

## EARLY SETTLEMENTS AROUND WINESBURG

According to John W. Pfouts, his grandfather (father of David Pfouts) was one of the very first to settle in Paint Township before 1816 and built a saw mill in that year on the opposite side of the creek from the grist mill by the side of the Pfouts dam of later years. He says:

"My father, David Pfouts, was born in Paint Township, Holmes County, Ohio, August 11, 1818, never lived out of the township, and died in 1890. We are of German or Swiss nationality, originally Pfautz. An ancestor, Michael Pfautz, came from Switzerland to Pennsylvania in 1707."

Before Winesburg was settled in 1827—as early as 1817 a number of pioneers had settled in the northwestern part of Paint Township, then apart of Wayne County before Holmes County was organized. The record shows that in 1825 land tax was paid by Thomas Brookens, Adam Lowe and Henry Lowe, who also paid personal tax in 1826. Mr. W. L. Reidenbach says, "There is no record of any personal tax prior to 1826. They may not have taxed it, but there was no personal tax collected in Holmes County for 1825, so far as the records show."

A's Holmes County was not organized till 1825, the early settlers' personal tax must have been paid in Wayne County prior to 1825.

Christian Lukebill paid his first recorded land tax in Holmes County in 1825 on 200 acres one mile north of Winesburg, but south of the Indian Boundary Line, as the land north of this line was divided into farms of 160 acres each. It is possible that he came to Paint Township earlier than 1824. His farm was the Cornelius Lowe farm, one mile north of Winesburg.

In 1808 the first settlers came from Pennsylvania to Shanesville. But after the first summer, Indian disturbances became so threatening that all returned to Pennsylvania. But settlers from Pennsylvania finally settled at Shanesville in 1811. These settlers were the only ones that had the courage to remain in the new territory through the terrors of the War of 1812. Shanesville is, without doubt, the oldest of all the neighboring towns.

Walnut Creek Township, on the south, was settled as early as 1811.

Elias Hochstetler, father of William Hochstetler, came at the age of four years with his parents from Ellick, Pa., and settled there, a few miles from Winesburg, in 1812. He married a sister of Col. Nicholas F. Joss, prominent Winesburg merchant.

To Salt Creek Township, on the west, the Bays family came in 1813 and the Snyders and Stiffers in 1815, as pioneer settlers.

The first settlers of Berlin arrived in 1812.

From the foregoing and the following it is apparent that most of the neighboring towns and townships were settled earlier than Winesburg.

Mt. Eaton was first settled in 1813. The first store was kept by a Mr. Wickadoll. This was likely the store to which John M. Smith and John Valentine Stahl and their families, as well as the other "Bachelors," went to trade before the coming of Christian Smith and family to Winesburg in 1829.

Paintville was the name till 1829, when it was changed to Mt. Eaton. Cholera took almost the entire population in 1833.

The earliest post offices were established as follows:

Mt. Eaton—1819.

Millersburg—1820 (the first in Holmes County).

Berlin—1822 (the second in the county). Postmaster General says 1818 (possibly the first in the county).

Massillon—1827.

Winesburg—1833 (January 31), with Cornelius Van Steenberg, a brother of Mrs. (Dr.) Scheurer, as postmaster. Prior to 1833, the people of Winesburg likely got their mail at Mt. Eaton or Berlin, but most likely at the former place.

Dundee — was not laid out till 1847.

Carlisle (Walnut Creek) — in 1827.

Wilmot — was settled later than Winesburg, having been laid out by Jacob and Henry Wyandt in April, 1836. At first it was called Freise Store, then Milton, then Wilmot.

Mrs. Kate Joss tells us that as late as 1855 Winesburg had only one mail a week.

I learned from authentic information some very interesting facts relative to the early history of Paint Township which antedates by a little over ten years the coming of the first four settlers to Winesburg in March, 1827.

From a sheepskin deed now in the possession of William DeBerry, Jr., which I have seen with my own eyes, deeding what is now the William DeBerry farm three miles north of Winesburg, is the following:

“James Madison, President of the United States, to Henry Lowe, one quarter section in Township 15, Range 11. Dated December 20, 1816.”

From this and other official records it is clear that Henry Lowe (father of Cornelius Lowe, Sr., and of Mrs. William DeBerry) and Adam Lowe, his brother (father of Henry Lowe, Jr., known by so many of us during the eighties and nineties), settled on adjoining farms three miles north of Winesburg, 1816 or 1817. This part of Paint Township north of the Indian boundary line was then a part of Wayne County until the organization of Holmes County in 1825.

At that time the wolves would prowl around the log cabin of the Lowes, who built a fire to keep them away. Bears, deer, wild turkeys and other wild animals as well as a few Indians were still here.

Thomas Brookens and his son Joseph settled near the Lowes about 1820, and Mr. Kilgore about 1819. The early settlers had some interesting experiences. A bear killed one of two hogs which Henry Lowe had brought from Pennsylvania. The Brookens and others also saw bears roaming through the woods.

## **WINESBURG'S FIRST SETTLERS**

Winesburg is situated in Paint Township, Holmes County, Ohio.

Early in the spring of 1827, about the last week in March or the first week in April, four young men came from Philadelphia, Pa., to the dense forests of Winesburg, with teams loaded with things they needed to start pioneer life in this new country.

It seemed that there was no place in this wide world that suited these four gentlemen (bachelors, as they called themselves) so well as the spot where Winesburg now stands.

Nature had prepared this spot to suit the tastes of these four bachelors. The hills, the dales, the rivulets, the rocks and ravines, the great forests, the many kinds of wild fruit and especially Wild grapes, and the fertile soil impressed these gentlemen so that they early had in mind a German village which would soon be established, where their countrymen could do

business in their own mother tongue, and where mechanics could follow their trades and where the surrounding farmers could clear the forests and establish fertile farms, and Where all could work hand in hand for the welfare of the entire community.

The trip took them about two weeks. The names of these four pioneers were John Michael Smith and Rev. William Smith (who were distant relatives),\_ Frederick Happold and Dr. August Scheurer. Not a single family then lived at Winesburg. These first settlers kept “Bachelor’s Hall” for a year at a place on the Winesburg-Mt. Hope road, just west of Winesburg, near a creek where there was a spring of water, south of the road near Albert Mayforth’s barn.

During this year’s “batching” my grandfather, with the help of others, managed to build a small log cabin on the 200-acre farm which he had bought in the wilderness, and made the necessary preparations for the coming of his wife and child. These “bachelors” had two dogs, “Strangy” and “Kawro,” several horses and several cows.

In the spring of 1828 my grandmother, Mrs. John Smith, with their oldest daughter, Katherine (then a child a year old), came on a “stage coach” from Philadelphia, Pa., to Dalton, Wayne County, Ohio. This stage coach was drawn by four horses and would comfortably seat nine persons. The trip took them twelve days. From Dalton her husband took her and their baby to their new Winesburg home in a one-horse wagon which he had borrowed from a neighbor near Winesburg. For a while she was the only woman in this section (as many of the early “settlers did not bring their wives on first coming—or were unmarried). She and her infant daughter thus completed the circle of Winesburg’s first family.

When she came here in April, 1828, it seems that there was one little log hut standing on the present site of Winesburg—according to the testimony of both my grandmother and of Frederick Happold’s daughter. This log cabin may have been built by some “Squatter” or by some unmarried man, who likely was living in it only periodically as some homesteaders used to do. What was the name of this man? No one living can say with absolute certainty. But the following from the records of the auditor’s office at Millersburg might point to Jacob Castor, who paid tax in 1825 on lot Number 39 (in north part of Winesburg), but is not listed for personal tax at any time from 1825 to 1830. This indicates that he did not live in it during that time, else the assessor would have appraised his personal property. If Jacob Castor built this log cabin it must have been in the north part of town that used to be called “Florida.”

The history of buying of the land on which Winesburg is located and land west comprising a total of 400 acres is as follows:

President of U. S. to Paul Farson February 4, 1820. Paul Farson to Philip baker, April 12, 1820, lots 37 and 38 for \$800. Philip Baker to William Smith and August Scheurer September 3, 1827, for \$1,000. Eighteen days later, on September 21, 1827, William Smith and August Scheurer sold the south half of the 400 acres (lot 37) to John M. Smith for \$500. The reason that the deed for the whole tract of 400 acres was first made to Rev. William Smith and Dr. August Scheurer possibly was that they were both professional men and more conversant with the business of making contracts, while my grandfather was a baker—the agreement from the start being that he was to get one-half of the 400 acres. In the following month (Oct. 23, 1827) Dr. August Scheurer disposed of his half interest in the

remaining 200 acres to Rev. William Smith, who remained the owner of this 200-acre tract (on which the larger part of Winesburg now stands) until at least 1831, when he, then living in Franklin County, gave to his brother, Christian Smith (who came to Winesburg in 1829), the power of attorney for the purpose of laying out and selling lots comprising the larger part of the present town of Winesburg.

In this connection a few notations ought to be made—according to Mrs. Emma Smith Knappenberger's recent letter:

1. That Rev. William Smith was a young minister who had just graduated from Theological school in Germany in 1826 and came to Philadelphia where he edited a paper for some time.
2. That his brother, Christian Smith, her grandfather, was a man of some means (who undoubtedly talked the matter of settling at Winesburg over with him and the other three "Bachelors"—John M. Smith, Dr. August Scheurer and Frederick Hapold at Philadelphia where they held a number of councils during the winter of 1826-27. The words in parentheses are mine.
3. That this young Lutheran preacher had bought this land with the understanding that his brother was back of him and later it should be deeded back to him.
4. That Rev. Wm. Smith did not stay at Winesburg a long time.

To clear up matters I again promptly wrote to the Court House at Millersburg for the exact official records which resulted in the following facts stated, under the date of May 1, 1930, by Miss Rose Limp (a Winesburg girl), County Recorder:

The 2010-acre farm was owned by Rev. William Smith for four years until 1831 when he sold 175 acres (all except the land on which Winesburg stands) to Frederick Smith (likely another brother or relative). He had sold a few town lots before 1834. (But in 1832 his brother Christian Smith was directed to lay out 32 town lots.) Rev. William Smith sold the land of these 32 lots to Christian Smith in 1834 (about 20 acres) (See Vol. 3-P. 38). . After having faithfully and conscientiously tried to get rock bottom facts it seems clear that:

1. Christian Smith counseled with the four "Bachelors" in Philadelphia, Pa., during the winter of 1826-27, relative to the selecting and founding of a town in the forests of Ohio.
2. He made a visit to the "Bachelors" in the Summer or early Fall of 1828 and laid plans for the building of a large house for his store and tavern, which was partly built, but not yet under roof when he and his family arrived at Winesburg in the following Spring.
3. He actually laid out the larger part of Winesburg—exactly 32 lots—in March, 1832—though it is stated that his brother William directed him to do so. This high honor belongs to him without dispute.
4. That he directed the selling of these lots and in 1834 received the deed for them from his brother William.

It is the author's earnest hope that all will heartily agree with him that nobody but narrow, prejudiced folks will grudge Christian Smith the high honor due him because of the prominent part he had in the laying out of Winesburg into lots in 1832, of the planning prior and his work after coming with his family to Winesburg in May, 1829.

The author is sincerely glad that his worthy grandson, Ed Smith, is President of the 1930 Reunion—a just recognition of the Christian Smith family.

The town site comprising exactly thirty-two lots was surveyed by Samuel Robinson, County Surveyor, March 14, 1832, and certified for record April 4, 1832. Witnesses present, Dr. August Scheurer and Christian Smith.

From the beginning of the recording of deeds in the recorder's office the names John M. Schmidt, William Schmidt and Christian Schmidt (all of whom came from Germany) were written in the Americanized and more convenient form "Smith" though many still cling to the German form.

Just as the following German or Swiss names were changed into the American form: Sunkel (to Sunkle)—Friederich (Frederick)—Peter (Peters)—Kuenzli (Kinsley)—Hochstetler (Hostetler)—Mayfohrt (Mayforth)—Feikert (Feigert)—Schneider (Snyder)—Bitsche (Beechy)—Pfautz (Pfouts)—Amstutz (Olnistead)—Schaup (Shoup)—Kochenderfer (Koch)—Tschantz (Johns)—Deutschland (Germany)—Schweitz (Switzerland).

From the foregoing it will be seen that many have done a commonsense thing in Americanizing their names as a matter of convenience both for themselves and for their fellow Americans. However we have no quarrel with those who still cling to the old spelling. If they prefer that, blessings on them! But we who are of age, and especially those of us whose parents were born in America, are not planning to make anyadology or further explanation to anybody, but rather want it understood that "The die is cast" irrevocably.

In this the author speaks for the above and many others as well as for himself. Note that the names Schmidt and Smith are used inter-changeably in this history. William Schmidt and Christian Schmidt were brothers and John M. Schmidt was distantly related to them.

Dr. August Scheurer paid his first personal tax in 1830, 1 horse, 1 cow, tax \$0.48 and "Physician Capital" \$200, tax \$0.70. This and the fact that he sold his remaining interest in the 200 acre tract to Rev. William Smith on October 23, 1827, only fifty days after these two men had first bought it, indicates that Dr. Scheurer stayed at Winesburg only part of the time from the spring of 1827 to 1829. (This is substantiated by Mrs. Kate Joss in her autobiography.) However, from 1829 on he lived at Winesburg till his death on July 17, 1839, as the community physician. In 1840 Dr. Charles Peter came to Winesburg and soon became a physician of fame. Also on May 29, 1829, Peter Schallioll of Philadelphia, Pa. (as the deed states) bought 100 acres adjoining the west end of John M. Smith's farm for \$200, and on November 11, 1830, he bought another 100 acre tract adjoining his first 100 acre tract for \$225. His residence is again given as Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His first personal tax is listed in 1831. From this it would appear that Mr. Schallioll came to Winesburg in 1830, unless possibly he made a visit here prior to 1830. He was a rich man for those days. In 1831 he built a big stone house one mile west of town which still stands. It was in this house that the people of Winesburg held services for some time until they completed their church building

1832—The major part of Winesburg exactly 32 lots laid out by Christian Smith. Since that time several additions have been added.

Note—the site of Winesburg is located on part of two 200 acre farms bought by William Smith and John M. Smith in September, 1827, the larger part being taken from the farm of William Smith.

## HOW THE TOWN WAS NAMED

The town having been laid out, a town meeting was called for the purpose of giving it a suitable name. At this meeting Dr. August Scheurer suggested the name of Weinsberg in honor of Weinsberg, Wuerttemberg, Germany, noted for its heroic and faithful women. These women, when once their native village was besieged, begged of the besieging general only one request, that is, to be allowed to take with them their most costly treasure, which on being granted, they immediately carried their husbands safely out of the town of Weinsberg, ever after known in history because of its "Weibertreu." The spelling was changed to Winesburg by the United States postal authorities in 1833, when a Post Office was established. The following data in addition to the foregoing will help to settle definitely the years in which the various early pioneers arrived at Winesburg:

(The year in which the settler paid his first personal tax is clear evidence that he was here the year before when the assessor listed his personal property.)

1825—Holmes County organized.

1826—First records of Holmes County by townships.

1827—Early in the spring — the first four pioneer settlers came to Winesburg from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania—namely, Rev. William Smith, John Michael Smith, Frederick Happold and Dr. August Scheurer. Both William Smith and John M. Smith paid personal tax in 1828.

1828—William Smith paid 96 cents tax on two horses and two cattle, and John M. Smith paid 72 cents on two horses and no cattle. (See duplicate in Auditor's office.)

1828—Early in the spring (March or beginning of April), Mrs. John M. Smith came with their oldest child, Katherine, a little over a year old, to Winesburg. In the early Fall of 1828, John Valentine Stahl arrived at Winesburg with his family and paid his first personal tax in 1829. (See duplicate in Auditor's office.) Two years later John Valentine Stahl bought his farm of fifty acres (on May 4, 1830) from John M. Smith for \$100. (See Vol. 1 P. 72.) John Buckmaster and Wilson Buckmaster (on Strubble place) settled one mile west of Winesburg on the Millersburg road. Paid their first personal tax in 1829.

1829—Christian Smith and family came from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Winesburg and started a general store and tavern. He paid \$118 first personal tax in 1830, listed as "Merchant Capital" and valued at \$900. Tax paid \$9.00. Also two horses and one cow, tax 96 cents. Brief Summary of Winesburg History

## BRIEF SUMMARY OF WINESBURG HISTORY

1815—(Or before) David Pfouts settled two miles northeast of town at Pfouts' Dam on Sugar Creek.

1816—He built the first saw mill in Paint Township.

1816—Adam Lowe and Henry Lowe settled in northwestern Paint Township.

1827—The Four "Bachelors" founded Winesburg.

1828—(Early Spring) Mrs. John M. Smith and one-year-old daughter completed the circle of Winesburg's first family.

1828—(Early Fall) John Valentine Stahl and family arrived.  
1828—Wilson Buckmaster settled on the old Strubbe place one mile south-west of town on the Berlin road.  
1829—(May) Christian Smith and family came here and started the first store and tavern.  
1830—Peter Schallioll settled on his farm just west of John M. Smith. And in  
1831—He built the large stone house where church services were held for several years until the church was built. 1831—~Nicholas F. Joss Sr. and a number of other Swiss families settled in Walnut Creek Township near Winesburg.  
1832—The Evangelical Zion's Church was organized (and in 1841 the church building was dedicated).  
1833 — the cornerstone was laid and Rev. Henry Colloredo elected first pastor.  
1832—Winesburg was platted-exactly 32 lots laid out by Christian Smith.  
1834—Ulrich Blaser and family arrived from Switzerland. \   
1836—Rev. Daniel Cranz became the second pastor and served till 1868.  
1840—Dr. Carl Peter, the community physician (for over forty years) arrived.  
1846—Nicholas F. Joss Jr. moved to Winesburg and started his store.  
1861—Methodist Church built.  
1862—The present school house was erected.  
1879—(January) Winesburg Murphy meetings held by John T. Hoak.  
1884—The lilig fire which burned down the whole block just west of the church.  
1884—Big barbecue and jollification over the election of Grover Cleveland as President.  
1897—First Winesburg Reunion. The first woman settler who had lived at Winesburg for nearly seventy years, Mrs. John M. Smith was introduced by William M. Smith Sr.  
1920—At the suggestion of Albert A. Frederick, an endowment fund was raised for the upkeep of the old cemetery.  
1930—First History of Winesburg published August 1.  
1930—As a result of the efforts of Charles H. Stahl, the bronze memorial tablet in honor of the first settlers and pioneers was erected and dedicated at the Eighth Reunion, August 21.