credible records where the Jameson family lived, or probably lived, in the spring of 1758?

That was the question which Arthur Weaner, associate director of the historical society, agreed to investigate. Ignoring for the moment any statements which others have made over the years about the exact location of the unfortunate family's property, he examined applications



for warrants, the warrants themselves, and existing surveys for several thousand acres of mountain land on both sides of the Franklin and Menallen township boundary line in an effort to answer the question.<sup>21</sup> Obviously, when he found good contemporary testimony that a particular tract had not been lived on or cultivated before 1780, 1790, or 1800, he reached at least the tentative conclusion that this was not where the Jameson family ever lived.

There were only four formal claims made before the Revolution for land in the general vicinity of what Arthur Weaner long ago concluded was probably the Jameson place. All of them were initiated nine or more years after the family had disappeared from the valley. First, on October 8, 1767, Francis Kincannon applied for 100 acres of land "at the foot of Piney mountain at the head of Blackley's run," in Menallen township. By the time a survey was made on June 2, 1768, Nicholas Strausbaugh had come into possession of this land.<sup>22</sup> Second, on September 14, 1768, Nicholas Wolf applied for 200 acres along a branch of Conewago creek. No survey followed until March 27, 1771, by which time James Bleakney was the claimant.<sup>23</sup> On all but two small sides of this 235<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> acre tract, the surveyor wrote that it adjoined vacant or vacant mountain land. Third, on March 10, 1769, Casper Fink applied for 50 acres of land in Menallen township. The survey of 47<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> acres made for him on December 19, 1770, extended for about 3,300 feet along both sides of a branch of Conewago creek. Except for one short course adjoining Nicholas Strausbaugh, it too was surrounded by vacant land.<sup>24</sup> Fourth, on December 3, 1771, George Shaffer secured a warrant for 50 acres of what was described as "vacant wood land" on Maple branch of Conewago creek. There is no evidence of a survey resulting before 1799.<sup>25</sup> After careful study of these four tracts, both Arthur Weaner and the author concluded that none of them was the site of the second Jameson homestead, although all four of them were probably close to it.<sup>26</sup>

There was, in fact, land in the vicinity of these parcels which, after thorough examination of its history, turned out to be most promising in answering the question. On October 24, 1784, William Sharp, then a resident of Franklin county, gave a deed to George Campbell, a resident of the city of Philadelphia. He had been elected in 1780 and again in 1781 to represent Philadelphia county in the Pennsylvania legislature. It is clear from the text of Sharp's deed that no warrant had ever been issued for the land being conveyed and that no survey had ever been made. The deed stated simply that the property contained "about Three Hundred Acres." It gave no courses and distances, simply because there were none to give. According to the deed, what Sharp was selling was

"Land formerly occupied by Francis Kinkennan, and bought by me and James Sharp from John and William Standley." Since James Sharp had already sold his half interest to William, the latter was now sole owner. The price which Campbell paid for his estimated 300 acres was the purely nominal sum of ten pounds, less than Hance Hamilton had paid the sheriff for the Jameson property in 1759. In responding to a request for information about the property and its previous owners, two York county justices of the peace, Samuel Edie and Jacob Rudisill, certified to George Campbell that the land he was purchasing "was improved (as we are informed) in the year of our Lord one Thousand seven Hundred and Sixty."<sup>27</sup>

Campbell lost no time in establishing the first formal claim to his new acquisition. On December 15, 1784, he secured a warrant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for 300 acres of land in Cumberland township, "including an Improvement near the waters of Canawaga." Based upon the information in the report of Edie and Rudisill, interest due on this land from the time of first settlement was to begin on March 1, 1760.<sup>28</sup> It took almost three years for Deputy Surveyor Moses McClean to get around to determining the actual metes and bounds of the Campbell purchase. On October 25, 1787, he surveyed 303 acres "Situated on The main Branch of Conawago Creek in Franklin and Manellen Townships." It is significant that, except for what Moses McClean described as "Jacob Simmons at a Distance," this large tract was entirely surrounded by what he called vacant mountain land.<sup>29</sup>

Using aerial, topographical, and current tax maps, in addition to the warrant, survey, and patent records discussed above, Arthur Weaner reached the conclusion, with which the author agrees, that the Thomas Jameson property of 1758, which Hance Hamilton purchased at sheriff sale in 1759, was either part or all of the property to which George Campbell began taking title in 1784.<sup>30</sup> Francis Kincannon may well have purchased the Jameson real estate from Hance Hamilton about 1760. Later, it passed through the hands of John and William Stanley (they appear as coowners of real estate in the 1767 Cumberland township tax list) before the Sharps bought it.

It is quite possible that in 1784 someone told the two justices of the peace about the Jameson and Hamilton connection with at least part of the land William Sharp was selling. If so, neither thought it necessary to include this information in the statement which they sent to George Campbell. After all, they were not making a record for the benefit of some unknown person or persons many years later, a record which had nothing to do with establishing the validity of the Philadelphian's claim.

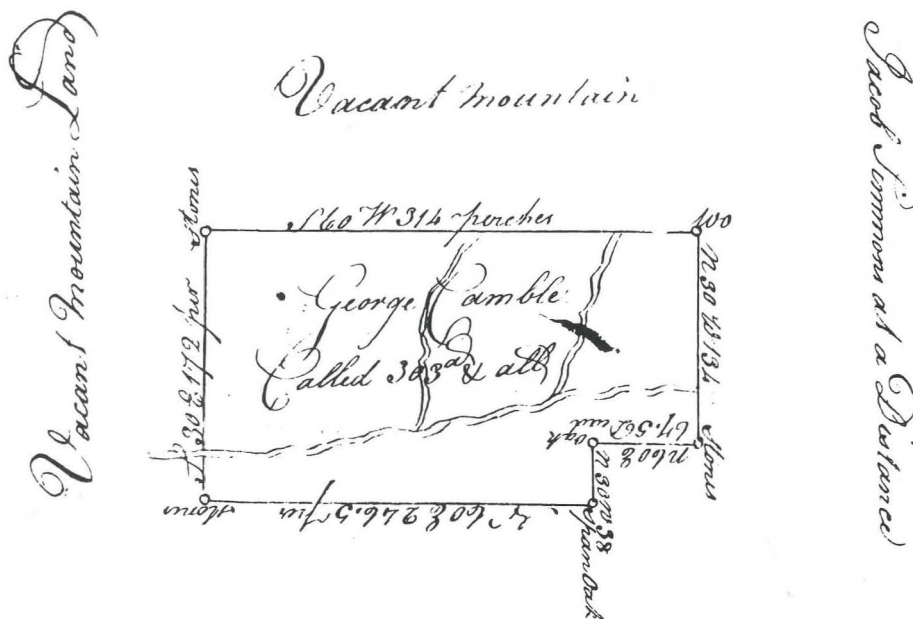


Fig. 3. George Campbell's Survey

• Moses McClean's 1787 survey of the "George Campbell" tract. For some reason, he drew it with south rather than north at the top: upside down. Sharp's Run is the small stream on the left, emptying into the Conewago Creek, which flows from right to left in the survey as drawn. McClean used the dot in the upper left corner of the survey to mark the location of the buildings then on the property. (From the Adams County Draft Book B, p. 140, Office of the Prothonotary.)

\* \* \* \*

In addition to Mary Jameson's autobiographical statement and the surviving public records, there is valuable information, which along with everything else needs to be examined critically, in still another source. It offers an additional perspective which helps to supplement and complement our knowledge of the Thomas Jameson family.<sup>31</sup>

In late 1873 Henry J. Stahle, for many years (1845-1892) editor of the weekly *Gettysburg Compiler*, rode into the Buchanan valley in the South Mountain.<sup>32</sup> While there, he visited several people, including Robert (1810-1883) and Agnes Bleakney. Knowing, as he later wrote, "their knowledge of local history to be extensive and reliable," he began asking them questions about the French and Indian raid into their immediate area more than a century earlier. He was confident of at least the general credibility of what they told him. As he explained it, the Bleakneys "have the facts from tradition through generations of the family residing on

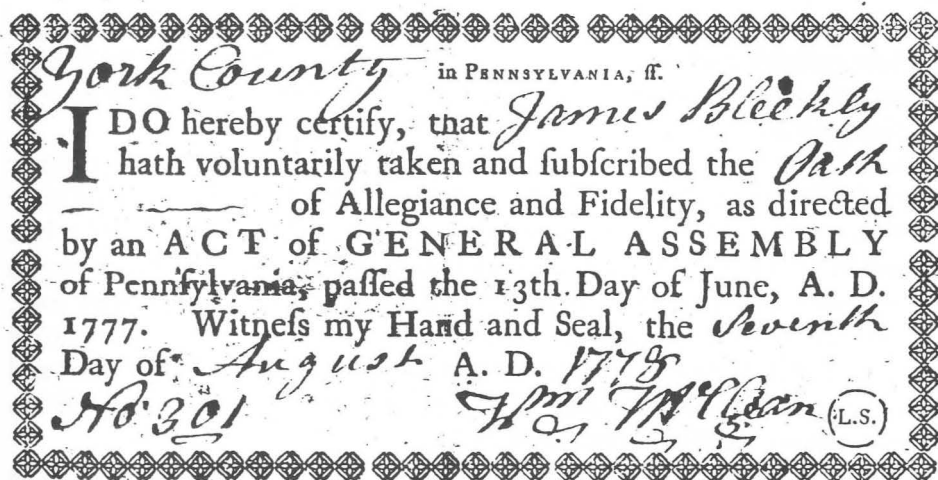


the same farm, corroborated by records in an old family bible." One might ask how reliable facts based solely on tradition are. Nowhere did Stahle inform his readers how Bible records were used to verify anything the Bleakneys told him.

Under the heading "Indian History.- A Man, Wife and Daughter Carried Off," Stahle used part of a column in the *Compiler* for January 7, 1874, to present his readers with a detailed description of what happened to the Jamesons (that was how he spelled the family name in this account) and their neighbors. The date of the seizure, he was told, was "about 1755." A year later, on February 5, 1875, in a lengthy story entitled "Early History of State and County," Stahle retold the Richard Bard story as his son Archibald had compiled it, and then repeated his earlier column on the French and Indian raid on the Jamesons.

Almost five years passed before the subject came up again in the pages of the *Compiler*. In four weekly issues of the paper in December 1879 (December 4-25), an unidentified person calling himself Knor and announcing that he was writing for the newspaper went into much greater detail about the seizure than Stahle had earlier. Knor visited the Bleakneys, on at least one occasion accompanied by Stahle. At that time, Knor had access to what he described as "a small, well-worn book," which he concluded corroborated what the Bleakneys had been saying "in every material particular." Although its title page was lost, Knor concluded from the preface that it had been published in Genesee county, New York, in 1824 and from an appendix that the author's name was J. E. Seaver. An Adams county resident, named Garret Brinkerhoff (1787-1862), had purchased the book about 1830 while visiting relatives in Cayuga county, New York. Someone had given it to Knor after Stahle's 1874 and 1875 stories in the *Compiler*. In his four articles, Knor tried to weave the Bleakney and Seaver testimonies into one narrative of Mary's life. She ceases being *Jameson*; she has now become *Jemison*. Because the Seaver narrative used the year 1755 for the attack and the Bleakneys had told Stahle it had occurred "about 1755," that now becomes the accepted date.

It is evident from the Stahle and Knor accounts that the testimony of Robert and Agnes Bleakney in the 1870s was derived ultimately from James Bleakney who, with his wife, lived in the South Mountain as early as the time of the raid. The implication is that Robert and Agnes heard what they believed directly from the old pioneer, but this is unlikely. James Bleakney died in Menallen township on June 27, 1822, at the age of ninety-eight years. Robert was only twelve at the time. There is no evidence that Agnes, who was fifteen, was then living with the Bleakneys.



YORK-TOWN: Printed by HALL and SELLERS. 1778.

Fig. 4. James Bleakney's Certificate of Allegiance, 1778

During the American Revolution, all males over eighteen years of age in Pennsylvania were required to renounce all allegiance to the British Crown and take an oath of allegiance and fidelity to the state of Pennsylvania. When many persons ignored the first deadline for taking the oath (July 1, 1777), the legislature passed a more stringent measure with heavier penalties and set a new deadline (June 1, 1778). "James Bleakley" waited until August 7, 1778 to appear before Justice of the Peace William McClean and do his duty. (Original in the Adams County Historical Society.)

These two people may well have heard what they long remembered from Robert's parents or other relatives.

James Bleakney was living in the valley without a formal claim of any kind when rumors of possible Indian raids prompted him to move to a place Robert and Agnes called Little Conewago, where they supposedly remained "a year or two." The Little Conewago creek flows north from its sources southeast of Hanover and empties into the Big Conewago north of New Oxford.

In 1762, the year of the earliest York county tax list, there was no James Bleakney in either Cumberland or Menallen township, but there was a taxable by that name in Mount Pleasant township, along whose eastern boundary the Little Conewago creek flows. By the time of the next surviving list for Menallen, in 1772, and regularly thereafter, James is on record there as a taxable. It is apparent that he and his family remained in Mount Pleasant for more than a year or two. It is equally apparent that, if Robert and Agnes are to be believed, his family was not



in the Buchanan valley when the Jameson family was seized.

Possibly because he lived in such a sparsely populated part of the county, James Bleakney was never appointed to fill a township office, but in 1808 the governor of Pennsylvania commissioned his son and namesake a justice of the peace for Cumberland and Franklin townships. A large landholder, the younger James was assessed in 1799 for 236 acres and a sawmill. In the 1830s he and his wife moved to Perry county, Ohio, where he died in his eighty-second year in 1841. In 1804, when he was about eighty years of age, the elder James and his wife transferred their homestead, which then consisted of 389½ acres, to two unmarried daughters, Margaret (1770-1856) and Hannah (d. 1849). Because during his many years of occupancy their father had never obtained a warrant for this land (he did have a survey, but one without benefit of warrant, which was unusual), it remained for them to secure a clear title, which they did when the state issued them a patent deed on June 15, 1811.<sup>33</sup> Margaret owned much of this land until her death, when Robert Bleakney acquired it. This is where he and Agnes were living when Henry J. Stahle and Knor visited them.

In 1873 the Bleakneys told Stahle that a family named "Kilkennon" lived in their neighborhood in the 1750s. Since they believed that it included a "good number of stout boys, all well armed," they could understand that the family first decided "they would risk staying if the Indians should come." However, as the rumors became more menacing, the Kincannons too decided to find a safe place and to ask the Jamesons to go along with them. Approaching their neighbors' house on that fateful April morning, and "hearing much firing," they turned away and hurried down the Conewago creek toward a blockhouse which some local residents had erected. This was not one of the frontier forts which the provincial government built; there were none of these in either York or Adams counties. The Bleakneys told Stahle that the blockhouse was "somewhere near where Samuel Hartman now resides, back of Arendtsville."<sup>34</sup>

From existing contemporary records, it is possible to confirm some of what the Bleakneys remembered about the Kincannon family and also to correct some faulty parts of their memory. On January 12, 1758, about three months before the Indian raid and in the county town of York, Francis Kincannon entered into an agreement, called a bill of sale in one part of the document and a mortgage in another part. For sixteen pounds he "granted Bargend Sold and Delivered" to Thomas Kelly of Chanceford township in southeastern York county certain specified household goods, farming implements, grain, and farm animals, as well as an "Improvement and Clame to a Tract of Land Situate in Menalen Township



... Suposed to Contain one Hundred Acres, more or less." According to the deed, this land adjoined James Bleakney on the south. We do not know whether the Kincannons remained on their property after the bill of sale, but at least the Bleakneys believed that they did. In April 1760, Kelly acknowledged that he had received payment of the debt owned him.<sup>35</sup>

There was a Francis "Cancanen" in the Menallen township tax list for 1762, but he does not appear on any subsequent one. Although in 1873 the Bleakneys said they knew where the Kincannons had once lived (they identified the property as one belonging to Samuel McKendrick), the fact that Francis's name has been associated with at least three different parcels of land, for none of which he obtained a survey or a patent deed, leaves one in doubt.<sup>35</sup> What is certain is that the family moved to the present Washington county, Virginia, probably between the time Francis got his application in 1767 and when the resulting survey was made for Nicholas Strausbaugh in June 1768. He acquired large tracts of land in Virginia and died in 1795. A sketch of the family published in 1974 which shows that in 1758 there were four Kincannon sons, ranging in age from two to sixteen years of age, leads one to wonder about the identity of the "good number of stout boys" in the family in the spring of 1758, "all well armed."<sup>36</sup>

Although Henry J. Stahle was certainly interested in learning about the Bleakneys and Kincannons when he journeyed into the Buchanan Valley, he wanted even more to find out what people there could tell him about the Jameson family and its tragic disappearance on that spring morning in 1758.

There is no evidence that, at the time of his first visit in 1873, the Bleakneys knew anything about the Seaver book. What they told him at that time, and what appeared in the *Compiler* on January 7, 1874, therefore, was not in any way influenced by what Mary Jameson had told her interviewer in western New York half a century earlier.

Robert and Agnes said that the Indians had carried off three people (the correct number was ten), that Mary's two younger brothers escaped by creeping into a hollow log (we have no other source for the log story, but they were her two older brothers), and that Mary never knew what happened to her parents (it is clear from the Seaver book that she did know). The Bleakneys told Stahle in 1873 that a man named William Mann, who worked for the Jamesons, was killed on the spot before the raiding party left the farm. By the time Stahle returned to the valley, they were able to say that the victim was actually William Buck, not William Mann (the *Pennsylvania Gazette* article calls him Robert Buck).

The Bleakneys showed Stahle and Knor where they believed some of the neighbors had buried the man. Two maple trees and a border of field stones still marked the grave. All that remained to identify the rest of the Jameson farm, the house and barn having long since disappeared without leaving a trace, were "a few gnarled and decaying apple trees." If the Bleakneys knew anything about what happened to young John Mann after his release from captivity or the identity of the man named Fields, who visited Mary Jameson in New York, they apparently did not discuss these subjects with their visitors.

At the time of his first visit, the Bleakneys told Stahle exactly where, in their opinion, the Jameson farm had been. They identified it as the property that Joseph I. Livers had recently sold to Francis Cole. Actually, this property was part of the 303 acres which George Campbell had surveyed in 1787 and which he had retained until 1798. Successive owners were Peter Breighner, Peter Keckler, Philip Stambaugh, John Lowstetter, and Jacob Harbaugh. In advertising the property for sale in 1822, the sheriff reported that it contained two dwelling houses, a barn, and a sawmill.<sup>37</sup> When Samuel Brady (1779-1847) purchased it from Harbaugh in 1831, the original survey of 303 acres was still intact. In 1842 he sold off 131 acres to his son Samuel. The remaining 172 acres went to his older son, John, in 1849. Since neither George Campbell nor any of his successors had secured a clear title to this land, John and Samuel Brady took that step when the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania granted them a patent deed for the whole 303 acres on July 29, 1853. By the time he sold his part to John Livers in 1867, Samuel had about 100 acres left. John's part was the one with his father's former sawmill. He was still being assessed for 180 acres and the sawmill in 1882, the last year in which he appears on the lists.

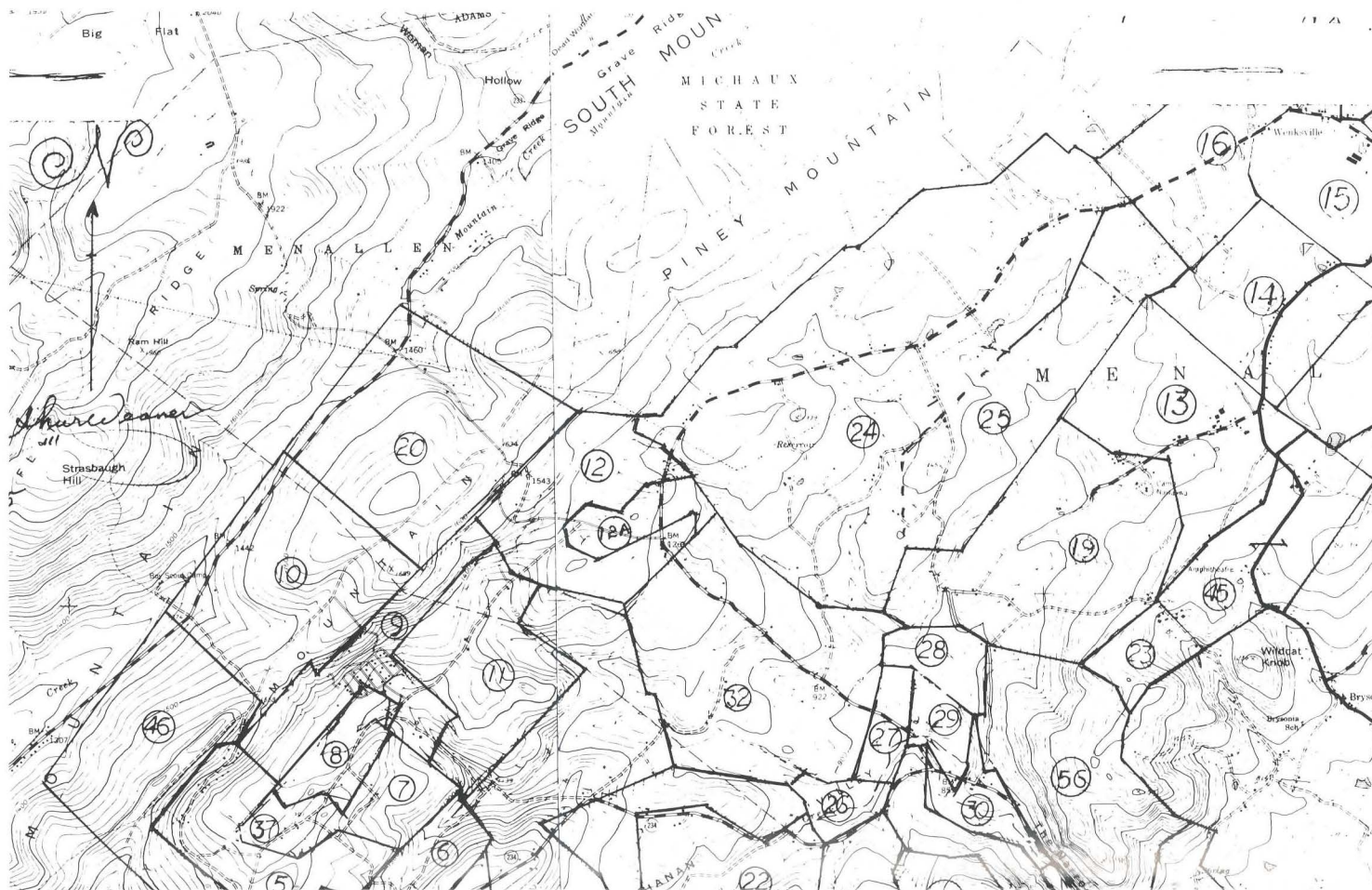
In 1995 there are but two owners for most of the Campbell tract. One is Reva Mae Rarig, who with her late husband, Frederick J. Rarig, purchased 107 acres, 142 perches on April 26, 1973. The other is the Glatfelter Pulp Wood Company, which acquired 191 acres, 100 perches on August 28, 1973.<sup>38</sup> According to the Bleakneys, the Jamesons lived on the part which Mrs. Rarig now owns and which local residents long called the "White Squaw farm." This may indeed have been the case, but since there was no survey of what the Jamesons believed was their land until long after they were gone from it, it is impossible to be certain.

The map on pp. 27-8, drawn on a United States Geological Survey map, is part of a much larger one prepared by Arthur Weaner in order to facilitate a throughgoing study of the patterns of early settlement both north and south of the Buchanan Valley in the South Mountain.



Glatfelter: The Jameson Raid (1758) as a Focus for Historical Inquiry  
 Part of a larger historical connected survey prepared by Arthur Weaner,  
 this map illustrates early settlement patterns in the area of the Buchanan Valley.

26







Beginning at the present U.S. Route 30 in the south, the larger map extends in a northeasterly direction along the ridge and east slope of Piney Mountain, to include several tracts north of the village of Wenksville. It incorporates more than fifty parcels and more than 15,000 acres of land.

Most of the warrants for this large area were issued only in or after the 1790s and only after one or two persons, usually neighbors, testified before one or two justices of the peace whether, from their own knowledge, the land to be warranted was improved or unimproved.<sup>39</sup> If the former were the case, the information given would generally follow an established sequence. For example, when Peter Keckler wanted a warrant for 180 acres in 1809, neighbors Andrew Noel and Peter Strausbaugh swore that "the said Peter Keckler Is an actual Settler of the said Described Track of Land that he has a House on it fit for the habitation of man and a person now Living In it and that we have Seen grain Raised and Reapt on It."<sup>40</sup> They then went on to give their best estimate of when the land was first improved.

Although there was an abundance of fairly level and fertile soil in the area covered by the larger Weaner map, much of it was hilly and the surveyors were fully justified in calling it "mountain land." For many years, especially during the nineteenth century, the chief economic activity in much of the region was lumbering, and one could find sawmills everywhere, along with an occasional shingle or lath mill. At the time of the 1840 census, for example, there were twenty-eight sawmills in Franklin and Menallen townships. Surveying mountain land, both here and elsewhere, was a difficult task which must have tried the patience and ingenuity of even an experienced surveyor. When Samuel Sloan resurveyed the Nicholas Wolf claim (Tract 22) in 1809, he wrote on the draft that "this Survey does not close well but it is extremely rough with Laurel and other bramble."<sup>41</sup> In preparing his map, Arthur Weaner encountered numerous instances in which surveys either did not properly join each other, which they should have, or which actually "interfered with" (to use a surveyor's term) earlier ones of adjacent properties. It is not difficult to imagine how steep hills, heavy timber, laurel, other brambles, and a scarcity of carefully tilled fields can explain a jigsaw land puzzle whose pieces do not fit neatly together.

The persons who committed to print what Mary Jameson and the Bleakneys told them described the area in which Thomas Jameson and his family lived as a neighborhood, implying that they had at the very least a fair number of close neighbors. Even after taking into consideration that there may have been residents nearby who were also



squatters and whose names have never yet come to light, the credible evidence which is available indicates strongly that, even long after 1758, the Jameson neighborhood was a very sparsely settled one. A careful study of the Menallen and Franklin tax lists for 1786, the year after the latter township was formed, yields fewer than ten taxables known to have lived in the area covered by the Weaner map.

Most or all of the known neighbors of the Jamesons were also Scotch-Irish and Presbyterian. The ethnic and religious composition of the area began to change with the arrival of several Roman Catholic families who had come from the vicinity of Paradise township in York county.<sup>42</sup> After being served for some time by priests coming from Conewago chapel, located near McSherrystown, on October 10, 1816, these Catholics laid the cornerstone for their own church, which was soon given the name of St. Ignatius Loyola. The church was built on land warranted by George Shaffer in 1771, but not surveyed until twenty-eight years later. On November 15, 1816, a few months after he obtained a patent deed for a larger tract of land, which included the Shaffer survey, Jacob Sterner and his wife sold 125 acres 30 perches to Rev. Francis Neale, a Jesuit priest, for the use of the church (Tracts 42, 43, and 47A). In 1855, after the parish had divided this large tract into lots, Neale's successor deeded 8 acres 148 perches, on which the church stands, to two lay trustees, John Brady and George Cole.<sup>43</sup>

Several of the families which settled in the northern part of the area covered by the Weaner map were Germans who had some affiliation with the Lutheran and Reformed churches. Members of these two denominations joined in 1781 to organize a union church is what is now Arendtsville, but which did not become a town until many years after that date.

The following section illustrates some important features of settlement in the area north and south of the Thomas Jameson homestead by a discussion of the early history of some twenty-seven tracts and their claimants or owners.

\* \* \* \*

### **Some Menallen Township Heads of Families at the Time of the First Federal Census, 1790**

Frederick Warrant, 7 males, 7 females  
Abraham Kackler, 2 males, 2 females  
Peter Kackler, 2 males, 2 females  
James Bleckley, 4 males, 3 females



Andrew Knowel, 5 males, 8 females  
Peter Trasbaugh, 6 males, 7 females  
Nicholas Trasbaugh, 1 male, 1 female  
Daniel Knowel, 8 males, 2 females  
Philip Simon, 1 male, 1 female  
John Simmon, 3 males, 3 females  
William Boyd, 4 males, 6 females,  
1 other free person  
Valentine Fail, 4 males, 4 females

Census entries for twelve families referred to in this section. The first ten are listed together. Those for Boyd and Fehl follow a few entries later.

*Tract 1.* This is the parcel of 303 acres surveyed in 1787 for George Campbell. Most of it was owned in 1995 by Reva Mae Rarig and the Glatfelter Pulp Wood Company. Somewhere on this tract were the Jameson family buildings. The 1787 survey showed clearly that all of the land immediately surrounding this tract was then vacant, the only neighbor being "Jacob Simmons at a distance." A study of the land papers for the adjoining properties confirms the accuracy of this statement. For example, no warrant was issued for the large Tract 50 until 1806, and interest was charged only from 1801, the presumed time of settlement. No evidence has yet been found to indicate that Jacob Simmons was ever anything more than a squatter, possibly on part of Tract 4 or 33.

*Tracts 2, 21, 22.* These three tracts, totaling about 955 acres, were claimed by James Bleakney (died 1822, aged ninety-eight years) and James Bleakney the younger (died 1841, in his eighty-second year). The original family homestead was probably located somewhere on Tract 2. At the time of the 1798 federal direct tax assessment, there was a 28 by 16 foot, one-story log house on this property, with three windows and fourteen panes.<sup>44</sup> This was the property which the elder James transferred to his two unmarried daughters in 1804; it then consisted of 389 acres. Robert Bleakney took over what still remained of the original in 1856. It passed out of the family only after Agnes's death in 1890.

Tracts 21 and 22 (this was the Nicholas Wolf tract which the elder James had surveyed in 1771) were eventually acquired by the younger James. They passed out of family hands about 1802, when James moved to his late father-in-law's property in the Manor of Maske.

*Tracts 1, 7, 11, 37.* Land papers associate the name of Francis Kincannon in some way or other with these four tracts, including 1 (the Sharp deed to George Campbell identifies him as a previous claimant), 7 (Andrew Noel's 1811 warrant was issued on the basis of Kincannon's

1767 application), and 11 (Peter Keckler's 1811 warrant refers to an improvement which Kincannon had earlier made on the land for which he was now filing a formal claim). The survey made for Nicholas Strausbaugh and called "Wild Catt Swamp" in response to Kincannon's 1767 application is identified on the map as Tract 37; it was incorporated into the larger survey made in 1811 for Andrew Noel. Kincannon's 1758 bill of sale or mortgage locates his real estate as being south of John Kelsey (Tract 12A) and north of James Bleakney (Tract 2). This is probably the most accurate information we shall ever have identifying where the Kincannon family actually lived.

*Tract 8.* Casper Fink, for whom a survey was made in 1770, was a taxable in Menallen township through the year 1784. He may have been the "Gasper Fink" listed in the Washington county, Pennsylvania, census for 1790. Many families did leave York and Adams counties for southwestern Pennsylvania and Ohio both before and after 1800. No patent deed was issued for the Fink land until 1851.

*Tracts 5-7, 33, 37, 48-9, 51.* Andrew Noel came from Paradise township into Menallen township between 1771 and 1778.<sup>45</sup> Several surviving signatures of his in German script establish his ethnic origin. As late as 1789, he was still being assessed for less than one hundred acres; beginning in the 1790s, he took up unclaimed and unimproved land west, south, and east of the Campbell tract. On the basis of nine warrants issued between 1793 and 1811, two of which were for land west of the area of the Weaner map, some 2,000 acres were surveyed for him and he obtained patent deeds for almost all of it. Noel was usually assessed for one or more sawmills, and sometimes for a grist mill and a distillery.

Andrew Noel made his will on October 31, 1816, and it was probated on March 11 of the following year. In it, he named eleven children. There is no record of a tombstone for him.

*Tract 3.* Daniel Noel, a member of the Paradise township family of the same name, appears in the Cumberland township tax list as early as 1779. According to the 1790 census record, he was then living in Menallen township and his household consisted of eight males and two females.

On the authority of a warrant which he secured in 1805, 197 acres adjoining the Campbell tract on the north were surveyed for him a few months later. When he applied for the warrant, Andrew Noel testified that the land being claimed had not been improved before the spring of 1785.<sup>46</sup> Daniel obtained a patent deed for this land in 1816 and continued as a taxable in Menallen township through the year 1823.

*Tract 4.* Peter Strausbaugh came into Menallen from Paradise township sometime between 1762 and 1771. He was almost certainly



the son of the Nicholas Strausbaugh for whom the Wildcat Swamp survey was made in 1768 and whose household is listed next to his in the census of 1790. The family name appears in the records spelled in a variety of ways, including *Strosper* and *Trosbach*.

By means of two warrants, one in 1793 and the other in 1815, Peter made formal claim to his lands. Over the years he is assessed for increasing acreage. Along with many others in Adams county and elsewhere in the country, as a landowner he did not survive the hard times which followed the Panic of 1819. In August 1824 the sheriff sold his real estate, consisting of 250 acres, on which there were four dwelling houses, a log barn and stable, and a spring house. He lived on in Menallen, assessed now for only a cow or two, through 1826. The record for the following year stated that he was now "out of the township."

According to the *Gettysburg Compiler* for June 15, 1830, Peter Strausbaugh died on the preceding May 31, in his eighty-second year, in Hamiltonban township, where he may have gone to live with one of his children. His wife Barbara was the daughter of Peter Noel of Paradise township. At the time of the 1790 census their household consisted of six males and seven females. There is no record of a tombstone for either Peter or Barbara.

*Tracts 9, 11.* Peter Keckler appears for the first time in the Menallen township tax lists in 1787, as a single man. His father Abraham (1732-1823) had moved into Menallen from Manheim township, York county, a year or two earlier. The family name was sometimes spelled with a C or a G. At the time of the federal direct tax assessment of 1798, Abraham claimed about one hundred acres of land, but without benefit of warrant, survey, or patent deed.

Peter is not assessed for real estate until after 1800. By means of warrants in 1807 and 1811, he secured surveys and then patent deeds for some 416 acres of land, on which for some years he operated one or more sawmills. This was almost certainly the land which his father had occupied before him.

Peter Keckler died on March 9, 1852, and was buried in Arendtsville. The baptisms of several of his children were entered in the union church register there. If the age carved on his tombstone is correct (87 years, 4 months, and 17 days), he was born on October 22, 1764. He and his wife Mary had a large family. In his will Peter named nine sons and two daughters.

*Tract 24.* Frederick Warren arrived in Menallen township between 1762 and 1771. In the tax lists and elsewhere, his name is often spelled *Warrant*, *Warrenton*, and *Warrington*.



Possibly locating first on small tracts warranted and surveyed by others (William Davis in 1751 and Charles Tolford in 1753), but not necessarily settled by them, near the end of his life Frederick secured two warrants, one for 400 acres and the other for 300. When he died in 1800, the sheriff's inquest found that his real estate holdings amounted to 1003 acres and 81 perches.

Warren left no will, but the Orphans' Court papers show that he was survived by his widow and fifteen children. Three of his sons married daughters of Andrew Noel. The Warren homestead was near Wenksville and many later members of the family, including two of Frederick's sons, were buried in the cemetery there.

*Tracts 12, 12A.* William Boyd was the son of Thomas Boyd, an early settler in Cumberland township, in the Manor of Maske. He was a farmer and tanner and left a family of young children when he died in 1760.

William Boyd appears first in Menallen township as a taxable in 1783, when he took up residence on Tract 12A, which was one of the oldest occupied properties in the area. There is evidence that it was the residence of John Kelsey, or Kelso, in the 1750s and that he and his family were living there when the raid on the Jamesons occurred in 1758. Laid out a few years before the Revolution, the road from Shippensburg to Baltimore was cut through the mountain at a place called Kelso's Gap, which was in all probability named for John Kelso.

In 1779 William Kelso, a gunsmith and probably John's son, sold the family property to Andrew Boyd. A few years later it came into the hands of his older brother, William, who farmed parts of it. He also operated a sawmill and tannery. Taking advantage of his favorable location along a well-traveled road, Boyd secured a license to keep a tavern in 1795 and continued operating it until 1825. At the time of the federal direct tax assessment in 1798, his dwelling house and tavern was one of the two in the area included in this discussion (Valentine Fehl had the other one) which consisted of two stories. It was a log structure.

Although he certainly established himself as a successful businessman in Menallen township, William Boyd made no recorded effort to lay any formal claim to land until 1815, when he secured a warrant for 300 acres. What was surveyed a few weeks later was not what his family had been living on for more than thirty years, but the vacant and unimproved land which surrounded it on three sides. Something eventually prompted William Boyd to secure a clear title to his actual homestead. When he applied for a second warrant in 1831, two justices of the peace recorded Peter Keckler's testimony that there was indeed an improvement on this property, but he believed "there is no person now in the neighborhood

who can recollect the first improvement of it but from the best information he has been able to obtain he supposes it was first improved about the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy."<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, when the warrant was issued, the date from which interest was to be charged, and presumably the date of first improvement, was given as 1755. The patent deed which the Commonwealth gave Boyd late in 1831 was for 444 acres 120 perches, for both Tracts 12 and 12A.

According to the Gettysburg *Sentinel* for April 3, 1837, William Boyd died on March 30 of that year, in his eighty-eighth year. He was buried at Black's, the graveyard of the Upper Marsh Creek (and later the Gettysburg) Presbyterian church. There was a tombstone, but without dates. Boyd left no will, but his estate papers mentioned six children, three of whom acquired his real estate.

*Tract 32.* William Boyd, Jr. was born about the time his family moved into Menallen township. He first appears as a taxable there in 1807. Unlike his father, he quickly took steps to make a formal claim for land. A warrant was issued to him in 1808. On the authority of sworn testimony that it had not been previously improved, he was charged almost no interest.<sup>48</sup> Later that year, 402 acres were surveyed, and he obtained a patent deed for them in 1814.

Assessed for a time for one or more sawmills, Boyd sold his real estate about 1818 and disappears from the tax lists. Presumably he was not living when his father died in 1837, since he is not listed among the heirs.

*Tracts 26-30, 45.* Valentine Fehl came into Adams county from Berks county about 1790. By the time the first federal census was taken in that year, his family, which already consisted of four males and four females, was living in Menallen township.

In 1794 Fehl bought a 292 acre property (Tract 45) from James Johnson, but the location with which his family was most closely associated was the one which he purchased at a sheriff sale in 1795. It consisted of five tracts (26-30) which had been warranted and surveyed north and west of the Narrows about a quarter century earlier, about the time the Shippensburg-to-Baltimore road was being opened. Court documents at the time of the sheriff sale, when all of the tracts were owned by the estate of Hans Morrison, refer to the property as "the sawmill place."<sup>49</sup> In 1809 Fehl obtained a patent deed for 320 acres 96 perches.

Valentine Fehl continued to operate a sawmill. In addition, between 1796 and the time of his death in 1827 he also operated a tavern, which his son Henry continued for about a decade longer. At the time of the



federal direct tax assessment in 1798, his dwelling house and tavern was one of the two in the area (William Boyd had the other) and consisted of two stories. While Boyd's house was log, Fehl's was described as "log boarded," which undoubtedly meant logs covered with boards.

Valentine Fehl died on April 28, 1827, in his seventieth year. If the German inscription on his tombstone in Arendtsville gives his correct age (69 years, 8 months, and 8 days), he was born on August 20, 1757. The baptisms of several children born to Valentine and Elizabeth Fehl were entered into the Arendtsville union church register.

\* \* \* \*

As noted earlier, each year the county court or the commissioners appointed a constable, two supervisors of highways, two overseers of the poor, and a tax collector in each township. They were chosen to serve for one-year terms, with the prospect that one would not be appointed again, at least not for two years in succession. Some idea of the extent to which people living in the area of the Weaner map were on the fringes of things in the later years of the eighteenth century is conveyed by the fact that neither the elder James Bleakney, Andrew Noel, Abraham Keckler, nor Peter Strausbaugh was ever called upon to serve in any of the above capacities.

Before 1800, three men living north of the Conewago creek in Menallen township were appointed supervisors of highways: Frederick Warren in 1784, William Boyd in 1787, and Valentine Fehl in 1798 and 1799. It is true that the younger James Bleakney was commissioned a justice of the peace for Cumberland and Franklin townships, but this was only about 1800 and only after he had moved into a more densely settled part of the townships.

\* \* \* \*

This essay explores one small part of Adams county history. Although most of the county's first settlers chose to make their new homes on land in its eastern and central sections, a very few ventured beyond, into the South Mountain. Until the French and Indian War began, these few could feel secure as they established new homesteads for their families.

In the spring of 1758, the Bards and Jamesons learned that their security, and indeed their very lives, could be abruptly snatched away. In both cases, someone survived to tell their story. Although years later Mary Jameson offered enough testimony of her life to fill a small book,



the inquiring student of Adams county history wants to know more than she could ever be expected to remember about her few years in the South Mountain. Who lived nearby when she and her family were seized and carried off? Was there anyone left in the vicinity to remember what happened to the Jamesons? If so, how accurately did they recall the facts and then pass them along to later generations? Who were the people who eventually possessed not only the abandoned Jameson homestead, but also the mountain land which surrounded it? What diversity, if any, did they bring to the area? How long did it take them to occupy the land and then to perfect a title to it? In the meantime, what use did they make of the resources available to them?

This essay is an effort to find a fuller answer to these and other questions than has been attempted before, but, in spite of the scarcity of good credible sources, this is not the definitive treatment of the subject. There is still more to be learned.

## Notes

1. This essay is a greatly expanded version of two articles entitled "The Thomas Jameson Family in Adams County," which appeared in the January and February 1995 issues of the *Newsletter* of the Adams County Historical Society. Associate Director Arthur Weaner has contributed significantly to the section of this essay dealing with land occupancy and ownership, and I gratefully acknowledge his help. The reader should be aware that Adams county was formed from York county only in January 1800. When the term "Adams county" is used in this essay, it refers to the present Adams county.

2. The author of the sketch was Eleanor Robinette Dobson.

3. Mary Jameson's recollections of her life before April 1758 as reported by Dr. James E. Seaver are found in James E. Seaver, *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison, Who was taken by the Indians, in the year 1755, when only about twelve years of age, and has continued to reside amongst them to the present time...* (Canandaigua, New York, 1824), pp. 17-25 (hereafter cited as Seaver, *Jemison*).

4. In *Colonial Records* 8:232-3 (hereafter cited as CR). (The *Colonial Records* were published in sixteen volumes before the First Series of the *Pennsylvania Archives* appeared.)

5. In *Pennsylvania Archives*, First Series, 2:755 (hereafter cited as PA).

6. See the *Report of the Commission to Locate the Sites of the Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania*, ed. Thomas Lynch Montgomery, 2 vols. (Harrisburg, 1916), 1:474-5.

7. However, a Franklin (then Cumberland) county weaver and former resident of the Manor of Maske, James McCullough, noted in his diary that on July 27, 1757, "one McKisson [was] Wounded and his son taken Captive from ye South Mounten" and that on August 17 of the same year "William Wags Barn was burnt in ye trak [that is, Carroll's Tract] York County by indines."

McCullough kept a detailed record of Indian attacks on the settlers in the York and Cumberland counties of his time. He briefly set down, for example, the bare bones relating to the attack on the Jameson homestead: "Aprill ye 5th, one man killed and 10 taken near blaks gape [that is, Black's Gap, along today's U.S. Rt. 30 in Caledonia]. He also mentioned the raid on the Bard or Baird farm discussed below: "Aprill ye 13 one man killed and 9 taken near Archibald beards at South mounten 1758."

As may be clear from these entries, taking captives to replenish their dwindling numbers was one principal motive for the Delaware and Shawnee raids on the settlers. Mary Jameson's example, actually one of many, suggests that up to a point the Indians were successful in retaining captured Whites.

James McCullough's diary is in the possession of Charles J. Stoner of Mercersburg, Franklin county. Mr. Stoner has generously allowed the ACHS to make a copy for its records.

8. Adams County Draft Book A, p. 191, Office of the Prothonotary (copy in the Adams County Historical Society).

9. PA, First Series, 3:336-7. Later, Richard Bard made several written records which went some years beyond the time of finding his wife and bringing her home. Upon his father's death, Archibald Bard used his papers to prepare an account describing his family's captivity and release. It was first published in a two-volume work edited by Archibald Loudon, a Carlisle newspaper publisher, under the title *A Selection, of some of the most Interesting Narratives, of Outrages, Committed by the Indians, in their Wars, with the White People*, 2 vols. (Carlisle, 1808, 1811). See also *Captivity of Richard Bard, Esq., And His Wife Catharine Poe Bard*, . . . , ed. Archibald Bard (Chambersburg, 1904).

10. Mary's recollection of her life between April 1758 and 1823, including



some direct quotations, are taken from Seaver, *Jemison*, pp. 20-34.

11. *CR*, 8:628-9. There were a number of taxables named John and William Mann in Pennsylvania in the 1770s and 1780s.

12. Seaver, *Jemison*, p. 19.

13. For more information on this subject, see Charles H. Glatfelter and Arthur Weaner, *The Manor of Maske: Its History and Individual Properties* (Gettysburg, 1992).

14. There are xerox copies of all surviving eighteenth-century tax lists of Adams county townships in the Adams County Historical Society.

15. There are typed abstracts of the pertinent court and commissioners' records, as well as microfilm copies of the York county records before 1800, in the Adams County Historical Society.

16. *Ibid.*

17. Seaver, *Jemison*, p. 21.

18. The place where the Jamesons lived in 1758 was about seven miles west of the north-south line of the Manor of Maske.

19. The term *improvement*, when used in applications and warrants, meant that someone had built enough buildings, however primitive, and begun to till enough land, however primitively, to enable an individual or family to subsist on the land for which a formal claim was being sought.

In October 1785 the York county court divided Cumberland township and named the northwestern part Franklin township, obviously in honor of Benjamin Franklin. The property which the sheriff sold to Hance Hamilton is now in Franklin township.

20. York County Deed Book A, p. 352. There was a Robert Work named in the 1762 Cumberland township tax list as a single man. He eventually owned a 400-acre manor tract, near Greenmount. How Jameson came to owe him sixteen pounds and what other relationship may have existed between them we do not know. If we did, it might tell us something about where in the manor the Jamesons lived. One of the first storekeepers in the manor,

Samuel Reynolds, who lived several miles north of the present Gettysburg, died in 1758. According to his inventory, among those owing him money was Thomas Jameson, whose store bill was four shillings and five pence.

21. Following a request made by Menallen township residents that they "labor under great inconvenience and difficulty by reason of the present form and situation of Menallen Township," the Adams county court on April 21, 1858, approved redrawing the line between Menallen and Franklin townships so as to move about 12,000 acres from the former to the latter. Some of the properties discussed in this essay, including that of Robert and Agnes Bleakney, which had been in Menallen township, were now in Franklin.

22. West Side Application 4478 and Copied Survey C-145-248, Pennsylvania State Archives. (Microfilm or xerox copies of many Adams county land papers are available in the Adams County Historical Society.)

23. The name of this old South Mountain family is spelled in many ways, including *Blakely*, *Blakly*, and *Blakney*. The spelling used here is the one found most frequently in estate and similar papers. The Franklin township section of the 1886 history of Adams county contains the absurd statement that James Bleakney arrived in the area in 1734 and that he was a shoemaker (*History of Adams County* [Chicago, 1886; 1992 reprint], p. 256). In 1734 he was about ten years old. Who was there within miles in any direction to buy the shoes which he made?

24. West Side Application 5357 and Copied Survey A-38-355, Pennsylvania State Archives.

25. York Warrant S314 and Copied Survey D-61-259, Pennsylvania State Archives. The land on which St. Ignatius Roman Catholic church stands was taken from this survey.

26. Although any careful study of land acquisition and ownership in colonial

Pennsylvania must rest on actual warrants, surveys, and patent deeds, it is clear that these sources must often be supplemented by whatever evidence can be found in various places about the presence of squatters and the informal claims which they established for themselves. The Jamesons, Bleakneys, and Kincannons are excellent examples.

27. York County Deed Book 2D, p. 32. It is probable that much of what we know about the previous owners of the Campbell tract comes from the certification of Edie and Rudisill of the information which older residents of the area told these men. Applications for Warrants, Microfilm Roll 7.29, Pennsylvania State Archives.

28. York Warrant C80, Pennsylvania State Archives.

29. Copied Survey K-322, Pennsylvania State Archives.

30. The author of Mary Jameson's biography in the *Dictionary of American Biography* stated that the family was taken from "their farm near the junction of Sharp's Run and Conewago Creek" (*Dictionary of American Biography* 10:39). William and James Sharp, either or both, undoubtedly gave their name to the run through their property. It still appears on topographical and other maps.

31. On March 9, 1835, the *Gettysburg Sentinel* published an account written by a missionary at Seneca Station, New York, who had visited Mary Jameson shortly before she died. They discussed her mother's religious counseling, including that of their last hours together, which Mary said she had never forgotten. In calling attention to the article, the editor expressed the belief that "some of our aged Marsh-creek friends" would remember having heard of the fate of the Jameson family. Neither of the two other newspapers being published in Gettysburg at the time used the missionary's account.

32. In reporting on a celebration of the recent election of James Buchanan to the presidency, held at David Goodyear's tavern in Franklin township, Henry J.

Stahle stated that "in the course of the evening, the beautiful valley on the line of Franklin and Menallen townships, . . . was, at the instance of a large number of its inhabitants then and there present, christened 'Buchanan Valley,' which elicited several appropriate speeches" (*Gettysburg Compiler*, December 15, 1856). The author of the 1886 history of Adams county stated (p. 256) that the earliest name of this valley was Pleasant Valley, but offered no evidence to support the statement.

33. Patent Book H-6, p. 106, Pennsylvania State Archives.

34. The 1872 Adams county atlas shows "S. Hartman" living about half a mile north of Arendtsville.

35. York County Deed Book A, p. 279. This is the earliest such instrument on record for property in the vicinity of the Jamesons.

36. See David B. Trimble, *Southwest Virginia Families* (n.p., 1974), pp. 211-2.

37. *Gettysburg Sentinel*, January 9, 1822.

38. Adams County Deed Books 306, pp. 378, 309, and 239.

39. There were three basic steps to be taken in acquiring clear title to unclaimed land in Pennsylvania. The first was to purchase a warrant, which directed a surveyor employed by the land office to lay off a specified quantity of land for a warrantee. The second was to secure an actual survey, which conferred enough of a title to enable the warrantee to sell or bequeath the land. The third step was to pay whatever was still due for the land and obtain a patent deed from the Penn heirs or, after the Revolution, from the Commonwealth. It was the patent deed, not the survey, which conveyed a clear title. Years, even decades, could, and often did, elapse between the issuance of a warrant and the granting of a patent deed. One had to apply for a warrant. Sometimes the application contained much valuable information about the previous use of the land.

40. Applications for Warrants, Microfilm



Roll 7.61, Pennsylvania State Archives.

41. Copied Survey C-94-240, Pennsylvania State Archives.

42. The earliest Catholic families in the Buchanan Valley were the Strausbaughs in the 1760s and the Noels in the 1770s. Although there were Dillons with early warrants, except for brief periods the first taxable member of that family in Menallen township was Charles in 1797 and in Franklin township it was Michael in 1823. Such families as the Bradys, Coles, and Irvins came later.

43. Patent Book H-13, p 701, Pennsylvania State Archives and Adams County Deed Books, H, p. 2 and 69, p. 252.

44. When war with France threatened in 1798, President John Adams signed a measure designed to raise revenue for the federal government by levying a tax directly on real estate. Assessors were directed to determine the amount of land each taxable held as well as the dimensions and material used in the construction of all buildings. In arriving at an assessed valuation of the real estate, the assessors listed the number of stories in each dwelling, as well as the number of windows

and lights (or panes). Virtually all dwellings in Menallen township in 1798 were log and one story. The surviving schedules for York and Adams counties generated by this measure, which was repealed soon after the threat of war had passed, are available on microfilm at the Adams County Historical Society. The same is true for most of the other sources used in discussing the twenty-seven tracts.

45. For Menallen township, the only tax lists available before one surviving from the war years 1778 date from 1762 and the fall of 1771 for use in 1772. In most cases, these lists provide the only reliable source for the arrival of newcomers into the township between 1762 and 1778.

46. Applications for Warrants, Microfilm Roll 7.58, Pennsylvania State Archives.

47. *Ibid.*, Microfilm Roll 7.73.

48. *Ibid.*, Microfilm Roll 7.59. It is surprising, to say the least, that no one had claimed this large tract along the Shippensburg road before 1808.

49. In 1990 a descendant of Valentine Fehl brought the original of the 1795 sheriff's deed into the historical society and permitted us to make a copy of it.