

Jackson Township

Cambria County, Pennsylvania



Chapter 1

Annals Of Jackson Township

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Nanty Glo Journal
April 9, 1942

Jackson township, Cambria county, Pennsylvania was organized on January 3, 1828, prior to that being part of Cambria and Summerhill townships. It was named for Andrew Jackson who was elected president of the United States during that year. There are eighteen Jackson townships in the state and a large number by that name in the United States.

The township occupies a part of that land purchased by the heirs of William Penn in 1768, and much of the history of the earliest settlers of Pennsylvania is the early history of our own section, although there is no way to distinguish it from the rest. It has the following townships for its boundaries: on the north, Blacklick; to the south, East Taylor; on the east lies Cambria and Croyle townships, and Indiana county borders it on the west.

Jackson township contains one railroad and no large towns. There are six churches and ten schools and the population in 1940 was 2,442. In 1860 the population was 854. At Mundy's Corner the height above sea level is 1,897 feet; at Chickaree, 2,369; at Dearmin, 2,000 feet; at Vinco, 1,722 feet; on Rager Mountain 2,400 feet; at Vintondale, 1,408 feet.

Many industries have flourished here and disappeared, some of them beyond the memory of the oldest inhabitant. The several communities are mainly made up of descendants of those first settlers who through perseverance and often-great hardships made their homes in the wilderness and established their families. Several nationalities are represented by these first families. Here we have the immigrants coming over from Germany, Wales, England, Holland, Ireland, and in more recent times, Austria and southern Europe. One family is supposed to be a direct descendant of an Italian priest. Another, Irish to their finger tips, tell of their immigrant ancestor coming over on a cattleboat, and among their precious possessions a blue butter bowl, carefully guarded, which is still in the family. Yet another family claims the Mayflower as the boat their ancestor came on, English they are, and proud of it. But, wherever they came from, those pioneers, their descendants have stayed here in large numbers and have made of this township a thriving group of communities, wherein anyone might well be proud to live.

The township contains rich farming land; the community known as Clinefelter being made up of especially well kept farms. Most of the wage earners, however, are employed in the towns nearby, especially at the Bethlehem and Lorain Steel Companies in Johnstown. The average resident of the township is a home loving person, attested to by the well-kept appearance of most of the homes. In recent years some of the communities near the towns have really become suburbs of those towns, and homes, modern in every detail have been erected.

The residents of this locality are as a rule, religion conscious, most of them belonging to one of the six churches in the township, or maintaining membership in a city church. Here we have Brethren, Methodists, Presbyterians, Evangelicals, Catholics, Lutherans, and Christian church members, as well as

several other sects. The various churches, as a rule, are also social centers of their own communities. Although the township boasts of no high school, high qualifications are required of the teachers in the eight country and two village schools.

It is a far cry from the Jackson township of today, with its thickly populated communities, its smooth highways, electric lights, radios, telephones, automobiles, to the olden days of the plank road, candle-lit log cabin homes, and travel by horse-drawn vehicles, but the hand of man has, through the years, added much to the great natural beauty of this section of Perm's Woods, although in some places forests have been cut away in the natural progress of human beings. In other places, particularly as one stands high on Chickaree, on the upper part of the Meegan farm, may be glimpsed far vistas of as beautiful scenery as is found anywhere in the state. Also, in the Clinefelter community one may see for miles, rolling fields under cultivation or miles of a solid green of forests, seemingly so untouched as to appear almost as virgin timber. Near the Millwood section, too, there are miles of timber, dense in places as any jungle, yet of a third or fourth growth. In these woods deer are yet plentiful although they have been thinned out to a large extent by the annual hunt. Many species of wild life yet abound, but the ferocious animals have long since disappeared. In the mountain streams running through this beautiful section of Pennsylvania the Speckled trout, as well as many other kinds of fish, have their home. Little wonder that the natives feel, and rightly so, that this is truly a "garden spot".

To Be Continued Next Week

[Back to top](#)
[Annals](#)

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