

Jackson Township

Cambria County, Pennsylvania



Chapter 24

Annals of Jackson Township

**Mrs. Betty Burkhart
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Communities And Their First Settlers

Vinco And Singer hill

Edward Davis, who was born in Aberdale, Glamorganshire, Wales in 1819, came to America after his first wife died, and here he married Catherine, daughter of Richard Davis, a first settler of the Wellview community. Edward first settled near Dilltown, but later lived near Vintondale. His sons were William, Phillip, Amos and John. The first two became well known here, having lived a good share of their lives in this township. William first lived in what is known as the old Allbaugh place on the corner at Vinco, which was built and owned by Jonathan Custer. Later he moved with his family to a farm near the old Horner Church (since torn down). His children are Cyrus Davis of Conemaugh, who served as county coroner for two terms and sheriff of the county for one term; Mrs. Elizabeth Jenks of Vinco, and Mrs. Maud Wissinger of Johnstown.

William moved to Conemaugh in 1886 where he was freight and station agent on the Pennsylvania Railroad. Phillip owned a farm adjoining his brother's. His children were Elsie Davis of Ebensburg, Anna, Gussie, Ivy and Merton, none of whom settled here. Phillip later moved to Mineral Point where he was inspector for a water company for many years. He suffered a heart attack while on his tour of inspection and was found dead by friends.

The first Singer to come to this community was Samuel who took out a grant of land in April 1851, in the community later known as Singer Hill. He has many descendants, a large number of who make, or have made their homes here. A grandson, James M. Singer, was well known in the county, having served as register of wills and recorder of deeds for six years. He also taught school in the township for a number of years. He enlisted in the Army during the Civil war. He was twice married, the first time to Caroline Wehn, daughter of the grist mill owner in this community, and the second time to Matilda Sell of Somerset county. George Singer of Singer Hill, Ralph and Mrs. Walter Mackall of Vinco, Mrs. Cora Byers of Johnstown, Mrs. Grace Byers of Fort Lauderdale, Fla. and Walter Singer are children of his.

In 1839 Peter Kinney, who had come from County Longford, Ireland a few years before the Devlin brothers, owned property in Johnstown, which now includes all that land from Main Street to Lincoln Street, to Walnut Street and to Morrell place, which he exchanged for a farm and \$600. The farm, located at Vinco, consisted of about 150 acres. The same property in Johnstown is now valued at over \$2,000,000. The Vinco property has been divided and subdivided. The house Peter Kinney built is now owned and occupied by the Ralph Hagerich family, although one wing of the house was added by William Thomas after he purchased it from Mr. Kinney, who sold it in 1845 when, due to an injury he

received when a tree fell on him, he was unable to farm. Mrs. Pat Farrell of Johnstown, wife of the county sheriff, is a great-granddaughter of this first settler.

William Thomas, who was an agent for the Maerlein Brewing Company of Johnstown, bought the farm for that company and it was from them that Harry Griffith purchased it. The farm was then divided and he and Timothy Gillin each had part of it. For a time both families lived at the old Kinney homestead but later Mr. Griffith built the house where he and his family have since lived. Mr. Griffith was deputy warden at the county jail for three years and was on the state health board for several years. Many of the Vinco homes are built on what was once the old Kinney farm.

Today Vinco is growing rapidly, and each year sees the building of several new homes.

Nathaniel and John Singer were brothers, grandsons of Samuel, and it is probably from them that Singer Hill gets its name. John built a log house near where the George Singer home now is and Nathaniel built his home where his son, Lewis now lives. The log barn that he built was recently torn down and the logs from it were used in the construction of a summer cottage for Miss Elda Fresh, a Conemaugh school teacher, in the Clinefelter community.

Nathaniel and John had ten children each, most of whom have settled here, or are well known here. Nathaniel's offspring are Jane (Singer) Grove, Lew, James, Cornelius, Bertha (Singer) Teeter, Sarah (Singer) Headrick, Harriet (Singer) Myrtle, Catherine (Singer) Amigh, Lucinda (Singer) Ribblett, and Ruth (Singer) Gelly. The children of John were Ella (Singer) Hunt, Elizabeth (Singer) Shaffer, Jennie (Singer) Rager, Alice (Singer) Burns, Matilda (Singer) Stutzman, Edward Singer (deceased), Clara (Singer) Hoffinan, Dollie (Singer) Paul, Irvin and Blair Singer.

When Nathaniel and John lived here the countryside was mostly wilderness and it was not until comparatively recent years that the community has been developed. The brick road was completed in the 1920's the farms were divided into lots and a number of homes were built. It has grown rapidly since then until now it has a suburban appearance. Here there are three stores, a church and parsonage, Allbaugh's Park, and a greenhouse. The well kept lawns of a gas refining station also add to the beauty of the community.

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