

It was from the Penns that Isaac Walton bought 380 acres and 156 perches in 1793, thus beginning in America the Walton family saga. And it is true, of course, that descendants of both the Wallis and Walton families are with us today.

In April, 1815, Lycoming County was formed and from that time until 1852, many owners' names are on the record deeds. In 1852, the property was sold to Benjamine Warner, a Quaker. It remained in the Quaker fold until 1922, when Narber Fry bought it. In 1925, the Morris family, of Philadelphia, bought it and for some time ran a tea-room. Finally, in 1935, Ernest and Amanda Brant became the owners. The present owners are Elwood and Ione Lose Brant.

As one looks through the records of the house, and the Quakers go by in rapid succession, one sad note, in one of the deeds, catches the eye:

Deed - Sept. 8 - 1876 to Benjamine Warner

"Whereas the said Parvin Master, owing to sundry losses and Misfortunes and at present unable to discharge his just debts is willing to assign his property for the benefit of his debts, sum of \$1.00 to him is given" - Here is a wonderful

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example of Quaker honesty!!

The original little house, with hand-hewn logs, is thought "to burrow into the hillside" sometime between 1784 and 1790. Before this, there were probably just some out buildings on the land.

Above the doorway of the oldest part of the house, there is a keystone with initials "J.S." and "E. S." and the date "1808". Many believe that this refers to a certain John Stryker and that it was he who owned the land and finished the log structure with limestone.

However, the records in the Court House simply do not bear this out. According to an indenture from Northumberland County, the land belonged to William Watson in 1808.

There is also another theory, that the initials belong to one Jno Sykes, who helped to build the limestone house and who, also, built the two handsome old doors, which are still in the house.

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(2) Hand made bricks, made from compressed sawdust, in the fireplace in the dining room, --- (3) Two articles found in the ground here: (a) a Harper's Ferry bayonet, and (b) an oxen shoe.

I can think of no more fitting way to close than to quote from an old hand-made sampler, which hung in the Reception Room in the days when it was a tea-room.

"Old house, you are really small,
Big enough for love, that's all."

Information for this booklet was prepared by Madeleine Whitelock for the meeting of Muncy Woman's Club held at the home of Ione and Elwood Brant, House of Many Stairs, on Wednesday Evening, April 27, 1983.

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ELM

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...a spot in Lycoming County



The "House of Many Stairs", located in Pennsdale, was built in the 1780's of lime rock and fossil-stone. All rooms are on different levels with 4 or 5 stairs leading to the next room. There is a large square fireplace in the kitchen constructed of hand made bricks. In the 1790's it became the "Bull's Head Tavern", on the stage-coach line, with overnight lodging. For a while it was a hideout for horse thieves and highwaymen; it also contains a hiding place used by the Underground Railroad to hide slaves.

Sketch & Information by Mike Maietta
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