

Liggett Family History

Submitted

July 10, 1978

**Prepared by
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Log of a trip through the Cross Creek Country taken on June 21, 1978 by A.D. and Laura C. White accompanied by Dr. Charles Lee and Betty Liggett of Baytown, Texas:

Since this trip had been in anticipation since 1973-74, when Dr. Liggett first wrote the Whites regarding information on the Liggett Family and on local records of the Family and on sites connected with their residence here in former generations, it was taken on this date to fulfill that anticipation.

The Liggetts arrived at the Hickory "White House" at 9 A.M. on this date, and soon we were on our way in what proved to be a full day of driving through the area and in visiting many places of interest.

Driving on Route 50 to the former Mt. Prospect Presbyterian Church, and past it on the "ridge road" toward Cross Creek Village, we drove through land formerly owned by Dr. Liggett's great-great-grandparents, Samuel and Mary Dinsmore Cowen. This included a farm just to our right as we left Mt. Prospect Church, and also an adjoining farm, the "home farm" of the Cowens, to our left as we drove out this ridge road. Looking over the home farm from the public road, we could see the old brick house built by Samuel and Elizabeth Cowen in 1858; a dated stone is inserted in the gable end of this house. After living there for many years, about 1869, the Cowens moved to Ft. Scott, Kansas, where they lived the rest of their lives, and died there and are buried in one of the fine cemeteries at that place.

Turning off the ridge road a mile beyond the old Cowen farm, we drove down a long valley, soon passing the old Campbell Farm, now known as the Serenity Farm, which is a half-way institution for alcoholics. Then, a mile farther down, we passed an old log house, completely weather-boarded over; this house was built around 1800 by James Reed, a great-great-grandfather of A.D. White. It stands on land given by James Marshel to James Reed's father, Joseph

Reed for moving the Rev. Joseph Smith from York Co. Penna. to Washington County in 1779 or 1780. Reverend Smith was the first pastor of the Cross Creek and Upper Buffalo Presbyterian churches in this area.

Another mile down this valley, we passed the farm once owned by John D. Cowen, son of Samuel and Mary D. Cowen. John Cowen and his wife lived on this farm until 1869 when they, too, moved to Ft. Scott, Kansas. On the farm while living there, the Cowens erected the present large brick house and also a very large barn; the barn was burned by an incendniary several years ago. Mr. and Mrs. Lee Adamson now live on this property. He is in charge of the Hickory-Woodrow Telephone Company at Hickory, Penna.

Driving back on to Route 50 at Rea Cross Roads, we turned right and drove down the valley of the South Fork of Cross Creek (the stream) and about two miles toward Avella, we reached Patterson Road, turned right on to it, and drove north toward Patterson Mills. We soon reached the former Thomas Liggett farm on which stands an old brick house, which may have been built by Thomas Liggett, who this writer believes was a son of Thomas and Permelia Dempster Liggett, the first family to locate in the Cross Creek Country. Thus, Thomas Liggett, Jr. would have been a brother of William Liggett, the great-grandfather of Dr. Lee Liggett. We know nothing more about this Thomas Liggett, or his family, but one of that name was living in Hopewell Township in 1882, according to Beer's Biographical Record of Washington County.

Father on on the Patterson Road, we came to the old William Patterson farm, settled in 1778 by Capt. William Patterson, a veteran of the Revolutionary War and a great-great-great-grandfather of Dr. Liggett. After locating here on this farm, Capt. Patterson, in 1774, erected a large stone house, which was built from field stone obtained from the farm. Here members of the Patterson Family lived until 1955, when Miss Mary Patterson, a great-granddaughter and the last

of her generation to live there, sold the farm and moved to Washington. Some years later, the stone house was sold to James Drain of Ligonier, Penna. and the stone were moved there and used to erect a home and antique shop. In addition to the stone house, there were two log barns on this farm. The so-called "upper" barn was sold to Albert Miller and moved to Meadowcroft Village some years ago, where it was re-built. The "lower" barn, now in ruins, had in it the large power wheel, built for it by James Murdock of West Middletown and placed in this barn, where horse-power operated it and it was used for threshing, cornshelling and grinding of grain. This wheel, which would be a valuable antique, if taken care of, can now be seen sticking up among the ruins of this old barn. The farm is now owned by Paul Margaria who has little interest in the historical values of the old farm. He has built a new barn near the site of the old farm buildings and will build a new house here, too. This old farm is located high on the hills at this point, since one has to drive up a fairly steep hill to reach it, and in leaving the area, down another steep hill toward Patterson Mills.

As we drove down this long hill, we noted the trace of a lane into the former property of the home of Nathan Patterson, great-great-grandfather of Lee Liggett. A tradition is that after Nathan Patterson's death and the dispersal of the family, that the buildings on this farm were left and the furnishings and furniture which they contained were never taken away, but everything was left to decay. Fifty years ago, ruins of these old buildings could be seen at this place, but it likely now that even these have disappeared.

Reaching the foot of this long hill, we were at the site of the old Patterson Mill, built here by Gen. Thomas Patterson in 1774. It is likely that the first mill was a primitive structure, but later a three-story building was erected here, and it stood until about 1925 when it was torn down. The Patterson Family operated this mill for a full one hundred years, from 1794, until 1896, when, on

the death of John S. Patterson, the mill was sold and operated by others until it was finally dismantled. Since it was located at the junction of two streams, the middle branch and the north branch of Cross Creek, water could be collected in dams on both streams and conducted in "races" to the mill, which increased it's usefulness in times of low water. All that can be seen there now is a depression in the ground where the mill stood.

We then drove up the road about 300 feet to the old William J. Patterson home which stood on the bank right above the mill. This brick house was probably built by the Patterson Family, and it was the home of William J. Patterson, great-grandfather of Lee Liggett until his death in 1889. John S. Patterson, who succeeded his father in the operation of the mill, lived on the other side of the public road and almost opposite the William J. Patterson home. The Fred Hofrichter family now live in the William J. Patterson house and they have done considerable restoration work in the house. Mrs. Chris Vance and her sister, Miss Ann Lusakow live in the former John S. Patterson house. It is a frame building and is in good condition.

Leaving these old homes, we drove up the road toward Cross Creek Village as far as Cedar Grove (on the north branch of Cross Creek) and there at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Emanuel Paris, we saw one of the "burrs" from the old Patterson Mill. When a water line was being laid from Avella to Cedar Grove four or five years ago, at the point where it passed the site of the old mill, the Paris Construction Company found this old stone burr along the road, so Mr. Paris took it to his home and has it permanently set on a concrete base. Thus this old relic of the Mill will be preserved.

Retracing our route back to the Mill and then on towards Avella, we passed the beautiful St. John's Byzantine Rite Catholic Church which was erected here by a congreation composed largely of families in the Cross Creek Country of

Czecho-slovakian descent. It stands within a quarter of a mile of the site of Patterson Mill.

When the Patterson family were active in the operation of the grist mill which we have already described, one of the family opened a Fuller's Mill about a quarter of a mile away up the north fork of Cross Creek and it was operated for many years by members of the family. This mill, too, has entirely disappeared. Good pictures of the old Patterson Stone House and other farm buildings, of the Patterson Mill and the old William J. Patterson home, and also of the William Patterson Home and Fuller's Mill on North Branch can all be seen in Caldwell's Atlas of Washington County, Penna., published in 1876 and re-published in 1976 by the Fort Vance Historical Society.

Leaving the Patterson Mills area, we drove down this valley to Avella, where we took a right turn on Route 231 and drove down the main stream of Cross Creek to the site of the restored Meadowcroft Village. In crossing the creek just before reaching the site of the village, we saw on the hillside just above the creek, the location of the world-famous "dig" being conducted there by an archaeological group from the University of Pittsburgh. Albert Miller, founder of Meadowcroft Village, discovered some artifacts under an overhang of rocks at this place some years ago, and in reporting it to archaeologists, it was decided to excavate here, and in so doing, evidences of a very early culture have been found, dating it is believed back as far as 1300 B.C. (or possibly 13,000?). This project is not active at present, ~~working~~ having been suspended at the close of the 1977 season to give the explorers time to evaluate what has already been found. The terrain is very steep at this point, but Dr. Liggett scrambled up the side of the hill to get a closer look at the excavation site.

We then went up the driveway into the Village, registered at the visitor's office and then took a brief tour of the Village. We noted the stone gateposts

set up in the Village, these coming from the old Simpson Farm in Cross Creek Township; then went to the newly opened museum where we met briefly Delvin Miller, the race-horse breeder and driver, and brother of Albert Miller and co-founder of the Village. Much of the exhibit in the museum at present is devoted to a display of memorabilia having to do with Delvin Miller's famous stallion, Adios. We looked over it and the exhibit of small replicas of stage coaches and other similar vehicles in the museum.

Next, we visited one of the log houses which the Millers have brought to the Village and re-built here. This was the so-called King House, a two-story house which has been partially furnished with early furniture. The hostess at this house was Mrs. Dan Gagich of Rea Cross Roads in Cross Creek Township. We then went to the Beall Carriage barn where many types of buggies, buck-boards, racing sulkies, etc., are on display. We then returned to the center of the Village, visiting in turn the old Miller Log Home, the Miller One-room Schoolhouse, and then through the Pine Bank covered bridge back to the office and the Fowlerstown Store and Post Office. Laura White chose not to take the tour of the Village but remained at the visitors' headquarters until the rest of us returned there.

Leaving Meadowcroft Village and driving back to Avella, we stopped there to call Betty Cunningham Cowden of Washington, and a second cousin of Dr. Liggett, to meet us for lunch at the restaurant at the Village Green golf course on Route 18 near Hickory. We then drove up Route 50 to Seminary Road which we took the right and went to the site of the murder of Samuel T. Ferguson, which had happened in September, 1904. Mr. Ferguson was a contractor for the work of building the Wabash Railroad down this section of the Cross Creek Valley. He and his secretary, Charles Martin were driving down what is now called Seminary Road on that September day having with them the money with which they expected to pay the

laborers in the Ferguson Construction Camp which was nearby.

As they crossed a drainage culvert on this road, a terrible explosion occurred. As learned later, a quantity of dynamite had been placed in this culvert and someone with a cleverly contrived line to an electric battery had triggered the explosion just as the vehicle in which the men were riding was over this culvert. Mr. Ferguson was killed and Mr. Martin critically injured, but he recovered. The money which they had, disappeared and later, through some expert detective work, two men of Croatian blood were intercepted as they were fleeing the country, and they were brought back to Washington County and tried for the crime.

This event is of interest to Dr. Liggett, since his grandfather, the later Lewis S. Liggett, who lived near this site, was working in a cornfield just above the road, and he was among the first to discover the crime. At the subsequent trial of the suspects, Mr. Liggett was called on to identify the criminals, but he failed to do so, possibly through fear of reprisal by others possibly involved in the crime. Due to the effects of this episode on the Liggett Family, some time afterward, they moved away from the West Middletown area and located in nearby Ohio, where the family has been living until very recent times. The story of all of this evidently had not been much discussed in the Liggett Family, so Dr. Liggett knew little about it until our correspondence and this visit to the site of the murder.

As we drove back down Seminary Road, in passing under the railroad, we noted that the former home of Dr. Liggett's great-grandfather, William Liggett had stood on the bank above the road at this point. This home had been a large white house which, while it was still standing, was easily visible from the valley road, present Route 50. The house is now gone, having either been torn down or burned down some years ago.

On reaching Route 50, we drove east on it back to Route 18 near Mt. Prospect Church, then on Route 18 to the restaurant where we were soon joined, about 2 P.M. by Betty Cowden and we all had lunch together here. This lunch period gave Betty and Lee an opportunity to get acquainted and to discuss items of family interest with which they were both familiar. Betty is a granddaughter of John S. Patterson, while Dr. Liggett is a grandson of Hannah Margaret Patterson, who married Lewis S. Liggett, John and Hannah Margaret having been brother and sister.

Lunch being finished, we took off cross country to the old Dinsmore Home in Canton Township, passing on the way the farm on which our mutual ancestor, James Dinsmore had settled in 1795. This farm is in Mt. Pleasant Township, but the old stone house and other farm buildings on this farm have disappeared, only the site of them being visible and known. There is possibly still the old stone spring house standing here, but if so, all of it has disappeared except the stone walls and the stone water trough.

We drove over the hill toward the present Dinsmore Home, and just as we crossed the ridge, we espied Malcolm Dinsmore working in a nearby field, cutting grass for hay silage. He stopped his machine and visited with us a few minutes, then we drove down to the house where Malcolm's wife, Mary Dinsmore came out and greeted us as we visited on the lawn of the old Dinsmore brick house built by our common ancestor, John Dinsmore in 1810. This is a very large old house, containing fourteen rooms. It was built in two sections, the older part in 1810, and the newer part some time later at a time not now known. Up until the time of building this house, the family had lived in the stone house on the Mt. Pleasant Township farm. There, in 1800, James Dinsmore, our immigrant ancestor, had taken for his third wife Elizabeth Carr, who was a girl considerably younger than Mr. Dinsmore, in the same ceremony his son, John Dinsmore had married

Elizabeth's sister, Jane Carr. Thus, father and son, James and John Dinsmore became also brothers-in-law. In 1805, John's brother, James Dinsmore, Jr., married Esther Hamilton and the elder James Dinsmore then divided his land, giving to his son, James, the farm with the stone house, and to John the farm on which, in 1810, he built the brick house. The farm with the stone house became known later as the Cook Farm, since one of the Dinsmore girls had married Dr. Wm. Cook and they made this their home until Dr. Cook's death in 1866.

While visiting with Mary Dinsmore at the old home, her and Malcolm's daughter, Myrta Littman drove down the lane on a farm tractor towing a silage wagon. She was helping her father fill the silo by bringing in the loaded wagons from the field and emptying them at the silo, then going back to the field for another load. Myrta is a graduate of the agricultural dept. of Trinity High School in Washington and a former member of the FFA of that school.

Betty Cowden was still with us, having taken Laura White into her car for company as they traveled along with us, Dr. Liggett's car leading the way. When we had completed our visit at the Dinsmore Home, we decided to visit some of the cemeteries where Dr. Liggett's forebears are buried. So, we drove toward Buffalo Village, passing on the way the stone house which is the home now of Dr. and Mrs. Glenn Hisrich, but it is the house which was built by James Taggart in 1802, and which remained in the Taggart name until it was sold to the Hisrichs about seven years ago. James Taggart and the first James Dinsmore were near neighbors and close friends for their long lives together on these adjoining farms.

At Buffalo Cemetery at the Upper Buffalo Presbyterian Church in Buffalo Village, we visited the graves in the Dinsmore row of graves, and here found buried Dr. Liggett's great-great-great-grandfather, the older James Dinsmore (1742-1817) and by his side, his third wife, Elizabeth Carr, who lives for

another 26 years after his death. Also in this row are the graves of John Dinsmore and his wife, Jane Carr Dinsmore, great-great-great-grandparents of Dr. Lee Liggett. Their daughter, Mary Dinsmore married Samuel Cowen and went with him to live on their farm in Mt. Pleasant Township, as elsewhere noted, and they were the parents of Elizabeth Cowen Liggett.

Our next stop was at the graveyard adjoining the Grove United Presbyterian Church in West Middletown. Here are the graves of Thomas and Permelia Dempster Liggett, the first of this family to live in the Cross Creek Country. They had lived on the farm, later belonging to their son, William Liggett, Near the site of the Ferguson Murder.

We were traveling along Route 844 from Buffalo Village to West Middletown, so we continued on this road west to the Independence Cemetery which is located on Route 844 and one mile east of the Village of Independence. Here we found the graves of William Liggett and his second wife, Elizabeth Cowen Liggett, Great-grandparents of Dr. Lee Liggett. This cemetery is located on one of the Liggett farms, that of Robert Liggett, who was a brother of William Liggett. The farm of the present Robert Liggett adjoins the cemetery grounds and his beautiful farm home can be seen from the cemetery. Many other members of the Liggett Family are buried here in the Independence Cemetery.

By now, the day was far spent, but there was one other cemetery to visit, of interest both to Dr. Liggett and to Betty Cowden, so we started for Cross Creek Village and the Cemetery at that place. Here in the older graveyard, which we visited last, are the graves of William Patterson and his wife Elizabeth Brown who came to the Cross Creek Country from Lancaster County, Penna. in 1778 and who built the stone house in 1795. They were the great-great-great-grandparents

of both Betty Cowden and Dr. Lee Liggett. Their son, Nathan Patterson and his wife, Lydia Houston Patterson are buried in the Mt. Hope Graveyard in Independence Township, which we did not have time to visit on this trip. But the next in line, William J. Patterson, son of Nathan and Lydia, is buried with his wife, Eliza Snodgrass in the new Cemetery at Cross Creek; and on the same granite monument which contains their names, are the names of their son, John S. Patterson and his wife, Elizabeth Dunbar Patterson, the grandparents of Betty Cowden. Also, on another stone is the name of a sister of John S. Patterson: Lydia Houston Patterson 1861-1876; she died at the age of 15 and on her stone is this inscription: "Tell my classmates I will meet them in Heaven".

Returning to the White House at Hickory, we all took leave of each other, Betty Cowden returning to her home at Washington and the Liggetts going back to St. Clairsville, Ohio to complete their visit with friends there.

In summary, on this trip, we had visited, in turn, the homes of Samuel and Mary Dinsmore Cowen in Mt. Pleasant Township,

the site of the stone house home of William and Elizabeth Brown Patterson in Cross Creek Township,

the site of the old Patterson Mill and the William J. Patterson home at the village of Patterson Mill in Cross Creek Twp., and also the location of the burr from the old mill,

the site of the archaeological "dig" and Meadowcroft Village in Jefferson Township (we hoped to see the old "upper" barn from the Patterson Farm, but it was too remote to visit in the time we had there).

the site of the Ferguson Murder in 1904.

the home of John Dinsmore in Canton, Tw. built in 1810.

Then in the following order, the following graves:

At Buffalo Cemetery, the graves of James Dinsmore and his son, John Dinsmore, and their wives.

At Independence Cemetery, the graves of William and Elizabeth Cowen Liggett and quite a number of other Liggett graves.

At Cross Creek Graveyard, the graves of William and Elizabeth Brown Patterson, and in the Cemetery the graves of William J. Patterson and his wife, Eliza Snodgrass Patterson, and of their son, John S. Patterson.

This record submitted by

Alvin D. White

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