

Peter Bezaillion's Road

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The fur trails, used by traders in their journeys from seaports to Indian towns in the interior in their trade for peltries, the earliest and for a long time the most prosperous enterprise of the middle colonies of Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York, were also the avenues through which flowed the first waves of immigration into the unexplored and undeveloped interior.

One of the most important of these early fur trails in Pennsylvania, linking the merchant port of Philadelphia, and its rich stocks of traders' goods, with the important and numerous Indian towns on the lower Susquehanna, was that known as Peter Bezaillion's¹ road, so named because it was the trail used by that important frontier figure during the pioneer period of the lands through which it passed.

Peter Bezaillion, called a Roman Catholic by Governor Gookin—probably because he was French—but hardly that in the light of his long connection with the English church at Pequea, entered the wilderness referred to in the earliest records of Pennsylvania, as the "back parts of Chester," from Philadelphia. He bought his goods in Philadelphia, sold the peltries he received in exchange for his "trader truck" there, and was largely financed in his enterprises by James Logan, close confidant and American agent of William Penn, and later, his sons, for many decades.

Bezaillion luckily for the future generations of Pennsylvania, had important connections in Philadelphia, where, in spite of trouble with Judge Moore of the Admiralty Court and later with Governor Gookin,² he continued to do business; his share of the expanding fur trade of Pennsylvania helping to lay the foundations of the future commercial greatness of Philadelphia, which by the outbreak of the American Revolution, had made that city the acknowledged metropolis of the new world and the financial center of a great continent.³

But Bezaillion did more than that. His connections with the Indians, his fair dealings with them, and his peculiar ability to understand their

psychology, helped to keep the Indians in Pennsylvania at peace during the years when the first small agricultural settlements in the interior were being expanded and developed into virile and prosperous communities.

BEZAILLION PROBABLY HUGUENOT

Bezaillion had a long and busy life. Where he spent his youth is a fact that remains to be discovered. Probably as one writer concludes,⁴ he was a French-Huguenot who fled from France to England or the Netherlands perhaps with relatives, after the Edict of Nantes, and came to America with compatriots shortly after the founding of Pennsylvania by William Penn.

On his tombstone in the churchyard of the Pequea Church, in history so closely attached to his family,⁵ we find that he died July 18, 1742, and that he was 80 years of age, placing his birth in the year 1662, or possibly the last half of 1661, depending on the month of his nativity.

We know for a fact he was in Pennsylvania in 1693,⁶ and there are several reasons for supposing that he had come to America many years earlier. The first of these is the frequent association of his name with that of the elder Jacques LeTort, the French-Huguenot who arrived in Pennsylvania in 1686 as the agent of an European firm, which included Sir Matthias Vincent of England, as a partner.⁷

Peter Bezaillion married Martha Combe, the daughter of John Combe, Philadelphia. The marriage was probably performed sometime after 1710,⁸ since her birth in 1693, would make her only seventeen that year. The same year Bezaillion was 48 years of age.⁹

In 1719, he obtained a warrant for 700 acres of land for the use of his wife, Martha. This land was located along the Susquehanna River above Marietta and included an improvement which had previously been made by Nathaniel Christopher.¹⁰ This tract adjoined another of 450 acres, which was surveyed for his brother-in-law, Moses Combe. This brother of his wife died before 1720, and Bezaillion and John Warder of Philadelphia, were named his executors. Moses left this Susquehanna land to a nephew and a niece by a brother, John. When a patent was finally issued for it, 1728, for Warder and Bezaillion as Combe's executors, the niece, Martha Combe, had died, while the nephew, John Combe, was still a minor.¹¹

This Combe tract had been sold before this date to the Brenneman family of Conestoga Township,¹² but a patent was necessary so that Bezaillion could give the buyer a legal release. At the same time, a patent was issued to Bezaillion for his wife's 700 acres.¹³

SETTLED AT FRENCH CREEK

Returning to Bezaillion's earlier adventures, his first settlement in Pennsylvania, where he entered the Indian trade, was at the mouth of the French

Creek in Chester County.¹⁴ This was an especially advantageous location in the early days since it gave ready access, via the French Creek by one or another of its branches and the valley of the Conestoga, to the important Indian towns on the Susquehanna River, and also was near the Shawnee settlements on the upper Delaware.

At that time there were a number of Delaware Indian towns on the Schuylkill and Brandywine, an Indian nation for whom Bezaillion became noted as an interpreter, while Philadelphia, where peltries were sold and trader truck and rum purchased, could be reached by a canoe trip down the Schuylkill.

It was during this period that Bezaillion first had to post a bond because William Penn was suspicious of his intentions, being a Frenchman,¹⁵ and second, when the Frenchman served the provincial authorities a good turn by reporting the Iroquois' plot to wipe out the Shawnee Indians within the province, information which he no doubt obtained through Martin Chartier.¹⁶

This post on French Creek also was on the trail used by the early Dutch and Swedish traders who came up the Schuylkill, although it probably reached its peak in importance during Bezaillion's sojourn, because of the growth of Philadelphia.

INDIAN MOVEMENTS WESTWARD

When the Shawnees on the upper Delaware began moving across the mountains to the North Branch of the Susquehanna River at Wyoming, and when the Delawares were pushed westward by the settlement of the lands they had sold to Penn and his governors, the post at the mouth of French Creek lost its importance.¹⁷ When the center of trade changed to the Susquehanna, Bezaillion and the other traders moved with it, but fortunately for the future greatness of Pennsylvania, Bezaillion, unlike the traders from Maryland, still looked to Philadelphia on the Delaware as his market for furs and his source of supplies used in bartering for peltries.

Bezaillion, whose trading interests were with the Delawares rather than the interior tribes at least before 1707, remained at the mouth of French Creek until that year.¹⁸

This year, 1707, marks a turning point in the career of Bezaillion, in his trade among the Indians along the Susquehanna, and because of the importance of this trade, in the history of Pennsylvania itself.

For decades before the founding of Pennsylvania, Maryland had been in more or less loose communication with the Indians along the lower reaches of the river. Traders from the head of the Chesapeake Bay, from the days of William Claiborne, had been going into that region and bringing out furs

and peltries, just as the Swedes from the Lower Delaware and the Dutch from New York and Albany had been tapping other fruitful sources.¹⁹

After William Penn acquired his charter, with its famous clause about the 40th parallel, which was to cause so much trouble in later years, the Maryland traders continued to penetrate into the Susquehanna region, both from the eastern and western shores of the bay. The long struggle between the Delaware and Chesapeake regions, for the fruits of the interior valleys, which has continued into modern times, was already in the making.

STEELMAN, THE MARYLAND TRADER

John Hans Steelman, the Maryland trader who spent many years at the head of the bay, Lewee Lewison, a Frenchman, later identified only as French Louis, Jacob Young and lesser figures, had been buying their trade goods in Maryland and returning again with the furs they had exchanged for the same.²⁰

So far the traders dependent on Philadelphia merchants had remained in the Delaware River watershed, trading in the towns of the Delawares.

As late as 1707, there appears to have been no direct road from Philadelphia to the interior.²¹ A crossing could be made from French Creek to the headwaters of the Conestoga Creek, just as the earlier Swedes are believed to have done, but it appears that most travelers preferred to travel down the Delaware to New Castle, then turn inland from that point to the Octoraro, head north to a break in the Mine Ridge, and then go west through the valleys of either the Pequea or the Conestoga.

It was this route which Lieutenant Governor John Evans and his entourage took in the summer of 1707, when three Indian towns in the Conestoga region were visited. Bezaillion joined this tour of the Governor's at the start, and helped persuade Evans to continue it to Paxtang, for the purpose of capturing Nicole Godin, the Frenchman, who maintained a trading post there.²² Godin's principal offense seems to have been that he was a dangerous rival of the little clique which included Bezaillion, Jacques LeTort and Martin Chartier, and the reason for making him a prisoner—that he was a French spy—was a rather thin one. Later on Godin proved he was an English citizen by birthright, being a native of London, but he never got back his trading post at Paxtang, and seems to have disappeared completely from the Pennsylvania scene.²³ Meanwhile Bezaillion and his friends secured the trade at Paxtang. And because of this, Bezaillion established the road, between his new trading post and the Chester Valley, which became known as Old Peter's Road.

LITTLE OF PETER'S ROAD REMAINS

This early fur trail has all but disappeared. Only vestiges of it still remain in use; one part connects Salisbury in Salisbury Township with the

New Holland Pike, where it is still known locally as Peter's Road,²⁴ as is a section in Warwick Township near Lititz.

The first section between Caln and Salisbury is gone, as is the longest stretch of all, between the New Holland Pike and the river, except for short sections. But we can still locate it accurately enough by existing township lines, for when the magistrates and freeholders of the newly erected county of Lancaster met in the summer of 1729, to lay out townships, Peter's Road was designated as the dividing line between Leacock and Earl, between Manheim and Warwick, and between Hempfield and Warwick.²⁵

And if additional evidence is necessary, an old draft of the 1400-acre tract, resurveyed to Thomas Griffiths on the Chickies Creek in 1734, should answer, for across the middle of this large block of land, the surveyor traced the location of Peter Bezaillion's Road to Paxtang.²⁶

From the point where this road crossed the Chickies Creek—and the word road is used advisedly, since it was hardly more than a trail wide enough for packhorses—it appears to have passed through Mt. Joy, one branch following a southwesterly direction, finally reaching the river near the mouth of the Conoy Creek, and another, which was the more important, a northwesterly direction toward the Swatara Creek and Paxtang, probably having the same general course as the present Harrisburg Pike northwest of Mount Joy.²⁷

A third source of information about the location of this early fur trail, is the early settlements made along or adjacent to it, which will be considered in detail further along.

PETER BEZAILLION IN 1707

Peter Bezaillion, in 1707, was a man past middle age, but from what we can glean of his accomplishments, in the prime of his frontier career. He had a knowledge of French and English. He was an expert in the interpretation of the Delaware tongue, a talent disclosed by his frequent selection to act in an official capacity at various Indian conferences. He probably acquired some knowledge of German later from his Swiss neighbors—anyone within ten miles was a neighbor—after 1710.²⁸

But there is a great deal we do not know about Bezaillion. Since no one left a description of him, we do not know whether he was tall or short; we are in the dark about his facial characteristics; whether he had any peculiarities of dress that marked him out from other men; whether he was even or bad tempered, arrogant or quiet spoken. However, we can safely suppose, he was shrewd at business for he was one of the few Indian traders who acquired substantial property.²⁹

Then too, he probably maintained trading stores at two Indian villages, perhaps more. No doubt many of the traders, who were conspicuous on the frontier in the years immediately after his active career ended, learned what they knew about such matters after doing service as his servants.

Trading with the Indians was not generally a one-man affair. Although we don't know the names of Bezaillion's servants, as we do of some others, he no doubt had many different ones in his employ at various times.

Servants had a station in life in those days different than we conceive it to be today. That word did not necessarily mean that the person so called was employed in menial tasks, but merely indicated the legal relation between the employee and his master. In other words, the term servant in the eighteenth century referred to a person, whatever his occupation, who was bound by a legal indenture to serve a master for a stated period of years. During that period, the servant received no remuneration. He actually was working off a debt incurred by him or in his behalf, his master buying his services by the payment of the debt, which nine times out of ten in provincial times, was the servant's ship fare from Europe.³⁰

Usually servants, after they had worked out their indentured years, would be replaced by new servants purchased at auctions held in Philadelphia. The former servant, now a freeman in the nomenclature of the frontier, would be "on his own." Since his years of service had made him experienced in the trade or business of his former master, that was usually the business he followed.

So when any list of the early traders along the Susquehanna River is examined, it is safe to say that many of those named learned the fine points of fur buying and selling under the keen eye of Bezaillion.

Probably not all of those in Bezaillion's employ had the status of servants, for no doubt some, whether or not they had been previously indentured to him, were freemen who were trusted agents. For it would have been unwise to leave a servant entirely alone on the frontier as long as opportunities to run away existed.

EARLY TRADE ON THE SUSQUEHANNA

In the period between 1707 and 1714, there is little known about Bezaillion's movements, but without a doubt he was extensively engaged in trade with the various Indian communities on the Susquehanna River.³¹

During this period, a number of Indian migrations took place. First of all, the Shawnees, who had first settled in a village at the mouth of the Pequea Creek, moved from there to a new location near Washington Boro, a place which from most ancient times had been an important Indian center.³²

And it was during this period too, that the Ganawees or Conoy Indians established their village at the mouth of the Conoy Creek near Bainbridge. In addition there was the Indian town at Conestoga, which all during this period, was sort of a capital for the tribes on the lower Susquehanna. All the Indians in this region were vassals of the all-powerful Iroquois Nations in New York State, and it was at Conestoga that their viceroys came and lived until the era of Shickellemy at Shamokin.³³

However in 1714, Bezaillion obtained permission to build a house at Paxtang, then an Indian village on the Susquehanna River, where the Paxtang Creek flowed into it. This permission was granted by the provincial Property Commissioners in these words:

"We do hereby authorize and allow Peter Bezaillion, Indian trader, to seat himself at Pashtang or any other Indian town or place on Susquehanna in this province, and to erect such buildings as are necessary for his trade, and to enclose and improve such quantities of land as he shall think fit, for the accommodation of his family there, until further order shall be given by the proprietor or his commissioners, provided always that he, the said Peter, shall not act or proceed in anything under color hereof but by the free leave and approbation of the Indians amongst whom he dwells or resides." ³⁴

DELAWARES LEAVE THE BRANDYWINE

Apparently, 1714 also fixes the period in which the Delaware Indians on the upper Brandywine were migrating to the Susquehanna River, and settling at Paxtang. This conclusion is reached largely by conjecture and is based on these facts. At conferences held at Conestoga in 1711, the Delawares were not represented, but beginning in 1717, they were, and at that time they were identified as living on the Susquehanna River.

The following year, 1718, at another conference at Conestoga, among the chiefs present, was Sheeckokonicha or Shecokokeneca, "a chief of the Delawares formerly on the Brandywine, all at present inhabitants on the Sasquehannah." During the conference, this particular Delaware chief complained "that the young men about Pextan had been lately so generally debauched with rum carried amongst them by strangers that they now want all manner of clothing and necessaries to go ahunting, wherefore they wish it would be so ordered that no rum should be brought amongst them by any except the traders who furnish them with all other necessaries and who have been used to trust them and encourage them in their hunting." ³⁵

Bezaillion, of course, would have been the leading "old trader" this chief had in mind, and it is likely that if the truth were known, he inspired this complaint in an attempt to combat growing competition from new traders.

The year before, he had been the interpreter. In 1718, the interpreters were John Cartlidge and James Hendricks, the later having come from Chester County in 1714, although many years later he claimed the honor of being the first white man to visit Conestoga.³⁶

In 1719, when Peter Bezaillion obtained a warrant for 700 acres along the Susquehanna near Marietta for his wife, he was living at Paxtang. Since it does not appear that Bezaillion either lived on this lower plantation before or after 1719, the year the warrant was issued, it appears to have been in the nature of an investment. (See Note 14.)

In 1721, the report of a conference at Conestoga provides the most definite evidence we have of Bezaillion's residence at Paxtang during this period. The report was written in James Logan's hand as part of the minutes of the Provincial Council in March, 1721.³⁷ He and Col. John French of New Castle, Delaware, had been sent by Governor William Keith to investigate the report that an Indian had been murdered at Monocacy Creek, near the Potomac.

The report caused quite a flurry in official circles in Philadelphia, since it came at a time when Governor Keith was preparing to depart for Albany, in New York, for one of the most important conferences this province ever had with the Iroquois. And the fact that the murdered Indian was a Seneca and the accused slayers were the Cartlidge brothers, one of whom was a justice of the peace for Pennsylvania on the frontier, did not help matters.

The provincial authorities had always impressed on the Indians that there was equal justice for both Indians and white men, and that any malefactors who were white would be punished just as severely as they expected the Indians to punish Indian criminals. But the Cartlidges had many powerful friends; Edmund Cartlidge, Sr., having been prominent in Chester County affairs for many years. Then, too, they were Quakers. It was a most delicate mission that Logan and Colonel French undertook in March, 1721, and they had to depend a great deal upon the honesty of their interpreter to get an accurate account of what had happened.

They soon learned that there were eight living witnesses to the crime. Of these, four were white men; the two Cartlidges, who also were the accused, their servant, William Wilkins, and a boy, Jonathan, another servant. The remainder were Indians: the squaw of the murdered Indian, a Shawnee woman; the guide of the Cartlidges, a Conoy or Ganawese Indian; and two Shawnee youths who had accompanied the Cartlidges in a more or less anomalous capacity.

Logan and Colonel French went direct to John Cartlidge's house along the north side of the Conestoga Creek, near the Indian town. Here they found John Cartlidge already under arrest and in the custody of the sheriff of Chester County, who had been sent ahead with warrants. Edmund, the other brother, came in a day or so later, having been across the Susquehanna with a pack of horses waiting for his brother, as they were about to start on a trading expedition to the faraway lands of the Potomac.

Immediately upon their arrival at Conestoga, Logan, who was well acquainted with Bezaillion and placed great faith in his loyalty, sent a messenger for him to his home, which he described as being 36 miles further up on the Susquehanna, or at Paxtang. But to quote the words of Logan, "he [Bezaillion] having no horses at home and being far from neighbors, he could not get down till the 4th day after the messenger set out, namely till the 13th in the afternoon. Upon Peter Bezaillion's coming, we appointed a meeting with them [the Indians] the next morning."

Bezaillion had a most important function at this conference. When Logan or Colonel French would ask a question of the witnesses, Bezaillion would translate it into the Delaware tongue, and then depending on whether the witness was of one tribe or another, Captain Civility or Captain Smith, the Ganawese, would translate it into the witness's language. The answers were made in the same fashion.

After Logan and French had learned all they could of what the witnesses knew, it was decided to send "a belt"—an important diplomatic gesture to appease the offended Indians—to the Senecas in New York, of whom the murdered man was a kinsman. For this important job, Skalcheetcho, a Cayuga Indian living at Conestoga, was selected, he being an Iroquois as was the victim. This Indian after much persuasion, consented to go with the belt and the story of what Pennsylvania was doing to punish the Indian's slayers, provided his family would be cared for in his absence. Logan agreed, buying six bushels of corn from "the Palatines"—probably meaning the Herrs and related families—who lived nearby.

The messenger was also offered a strowd coat—a sort of honorary garment, a gun, lead and powder. Since Logan had brought none of these things with him from Philadelphia, he tried to obtain them from John Cartlidge, the accused. Cartlidge did give a gun and some lead, but he was out of powder and strowds, so "Peter Bezaillion promised to deliver these to the messenger as he *past his house at Pextan*," to quote Logan's words.

THE CLAIMS FOR JOHN HARRIS

These facts are especially important since Bezaillion's career as a trader at Paxtang has been shoved into the background to make way for claims which would give John Harris, the father of the founder of Harrisburg, the honor of being the first trader permitted to reside there by the provincial authorities.

Briefly these claims—which are considered here only because they make Bezaillion play a second fiddle or none at all during the most important period of his life—are largely based on the appearance of the name of John Harris on the Conestoga tax list in 1718 and also on the assumption that the name "John Hans," which appears on several occasions in the provincial records, was none other than John Harris in a misspelled version. It must be noted that neither the appearance of the name in the tax list, nor the references to John Hans are identified in anyway with Paxtang.

As to the appearance of Harris's name in the tax list of 1718, it merely means he was living in what was then Conestoga Township, but does not locate him at Paxtang. What is probable is that he was living along the Susquehanna in the Donegal region, since his own grandson, when an old man, recalled that his grandfather had first traded with the Indians at

Conoy, while one of the early settlers in that region—his land adjoined that of Jacques LeTort—was a James Harris, who conceivably could have been a relative.

On the other hand, Harris is not listed as a property owner at all, but as a freeman, which simply meant that he was in someone's employ for wages.³⁸

THE "JOHN HANS" IDENTIFICATION

As to the "John Hans" identification with Harris, any claim that the name was misread in a letter written by William Penn in 1701 to a trader identified by that name, falls of its own weight when considered alongside a minute in the council book, written at the same time and giving the same facts in Penn's letter, in which the name is given not as John Hans, but as John Hans Steelman, the well-known Maryland trader.³⁹

Documentary evidence that Bezaillion was at Paxtang during the period when the elder John Harris is asserted to have been there has already been cited. Harris is variously asserted to have first settled at Paxtang in 1705 or 1710. As already pointed out, Bezaillion began trading at Paxtang after the ousting of Nicole Godin in 1707; he received a permit in 1714 to settle there with his family, and he was actually living there in 1719, when his wife, Martha, was given a warrant for land on the Susquehanna, south of Bainbridge, and was there in 1721 when he served as an Indian interpreter at Conestoga Indian town.

Another important proof is the draft of the Griffith tract made in 1733, on which the surveyor marked the road crossing it, "Peter Bezillion's Road to Paxtang," while other property in the Donegal region was located as being on Peter's Road in those early years.

But to this writer, the best proof of all is Logan's personal interest in Bezaillion during this period from 1708, when he recommended him to William Penn as a valuable man, until Bezaillion quit active trading about 1730. Logan was personally interested in the Indian trade. He had goods of his own at Conestoga in 1717, and presents for the Indians were taken from that stock at a conference which he attended.

He financed the two Cartlidges at Conestoga, and James Paterson at Washington Boro, in their land purchases. He bought the land which Peter Chartier owned in Lancaster County and also that of Jacques (James) LeTort. In fact there is scarcely an early trader with whom he did not have some connections.

As for Peter Bezaillion, when the payment came due on his 700 acres near Bainbridge in 1720, Logan made the payment of 70 pounds. Nor was this the only transaction in which Logan paid the actual cash for Bezaillion, the assumption being that the money represented the trader's credit with Logan for furs he had sold to him.⁴⁰

There is no gainsaying the power that Logan wielded in the affairs of Pennsylvania during this period, for he was able to make and unmake governors almost at will. Two of them were forced out in succession after they quarreled with him. He was supreme in the affairs of the Land Office as the agent of the Penn family, and as the presiding member of the Board of Property Commissioners.⁴¹ In this capacity, Logan directed the affairs of the Land Office during the period when the estate of William Penn was in litigation. At a time when it was impossible to issue regular land warrants, a note from Logan to James Steel, receiver general, was all that was necessary for favored friends to have choice pieces of land surveyed to them.

With this in view, it is dubious whether Logan would have sanctioned the settlement of a rival of Bezaillion at Paxtang. If Harris or any other licensed traders did business there while Bezaillion was still actively engaged in trade, it is probable that they did so as agents or servants of Bezaillion and not as competitors. As for unlicensed traders, the frontier was always filled with these, but they, from what we can learn of them, made no permanent settlements, but visited Indian towns for a day or two, cheated the Indians right and left, and vanished as speedily as possible.

WHEN BEZAILLION QUIT TRADING

Just when Bezaillion quit active trading is a hard date to fix.⁴² However it appears to have been approximately about 1726 or 1727, since in 1728 he is spoken of as "late of Paxtang," while in 1729, when he paid quit rent on his property in Caln Township, Chester County, the farm is referred to as "where he dwells."

There is a letter written by James Steel of the Land Office, which because of its reference to John Harris, may be our best clue to this change in Bezaillion's life. The letter, dated January 4, 1727, is addressed to the surveyor general. It reads:

"The bearer, John Harris, has seen his warrants, which are now at James Logan's to be signed, which I expect will be done this day, there being now no objections, the original deeds being produced. Thee knows the warrants had been twice drawn over, but what I received from thee for it I cannot tell, but J. Harris has paid me 12 shillings. . . ."⁴³

If this letter of Steel's refers to the Harris of Paxtang, although there is no evidence in the body of the note to determine this point, there seems little doubt but what the land in question was located at Paxtang or Harris's Ferry, although it does seem curious that another six years should pass before the Harris warrants were actually issued.

However, there is a bit of evidence which places John Harris at Paxtang even before 1727, so that this Steel letter really is not important in deciding this point. Robert Harris, the grandson of the elder John Harris and son of the founder of Harrisburg, in speaking of his father more than a century

later,⁴⁴ said that John Harris, Jr., was the first white child to be born at Harris's Ferry. The founder of Harrisburg, we know, was born in 1726, which determines that Harris's father, John Harris the elder, was there that year. This would prove nothing in particular, if it were not for the fact that John Harris was the third child of John and Esther Harris. Before John, Jr., two daughters had been born, while tradition variously fixes the date of Harris's marriage as 1721 and 1722. Obviously if John Harris, Jr., was the first child born at Paxtang, as his son insisted, then John Harris, the elder, moved to Paxtang between the birth date, 1724, of his second child, later the wife of Dr. William Plunkett, and 1726, the birth date of the younger John Harris.

Bezaillion, while maintaining his trading post at Paxtang, does not appear to have confined his trading activities to that place, and there is no doubt that he and later his agents went far into the woods of Pennsylvania, seeking peltries and skins from the Indians.

BEZAILLION AND THE OTHER TRADERS

There also seems to have a close association through many decades, between Bezaillion and the other French traders. Bezaillion, himself, spoke the Delaware language, and did most of his personal trading with that tribe. Martin Chartier, and his son, Peter, were the principal traders with the Shawnees, which was natural enough in the light of the elder Chartier's marriage into that tribe. As for the LeTorts, the younger, Jacques LeTort, at least after his mother's ouster from the vicinity of the Conestoga Indian town in 1712, traded principally with the Conoys.⁴⁵

LeTort's cabin or trade store was located on the Susquehanna, near Marietta, in 1721, when surveyors laid off the Mine Tract across the river in York County. This association between Bezaillion and LeTort seems to have continued at least until LeTort began trading on the Allegheny, for the trail across the York County hills to the Yellow Breeches Creek at Lisburn, and over the Cumberland Valley to LeTort's Spring, the young Jacques' second trading post, began on the west bank of the river opposite Conoy-Town, a Bezaillion sphere of influence.

But whether Bezaillion was LeTort's silent partner or not, it seems obvious that LeTort's peltries and trade goods were carried to the seacoast over Bezaillion's Road, even after he had moved a third time to the western slopes of the Alleghenies. And at this point it might be well to point out, the first trail to the Ohio Valley was merely a continuation of this branch of Bezaillion's Road, used in the earliest days by traders and first settlers alike.

And it should be noted, too, that the branch of Bezaillion's trail which went past his house at Paxtang, followed the river north to Shamokin, the Indian town located where Sunbury now stands, and so on through the In-

dian lands to the remote Iroquois castles in New York. Thus Bezaillion's Road was also used by the messengers and emissaries to and from the Iroquois castle of Onondaga, when traveling from or to Philadelphia in the early years of Pennsylvania's history.⁴⁶

ADVANTAGES OF BEZAILLION'S ROAD

The natural advantages of Bezaillion's Road to the traders of his day are obvious. It was the shortest route between the Susquehanna River above the mouth of Chickies Creek and the western limits of the settlements in the Chester Valley when it was blazed by Bezaillion. At the same time it crossed a minimum of hills and streams, and used the best fords on those creeks which it did cross. It seems hardly credible that Bezaillion selected this route himself. What seems more probable is that he used a trail which the Indians had been using from most ancient times.⁴⁷

Of course, there was another trail from the New Castle region to the Susquehanna Valley, which was called the Conestoga Road in later times. But while this latter road or trail seems to have been favored by travelers bound from the Lower Counties to the Susquehanna towns, the upper roads—Bezaillion's and the trail linking French Creek and Conestoga Indian-town⁴⁸—were used by traders bound from the Susquehanna region to the Schuylkill River settlements.

In the earliest period of trading activities, there was no direct trail from Philadelphia to the Conestoga Valley. It was many years before the White Horse Pike from Lancaster to Downingtown was surveyed. In fact until 1729, there was no town of Lancaster, while the early Swiss settlers appear to have used a trail which crossed the Mine Ridge southeast of the Pequea Valley to the Chester Valley. This trail which was widened to accommodate the heavy Swiss wagons—famous through history as Conestoga wagons—in the decade following the first settlement in 1710, was the famous Conestoga Road, which terminated at Rock Hill on the Conestoga after passing through Strasburg, Lampeter, and Conestoga (now Pequea) townships.

Until 1730, the Conestoga Road was the only highway other than Bezaillion's Road which crossed the county from east to west. In that year, the Quakers, who had settled at Wright's Ferry, along the Susquehanna, asked that a road be laid out from the Susquehanna to the Stoneman's mill, and from there to Cookson's plantation at the head or source of the Pequea. But it was some years more before that section of this road east of the Conestoga was laid out.⁴⁹

This first petition was directed to the county court, which in turn joined in a petition to the Provincial Council. This was considered by the Council in January, 1731, the petition pointing out that there were no public roads in Lancaster County and that one was badly needed from the new county town of Lancaster to the high road in Chester County. The Council granted

the petition naming viewers from both Lancaster and Chester Counties to lay out the road.

PART OF WHITE HORSE PIKE

The viewers took several years to complete their work and it was not until June, 1733, that they were ready to report. Then they prepared a description of the new road, which is variously known today as the Old Philadelphia or the White Horse Pike. Of particular interest to us in connection with Bezaillion's Road, is that, at the point it crossed the county line, it was described as being "near the English Church" at Pequea. And what is more, from that point on until it reached the Brandywine Creek at Moore's mill, it was substantially the same road Bezaillion had been using for years before 1733. In fact, the two roads also appear to have been identical for some miles west of Pequea Church.⁵⁰

It was very natural for these early road builders to desert Bezaillion's route beyond Salisbury Township, for they had a different destination in view than the old French trader. A town had been established in 1730, which was located many miles south of his road⁵¹

But there was still an important place for Bezaillion's Road in the commerce of the interior in 1733 and a few years more. Hundreds of immigrants, bound for the ever-extending frontier had traveled over this road to new homes in the wilderness and it was still their only link with the civilization they had left behind at the Delaware.

Now an ever-increasing wave of Scotch-Irish immigration into the Cumberland Valley had set in, and thousands of those sturdy pioneers were pouring into the interior from Philadelphia and New Castle. The shortest route—a fact of vital importance—to their source of tools, of manufactured products, of the necessities and luxuries of their day, was the road over which they had gone into the wilderness, which was Bezaillion's Road.⁵²

This road thus was rapidly expanding into a highway with a much greater importance than merely a fur trail. It was becoming an artery of commerce, and no doubt would have continued so, had it not been for the *coup de grace* administered to it in 1737 by John Harris and his neighbors on the Susquehanna.

A RIVAL HIGHWAY IS OPENED

In that year a petition was filed with the Provincial Council for a direct road from Harris's Ferry at Paxtang to Downingtown, which, as the petitioners pointed out, was a much shorter route than the old road then in use. Significantly among the signers of this petition were only a few settlers from the Cumberland Valley and those that did sign, lived in the end of the valley closest to Harris's Ferry.⁵³

The petition was granted and viewers were named to lay out the highway. When it was completed it became the Paxtang Road or Horseshoe

Pike, crossing the South Mountains at Cornwall and continuing east through Ephrata, and Blue Ball to Downingtown. Meanwhile, in the natural course of events, a road joining Lancaster to Bezaillion's Road, near the point where the latter crossed the Chickies Creek, had come into use. Bezaillion's Road, never having any legal status as a public road or king's highway, remained unimproved.

Traffic was being diverted from it in all directions and it soon ceased to exist as a through highway. Whole sections of it disappeared entirely as settlers, taking up the land through which it passed, cleared the trees off their acres and plowed up the new land and the road passing through it.

But old Peter Bezaillion, now in the twilight of a busy life—for in 1737 he was 75 years of age—could not see the road, which he had used for so long, go without a protest, and he added his name to a petition to Provincial Council which challenged the wisdom of building the new highway from Paxtang, but the protest was in vain.⁵⁴

Back in 1707 when he had begun to trade on the Susquehanna, and even in 1714 when he received official permission "to seat himself at Pashtang or any other Indian-town or place on Susquehanna," there were no settlers west of the Conestoga Creek. A few Swiss Mennonite families had crossed Mine Ridge in 1710, and quietly settled on the Pequea, and there were other Whites trading with the Indians, who lived near Conestoga town, but the frontiersman's ax had yet to cut a chip in the whole region traversed by his fur trail.

SETTLERS USED PETER'S ROAD

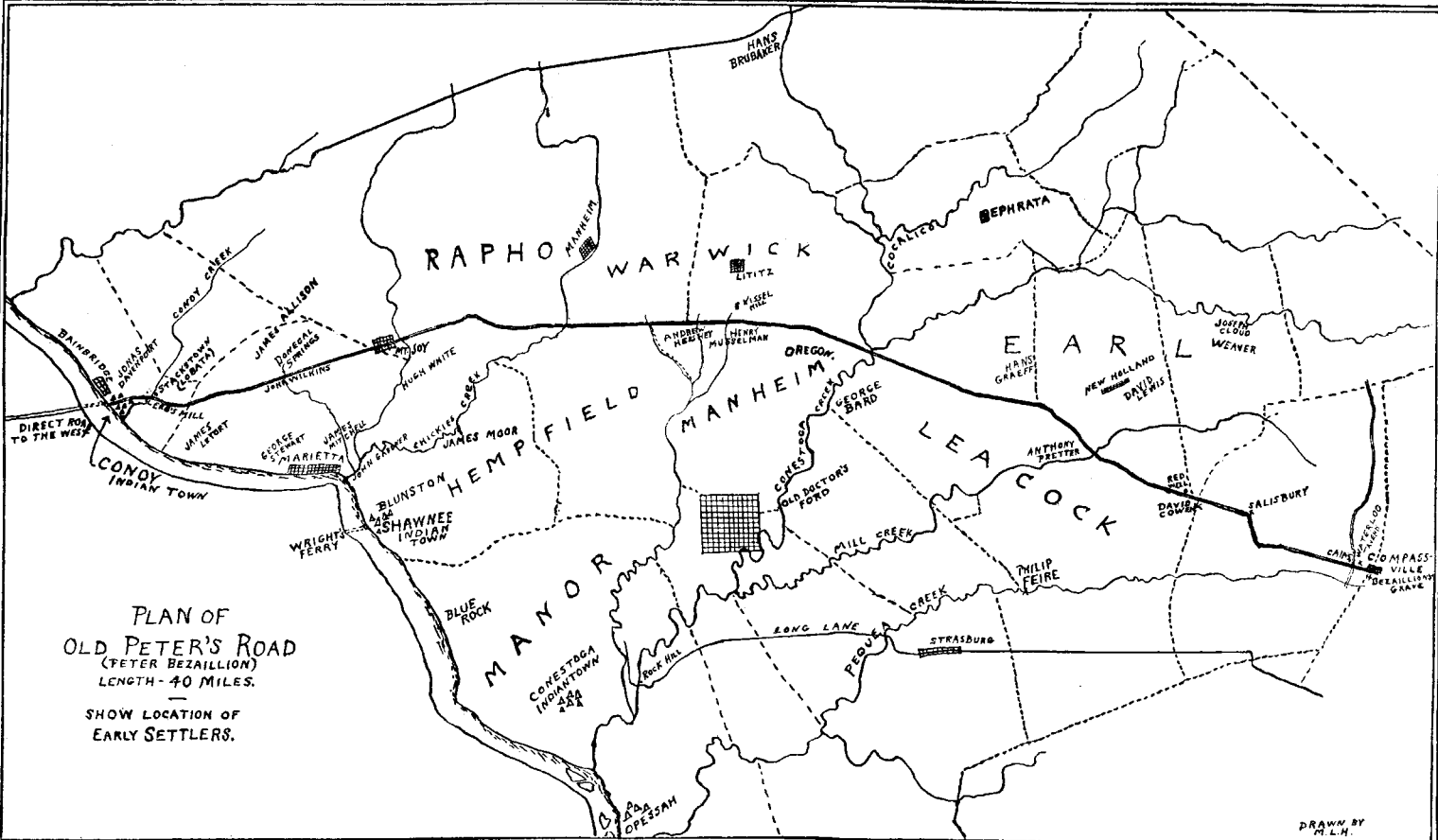
But 1717 saw a marked change. That was the year the second contingent of Swiss—and it was much larger than the first—reached the Susquehanna watershed. Some of the new arrivals and some of the old began to look beyond the Pequea for land, since between the time the first Swiss had arrived in 1710 and the second and larger group came in 1717, Philadelphia land speculators had reserved for themselves huge blocks adjacent to the Pequea settlements.⁵⁵ Looking elsewhere, it was natural for these new settlers to take the beaten trail used by Peter Bezaillion. Thus it is that isolated land claims were staked out between 1717 and 1720, which would be hard indeed to rationalize if we did not know their land lay on or near Old Peter's Road.

Even before this, in 1715, a warrant for 650 acres on a head-branch of the Pequea had been issued and surveyed to Richard Cloud of Chester County, a Quaker from Caln Township. Cloud, however, died before he got a patent, and his widow asked the Land Commissioners in 1720 to accept the purchase money from her brother, Daniel Cookson, this being the plantation which ten years later was to be designated as the eastern terminus of the first public road through the county.⁵⁶

Another early settler who used this road, was Anthony Pretter, who had 400 acres surveyed to him in what later became Leacock Township on the

PLAN OF
OLD PETER'S ROAD
(PETER BEZAILLON)
LENGTH - 40 MILES.

SHOW LOCATION OF
EARLY SETTLERS.



Mill Creek. This survey was made in 1716. The following year Pretter and another man named John Frederickful, then of Oley in Philadelphia County, but later of Salem, N. J., had 300 acres surveyed to them in the Black Walnut Bottom, north of the road in Earl Township. This was the first land actually laid out to a settler in what later became Earl Township, when Lancaster County was formed in 1729. Frederickful, it might be added, sold his half of the tract to Peter Bellar, who sold it to Henrich Barr, whose son, Martin Barr, patented it in 1746. Pretter sold his first land to the southwest in two tracts to Maudlin Lightner and Sebastian Royer, the deeds being dated 1729.⁵⁷

After 1717, the year in which a number of early settlers in the valley are traditionally supposed to have made settlements, including Hans Huber, Hans Witwer, and Hans Moyer,⁵⁸ among others, it is sometimes difficult to say who the first settlers actually were. In some cases, persons who obtained warrants had settled before the warrants were actually issued, and in other cases the reverse is true. The only safe plan under such circumstances, where evidence settling priority claims is missing, is to give such data as is to be found in the existing land records.

MUSSELMAN MAKES SETTLEMENT

With that in mind, we find that Henry Musselman settled south of Peter's Road in Manheim Township in 1718, taking up 200 acres. The same year, 200 acres were surveyed to Joseph Cloud, of Caln Township, brother of Richard, who had settled on the Pequea Creek. Joseph's land was on a branch of the Conestoga Creek at Weaverland. Cloud lived there until 1725, when he sold out to Nathan Evans, a millwright. Evans remained until 1728, when he sold out to Johannes Kitzmiller, who in turn about 20 years later, sold the mill to the Shirk family.⁵⁹

In 1719, David Priest, or Price, who had earlier lived in Conestoga Township, took up 200 acres almost adjoining Cloud, but he too sold out about 1726 to Henry Miller, at the time the three Weaver brothers moved into this region from Lampeter Township.⁶⁰

Hans Groff obtained his warrant for 1150 acres just north of this road, at Groffdale, in 1718. He immediately sold 400 acres of it to Hans Moyer, who previously had bought out the right to an adjoining 100 acres from John Blake and David Jones. The following year, Groff sold another 100 acres to Hans Rudolph Nagly, a Mennonite preacher, who later became one of the leading followers of Conrad Beissel.

Hans Good also bought 200 acres of Groff's warranted land in 1719-20, so that Groff, of his original 1150 acres, had only 450 acres remaining. However, he purchased a part of the Martin Kendig and Hans Herr right, so that when the surveyor made a plat of the region in 1726, Groff's plantation contained 650 acres. A new survey, made in 1733, included 1419 acres.⁶¹

David Lewis of New Town, Chester County, in 1719, had 725 acres in two tracts surveyed to him in Earl Township, one south, and the other east of New Holland.⁶² It was in this year, also, that 900 acres along the Susquehanna, above Marietta, were surveyed to James LeTort, and 200 acres in the same place were surveyed to Jonas Davenport, servant of John Cartlidge, who agreed to pay for it.⁶³

The following year marks a new era in settlements in Lancaster County, for in May, 1720, James Galbraith, "late of Ireland," as the record book states, paid five pounds down on 100 acres "at or near the Susquehanna," which is the first notice in contemporary land records of a Scotch-Irish settlement in Donegal.⁶⁴

While the real tide of Scotch-Irish settlement did not begin until 1720, the vanguard of that nationality had arrived in Lancaster County (then still part of Chester County) a few years earlier. Among the first was George Stewart, who had 200 acres surveyed on the Susquehanna, where Marietta now is. He got a warrant in 1719. The year, before, a warrant was issued to Robert Wilkins, who had previously lived in Conestoga Township, almost across the Conestoga from Indiantown (the Wilkins's improvement on the Conestoga adjoined that of Richard Carter), while James Mitchell, the first justice of the peace in Donegal Township and backwoods friend of James Logan, arrived in Pennsylvania in 1719. This we learn from a deposition made by his son, Alexander Mitchell, in 1770, in a suit over land ownership.⁶⁵

Peter Allen, also, had land surveyed in that region at an early date, the surveyor noting on his draft of Allen's tract that the survey was made upon the verbal order of James Logan.

SETTLERS AT DONEGAL

Of these early settlers, Stewart and Mitchell were without doubt from Ireland, while the Wilkins family, which intermarried into many Scotch-Irish families of the Donegal region, probably was too.

Somewhat off Bezaillion's Road, 1000 acres were surveyed to Jenkin Davis in 1720, on the Conestoga Creek near Martindale. Davis was described as being "late of Wales, now of Radnor."⁶⁶ Lewis Lewis of New Town, Chester County, had 175 acres surveyed on what later became known as Hammer Creek, in a region north of Bezaillion's Road. Actually, 300 acres were laid out, and it deserves to be noted that a mill was built on it, which served as a township marker when Lancaster County was created in 1729. The mill at that time was operated by David Priest. Later, it was owned by Hans Brubaker of Lancaster Township, who bequeathed it to his son, Hans or John, Jr.⁶⁷

Turning again to the Susquehanna, we find that the first recorded survey there, above the mouth of Chickies Creek, was made for John Gardner in 1716.⁶⁸ Gardner, who later appears to have lived on the west side of the Sus-

quehanna in Fairview Township, York County, sold part of his 600 acres to Joseph Borton or Burton of Chester County. The remainder was divided between John Ross and George Stuart or Stewart. (Jane Stewart, widow of George Stewart, was in possession of the most easterly part in 1733.) This 600 odd acres had frontage on the river, where the Chickies Creek flowed into it.

How many others made improvements in the same neighborhood within the next five to ten years, but never attempted to gain title to their land, will probably never be known. But at any rate these settlers used Peter's Road to reach their new habitations. It was not until 1726 that the Wrights, Barbers and Samuel Blunston took up land where Columbia now is, after buying large plantations from James Logan and Jeremiah Langhorne, the later a big landowner of Bucks County.⁶⁹ Turning east, we find Michael Bachman locating anew near Peter's Road in Manheim Township, and Andrew Hershey and his brother-in-law, Herman Long, improving tracts south of Peter's Road between the Conestoga and the Chickies Creeks.⁷⁰

Benedict Witmer, of Lampeter Township, and John Burkholder, of Conestoga Township, selected adjoining tracts north of Peter's Road in Warwick Township, which were surveyed in 1719, probably the first land laid out in this township. Witmer sold his land to Henry Bear, of Hempfield Township, whose son, Martin Bear, inherited it, while Burkholder's son, John, inherited the adjoining plantation.⁷¹

LOGAN AIDS SCOTCH-IRISH

However, these were scattered settlements compared with what was occurring in Donegal Township. James Logan, a few years after 1720, wrote that "about that time in 1720, a considerable number of good, sober people came in from Ireland, who wanted to be settled," and went on to explain that they were told to locate on vacant lands between the Chickies Creek and the Susquehanna River, a region which soon became known as Donegal.⁷²

Logan appears to have taken a special interest in the Scotch-Irish settlements in Donegal, and the reason is not far to seek. As was generally the case, where settlement began, huge tracts for favorites were laid off. When the surrounding lands became filled up, new arrivals would have to purchase from the big landowners. Logan owned thousands of acres in this locality. Hannah Penn, William Penn's widow, made a gift of 2000 acres of unlocated land to him for his services to her and her children, in 1724. Of this, 1400 acres were surveyed on Chickies Creek where Manheim now is located. The remaining 600 acres were laid out on the Susquehanna at Columbia, Logan selling this land to Blunston.⁷³

Added to this, Logan purchased LeTort's 900 acres along the Susquehanna near Marietta, and then bought a tract owned by Jonas Davenport immediately north of Conoy Town, which became the location of a ferry.⁷⁴ All in all, his holdings in the vicinity of Donegal came to 3300 acres.

A tract of 2103 acres was surveyed in 1720 to the Penn family on the Chickies Creek, adjoining the Griffith tract, already referred to, on the south. Samuel Blunston acted as the agent for the Penns in disposing of this to private purchasers.⁷⁵ The Griffith tract, because Peter's Road crossed it, was later sold to Isaac Norris of Philadelphia, who disposed of it to some of Lancaster County's earliest settlers.⁷⁶

Naturally, all of these large landholders were glad to see the lands surrounding their own holdings filling up with Scotch-Irish settlers, for improvements in the neighborhood advanced the prices at which they could expect to dispose of their holdings. All that they asked of the new settlers, many of whom were too poor in worldly goods to pay warrant fees, was that they should not squat on their land.

Logan, as noted above, took a special interest in the Scotch-Irish. He reserved a section for the Donegal Church, and January, 1727, he aided the Rev. James Anderson, first Presbyterian minister at Donegal, in getting located. "James Anderson," we note in the Land Office Records, "the Presbyterian minister who formerly lived at New Castle, is desirous to settle among the people of Donnegall and therefore requests the grant of about 300 acres of land for a plantation. He, having lived in repute amongst the people at New Castle, may be of service to the people where he is now going to settle, for which reason Secretary Logan has ordered this entry in his favor."⁷⁷

Another prominent Scotch-Irishman Logan aided was James Mitchell, the first justice of the peace in Donegal Township. When Mitchell had 522 acres surveyed to him in Donegal near Marietta, in 1733, by special order of the proprietary, 100 acres of it was based upon a warrant right held by Logan.⁷⁸

Logan and the Penns were amply repaid for all they did for the Scotch-Irish in those early years, for it was the people from Donegal who preserved the Penns' claims to a major portion of what later became York County, in the dispute with Maryland over the location of the boundary between the two colonies. When Maryland's governor sent the militia of Baltimore County to oust the German settlers in the Codorus and Kreutz Creek Valleys after they refused to pay taxes to Maryland, it was the Scotch-Irish from Donegal who crossed the river at Anderson's Ferry or Marietta, and virtually stared them down.⁷⁹

With true Celtic fervor, the Donegal settlers made that dispute their own and joined the sheriff's posses during the turbulent decade from 1730 to 1740 almost en masse, even though none of their own lands was involved.

However, by the time these events were transpiring, Peter Bezaillion with his packhorses loaded with trader truck or furs, was no longer to be met on the woodland trail, which had been given his name. In fact, the trail, which for a time it had seemed would really become the leading road to the

west, was declining, too, as a younger generation of traders used the newer wagon roads, which agricultural settlements needed.

When in 1742 death claimed Peter Bezaillion, at the age of 80, at his manorial plantation in Caln Township, Chester County, his road had passed, too. Both had been important factors in the development of the frontier. Both had served their day well.

NOTES

¹The spelling of Peter Bezaillion's name in the body of this paper conforms with that on the Bezaillion monument at Conoy, and has been established by the Lancaster County Historical Society as the standard way for this much misspelled surname. The writer was able to find only one document in which Bezaillion can be said with any certainty to have written his own name, namely, a road petition contained in Provincial Papers, Vol. VII, folio 28. This signature, in the quavering handwriting which one would expect of Bezaillion in 1737, when he was 75 years of age, was almost printed, rather than written, each letter being separated from the other, as French signatures of that period generally were. It was spelled "Pitre Bisaillion," with the "s" formed in such a way that it might be deciphered as a "z." His name is also in a petition in 1736, where it is spelled "Peeter Bresellon," but the handwriting is entirely different from the signature of 1737, and identical with the signature of another directly above it. Bezaillion's name on his tombstone is spelled "Bezellon." Elsewhere, in the notes to this paper, appear the various other spellings as they are in the originals of the sources quoted.

² Bezaillion's troubles with Moore are given in detail in a subsequent note. Previous to this, however, he had had some difficulty with William Penn, as shown in the Colonial Records, in May, 1701, just before Penn left America for the last time. Penn stated that great abuses had grown up in the Indian trade and "especially by means of two French men, Louis (Lewison—Maryland Archives) and P. Bezaillion, who have been suspected to be very dangerous persons in their traffic with the Indians. . . The two Frenchmen should be confined and restrained from inhabiting and trading amongst the Indians."

After Penn left America, his agents forgot his advice and Bezaillion and the other French traders were unmolested until March, 1710 (Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 509), when Charles Gookin was lieutenant governor, and Bezaillion again was accused of being inimical to the government:

"The Governor acquainted the board," so the record goes, "he has been informed one Peter Bizalion, a Frenchman and a Roman Catholic, a trader amongst the Indians at Conestoga, has lately spoken some suspicious words and committed some misdemeanor, whereupon he had caused his effects to be seized, the better to oblige him to appear and answer unto what should be laid to his charge, and craved the advice of the board in the premises, who came to this resolve, that Bizalion should enter into a recognizance to the Queen (of England) in 500 pounds with two sufficient sureties in 250 pounds apiece for the said Bizalion's personal appearance at the next sessions of the peace to be held at Philadelphia for the said county and his good behaving himself in the meantime."

Unfortunately, we do not have anything in the Colonial Records which gives a hint of what happened to Bezaillion at the next sessions of court in Philadelphia, nor of what the specific charges against him were.

However, it is interesting to note that James Logan, the all-powerful secretary of the Governor's Council and personal agent of the Penns, had sailed for England a short time before Bezaillion's arrest in March, 1710. Logan had been Bezaillion's champion, mainly because Logan appears to have been Bezaillion's silent partner in the trade with the Indians.

Logan, in his opposition to the Assembly, had made many powerful enemies in Philadelphia, so much so that before he sailed for England, the Assembly attempted to have him thrown into jail in Philadelphia for making disparaging remarks about it and its leaders. Governor Gookin however could not tolerate such an attack on one of his official family and nullified the warrant. But after Logan sailed, someone, probably one of Logan's enemies, secretly informed against Bezaillion to Gookin, perhaps hoping to damage Logan by damaging Bezaillion.

It appears that the first attempt was unsuccessful, for the following May, 1711, Bezaillion was still in trade at Conestoga (Col. Records Vol. 2, p. 531).

"Peter Bezalion," the record states, "acquainted the board that the Queen and some of the chiefs of the Conestoga Indians desired him to tell the Governor that they would be glad to see him at Conestoga to renew the league formerly made betwixt them and the Proprietor. . . ."

Governor Gookin postponed action until he could talk to Colonel French, who appears to have been his adviser on Indian affairs, and may have been the secret enemy of Bezaillion, although no direct evidence on this point exists. French said he knew of no reason for a conference, but on June 11, the other members of the Governor's Council urged him to go to Conestoga in spite of the heat. Gookin went and held a conference there June 18, 1711 (all dates old style). It was at this conference that the "Palatine" or Swiss settlers along the Pequea are first mentioned in the Colonial Records.

Incidentally, this was not Gookin's first visit to Conestoga. He had been there on two prior occasions, first in May, 1710, shortly after he had first denounced Bezaillion, and second in July, 1710. (Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 529). There is only a meagre account of the first conference and none at all of the second in the contemporary records. All we know of the second is that before Gookin went to Conestoga, a report came to Philadelphia that a Congress of the Indian chiefs was in session, including many important chiefs from the Five Nations or Iroquois in New York. There is no mention of Bezaillion in connection with either of these conferences, except by inference, since it was reported by Gookin that the Indians complained that "several persons" were accustomed "to waylay their young men returning from hunting, making them drunk with rum and then cheating them of their skins. . . ." These traders, Gookin charged were foreigners (Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 510).

As noted above, Bezaillion in May, 1711, carried a request to the Governor at Philadelphia that the Indian chiefs wished to see him at Conestoga. He was then at liberty, although his goods had been seized in March, 1710. It may be that this was the first time Bezaillion appeared in Philadelphia since Gookin's order for his arrest. It may be a second complaint had been made against him and he was arrested again. At any rate, on August 22, 1711 (Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 529), we find:

"Peter Bezillion's petition from the prison being read, it is the opinion of the board, that he enter into a recognizance vizt., himself in 508 pounds

[earlier it had been 500 pounds—was the eight pounds interest?] and two surities in 250 pounds apiece for his personal appearance at the next city sessions [of court] and for his keeping within the bounds of the city of Philadelphia till said court.”

Logan was still absent in England. Bezaillion had no friend at court to raise a voice in his defense. And so matters stood until May 13, 1712, when, at the first Council session Logan attended after his return from Europe, we find this entry in the Colonial Records (Vol. 2, p. 545): “The petition of Peter Bezillion being now read, praying that the Governor would permit him to trade with the Indians as he had formerly done and the same being considered, the Governor admits him to a license. . . .”

However where Bezaillion had formerly acted as an interpreter at various Indian conferences, he never did so while Gookin was Governor. Immediately upon Gookin's retirement, when Sir William Keith became governor, in 1717, a conference was held at Conestoga, and Bezaillion acted as interpreter, translating what the English official said into the Delaware tongue and what the Indians said into English.

During this period, Bezaillion had his trading post near Conestoga Indian town (see Note 31), that is, from the time he was permitted to settle among the Indians above Conestoga in 1708 until the time he was imprisoned. However, after he again received a license in 1712, or at least within another year or so of that date, he left Conestoga for Paxtang, an Indian village where Harrisburg now stands. For in July, 1712, due to the complaints of the Indians at Conestoga (Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 553), the Governor and his Council ruled that “none should be suffered to sit down among these people [the Indians at Conestoga] . . . but that this fall, at the farthest, remove to a greater distance and not be allowed on any terms to keep any cattle or other horses than what are for their immediate service, unless they live on purchased land. . . .” The Council also stated that it was “sorry . . . that the traders proved such bad neighbors, that none had even been allowed by us to settle amongst them, but Peter Bezalion, and that not only he, but the rest that had done them damage, should forthwith make them satisfaction. . . .”

³ General Thomas Gage wrote to Lord Shelburne from New York, January 23, 1767, as follows: “During my stay in Philadelphia, I could not help being surprised at the great increase of that city in buildings, mechanicks and manufacturers. The emigrations from Great Britain and Ireland and the importation of Germans every year from Holland, contribute to the constant increase of mechanicks and manufacturers in the province beyond any of the rest. . . .”

⁴ Charles A. Hanna, in Vol. 1, of “The Wilderness Trail,” p. 161 et seq., (see also Note 14).

⁵ William F. Worner, in his excellent article entitled “The Church of England in Lancaster County,” Lancaster County Historical Society Papers, Vol. 37.

⁶ Colonial Records, Vol. 1, p. 396 (see also Note 14).

⁷ Charles A. Hanna, in Vol. 1, of “The Wilderness Trail,” p. 161 et seq. Also Egle's Notes and Queries, 4th Series, Vol. 35 (see also Note 14).

⁸ The romance and marriage between Peter Bezaillion, the adventurous frontiersman and trader with the Indians, and Martha Combe, the daughter of John Combe of Philadelphia, is an event that offers great room for specu-

lation. Possibly the old records of Christ Church of Philadelphia, when searched some day, will disclose the date of the marriage. This writer's guess is that the wedding probably took place as late as 1719, but that Bezaillion first met his future wife while he waited in Philadelphia from 1711 to 1712 for permission to resume his trade with the Indians (see Note 2).

No doubt the land on the Susquehanna River was somewhat in the nature of a dowry or a wedding gift. This land was purchased in Martha's name in 1719 (see Note 11). But what seems to indicate more than anything else that 1719 was the year of the marriage is that that was the year in which Peter Bezaillion purchased his plantation in Caln Township.

In Minute Book I of the Land Office (see Penna. Archives, Vol. 19, p. 690) under the date of December 11, 1719, we find this entry:

"Peter Bizalion having purchased 500 acres of land first granted by the proprietor to Ralph Withers and mentioned in the former minutes of the 4 mo., 1703-04, John Withers only surviving brother of Ralph, who died without heirs, by deeds of lease and release, dated ye 21 and 22 days of May last for 20 pounds sterling granted the whole to John Bezer of the county of Chester, who by like deed dated the 2nd and third days of the 9th mo., last, granted the same to John Warder, but it is in trust for Peter Bizalion. The land was laid out in the year 1703 at Caln township. The lot and liberty land is now desired to be laid out also."

As Bezaillion in 1714 received permission to build a cabin for "his family" at Paxtang, his first wife must have still been living at that date. One can only wonder whether the word family also included children and if it did, who were they and what became of them (see Note 14).

Since the land on the Susquehanna near Bainbridge was purchased before that in Caln Township, whether for a gift for his wife or not, it may well have been that Bezaillion at first intended to make that place his home with his new bride. But the Philadelphia-bred Martha may have demurred after a stay of several months and persuaded her husband, Peter, to buy the place in the environs of Coatesville, because it was nearer civilization.

Although the inference is plain that Bezaillion's home after 1719 was in Caln Township, he continued active in the Indian trade for many years more at Paxtang (see Note 42).

⁹ Information on tombstones in graveyard of English Church at Campass, Chester County. (See Note 14).

¹⁰ Nathaniel Christopher's name appears on the 1718 tax list of Conestoga Township, Chester County, along with that of Charles Christopher. The latter was a Mennonite who lived in Lampeter Township, until his death in 1762.

¹¹ The information relative to the Bezaillion and Combe lands on the Susquehanna is obtained from these Land Office records: Copied Warrants D-66-207, A-106, D-77-158, and Patent Book A-5.

¹² Lancaster County Recorder's records.

¹³ See Note 11.

¹⁴ This statement differs radically with the conclusions reached by Charles Hanna in his "The Wilderness Trail" (see Vol. 1, p. 162 et seq.) and those writers such as David H. Landis (see "Conoy Indian Town and Peter Bezail-

lion," Vol. 37, of Papers read before the Lancaster County Historical Society), who cite Hanna as their authority. Hanna states that Bezaillion traded at Conestoga before 1696, and that in that year his trading post was located at St. John's or Pequea Church on the boundary between Lancaster and Chester counties. Such was not the case, as I shall demonstrate.

The early life of Bezaillion was linked with that of the LeTort family. From the meagre references to be found in the Colonial Archives, the Maryland Archives and the Land Records, I have reconstructed that period of his life somewhat in the following fashion. Captain Jacques LeTort was a French Protestant who came to America in 1686, with a number of French families of like faith to settle on a tract of 30,000 acres purchased from William Penn by Doctor Daniel Cox, Sir Mathias Vincent and Major Robert Thomson (see Maryland Archives, Vol. XX, p. 470). The authority for this statement is a letter written by Lieut. Gov. William Markham of Pennsylvania in 1696 to the Governor of Maryland. He says of LeTort:

"But as to LeTort, he is a protestant, was sent over in the year 1686 with a considerable cargo and several French protestants, of whom he had the charge, by Doctor Cox, Sir Mathias Vincent, and a third gentleman I cannot call to mind at this time, to settle thirty thousand acres of land up the Skoolkill, that they had bought of Mr. Penn, and that's the place he lives at. Other houses were built and families settled there that he brought with him, but being so far up in the country, they deserted them.

"This LeTort was going for England in the ship with Governor Hamilton, but was taken prisoner. LeTort was carried to Tholoun [in France] and narrowly escaped the gallys [being a galley slave], but after a long and hard usage, got into England, where he [be]came acquainted with the West Jersey Company, and they understanding that his house stood upon the Skoolkill in a convenient place to trade with the Indians, contracted with him to trade with them there, and wrote to their agent to supply him with goods. It is not many days since he went up to Burlington [N. J.] to make up his accounts with the agent, intending as soon as he conveniently can [to leave] for England. . . . Philadelphia, June 25, 1696."

When LeTort went to England the first time in 1690 (Col. Records, Vol. 1, p. 340), his wife, Ann LeTort remained in America at the plantation on the Schuylkill and continued to trade with the Indians. In December, 1693, before her husband had returned, rival Swedish and English traders brought complaints against her and Peter Bezaillion, that they were consorting with strange Indians, whom everyone supposed were in allegiance with the French of Canada (see Col. Records, Vol. 1, p. 396). The accusations were made by Thomas Jenner and Polycarpus Rose among others. Rose, an Englishman, seemed to have a special grudge against Madame LeTort, because she had used a horsewhip on him on one occasion. Because of the seriousness of the charges, the various complainants, Indians and Madame LeTort were ordered to appear before the Council for an investigation. When the day came, Madame LeTort was the only one who appeared on December 31, 1693. She asked to be excused from coming again until the others were certain to be there also because of the "extremity of the weather" and "she having no person at home, remote in the woods, to be at her house in her absence."

This house in the woods was located on the thirty thousand acres sold to Sir Mathias Vincent and others by Penn, when he was originally seeking settlers for his new colony. The French Creek, which received its name from the French Protestants who attempted to settle this tract with indifferent success, flowed through it. The colony, established as an agricultural settle-

ment, failed utterly so that after 1690 only the LeTorts were left, and by then they had turned from agriculture to Indian trade. The final blow to the colony was the war between France and England which broke out that year.

The war fever spread to America and in April, 1690, Captain Lacey Cock, Indian agent and self-appointed protector of early Pennsylvania, asked Council for permission to go up the Schuylkill to "make particular inquiry concerning the store and quantity of ammunition in the custody of the few French families seated up the river . . . and further that such of the French who be justly suspected of unfaithfulness to this province, may be by suitable means, persuaded [to come] down here [Philadelphia] . . ." (See Col. Records, Vol. 1, p. 334). It was only a few weeks after that that captain LeTort came to Philadelphia to ask permission to go to England, probably to see what could be done there to save the expiring colony.

Captain LeTort did not return until February, 1694, a few months after his wife was accused of being a sympathizer of France. He had arrived back in time to appear with his wife before the Provincial Council (Col. Records, Vol. 1, p. 435) when a second hearing was held on the charges that they were inciting the Indians to disloyalty to the English.

That must have been a happy reunion between Captain LeTort and his wife, Ann. Two years before that, while her husband was still absent, Ann LeTort had indentured their son, James, to John King of Philadelphia, to learn the trade of the sea. He was bound out for five years, and must have been a lad about eight years, since we know he was born in Pennsylvania and his parents had arrived in 1686. The indenture was dated May 28, 1692 (Col. Records, Vol. 1). This younger James LeTort after his apprenticeship at sea, returned to the Indian trade again and lived with his widowed mother at Conestoga and later near Bainbridge. Eventually he became one of the best known and most successful traders on the frontier and was one of the first to travel west to the Allegheny region after the Indians began leaving the Susquehanna region.

I say widowed mother, for Captain LeTort, it appears, never returned from his second voyage to England, taken in 1696, although what his fate was, the records do not disclose.

At the same time charges were brought against Ann LeTort in 1693; charges were also made against Peter Bezaillion. However, Bezaillion did not live in what is now Pennsylvania at that time, for when the Council gave the order that he should be brought before it to explain his actions, Bezaillion was living in the Lower Counties or Delaware (Col. Records, Vol. 1, p. 396).

Bezaillion, it appears, came to America as a silent partner in a shipping venture, which failed because of a shipwreck. This information comes from the same letter of Governor Markham already cited. He wrote of Bezaillion:

"I enclose to your Excellency what I found among castaway papers. Basalion was in equal partnership with Petit and Salvay (two Frenchmen), though it went in only their names, Basalion coming in after the others had provided for the voyage, and after the voyage was overthrown [shipwrecked], I divided the left [salvaged] cargo and Basalion had one-third." That was in 1696.

Rose in his charges in 1693, said that a packet of letters written by Peter Bezaillion, Captain DuBrois and Madame LeTort from Philadelphia, had been left at the plantation of James Stanfield by Richard (should this be Peter?)

Basalion's servant. These letters, it was claimed, were to strange Indians called Shallnarooners. Madame LeTort explained that what had been found were not letters at all, but was an account book containing the dealings she had had with the Indians. Captain DuBrois appears to have been a sea captain. He and Bezaillion, as early as 1693, were dealing with the LeTorts. Probably their business dealings concerned the provision of trade goods for the Indians and the shipment of furs to England.

However, Bezaillion at that time did not live in Pennsylvania. His plantation was located on Murther Creek in Kent County, Lower Counties. The Markham letter was written in answer to charges which had been made by Col. Casparus Herman, a Maryland trader, to the governor of that colony against Bezaillion and the LeTorts. He wrote:

"This informant saith that Basilion does now live at St. Jones's [Murther creek flows into St. Jones river, south of Dover, Delaware] but formerly lived about thirty miles backwards from any inhabitants [the French settlement on the Schuylkill], where he treated with the Indians and was then reported that he kept private correspondence with the Canida Indians and the French [a revival of the Rose charges?] and since he has heard that he has a brother taken by the Mahages [Mohicans] from Canada, to whom he was intended to go to redeem him. . ." (Maryland Archives, Vol. XX, p. 406, May 1, 1696).

Hanna has construed St. Jones to be St. John's. This, however, is an error. For substantiation see Minute Book I, Penna. Archives, Vol. 19, pp. 670 and 701, where there are these entries:

"John Curtis having purchased the plantation and tract of land formerly belonging to Peter Bizalion situate on the Murther Kill or creek, desires to purchase the marsh and swamp which lies between the s'd tract and the creek. . . ."

And:

"Jehu Curtis having purchased the plantation and tract of land late of Peter Bizalion on Murther creek in Kent county. . ."

When Captain LeTort failed to return from England, Bezaillion apparently took over his trading post at French Creek, for in 1700 he asked for permission to build a house there.

"Peter Bezalion having built a house in the fall of the year 1700 on a tract of land over against Mahanatawny, requests a grant of a few hundred acres at a bushel of wheat p'r hundred, which cannot be granted. [Peter was an alien]. Ordered, however, that said Peter shall enjoy the said settlement quietly without molestation till the s'd land is to be settled by such who would make a plantation and if he shall be willing to do the same, shall have the refusal of a convenient quantity there." (See Penna. Archives, Vol. 19, p. 317.)

The location of this settlement is determined in a survey order given Jacob Taylor Nov. 7, 1708, by the Land Commissioners, which states:

"Matthew Brooks of Philadelphia county, has seated a tract on the Schuylkill which Peter Beazallon with our consent, formerly took up and improved a survey on 500 acres of the same and adjoining land to be held for 5 years."

In 1717, a warrant for 200 acres was issued to Peter Baydeller, late of Germany, "whereon Bizaillon formerly dwelt." The following year a warrant for 200 acres was issued to Jacob Knave or Neff for 200 acres on the west side of the Schuylkill near "the tract seated by Peter Bizaillon and for the last few years in possession of Mathew Brooks." These two tracts were in Chester County near the mouth of French Creek.

In addition to the tie of race between Bezaillion and the LeTorts, there probably was an even more personal one. Before Bezaillion married Martha Combe, he had had another wife, whose name is not known. As a matter of fact all we do know about her is this reference to her in the Colonial Records.

"Two Onondagoe Indians were again called to receive their answer and Peter Bezillion's wife being in town, who understands their language well, was also called to interpret. . . ." (Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 141.)

The date of this conference was May, 1704. Obviously Martha Combe, who in that year was only ten years of age, neither could have qualified as a wife nor as an Indian interpreter. The fact that this Madame Bezaillion understood "well" the Iroquois tongue indicates one of two things: First, she was herself an Indian, or second, she had been raised on the frontier and like Conrad Weiser, learned the Indian language from childhood playmates. I fancy the latter explanation and what is more, I would like to conjecture that she was a sister of James LeTort the younger, and a daughter of Captain Jacques and Ann LeTort.

¹⁵ See Note 2.

¹⁶ Col. Records, May 18, 1704: "Peter Bezillion, ye French trader coming to town and being sent for, informed ye board that he had heard that those of ye Five Nations who intended shortly down this way, had a design of carrying off the Shawanah Indians, both those settled near Conestoga and those near Lechay [Lehigh], they being colonies of a nation that were their enemies." Chartier came with this tribe to Pennsylvania.

¹⁷ See Note 31 for some of the changes in the Indian tribes on the Susquehanna River, in the first decade or two of the eighteenth century.

As for the Delawares, it is probable that the Indians whom Governor John Evans and his companions found at Paxtang, when they visited that place in 1707, were for the most part Delawares. However, the principal chiefs of the Delawares close to the English settlements continued to reside on the Schuylkill River until 1712, for that year (Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 546) a Council was held with the Delawares at the farm of Edward Farmer at White Marsh on the Schuylkill River. Attending the conference were Sassanoon and thirteen other Indians, all delegates from the Delaware tribe to the Five Nations. They came to see the governor before going to the Iroquois capital in Western New York.

When these delegates returned, the Delawares apparently moved from the watershed of the Schuylkill to that of the Susquehanna, for at the next conference which the Delawares attended, in 1715, (Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 603) they came to Philadelphia as representing all but the Conestogas, of the Indians on the Susquehanna. Again Sassanoon headed the delegation of Delaware chiefs. When a report came from Maryland that the Conestogas were deserting their "ancient town," Sassanoon and his companions were given gifts for Civility and the other Conestoga chieftians, with a message urging them to come to Philadelphia for a renewal of the "league of friendship" with Pennsylvania.

At this time, all evidence points to the conclusion that the chief town of the Delawares on the Susquehanna was at Paxtang, for a few years later, Sassanoon is identified as the chief of the Indians at Paxtang. Now it must be realized that in 1712 and also in 1715, the Iroquois who claimed all the lands on the Susquehanna River by right of conquest, had not sold any of the lands north of the South Mountains, so that the Pennsylvania authorities had no jurisdiction over them unless they wished to pick a quarrel with

the Indian confederation. So it is obvious that the Delawares sought permission from the Iroquois to settle on the Susquehanna and that that permission was obtained when their chiefs went to Onondago, the Iroquois capital in 1712.

This was the year in which Bezaillon again obtained permission to resume trade with the Indians (see Note 2), and thus it is altogether likely that he followed the Delawares to their town at Paxtang that year, although it was not until 1714 that the Land Commissioners permitted him to establish a permanent domicile at that place. All this tribal shifting on the part of the various Indian nations was caused by the pressure of settlers moving westward from Philadelphia, for as the Conestoga Indians told the authorities in 1715, it was their "design to remove from Conestoga to leave room for the English to settle there."

¹⁸ See Note 8.

¹⁹ See Charles A. Hanna, "The Wilderness Trail," Vol. 1, p. 26 et seq.

²⁰ The rivalry between Maryland and Pennsylvania, which at the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth, also involved the Lower Counties or Delaware, for the fur trade began at a very early date and continued all through the colonial history of the two colonies.

During the early part of this period, the principal trader with the Indians from Maryland appears to have been Col. Casparus Herman, a militia officer and magistrate in Cecil County, Maryland, at the head of Chesapeake Bay. It was on his manor or plantation that the Shawnees after their migration from the French fort on the Mississippi settled in 1692. Martin Chartier, whom the Marylanders called Martin Shirtive, came with them, and because he was French, caused the government no end of anxiety.

Col. Herman did not actually visit the Indian towns along the Susquehanna himself, but supplied others with the trade goods. One of these was Amos Nicholls, whom Markham characterized as a man not to be trusted (Maryland Archives, Vol. XX, p. 470). Another was Cornelius Comegys, who was warned by the Maryland Council against trading illegally with the Indians.

But the greatest and best known of the Maryland traders was John Hans Steelman who was active in the business from about 1690 to 1722 at least (see Maryland Archives). Steelman's trading post in 1698 and later in 1700, was at the mouth of the Octoraro on the east side of the Susquehanna. Later he established a post near Nottingham, Chester County, which was located in the strip claimed both by Maryland and Pennsylvania.

The heirs of Joseph England, years later, in a deposition (see Penna. Provincial Papers) which tried to settle in which province this farm lay, stated:

"That one Steelman sometime before 1706 or 1707 cleared and was possessed of a tract of land, part of 600 acres claimed by Joseph English in his lifetime. . . ." And John Dawson, a Marylander, asserted Steelman "took up 200 acres in Talbot's Manor under a Maryland right," but on cross-examination admitted that Steelman "should be regarded as a freebooter."

Later on, Steelman attempted to establish a trading post at the Shawnee village on the Delaware River above the Lehigh (see Note 39) and again at the Conoy village on the Susquehanna (see Note 32). Finally throwing in his lot with Maryland, after he became involved in the dispute over the death of Francis de la Tore in Pennsylvania (see Col. Records, Vol. II), he returned to Maryland, locating first in what is now Frederick County, (see Maryland Archives) and then in what is now Adams County, where the Pennsylvania Historical Commission has erected a monument to him.

Steelman in the period around 1700 was on more friendly terms with the French traders from Pennsylvania and the Lower Counties, than he was with the English in Maryland. In 1697, two persons, Michael Judd, an innholder, and Mary Clark, who lived on the Susquehanna River, charged before the Maryland Council (see Maryland Archives) that "John Hanstillman of Caecill county does deal and hold frequent correspondence with three French Indian traders, alien enemies to His Majesty. . . ."

Since Col. Herman had only the year before complained against Bezailion and LeTort (see Note 14), we can surmise that Bezaillion was one of the three Frenchmen. (LeTort had gone to England in 1696). The second no doubt, was Martin Chartier, who already, as noted above, had come to the attention of the Maryland authorities. Mention should be made, too, of the third Frenchman. In the Pennsylvania records, he is known simply as Louis or Louis, the Canada prisoner. In 1693, he was the servant of the LeTorts, and Polycarpus Rose of Chester County accused him of helping Madame LeTort, when she used a whip on him at the LeTort trading post on the Schuylkill (Col. Records, Vol. 1, p. 396, also Note 14). In Maryland, he was called Lewee Lewison, and in 1698 served as interpreter for the Susquehanna or Conestoga Indians at a conference which was held at the trading post of Steelman on the Susquehanna River.

The record of that conference in the Maryland Archives states that "Connetectna, King of the Susquehannas, together with two more of his great men and one Lewee Lewison, a Frenchman, resident among them," came to the conference on May 26. A few days later, so the record goes, "Meauroway, King of the Shawanoles [Shawnees] was brought on horseback by reason of his age, together with one of his great men and one, Martin Shartee, a Frenchman resident and married among them." In the treaty which followed, Lewee Lewison signed for the Susquehannas, and Chartier for the "Shavanoles." Hendick Peterson and Steelman, who signed his name "Jno Vrans Saelsmans," were the signers for Maryland.

Louis Lewison was also linked with Bezaillion in 1701 by William Penn (see Note 2), as living and trading among the Indians. As we know the elder LeTort had sailed again for England late in 1696 never to return (see Note 14), we are safe in surmising that Lewison, as the servant of the LeTorts, was acting for them. To this man, of whom we know so little, must go the credit of being the first of the French traders to live at Conestoga, for in 1698, Bezaillion was still in the Lower Counties and in 1701, at French Creek on the Schuylkill (see Note 14).

²¹ See Note 48.

²² Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 389.

²³ Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 390.

²⁴ This section of the ancient road is the only part still in use which retains the original name.

²⁵ Mombert's "Authentic History of Lancaster County," published 1869, p. 348, gives the boundaries of the first townships as determined at meetings of the magistrates and inhabitants, June 9, 1729. Quoting from Mombert:

"Hempfield—The township of Hempfield, beginning at the mouth of the Conestoga, thence up Sasquehanna to Chickasalunge [Creek], thence up said creek to Peters' Road by the log cabins, thence to the Little Conestoga. . . .

"Donegal—The township of Donegal, beginning at the mouth of the Chickasalunge, thence up East Branch to Peters' Road, thence (taking in the present inhabitants) on a northerly course to the Conewago. . . .

"Earl—The township of Earl, beginning at Peters' Road by Conestoga creek, being a corner of Leacock township, thence up Conestoga creek and Muddy creek (etc.) "by Salisbury line to David Cowen's west corner, thence to Peters' Road and along same to the place of beginning.

"Warwick—Warwick township, beginning by Conestoga creek at a corner of Manheim township, by Peters' Road, thence up by the west side of Conestogoe to Hans Graff's mill,—(line went up Conestogoe, then Cocalico to Graff's, later Eby's mill on Cocalico)—, thence up a northerly branch to David Priess' mill—(Priess' mill was on Hammer Creek on land owned by Lewis Lewis, Chester county Welshman, later sold to Hans Brubaker of Lancaster township)—thence westerly along the hills by Lebanon township to Derry, thence southerly by Donegal to the aforesaid (Peters') road, thence along said road easterly to the place of beginning.

"Manheim—Manheim township, beginning by Peters' Road at a corner of Donegal and Warwick townships, near the head (source) of Little Conestogoe, thence along said road by Warwick township to the Conestogoe creek, thence down said creek. . . .

"Leacock—Leacock township, beginning at the mouth of Beaver creek, thence up the east side of Pequea to Philip Feire's lower corner, thence west by Lampeter township to Conestoga creek at the upper corner of George Bard's land, thence up said creek to Peters' Road, thence easterly along the said road by Earl township to David Cowen's land, thence southerly and westerly by Salsbury, Sadsbury and Martock townships to the place of beginning."

In passing, it might be added, that in addition to the townships already named, these others were laid out in 1729:

Drumore, Sadsbury, Martock, Conestogoe, Derry, Peshtank, Lebanon, Lancaster, Lampeter, Salsbury, and Caernarvon. Although Lancaster County ran to the Schuylkill River on the east, the whole area bounded by the Conestoga and Muddy Creeks, and the upper line of Caernarvon, on the south, and by the Cocalico and Muddy Creeks and the east line of Lebanon on the west, was not included in any township, indicating that if there were any settlers in this region, other than the Palatine settlement on the Tulpehocken, they were few indeed.

26 Warrant book Penna. Land Offices.

27 The road traveled by Peter Bezallion to his plantation at Paxtang is probably almost identical with the Harrisburg-Lancaster Pike as far as Middletown. When Thomas Harris took up 252 acres in 1734 (he had probably settled there many years earlier, but his warrant was not issued until that date) it was located on the Conoy Creek at the present location of Elizabethtown. One of his daughters married George Stewart, Jr., of Donegal, who founded the Black Bear Tavern in 1736 on part of his father-in-law's land. This tavern was later sold to Lazarus Lowry and then by Lowry to Barnaby Hughes, who owned it during the French and Indian Wars, when it was known as the Black Horse Tavern. Elizabethtown grew up around it. The original tavern was built on the road to Paxtang.

The original road crossed the Swatara Creek at Pine Ford, near the present highway bridge over the Swarata at Middletown. From this point it turned north along a road which still exists today as a county or rural road, known locally as the "back road from Middletown to Harrisburg."

The road along the river was not built for many years later, for even as late as 1745 (Lancaster Quarter Sessions Court Records) local residents in Paxtang Township, in a petition, opposed the establishment of a road

through the river bottoms from Harris's Ferry to Pine Ford. Some years before that, the petition stated, Harris had succeeded in having the back road made a public road, although it is apparent from the petition that the viewers departed at many points from the original trail.

This back road passed through what is now Oberlin, skirted the present Dauphin County Poor House property, turning toward the river along the present Paxtang Street in Harrisburg, to what after 1733 was Harris's Ferry across the Susquehanna, but which a decade earlier must have been Bezaillion's trading post at Paxtang.

²⁸ "New Light on Hans Herr and Martin Kendig" by the writer, Proceedings of the Lancaster County Historical Society, 1935, Vol. 39.

²⁹ Bezaillion's will gave his widow, among other things, eight negro slaves, 32 head of sheep, 24 head of cattle, 10 horses, bonds valued at 182 pounds, and a valuable plantation in East Caln Township, near Coatesville, Chester County.

³⁰ See article on Redemptioners by Frank Reid Diffenderffer, in Vol. X, of the Proceedings of the Pennsylvania German Society.

³¹ One of the events in which Bezaillion took part, during the period from 1707 to 1714, was Franz Ludwig Michel von Schwertswendi's fruitless search for a silver mine, believed to be somewhere in the undeveloped frontier of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia in the first decade of the eighteenth century.

His part in this quest, which led indirectly to the settlement of New Bern in North Carolina, and of the Swiss Mennonites in Lancaster County, both of which occurred in 1710 (see New Light on Hans Herr and Martin Kendig, 1934), is a letter written to William Penn by James Logan in June, 1708 (Penn-Logan Correspondence). The letter states in part:

" Peter Barzalion who has long traded here, and behaved himself well, last year (1707) had some Indian goods seized by the collector (Admiralty Court) because imported by a foreigner. Thy third (of the seizure) came to something above 30 pounds. At his earnest request, I took his bond for it, everybody exclaiming against the severity for though a Frenchman, he had been very faithful, and believing that upon his application and thy knowledge of the matter, thou wouldst not touch with it.

"For these nine months past, he [Bezaillion] has been out with Michel in quest of the mines, and the meantime, unhappily, had another parcel of a greater value seized, which are also condemned, without mercy, for John Moore was angry with him (Moore was in the Admiralty Court) and was sold by the admiralty. I know not what to do in such a point, but must crave thy direction. He is desirous if he stays here, to procure a denization from England, in which it would be kind to be helpful to him, for he is useful and accounted very honest by those who trade with him.

"But I fear he will leave us and if provoked, is capable of doing much hurt. . . ."

Logan, it appears from the Minutes of the Land Commissioners, acted at once to do something for Bezaillion (Penna. Archives, 2d Series, Vol. 19, p. 496).

On a day when no other business was transacted, he, and Thomas Storey and Owen Griffiths, the other commissioners, passed this order, October, 1708:

"Granted unto Peter Bizallon, Indian trader, (upon his humble request) free liberty to build himself a house and plant necessary fields for his own use on any of the lands above Conestoga, not possessed or made use of by

the Indians, to be held by him during the proprietor's and governor's pleasure, or his lieutenant, or commissioners, and no longer, he paying one deer skin yearly for the privilege."

The location of Bezaillion's trading post near Conestoga has been established by a reference uncovered by David H. Landis in his "Conoy Indian Town and Peter Bezaillion" (Papers Read before the Lancaster County Historical Society, Vol. 37, p. 128), among the Logan Papers. From this source, we learn that in 1714 Robert Hodgson and James Hendricks applied for land on the Conestoga Creek, adjoining John Cartlidge's tract and including the "old Indian Fields" but not "Peter Bezaillion's improvements." A warrant was issued to them in February, 1715.

Landis locates this land north of the Conestoga Creek in Manor Township. However, when in 1716, 1100 acres were surveyed to James Hendricks, it was on the south side of the Conestoga Creek, in Conestoga Township, at Rock Hill. In fact, John Postlethwaite, at whose tavern the first courts in Lancaster County were held, bought part of Hendricks' thousand acres.

Some hint as to the location of these "Bezaillion improvements" on the Conestoga Creek is given in an entry in the Day Book of the Land Office, under the date of 1723. We find this entry:

"Richard Carter, sundry acct's.....	28 pounds, 16 shillings
acc't 200 acres granted and surveyed to him	
on the first mo., 1718, near Conestoga...	20 pounds
acc't of interest for five years.....	8 pounds, 16 shillings
Sundry acc't debtor to Richard Carter.....	28 pounds, 16 shillings
Michael Springle (he was son-in-law of Jacob	
Miller) debtor, who holds land and therefore	
gives obligation to M. Kendigg	24 pounds, 16 shillings
cash received of Carter by Peter Bizaillon.....	4 pounds
Total.....	28 pounds, 16 shillings

My explanation of this rather obscure bookkeeping entry is this. Carter had sold out his warrant right to this 200 acres to Michael Springle, who gave a note of Kendig's for his payment to the Land Office. In addition, there was to the credit of Carter, four pounds which had been paid by Bezaillion. Apparently Bezaillion had sold to Carter the rights he had held in the tract and such improvements as were there at some earlier date. Incidentally, this tract adjoined the land of James Hendricks, downstream on the Conestoga, and what is even more interesting, was across the creek from Cartlidge's plantation. The land was eventually patented to Jacob Miller, a brother-in-law of Springle.

Mr. Landis also identifies the "Indian Old Fields" mentioned in the application of Hodgson and Hendricks, found in the Logan Papers as the site of Pequehan, the town of the Shawnees. However, this writer is of the opinion that Pequehan was located at the mouth of the Pequea Creek, at the location of the "Shawanna Old Fields," later granted to Col. John French (see Note 48). The Indians who lived on the land later granted to Hendricks and adjoining Bezaillion's trading post near Conestoga, if not Conestoga Indians, were probably Delawares, since that is the tribe with which Bezaillion traded, first on the Schuylkill and then the Susquehanna.

Bezaillion after 1712 and before 1714 (see Notes 2 and 17), transferred his trading post to Paxtang on the Suquehanna River, where Harrisburg is now located. Just where at Paxtang Bezaillion built his cabin and cleared his fields, it is now almost impossible to determine, but if a surmise is permitted, this writer would guess that it was at the place where, some years later, John Harris, the elder, located his trading post and ferry.

In January, 1731, the Land Commissioners (Penna. Archives, 2d Series, Vol. 19, p. 7, recorded that "Robert Barber, Conestoga (first sheriff of Lancaster County), requests the grant of a parcel of vacant land next above the old settlement of Peter Bizational at Pextang. J. L. [James Logan] consents to his request."

If we could locate this Barber land, we would know where Bezaillion's cabin stood, but subsequent records appear to be silent.

Turning to conjecture, after a thorough study of all the early titles of tracts in the vicinity of Paxtang, there seems to be the possibility that the "right of Christian Stone" (see Note 42) for 100 acres and the Barber right were identical. In other words, Barber disposed of his right to Stone, and Stone sold to Harris, who used it obtaining a survey and patent (see Note 42). For just like this Barber right, there is no other mention, as far as present research discloses, of a Stone right at Paxtang.

The Stone right formed part of the basis for Harris's patent for 300 acres, immediately above the 500 acres upon which his ferry and his home were located. The line between the two tracts began in River Park, Harrisburg, at or near Chestnut Street, and extended in east northeast direction for the best part of a mile.

³² The Shawnee and Conoy tribes were almost as recent settlers in the lower Susquehanna region as the whites. The lands along the river had belonged to the Susquehannas, later known as the Conestogas, a vanishing tribe in 1700. However, they had been conquered both by Maryland and the Iroquois, one persistent tradition being that the Marylanders had defeated the Susquehannas at their chief fort near Washington Boro. The Shawnees, migrating from the southwest, appeared first in Maryland in 1692, moved north into Pennsylvania by 1698. The Conoys followed a few years later. The Shawnees' first settlement in Pennsylvania was at the mouth of the Pequea, where they were in 1707. A few years later they had abandoned this village for a new one near Washington Boro, a place previously abandoned by the Conoys who had gone on up the river to a new location near Bainbridge.

As the Conoy Indians themselves told Thomas Cookson of Lancaster in May, 1743 (Col. Records, Vol. 4, p. 656), they came originally from Maryland.

As Cookson recorded it they "came from Piscataway to an island in the Powtomeck [Potomac], thence down to Philadelphia in Old Proprietor Penn's time, in order. . . ." to make peace and request the right to settle in Pennsylvania. So they ". . . brought down all their brothers from Powtomeck to Conejohola on the *east side* of the Susquehanna and built a town there. . . ."

Then "the Six Nations (Iroquois) told 'em there was land enough and they might chose their place of settlement anywhere about the Susquehanna. That accordingly they thought fit to remove higher up the Susquehanna to the Conoy town where they now (1743) live; and in their first settlement, the Indians of the Six Nations came down and made their fire and all the Great Men declared the fire of their kindling in token of their approbation of their settling there. . . ."

David H. Landis, the noted Indian authority of Lancaster County, in "Conoy Indian Town and Peter Bezaillion" (Vol. 37, No. 5, Papers Read before the Lancaster County Historical Society) states that Conoy Town at Bainbridge was not settled until 1722, since it was in July, 1722, that the records contain the first reference to such a town.

However, this writer feels that the removal occurred at a much earlier date, although existing records are obscure upon this point.

In May, 1705 (Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 191), it was reported to the Provincial Council that the Ganawense or Piscataway Indians (the Conoys were also called Tuscaroras and Nanticokes, rightly or wrongly, I do not pretend to say), who had "settled in this province, desire to quit their present habitation [where they settled about five years ago] . . ." and settle among the Delaware Indians at "Turpyhocken" (Tulpehocken).

It is apparent that the place where the Conoys were then residing was at Conejohola on the east side of the river (Washington Boro), as they told Cookson forty years later.

The following October (1705), James Logan, then secretary of the Provincial Council (Col. Records, Vol. 2, pp. 244-45) visited the Indian villages on the Susquehanna River, in company with nine other persons. He held a Council with the various Indian tribes at Conestoga Indiantown. Among the Indians who attended were the "Indians called Piscataway, who five years ago came to settle in this government."

While at Conestoga reports came to the Englishmen that a certain John Hans (John Hans Steelman, Maryland trader) "was building a log house for trade amongst them [the Conoy or Piscataway] which made us uneasy and desired to know whether they encouraged it. To which they answered that they did not and were desired not to suffer any Christians to settle amongst them. . . ."

Since on this same tour of the Susquehanna towns, Logan and his party visited Conejohola, the fact that they learned of the building of the log house by Steelman by reports rather than seeing it for themselves, infers rather clearly that the cabin was being built at some other place than Conejohola and that since it was among the Conoys we are on safe ground in assuming that it was at or near Bainbridge, where the Conoys had located their new town.

It can be assumed that when the Conoys at first planned to settle among the Delaware Indians on the Tulpehocken, a tributary of the Schuylkill, the Iroquois stepped in and assigned them new territory on the Susquehanna River, as they told Cookson many years later.

Egle concludes that the John Hans spoken of by Logan was actually John Harris, founder of Harris's Ferry, and that the "log house" spoken of here, was Harris's first trading post at Paxtang. Obviously, this is incorrect. (See Note 39.)

Also, in July, 1749, at an Indian treaty at Lancaster, the Conoys, who had by that date moved away from Bainbridge, laid claim to the property on which their town had stood. To this, the governor of Pennsylvania answered (Col. Records, Vol. 5, p. 393) that:

"I now return answer to Assuehque, who gave this string in behalf of the Conoy Indians. I am sorry to say that these Indians have misrepresented the facts, for in the information I have received from proprietary officers, this land which is but a small piece where their town stood, was not reserved out of their grants of the lands sold by the Six Nations, but at that time the Conoy Indians were very desirous to continue there, prevailed with the Six Nations to ask this as a favor from the Proprietor. . . ."

It will be noted here that the Conoy Indians were living at Bainbridge, when the Iroquois sold the lands in the Donegal region to the Penns.

³³ Shickellemy first became concerned in Indian affairs in Pennsylvania in 1731. His residence at Shamokin made that the most important Indian town on the Susquehanna after that date, although quite a few Indian conferences were still held after 1731 at Conestoga.

³⁴ Mombert's Authentic History of Lancaster County, p. 416.

³⁵ Col. Records, Vol. III, p. 23.

³⁶ Affidavit made by Hendricks in 1740, printed in Penna. Archives. James Hendricks was the son of Alburtus Hendrickson or Henrixon, who died in Chester County. A brother was Tobias Hendricks, early justice of the peace, and one of the first settlers in the Cumberland Valley, his settlement being made near Oyster's Point in Camp Hill.

³⁷ Col. Records, Vol. III, p. 191.

³⁸ Whether or not the identification of the John Harris whose name appears in the Conestoga tax list with the John Harris of Harris's Ferry is an accurate one, probably will never be determined. It might be well to point out, however, that in 1738, there was issued to Joseph and Jeremiah Harris, the sons of John Harris, Lancaster, a warrant for 400 acres of land on the Conococheague (Franklin County). John Harris of Paxtang had no sons of this name. In addition, Samuel Blunston, a few years earlier, had issued to a John Harris a license for settling this Franklin County land, indicating that as early as 1734, at least there were two John Harrises in Lancaster County.

The name of John Harris appears on the petition circulated in 1729 by residents in the lower Susquehanna region for a new county, which became Lancaster County (Provincial Papers, Vol. IV). In 1746, when John Harris the elder of Harris's Ferry made his will, there is no signature, only a mark, JH, run together. Since death did not occur until 1748, there is nothing to indicate that Harris was unable to write his name because of illness or feebleness. Therefore the question arises, if the Harris who signed the petition in 1729 was the same as the Harris of Paxtang, what had occurred to his ability to write in the interim? Or were there two John Harrises residing in Lancaster County in 1729, as there were only five or six years later? And if this was so, when did the John Harris who signed the county petition of 1729 arrive? In other words, in the absence of any proof that the John Harris listed in the Conestoga tax list of 1718 and in succeeding years was the Harris of Paxtang, how can we be sure it was not the John Harris, whose sons, Joseph and Jeremiah Harris, settled in Franklin County in 1738 or earlier?

³⁹ Dr. William H. Egle bases his principal claim for Harris's early settlement at Paxtang on a letter William Penn wrote April 12, 1701, to "John Hans." Egle reading Hans in the original in Provincial Papers, Vol. I, Harrisburg, Pa., as "Harris." This writer could see no resemblance to Harris after a close examination of the document in question.

It reads as follows:

"John Hans:

"Thou hast often promised to visit this place in order to treat with me about thy Indian trade, but hast as often disappointed me. Thy present management thereof amongst us is directly contrary to our laws. I have before stopt thy goods intended for Lechay till according to thy frequent engagement thou come hither thyself and give further satisfaction than thou hast yet done to Thy Friend, William Penn."

In connection with this letter, this minute from the Executive Council book, for May, 1701, should be read:

"John Hans Steelman, represented to live in Maryland, and having no license, followed a close trade with the Indians not only at Conestoga, but had been endeavoring to settle a trade with them at Lechay or the forks of the Delaware. . . .

"It was moved that as it is not concluded or allowed by the Proprietor [William Penn] that that man lives out of the province and his father being a native of it, it will appear so reasonable to exercise the rigour of the law. . . . The Indians complained against him for defrauding them, so that he be not permitted to trade anymore till he get a license." (See also Note 20.)

John Hans or John Hans Steelman is referred to in the Colonial Records on at least two other occasions. Once when he attempted to build a cabin at the village of the Conoys, and again in connection with the death of Francis de la Tore, allegedly at his instigation. Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 244.

⁴⁰ In the Day Book, in the Land Office records, appears the following item under the date of 2nd day, 7th month, 1720:

"Peter Bizaillon, debtor sundry accts.

Acct of land for 700 acres laid out	
to him 9ber last on Susquehanna river	70 pounds
Acct of interest for one year on 70 pounds	5: 12

James Logan dr. to Peter Bizaillon for whom
he assumes to pay. Paid 70 pounds."

On the margin is this note:

"Speak to J. L. about this interest."

⁴¹ The governors who opposed Logan and thus lost their commissions were Charles Gookin and Sir William Keith.

⁴² John Harris, the elder, got a patent in December, 1733, for 300 acres of land at Harrisburg. The same month he was given a patent permitting him to operate a ferry across the Susquehanna, his ferry patent being dated the same as that given John Wright at Columbia. At the same time, an adjoining 500 acres were patented to Joseph Turner, which were sold to Harris.

Other references in the Land Records to this land at Paxtang are:

In Survey Book, A-86-236, is a draft of 500 acres laid out to Turner with this notation:

"By orders from the proprietor May 27, last [1733] surveyed to John Harris 4th June, 1733, certain tract on the Susquehanna River in Lancaster County, John Taylor, surveyor." There is also the notation "this draught is laid aside."

In Survey Book, A-36-134, appears a draft of the two tracts, 500 acres and 300 acres, with this notation: "The above described tract of land situate on Susquehanna River in county of Lancaster, containing 800 acres and the allowance of 6 acres per cent. was surveyed to John Harris, the fourth of June, 1733, in the following rights, viz., 500 acres thereof in right of Joseph Turner, one hundred acres in the right of Christian Stone, and the other 200 acres by order of the Proprietor [Thomas Penn] of May last."

Harris's patent for 300 acres was dated December 18, 1733, and had this preamble:

"Whereas, in pursuance of an order from ourselves to the surveyor of the county of Lancaster, there was surveyed and laid out on the 4th of June last to John Harris of Pextan, situated at Pextan aforesaid, which by our warrant of the 12th instant [December] we require our surveyor general to accept. . . ."

In Turner's patent, the preamble states:

". . . By a warrant bearing the date of 18th of May, 1731, the quantity of 5000 acres of land was granted to be laid out in our said province unto our brother, Thomas Penn, and whereas by indorsement on the said warrant, the same with the quantity of 5000 acres of land therein mentioned, is now vested in Joseph Turner of Philadelphia, merchant, unto whom a certain part or parcel thereof was surveyed on the 4th day of the month called June last past at Pextan in the county of Lancaster. . . ."

The Day Book of the Land Office under the date of December, 1733, has this entry:

"John Harris of Pextan, dr. acct of land	46:10 pounds
for 300 acres now confirmed to him on the late terms	
Cash dr. to John Harris	46:10 pounds
rec'd of Edw. Shippen for him in full."	

Edward Shippen's appearance in this transaciton is in'ereesting since he was in 1733, and for many years after that, the agent of James Logan, under whose guidance he had obtained his business training and at whose request he had located at Lancaster about 1731. No doubt Shippen was Logan's agent in this instance, too.

An additional reference to John Harris at Paxtang appears in the minutes of the Board of Property Commissioners under the date of 23rd of 7ber, 1727:

"John Harris requests, by John Warder, 500 acres of land above Pextang on the Susquehanna river."

Nothing was done about this application at that time, since in 1727, the land around Paxtang had not been purchased from the Indians. However Harris's reservation was recorded and when the land was put up for sale in 1733, he was given a warrant and patent, as already shown.

However, the significant thing about this transaction is that John Warder, the friend of Bezaillion, should have also acted for Harris. This more than anything else shows the connection between these two pioneers at Paxtang. It was Warder who acted as co-executor with Bezaillion of Moses Combe's estate, and it was Warder who in 1719, got a deed in trust for Bezaillion from John Bezar for the plantation at Caln, upon which Bezaillion spent the last decades of his life. As a matter of fact, the only mention of Warder in contemporary records is in connection with these two men, first Bezaillion, then Harris. No doubt he was a relative of Jeremiah Warder, of the next generation, who founded a famous mercantile business in Philadelphia.

The last mention contained in the records of Pennsylvania placing Bezailion at Paxtang was in 1731, when Joshua Lowe, coroner of Lancaster County, states he talked to Bezaillion there while investigating the finding of some bodies of Indians along the Swatara Creek. Lowe also identifies the Indians at Paxtang in that year as being Tuscaroras, one of the many names given the Conoy Indians. (See Note 32.)

The earliest knowledge of Harris being at Paxtang is the birth date of his eldest son, John Harris, Jr., founder of Harrisburg. (See Note 44.)

Thus the careers of Bezaillion and Harris at Paxtang overlapped for a period of at least six years (1726 to 1731 inclusive).

There is a strong inference here that Harris's first years at Paxtang were spent there as Bezaillion's agent. It is within the realm of possibility, too, that John Harris's wife, Esther, was a daughter of Bezaillion by his first wife. Dr. William H. Egle ("Notes and Queries" and other writings) identifies Esther Harris's family name as Say, but does not disclose the source of his information. It may be that Egle learned the name from family tradition and in this connection it is pertinent to point out that the French pronunciation of Bezaillion's surname would be "*Ba-say-yon*."

And then, it is a fact, too, that Bezaillion in writing the will, which was probated in Chester County, revoked any previous will. Does this hint that an earlier will mentioned other heirs, who since it had been written, had received their shares of his worldly goods? Perhaps someday, records will be discovered which will establish definitely the relationship between Bezaillion and Harris, whether it was just a purely business one, or whether it was more than that.

⁴³ Egle's "Notes and Queries," Series I, p. 8. At the same time it should be noted that a few months before Steel wrote this note, a John Harris was negotiating with the Land Office of which Steel was secretary, for 500 acres of land. This Harris was from the parish of King's Semford, county of S'afford, England. He had purchased the warrant right to 500 acres originally granted to Roger Beck of Bryan Yard, Hereford County, England. This land had never been laid out. (Penna. Archives, 2d Series, Vol. 19, p. 742, date, August 19, 1726.)

⁴⁴ Both the wife of John Findley and Dr. William Plunkett, sons-in-law of Harris, were older than John Harris, Jr., yet Robert Harris, in 1835, when a man of 70, told John F. Watson, that his father was the first white child born at Paxtang. (Annals of Philadelphia, Vol. 2, p. 113.)

⁴⁵ Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 553. Ann LeTort died in 1720. (Chester County Records.)

⁴⁶ The extent to which this road was used, both by settlers and Indians, is indicated in two documents.

The first is a petition for the division of the township of Caln, Chester County, which, incidentally, Bezaillion signed along with Joseph Cloud, Thomas Heald and others, was based on the expensiveness of repairing the road to Philadelphia, which the petition said "often wants it by reason its so abused and cut with the Dutch waggons which daily pass and repass along said road."

The second was a letter written the provincial governor (Gordon) in November, 1727, by George Aston, a magistrate of Whitland Township, which adjoined Caln Township on the east. He said:

"July 12, last, 1727, Richard Thomas, township of Whitland, came before me and did declare on his solemn affirmation that the King of the Five Nations of Indians, having been at Philadelphia to treat with the Governor, did on their return with his company take up their lodging near his house where they resided four days and nights together. The nearest neighbors contributed to their necessities what they could. The neighbors being few and poor, could not supply 'em to the full at which place they killed one of his cows which he valued at four pounds and desired of me a warrant to apprehend the said Indians, but I being informed that the Indians had a letter of credit from the Governor to all persons to supply them with what they wanted,—and they being gone two days,—I thought it most proper not

to send a hue and cry after them, but to write to John Wright and Tobias Hendricks to treat with them about it in an amicable way and to get satisfaction, but they had passed the Susquehanna. . . ."

These Indians apparently traveled west over Bezaillion's road to reach the Susquehanna, as in 1727, Lancaster had not been established.

⁴⁷ See histories of early Swedish settlements on the Delaware.

⁴⁸ We know so little of the early trails and their exact locations that any attempt to outline them on a map must always be in the nature of an approximation arrived at, simply by the consideration of the various but all too meagre facts which contemporary records put at our disposal. The net result will still be a stab in the dark, for what served one generation appears to have been discarded in the next, which in time, all too short, grew old and was replaced by another route. And the memory and tradition of man just does not get back far enough to permit us to say with any certainty that this was so and so, and then feel, rest assured, we are right.

So, this brief outline of the early roads from the Delaware to the Susquehanna in the end is just one man's idea, given for what it is worth, and with the pious hope that if it errs in some respects, it may at least point a way to find out exactly where the trails were located.

This writer in considering the locations of the early trails has tried to start with a blank page. First, on the one hand, on the Delaware he fixed the principal towns from which travelers bound for the interior would start. Then, with the realization that there were no roads, no bridges, no artificial cuts, tried to conceive just what route a man on foot or on horseback would take, considering the natural obstacles which had to be surmounted. There were streams to be forded, hills to be crossed or avoided, and valleys which could be followed.

Of some help, too, are the earliest maps still in existence. Perhaps, the best of these is that prepared by Lewis Evans and printed in 1747, or approximately forty years after the period under consideration. By 1747, much of the region under consideration had been settled and was under cultivation, but only a few of the towns had developed, and many of the roads we know now did not exist. Then, too, the early fords are a great aid.

Travel between the Delaware River and the Susquehanna region began at a very early period. The Swedes in the Lower Counties traded first with the Indians who came to their forts on the coast, and later followed them into the interior. But the reports they have left us are too vague to be of any great help in deciding which trails they used. This was still the period before roads.

The earliest point of departure for the interior appears to have been New Castle. When the provincial government appointed a ranger to keep in touch with the Indians in the Conestoga region, Colonel John French of New Castle was named that ranger. And when the authorities went inland, they generally went down the Delaware to New Castle and traveled to the interior from that point.

However, it appears that this was not the only trail. Traders, when bound from the interior to Philadelphia, on at least three occasions, before 1707, traveled by another route. So it appears that one trail was taken when going into the interior, and another when traveling from the interior to the Delaware.

The location of the trail from New Castle to Conestoga and the other Indian towns on the Susquehanna River is described best in the account of

the journey of Lieut. Governor John Evans to the Indian towns in the summer of 1707 (see Col. Records, Vol. 2). Evans with a number of companions, who incidentally included such persons as Col. French, the frontier ranger for the province, and Peter Bezaillion, who undoubtedly knew the best and shortest trail, traveled by horseback from New Castle to Nottingham, thence to the Octoraro Creek, and so on to the Shawnee village of Pequehan or "Peckquea." However, when they returned, they did not go back to Philadelphia by the same route, but reached the Schuylkill River at Matawany.

In March, 1704 (see Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 121), Madame Letort, then residing at Conestoga, sent news to the authorities that some "Towittois" Indians or Twightwees, had attacked the "neighbor Indians at Conestoga." She sent her message or letter to Edward Farmer, who lived at White Marsh on the Schuylkill, near the French Creek, formerly the home of Madame LeTort (see Note 14). Obviously, the letter did not come by the roundabout way of New Castle before it reached Farmer. But when the Council decided to inquire for more details before taking action, it decided to send a messenger to Conestoga "by the way of New Castle."

Again, later the same year, in May, when Nicole Godin, the Frenchman who in 1707 was arrested by Governor Evans at Paxtang, sent word that a party of forty Carolina Indians (probably Tutelos, or Towittois as Madame LeTort called them) had attacked the Senecas on the Potomac and were threatening to wipe out the Conestoga Indians, he also sent word to Edward Farmer. That he obtained his news at Conestoga is evidenced by the fact that at the same time (see Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 138) he passed along the complaint made by Ortyiagh, chief at Conestoga, against the rum being brought by traders to that town.

At this period, Bezaillion had his trading post on the Schuylkill near French Creek (see Note 14), although he traveled widely. Evidently, when in August, 1703 (Col. Records, Vol. 2, p. 100) James LeTort, the younger, appeared in Philadelphia for the first time after returning from Canada, after going there in 1701, his companion was Bezaillion. Obviously, LeTort had gone from the interior, where his mother lived at Conestoga, to Bezaillion's cabin on the Schuylkill and thence to Philadelphia.

The reason for these two trails, one used by those going inland, and the other, by those traveling to the coast is obvious. The shortest distance overland between the Delaware and the Susquehanna, just as today, was between New Castle and the Susquehanna at Pequea, or some point lower down. On the other hand, on the return trip, it would be a simple matter to load furs into a canoe at the French Creek and float down the Schuylkill to Philadelphia.

The overland route after crossing the Octoraro, probably avoided as many hills as possible although bearing in a general northwest direction, until the Pequea was reached near Mt. Nebo. A few years later, the road appears to have followed a more northerly route, crossing the Octoraro at Christiana, then passing through the western end of the Chester Valley to Georgetown, where it turned northwest to Strasburg, thence via Lampeter, New Danville and Rock Hill to the Conestoga Creek, almost opposite Conestoga Indiantown.

However, the account of Governor Evans' return trip in 1707 is no help to us in determining what course the return trail followed, since he started from the Susquehanna at Paxtang, traveled east through the Lebanon valley to Tulpehocken, and thence down that stream to the Schuylkill. Obviously, traders in Conestoga, bound for the Schuylkill would not go first to Paxtang, when bound for Philadelphia.

After a careful study of a map of the region between Conestoga Indian-town and the French Creek region on the Schuylkill, it becomes apparent at once that the shortest route between the two points in view of the physical obstacles encountered, was in a general northeast direction west of the Conestoga Creek to a point near Eden, then across the creek in an easterly direction, following the present course of the New Holland Pike and Morgantown road, and so on to the Schuylkill. As it happens, this was one of the earliest roads laid out by the courts, after Lancaster County was created out of the western end of Chester County. (See Colonial Records.)

One way of checking the existence of this road as a trail before the region was settled and put under cultivation, is to make a study of the early surveys in the region. How do the early property lines conform with the route of this trail as outlined? They do conform. One of the earliest tracts laid out west of the Conestoga Creek was that portion of the London Company lands, surveyed in 1716, which extended over that stream. The north-west boundary of this tract followed the course of the New Holland Pike from a point in Lancaster, for more than a mile. Southwest of Lancaster, the same circumstance is to be met with in an examination of the first surveys in that region. The lines, between the various land holdings of the first settlers, joined where the Millersville Pike now exists.

East of the Conestoga Creek, Hans Line was the first to have land surveyed there in 1717 (see Land Office Records). The northern boundary of Line's plantation, which was not parallel with the southern line, conformed with the present course of the New Holland Pike at the same place. Many similar examples could be cited.

Another significant fact is that here—throughout the region traversed by this theoretical trail—were made the first surveys in Lancaster County, outside of the immediate vicinity of the Pequea or Strasburg settlement of 1710.

This road also passed through that section of East Earl Township and Caernarvon Township in eastern Lancaster County where the Welsh made their first settlements, beginning in 1717. In the map of Pennsylvania drawn by Thomas Holmes, surveyor general, in 1687, we find the so-called Vincent tract of 30,000 acres (see Note 14) located above the so-called Welsh tract on the Schuylkill River. This again indicates the existence of a trail from the French Creek region to Lancaster County by the course already outlined.

While there is much evidence to indicate that this was the general course of the trail used by the early traders between 1700 and 1707, the year Bezaillion moved his trading post from the Schuylkill to the Susquehanna region (see Note 31), the closing of Bezaillion's trading post at French Creek in the latter year, largely ended the usefulness of this trail to the Indian traders, although it obviously was used more and more by incoming settlers.

Bezaillion's Road probably dates from 1707, or at least that part of it east of Bareville. The western extension of Bezaillion's Road from Bareville, across the Conestoga Creek at Peter's Ford, and so on to Conoy and Paxtang, probably dates from 1712.

⁴⁹ Col. Records, Vol. IV.

⁵⁰ The road, after crossing the Lancaster-Chester line went east to Compass, Wagontown, and Siousca, crossing the North Valley Hills east of the last-named place, and joining the present Philadelphia Pike near Thorndale, about a mile or slightly more west of Downingtown (see Colonial Records for detailed description of the road's courses). The juncture with Chester Valley road was near the location of Bezaillion's Caln Township plantation.

⁵¹ Lancaster was founded by James Hamilton in 1730.

⁵² Beginning in 1733, Samuel Blunston, as surveyor and frontier land agent of the Penn family, began issuing licenses to settlers west of the Susquehanna, a practice resorted to in an effort to circumvent in a quiet way previous pledges not to survey lands which still belonged to the Indians. As a result of these licenses, settlements were made throughout the Cumberland Valley and in what is now York and Adams counties. From the location of the lands for which the earliest licenses were issued, it can be seen that lands along the extensions of Bezaillion's road west of the river, were the first taken up.

⁵³ Col. Records, Vol. 4, p. 181. Also Penna. Provincial Papers, Vol. VI, p. 8.

Some of the signers of Harris's petition were James Silver, Richard Hough, Ra. Galbreith, William Johnston, Thomas Renick, Aaron Price, Robert Boak, James Mitcheltree, Samuel Woods, Moses Thomson, Thomas Simpson, A. McKnight, John Pickens, Thomas Mayes, David Martin of Weaverland, John Kerr, Gilbert Campbell, William Anderson, Samuel Martin of Paxtang, James Harris, Robert Rutherford and others.

The petition stated in part:

"Your petitioners being seated for the most part at a great distance from the city of Philadelphia, in a part of the said county [Lancaster] where no public road is as yet established and having long labored under many inconveniences through the want of such a road whereby they might have free access to the market to their very great loss and detriment, . . . they have discovered that a very good one [road] might be laid out from John Harris ferry on the Susquehanna river to join with the road lately confirmed from Lancaster town to Philadelphia, near the now dwelling plantation of Edward Pen. . ."

The road proposed was laid out and became the Horseshoe Pike. Strangely, time has proved, the petitioners from Harris's Ferry and vicinity were wrong, for that portion of Peter's Road from Paxtang to Mt. Joy, [the route between Harrisburg and Middletown is now much closer to the river] is, and has been for almost two centuries, the principal road from Harrisburg to Lancaster and points east.

⁵⁴ Provincial Papers, Vol. VII, p. 28.

⁵⁵ See "New Light on Hans Herr and Martin Kendig" for a discussion of this development. It is interesting to note that many of these tracts, particularly in the valley of the Mill Creek, were adjacent to the early road which crossed the valley from Gap.

⁵⁶ Land Office, Day Book, 1720, which states:

"Daniel Cookson, Chester county, 114:15: 2 pounds

Acct of 650 acres granted by warrant and surveyed to Richard Cloud on a branch of the Pequea in 1715, who since dying intestate, not having paid anything towards it, whereby ye warrant became void. His widdow and executor having requested that the Commissioners would yet accept of the purchase money and interest due for the same from Dan'l Cookson, who is her brother, to which they agree.

Cookson paid 50 pounds."

⁵⁷ Land Office Day Book, under date of Dec. 29, 1746, appears this entry: "John Frederickfulls and Anthony Pretter, 300 acres in Black Walnut

Bottom, now called Erle township, granted in 1717. Paid in full to Logan, Esq. 30 pounds.

"N. B. Prettier obtained a patent for 150 acres, Mar. 4, 1736, Martin Bear Jr., for the other 150 acres, April 5, 1746, in the right of Frederickfulls.

"James Logan esq. dr. to John Frederickfull and company, receiving of them by him in full for land, 30 pounds not brought to acct in the receiver office. The Hon. William Penn's acct with said Jas. Logan (in his own books) is credited with 12: 0: 11 pounds, part of said 30 pounds. The remaining 17:19:1 being never acct for to either the late or the present honorable proprietor.

Logan paid 20:7 pounds in the new currency."

Frederickful sold this land to Peter Bellar, who sold to Henry Bear, Jr. After his death in 1736, it descended to Martin, his son. John Eby was the executor of Bear's will, but died before 1746; Peter Eby, as executor of John, his brother, acting in the behalf of Martin Bear. Black Walnut Bottom was immediately north of Peter's Road, near Eby's or the Dutch Mill.

⁵⁸ These three men, all of whom came to America in 1717, bought a portion of the Hans Herr and Martin Kendig warrant of 1717. Although they paid interest and quit rent from the date of the warrant, it is unlikely that they settled on the land that early. The survey of Hans Huber's land was in 1721, that of Hans Musselman, his neighbor, probably the same year. Both tracts were on Peter's Road. The survey of Hans Witwer's land was probably made a year earlier in 1720, although the records are faulty on this point, since his land was later resurveyed to include a much larger area. His land was located north of Peter's road, at least two miles. A minister in the Mennonite church, as was his son-in-law, Wendel Holl and his son, Michael Witwer, Hans Witwer was one of the earliest settlers in Earl Township. Hans Moyer, son of Vincent Moyer, was another early settler, although he died before he could patent his land, and only a reference in the Taylor Papers remains to indicate where he resided. Family traditions about Hans Huber and Hans Moyer are excellently reported in "The Huber-Hoover Family History," by Harry M. Hoover, Scottdale, 1928.

⁵⁹ Joseph Cloud, a member of an ancient Chester County Quaker family, was a true frontiersman, who got into trouble with the established authorities on several occasions, and was always on the move farther west.

The Chester County court records show him as being accused of attacking a man named Hickman at his cabin in Caln Township in 1709. In 1715, his brother, William Cloud, settled on the Pequea. Joseph, a year or so later, got a warrant for 500 acres on the Pequea Creek, adjoining lands previously surveyed to James Clemson, James Logan and Rebecca Shaw. However, in 1719, he left this plantation and took up a new one on the Conestoga Creek at Weaverland, as this entry in the Day Book of the Land Office for 11th, December, 1727, indicates:

"Joseph Cloud of Caln Dr. to sundry acc'ts 6:11:6 pounds
Interest on 11:12 for seven years and 9 months
Quit rent on 200 acres on branch of Conestoga

Total 18:3:6 pounds

"Cash dr. to Joseph Cloud
received of Nathan Evans in full."

In the Minutes of the Board of Property Commissioners for the same date, we find:

"In 1715, William Cloud obtained a warrant for 300 acres in Chester county, assigned to his son, Joseph, who in 1718 had 200 acres surveyed to

him on a branch of the Conestoga and in the 1st month, 1720, paid in part and since, 1725, conveyed his right to Nathan Evans, Jr., millwright, who paid balance.

"Evans asked the grant of 100 acres joyning on east side of above 200 acres to erect a mill on. He also requests piece for settlement of his brother, Roger Evans, on the south side of the tract."

The following year, appears this entry in the Board's Minute Book under the date of 6mo., 23, 1728:

"Johannes Kitzmiller, late from Germany, having purchased the consent of Nathan Evans to a piece of vacant land on Little Conestoga (?) creek, where he had a license to build a mill. . . ."

Meanwhile, after selling his land to Evans, Cloud had moved on again. In February 10, 1727/28, Nathaniel Newlin of Chester County, obtained the following from the property commissioners, Richard Hill, James Logan and Thomas Griffith:

"Nathaniel Newlin, Chester county, requests the privilege of purchasing a certain tract or parcel near Paxtanon, Susquehanna, where *Joseph Cloud*, late of the township of Caln, presumptuously seated himself and made some improvements. We have therefore agreed as far as in us lyes that Nathaniel may have privilege of purchasing not less than 300 acres in the place aforesaid, including the said improvement at such time and on such terms as the Proprietor's other adjacent lands there shall be disposed of and in the meantime, we do allow the said Nathaniel by himself or his assigns to take and keep possession of the improvement with the said quantity of 300 acres until such time as the same can be regularly purchased as aforesaid without any advantages on account of the improvement already made or to be made."

Prior to 1728, Newlin on February 27, 1726/27, recovered against Joseph Cloud two debts, one for 58 pounds, and the other for 9 pounds, to be levied against his lands. In consequence, his plantation and improvements on Paxton Creek and the Susquehanna were seized, with 50 acres in Caln Township. The land was ordered sold for debt at Chester, the sale being made by John Taylor for 57 pounds and 10 shillings on the last Tuesday in February, 1728. The property was described as being bounded on the west by the river, on the south by land surveyed for John Taylor, Chester County, and on the north by John Harris. William Cloud bought it and deeded it to Newlin, February 26, 1728, for five shillings. This was the same land for which the Commissioners had issued a license to Newlin. Nathaniel died and his three sons sold the property on June 16, 1730, to Joseph Brinton, of Thornbury, who also had patented 500 acres on Mill Creek in Lampeter Township.

Whether or not this improvement, which appears to have been taken up by Joseph Cloud between 1725 and 1727, was the same which Bezaillion had originally made (see Note 31), is only a matter for conjecture. Incidentally, letters of administration were taken out by Ruth Cloud, in the estate of Joseph Cloud of Pextan, March 31, 1728.

⁶⁰ Land Office Day Book, under date of October 26, 1726.

⁶¹ Patent Books A-6 et seq., Land Office, Penna. Dept. of Internal Affairs.

⁶² Day Book, Land Office, under date of 4mo., 16th day, 1733,

"Amos Lewis, sundry accts 152:12: 3
acct of land 725 acres on branch of
Conestoga, surveyed 1719."

And also Minutes of Board of Property Commissioners, 9mo., 29th day, 1720:

"David Lewis, Haverford, having, by request to Isaac Taylor about two years ago, procured two parcels on a branch of the Conestoga, together 600 acres or thereabouts, for which he now desires a warrant."

Amos Lewis was the son of David. One tract adjoined that of the Eby family in Earl Township, immediately north of Peter's road.

⁶³ Davenport's land was above Bainbridge and was patented to James Logan. After Logan's death, part of it was sold to Henry Miller, whose father had settled in Earl Township in Weaverland, and died there in 1728. When the sale was made by William Logan, the son of James, Thomas Wilkins was living on it and operating a ferry across the Susquehanna. Included in the sale to Miller was "one cunoe and a ferry flat." Egle, in his "Notes and Queries," calls this Wilkins' Ferry at Bainbridge, stating that the west end of the ferry was at the lower end of an island owned by Joshua Lowe, an early coroner of Lancaster County. From these facts, it appears that this was the point where the road; which Blunston in his licenses called the "road from Conoy-town," crossed the river. (In April, 1735, Blunston issued a license to John Heald, a Quaker, for 200 acres "on the north branch of the Conewago about ten miles from the river along the Conoi Road". This was near Lewisberry, York County.)

⁶⁴ Day Book, Land Office, under date of 3rd month, 25th, 1720, which states:

"James Galbreith, late of Ireland,

Dr. to acct of land 10 pounds

100 acres granted to him at or near the Susquehanna
paid 5 pounds."

Prior to this, warrants in the Donegal region had been issued to two others, who may or may not have been Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. The first was Robert Wilkins, who obtained a warrant for 150 acres near the Susquehanna in September, 1718 (Survey Book, D-69-267). No return was made on this warrant. The second was to George Stewart for 200 acres, Nov. 16, 1719. No return was made on this warrant.

However in Penna. Archives, Vol. 19, 2d Series, p. 759, we find this:

"George Stewart formerly obtained a grant by warrant for 200 acres on the Susquehanna river for which he then paid 10 pounds, and afterwards obtained of Isaac Taylor a survey of some more land adjoining to the quantity of about 500 acres, including the first 200 acres. It lyes between the land where John Gardner settled and the land laid out to Robert Wilkins. George desires a regular survey and return." The date of this entry in Land Office Minutes was 28th, 12mo, 1728, or February 28, 1729.

The tracts here referred to, other than the Gardner land, were subsequently in the possession of John Stuart, a son of George, who had 357 acres surveyed to him in 1736, and the Rev. James Anderson, who had 301 acres surveyed to him. Marietta is located on portions of both these tracts. The Anderson land had previously belonged to Robert Wilkins, who traded it to Anderson in 1727 for another tract, which was later patented to Nathaniel Lytle, the latter obtaining this land through his marriage to Wilkins' widow.

On the same date, February 28, 1729, there is another entry mentioning George Stewart. It states:

"George Stewart requests the grant of 500 acres of land below the fork of the Sawatara (Swatara) creek, 200 acres for himself and 300 acres for his brother-in-law, Lazerus Stewart."

George Stewart died in 1733, leaving these children: James, Elizabeth, wife of Samuel Fulton; John, Frank, Mary and George, Jr. James settled in Hanover Township, north of the Swatara Creek, near his uncle, Lazarus; John remained in Donegal on the original farm; George married Margaret, daughter of Thomas Harris, and built the Black Bear tavern, at Elizabethtown, in 1736.

⁶⁵ Egle's "Notes and Queries."

⁶⁶ Day Book, Land Office, under date of 14th day, 3mo, 1720.

⁶⁷ Land Office Minutes and Patent Books. Also will of Hans Brubaker, filed in 1748, at Lancaster. Also Day Book, Land Office, 1728.

⁶⁸ Day Book, Land Office, under date of 23rd day, 3rd month, 1733.

Also in Minute Book H (Penna. Archives, 2d Series, Vol. 19, p. 608), we find: "Signed a warrant to John Gardiner, Jun'r, for 500 acres of land near Conestogoe Creek, at 10 pounds p. C't and 1sh sterling quitr't, dated 9th, 12 month, 1716."

⁶⁹ Land Office Records and Lancaster County Deeds.

⁷⁰ The first of these settlements in Manheim and East Hempfield townships of which there is a record, is that of Henry Musselman, who had 200 acres laid out to him "near Conestoga" in 1718. This land was on the Little Conestoga, near East Petersburg. (Day Book, May, 1720.) In the Day Book also, under the date of April, 1729, we find Michael Bachman paying the quit rent on 250 acres which had been surveyed to him on the Little Conestoga in 1721. This was near Neffsville. Andrew Hershey was the son of Christian Hershey of Lancaster Township, and the brother of Bishop Benjamin Hershey. His plantation, which appears to have been laid out in 1731 or a few years earlier, was located on the Little Chickies Creek near Salunga. His brother-in-law, Herman Long, was located near Musselman on a tract originally surveyed for the heirs of Michael Kauffman.

⁷¹ Both Witmer and Burkholder purchased a portion of the warrant rights of Martin Kendig and Hans Herr to 5000 acres, issued in 1717, for their surveys.

⁷² Logan's Papers.

⁷³ Lancaster County Deeds.

⁷⁴ When Logan's heirs sold this land to Henry Miller, about 1747, it was in the possession of Thomas Wilkins, a son of Robert Wilkins. Wilkins, it appears, was the first to operate a ferry across the river at Bainbridge, probably with Logan's permission. Logan also owned land on the opposite shore in York County.

⁷⁵ In 1739, Blunston was requested to report to the Penns, how much of this land was vacant, and what quantities had been surveyed to whom and how much.

⁷⁶ Michael Gritter or Kreider, in his will in 1739, gave his sons, Martin and Peter, the 500 acres he had been "bargaining for with Isaac Norris." Lancaster County Records.

⁷⁷ Penna. Archives, 2d Series, Vol. 19, p. 744.

In 1723, Logan wrote to Henry Gouldney of London, one of the trustees then in control of Pennsylvania, as follows (see Penna. Archives, 2d Series, Vol. 7, p. 82):

"I took notice that one Isaac Miranda [his son, George Miranda, later got a patent for 210 acres on the Susquehanna, adjoining Conoy Indiantown on the south], an apostate Jew or fashionable Christian proselyte, was gone over to [England] to transact some affairs in which our governor [Keith] is concerned, and particularly in relation to the mine beyond the Susquehanna. I have since received a very pressing application from some inhabitants of the lands on this side of the river over against [opposite] that mine, who have not yet obtained titles to their settlements. They are apprehensive that he has some design or instructions to procure a right and turn them out of their possessions and improvements, which would be very unjust. I can only say at present that the man ought in general to be guarded against . . . The mine spoken of, was located in the hills opposite Anderson's Ferry or Marietta.

⁷⁸ Land Office Records, D-89-70.

⁷⁹ This occurred during the dispute between Maryland and Pennsylvania over the boundary in 1737. See Penna. Provincial Papers and Maryland Archives.