

Avella Area and the Patterson Family Connection

**The Enterprise
June 21-August 30 Editions**

By Kathryn Campbell Slasor
For The Enterprise

From out of the past....

The "Flood of 1912" left its ugly mark on the town of Avella, when the two little Crowe sisters were drowned, as related in last week's Avella story. However, that was not the flood that claimed the life of "a teacher in the Fallen Timber one-room school," also as related in Part XVI. An apology and a correction to this tragedy should be noted. The teacher who was drowned was David Wallace Patterson. However, the year was not 1912, but 1919.

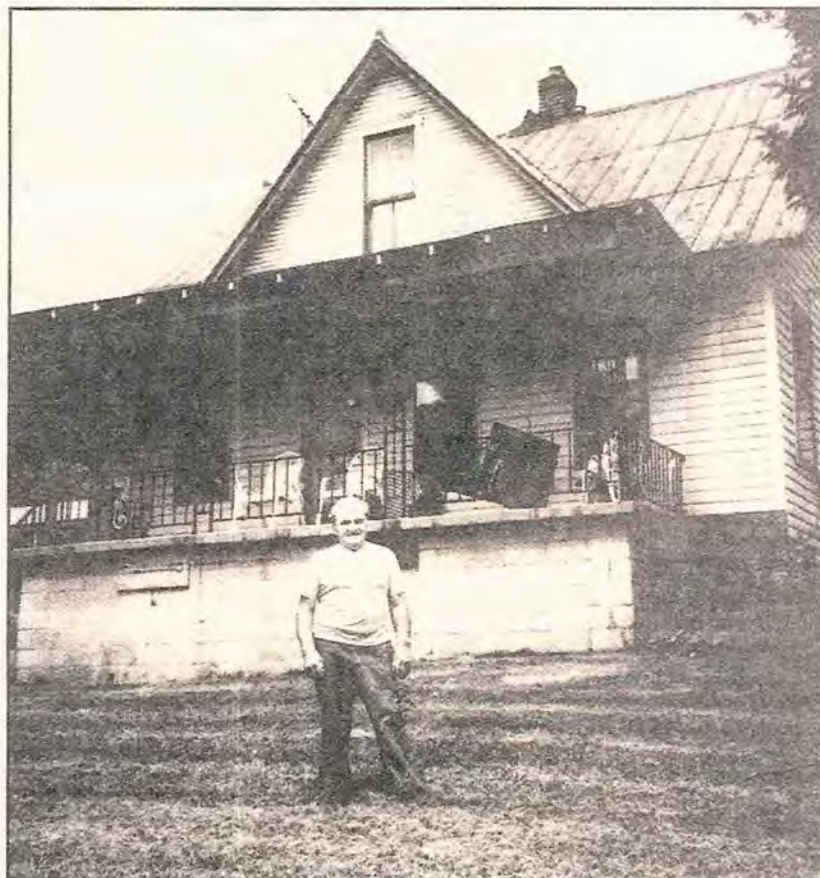
According to an old faded newspaper clipping in a scrapbook owned by Jean Wilson Robinson, the story, preceded by a number of headlines and sub-heads, reads as follows:

"VETERAN TEACHER IS DROWNED IN CROSSING STREAM. David Wallace Patterson Loses Life in Swollen Waters of Crosscreek at "Old Mill" Crossing. Small Boy Is Only Witness of Accident. Body Later Recovered - Was Beginning His 50th Consecutive Year of Service as Teacher in County Schools. Was Native of Cross Creek.

"Avella, Oct. 16, (1919) - David Wallace Patterson, aged 73 years, a veteran school teacher of Washington County, met a tragic death about 5 o'clock this evening when he was drowned in the swollen waters of Cross Creek. Mr. Patterson, who resided near here, was teacher of the Fallen Timber School, Independence Township, and drove to and from his home.

"Tonight, in attempting to ford the creek, at what is known as the 'Old Mill' crossing, near the Duquesne coal mine, he, with his horse and buggy, was swept down stream. His body was later recovered lodged against a tree about 1,000 yards down stream from the crossing. The horse was rescued about a half mile further down near the Pryor coal works.

"The only witness to the accident was a small boy who saw him



TEO ZATTA STANDS before the house he purchased from the Patterson estate in 1952. Notes by A.D. White: "It is my belief that David Wallace Patterson built the house, intending to move there after he disposed of the 'brick house at the mill.'" (Present Hofrichter home.)

drive into the creek. Mr. Patterson had evidently misjudged the height or the force of the water, for the creek was very high and the horse was soon swept off his feet and borne down the stream. The boy heard the driver call out, "whoa" after he was caught in the rush of the water.

"Mr. Patterson last month began his fiftieth consecutive year as a teacher in the county schools, and probably held the record in the county for length of service as a teacher. The members of his family wanted him to give up teaching this year, but he was anxious to round

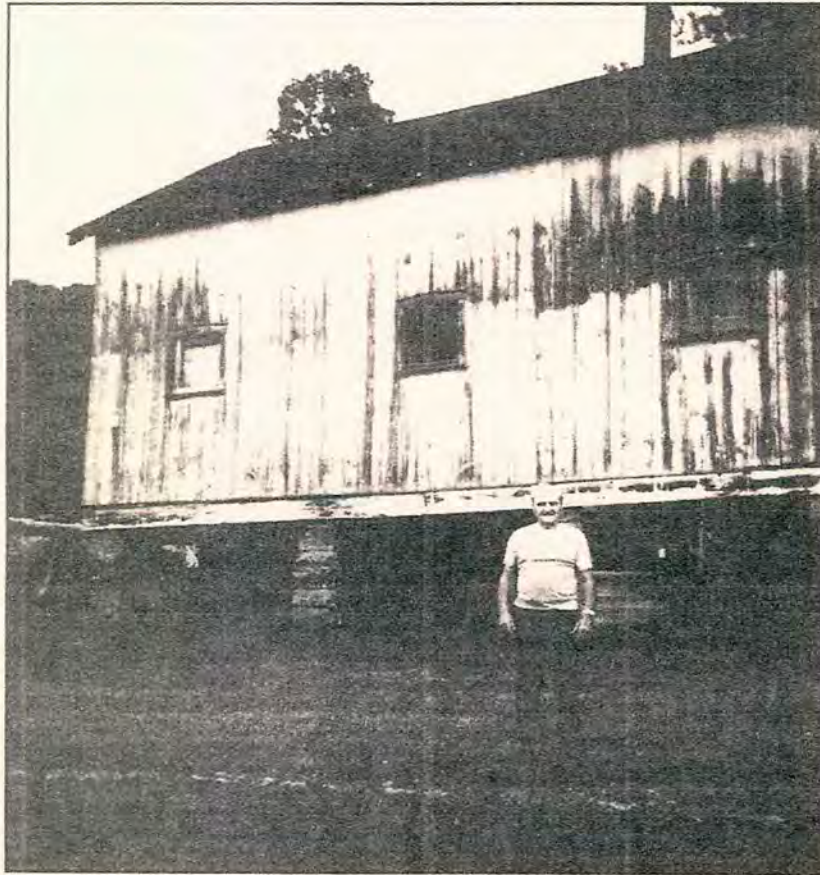
out a half century record and was elected to teach the Fallen Timber school.

"He was a native of Patterson's Mills, Cross Creek Township, and was born March 27, 1846. He was the son of Lysander and Elizabeth Wallace Patterson, his father having been in his time one of the best known surveyors in the county.

"In addition to teaching, Mr. Patterson followed farming and for many years resided on the old Patterson homestead. On October 1, he removed to the George Boles farm near here, which he had a

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THE STONE FOUNDATION under what was once the barn on the Lester Patterson farm has begun to weaken. The building is now a three-car garage, remodeled years ago by Harry McConnell.

short time before purchased.

"In 1878 he was married to Miss Jennie Patterson, of Westmoreland County, who survives, with children, Alma, Lena (wife of Harry McConnell) and Lester."

Since the Patterson family became as prominent in the Avella area as did the Wells family, the next few "parts" to the Avella story may concern the Pattersons. And, as with other pioneer families, lives were intertwined, by marriage, by proximity of farms and living areas, by friendship and by kindred interests.

For additional information on David Wallace Patterson, the writings of the late A.D. White have been consulted, as have those of James Simpson, historian, for gen-

eral Patterson references. James Simpson lived as neighbor to a number of the Pattersons, and had recorded in his daily journals some of the dealings he had had with them.

David Wallace Patterson, a teacher and farmer, was born near Patterson Mills March 27, 1846. He was a son of Lysander and Elizabeth Wallace Patterson. He was principal of the Burgettstown Public School for the terms of 1878-79 and 1879-80, and of the summer terms at Burgettstown in 1878, 1879 and 1880. After the close of the summer terms of 1879 and 1880, he taught a normal school in each of these two years. He also taught a night class in Burgettstown.

David Wallace Patterson's

teaching career began in Cross Creek Township in 1870. He also taught at Mt. Horeb, Hancock County; Manchester School, Independence Township; Sharon, in Beaver County; Robinson Township, Allegheny County; Boliver School, Westmoreland County; Jefferson Township, Washington County; Cross Creek Village School; Buckeye Valley, West Point, near Avella; and was striving to reach a record of fifty years teaching when the tragic accident happened in 1919 at "Mill Crossing," Avella.

Lena was born in the building at Patterson's Mills that was built by her great-great-grandfather, Gen. Thomas Patterson, who established the Patterson Grist Mill. Lester, brother of Lena and Alva, was born in Bolivar, Westmoreland County, in 1882. The house in which these three children of David Wallace Patterson lived, was bought in 1952 by Theodore "Teo" Zatta, for his family which consisted of his wife, four sons and one daughter. Mr. Zatta still lives in the house, and is a proud father and grandfather.

The Zatta family came to Avella in 1905. Teo's father, Tony, was a miner at Donahue, as were other members of his family. Teo knew and remembers Lena and her husband, Harry McConnell, both of whom were teachers. Harry was also a carpenter, and at one time had remodeled the old barn into a three-car garage. The barn has a stone foundation that is beginning to deteriorate. Beside the barn is a tall pine tree that spreads its strong limbs over the lawn. Teo planted this tree in 1953, when it was quite small.

Teo's favorite sport is soccer. He was a member of the Avella Polar Star soccer champion team in 1933-34, and was inducted into the Pennsylvania Sports Soccer Hall of Fame in 1989. Another special honor is that his T-shirt says he is the "Best Grandpa in the world!"

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CAPT. LYSANDER PATTERSON Home, as seen in Caldwell's Atlas of Washington County, 1876. Lysander Patterson was the father of David Wallace Patterson, who was drowned in the swollen stream of Cross Creek in 1919, and the grandfather of Lena McConnell, Alva and Lester Patterson, who lived in the present Teo Zatta home, Avella. No sign of the farm or the house remains.

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By Kathryn Campbell Slasor
For The Enterprise

PART XVIII

"When men first gave themselves names, there was a Patterson!" This from "A History of the Patterson Family of Cross Creek Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania," compiled by Mary L. Patterson in 1924.

Mary L. Patterson, the last of her family, left the old stone house that was known since the late 1700s as the Patterson Homestead, in August 1955. She then moved to Washington, where she died July 6, 1965.

Mary was one of eight children, none of whom ever married. After the deaths of all of her brothers and sisters, she found that she could no longer carry on the work of the farm. It was with much regret that she was forced to sell the old homestead, leaving it empty and alone on the high hill outside the village of Pattersons Mill.

Mary L. Patterson's love for the old homestead is revealed in two original verses she composed for the Christmas cards she sent to her friends. In 1943 she wrote,

"Old Histories relate,

"That in 1778,

"William Patterson made his first home on this farm;

"He built a cabin stout,

"And with Indians all about,

"He defended all his family there from harm.

"But of room he needed more,

"So in 1794,

"The building of a permanent home began.

"And this picture here I give,

"Where the Pattersons still live

"In the 'Old Stone House' the home of all the clan."

1963:

"The home was sold in '55

"Few farmers left you see;

"The place was all deserted,

"With no one left but me;

"It was sold to a man who wanted land;

"He has taken possession; it is now in his hands,

From out of the past....



PATTERSON HOMESTEAD as sketched in the 1876 Caldwell Atlas. The old stone house is no longer standing at this location. It was removed a few years ago to Ligonier and reconstructed. The upper barn, extreme right, has been moved to Meadowcroft Village.

"And the 'Patterson Home' is no more.

"And the 'Old Stone House' which was always our Home

"Is standing empty and all alone."

Mary gives the following description of the old stone house in her book: "William Patterson, in 1794, built the stone house that was always the home of the Pattersons. It must have been an unusual house for its time, and surely to the family of those days, it was a move from a cabin to a mansion." (Mary wrote in

the present tense, as the house was still standing at that time.) "This old brick house has thick stone walls (about two and one-half feet), and deep small paned windows, the front windows of the first story having each fifteen panes of glass. The main house is thirty by forty feet, two stories high, with a large attic, a basement kitchen and three small cellar rooms. On each of the first and second floors are four rooms and a wide hall. In the basement kitchen is a wide fireplace which will hold a ten-foot log. The

partitions and ceilings are plain wide boards, and the doors, with two exceptions, are homemade.

"The deep window sills are of wild cherry and in the upstairs, rooms are without paint or varnish, being worn smooth by the scrubbing of many generations of Patterson housewives, and showing the natural beautiful grain of the wood. The large stone steps at each end of the front portico were taken from a quarry on an adjoining tract of land, and were placed several years after the house was built as a

brace to the walls."

Mary L. Patterson had searched her family beginnings before she compiled her book. She found that there were Pattersons in the Clyde Valley in Scotland. During the days of Elizabeth, James I and Cromwell, large numbers from the Scottish and English border counties emigrated to Northern Ireland. The early Pattersons lived in County Antrim. They considered themselves Scotsmen living in Irish soil. The Pennsylvania Pattersons were Scotch-Irish.

James Patterson was born in County Antrim, Ireland, in 1708, the son of John Patterson. When a young man of twenty, Jamie fell in love with a girl who was considered as "poor," by Patterson standards. John Patterson opposed this relationship, the reason being that she could not "measure guinea for guinea," the Pattersons being well off. After a quarrel, Jamie declared he would go to America. In anger he left home in such haste that he did not even take his overcoat, and had only the money on his person.

His father followed him to the ship, and pleaded with him to come back. But Jamie's determination was unmistakable. The father took his own coat from his back to give to the boy, but his efforts were in vain. As the ship pulled out with the love-sick boy aboard, the desperate father threw him his purse full of money. The unruly Jamie promptly threw it back to shore. The father, heart-broken, watched as his son sailed away to find a new home in a strange land.

James Patterson settled in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He bought a large tract of land there in 1728, evidently the same year that he had left his homeland. He married a widow whose maiden name was Mary Montgomery. Little is known of her birth, life or death. James and Mary spent their entire lives on this farm. This original homestead was called "Ayr," indicating that Scottish memories were not forgotten. The house was built of logs on the slope of a hill with a little run at the bottom and a spring of pure water. Here James and Mary raised a family of ten children. James died in 1792. He and Mary are buried in the old Chestnut Level Presbyterian Church burying ground, about six miles from their old home. No stone marks their graves.

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PUBLIC SALE

On account of farming conditions—and my health—I am moving from the farm and will sell my personal property on:

SATURDAY, AUG. 13, 1955
at 9:30 A. M. D. S. T.

on the old Patterson farm, midway between road from Avella (on Route 28) and Cross Creek and Avella and Hickory, Pa. look for road signs on both roads.

Consisting of 65 Delaine brood ewes, 20 one-half blood yearling ewes, 38 one-half blood wether lambs, 25 one-half blood ewe lambs, Dorset ram, 4 yearling rams, 3 grade Guernsey cows bred, 3 grade Short Horn & Guernsey helpers, Guernsey bull calf, 2 purebred Chester white brood sows, registered Chester white boar, 2 young sows open, 3 barrows, 1955 Ford tractor 650 model, 2 tractor plows and cultivator, 2 row tractor cornplanter new, harrows, 3 land horse plows, hay ladders, corn weeder, sleigh & spring wagon, 40 ft. double ladders, 5 gas stoves, chairs, harness horse, 2 guns, poplar and walnut lumber, roll top desk, clocks, chairs all kinds, 3 pieces curley maple, bed dressing, stand, marble top stand, wood cradle, picture frames, 4 bags feathers, horse blankets & robe, wooden fork, window sash, grass lawn mower, dinner bell, potato planter, manure spreader, 3 hay rakes, 5 house jacks, 3 ox yokes, wire fencing, 200 gallon kettle, tractor chains, platform scales,

5 stocks hay, 125 bushels wheat, 130 bushels barley, 225 bushels new oats, 100 barrel old oats, 100 baskets ear corn, ½ bushel clover and alfalfa seed, cherry blanket chest, wash stands, beds, bureaus, pictures, mirrors, iron kettles, copper kettle, washing machine, high chair, tables, saddle, dog power churn, meat table, quilting frames, gas cook stoves, many, many articles not listed.

No inspections of household effects until sale day.

TERMS: CASH.

MARY L. PATTERSON,
Avella, R. D. Pa.

DAVID H. WILLIAMS
Auctioneer.

Lunch served by Ladies Aid,
Cross Creek Presbyterian Church.



STRAIN OF TIME and weather over a period of 154 crumbled one end of the old stone house in 1948. This picture was a newspaper clipping showing the props that were used to strengthen the structure. A section of the east wall of the famous landmark crashed to the ground, exposing two second-story rooms. Built in 1794 by William Patterson, the walls were in two layers, each a foot thick, the space between loosely filled. The bulging wall had been braced by great iron bolts running through the attic, and by the wooden props shown here. At the time of the crash, Frank, Ella, Annie and Mary were in the dining room. Had anyone been passing from the kitchen to the well outside, they would have been instantly killed by the falling stones. These four and the other four brothers and sisters were the fifth generation of Pattersons to occupy the home, built by their great-great-grandfather.

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For The Enterprise

From out of the past....

PART XIX

William Patterson was the oldest son of James and Mary Montgomery Patterson, who settled in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in 1728, after James' hasty and angry flight from his homeland of Ireland. William was born March 14, 1733. He became a farmer, as was his father before him. On March 16, 1758, he married Rosanna Scott, of Maryland. They had five children before she died in 1769. On April 10, 1770, he married Elizabeth Brown of Lancaster County. They had an additional ten children. William lived until June 29, 1818.

William was a soldier in the Revolution. He was a private in Capt. Thomas Whiteside's Company, Militia of Col. Thomas Porter's Battalion of Lancaster County, on their march of the Camp in the Jerseys, 1776.

After living nearly fifty years in Lancaster County, William became the pioneer of the family who migrated to a new home in the Western Wilderness. He and two of his sons, Samuel and Thomas, went to Cross Creek Township, Washington County, in 1778. Washington County was then known as the "Far West." They cleared some ground, built a house and put in what crops they could. The land on which they located was for many years known as the Patterson Homestead.

In the fall, William and one son, Samuel, returned to Lancaster County, leaving Thomas over the winter in charge of improvements. (Improvements in those days referred to the cabin and other buildings they had erected.) Their tract of land they named "oddy," due to its irregular shape.

Thomas boarded over the winter with a widow who had an adjoining tract of land. William returned the next year with the rest of his family. They crossed the mountains with pack horses, bringing their goods, and they settled on this heavily timbered tract of land. William later made a trip on horseback to Philadelphia to secure title from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for his land. This title was written on parchment and was



THE PATTERSON STONE house was built in 1794 by William Patterson. This sketch is from Caldwell Atlas, 1876. In 1948, when the house was 154 years old, the end wall crashed to the ground, as was shown in a picture in one of the previous articles.

dated May 23, 1787. The purchase price was ten shillings and six pence. The parchment was signed, "B. Franklin, President of the Supreme Executive Council." Records of the original survey read, "A Draft of a survey called 'Oddity' situate on the waters of Cross Ck. in Washington County, containing 398 ac's, 17 p's and the usual allow'ce for Roads &c. executed Feb'y 23rd, 1786, in Pursuance of a Warr't granted to Wm. Patterson for 400 ac's. dated June ye 20th, 1785. Signed, Presley Nevill and Math'w Ritchie - Ds's. Jno. Lukens, Esq. S. G'l. Ret'd &c. 23rd May, 1787."

The first Washington County home of the Pattersons was a log cabin, which stood in what later became the barnyard. The story has been handed down that before other members of the family were permitted to leave the cabin in the morning, the father first went out to look for Indians. It was well

known among the early settlers that danger from Indians was always present. One son, Samuel, is reported to have been killed by the Indians in 1787, while boating flour on the Wabash River to Vincennes, Ind. Horrors and hardships were a way of life.

A story concerning Pioneer William Patterson is told in Mary L. Patterson's book, and has been handed down through several generations.

"When our ancestor came to Washington County, he brought with him several important things. First, his horse, his only mode of travel. Second, a number of 'apple switches,' which were the foundation of the 'excellent orchard' referred to when the farm was advertised for sale in 1818. And third, but not least in importance, a pig. And the oft-related story is about this same intelligent pig.

"Some time after the arrival in

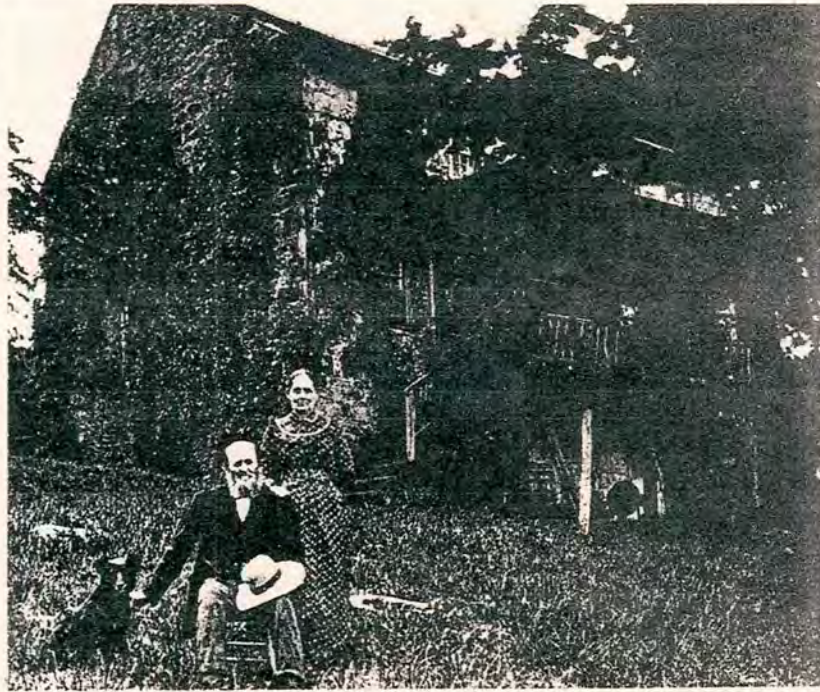
Cross Creek Township when Mr. Patterson (William) had selected his location in the wilderness and established a temporary camp he started out to explore his new possession. Returning to camp in the evening he found traces of Indians. This meant danger to the lone settler, so he hastily saddled his horse and started for the Settlement, riding hurriedly toward the East, mile after mile until he reached the mountains, probably in the neighborhood of where Uniontown now stands. There, both horse and man being weary, he picketed his horse and laid down to rest.

"When he awakened, there lying beside his horse was the pig. It had been left behind in the hurried flight, but had followed the horse through the miles of forest and traveling while they rested had finally overtaken them."

In 1941 or 42, a boy eight or nine years old had a dream. He de-

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ANOTHER VIEW OF of the old stone house, showing the west end. The man and woman are unidentified.

scribes the circumstances as follows:

“When I was a young boy I had a pet pig named Petunia and a horse named Babe. I lived on an onion farm in Walla Walla, Wash., and Petunia had the run of the whole farm. I had raised Petunia from a piglet since I got her from a neighboring pig farm where she had been the ‘runt.’ I had her for three years, at which time my dad, George Patterson, took her back to the pig farm to live as a brood sow.

“I don’t know where my dad got Babe, but it was at the end of our playing cowboy phase, and I never really learned to ride her. At about that time I remember having a recurring dream. I dreamed that I lived with Petunia and Babe on a frontier. I was a pioneer and one day I returned to my cabin to see Indian moccasin footprints in the dirt. As I was alone, I had to get of there, fast. I jumped on Babe and rode for miles away from the Indians, but also away from Petunia. I can remember the first time I had the dream. It was a terror, but after the first time I knew the end, and it no longer frightened me. I don’t remember how many times I had the dream, but it was enough to

plant it in my memory so that I would recognize it immediately when I read the Patterson book. The outcome of the dream is exactly the same as the adventure of my Pennsylvania ancestor. When I woke, (in my dream) there was Petunia sleeping nearby. She had followed us through the forest.”

In later years when Charles M. Patterson was sent a copy of Mary L. Patterson’s book and he had read the story of Pioneer William’s actual experience with the pig, he said that his hair almost stood on end. Charles’ family knew absolutely nothing about their ancestors. It would have been impossible for Charles to have heard of or read about William Patterson.

Charles M. Patterson became an English teacher in the Walla Walla high school and remained there for many years. He was a highly respected citizen of the community and could never have made up such a story.

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PART XX

The book of family history written in 1924 by Mary L. Patterson, the last of her family, contains an abundance of information that is found nowhere else. Most of the limited number of books published originally were subsequently burned in a disastrous fire, rendering copies of it extremely rare.

The following stories of General Thomas Patterson, who built the mill near Avella, the area of which bears the family name, are taken from Mary L. Patterson's book.

"The General: Thomas Patterson, the third son of William Patterson, was born Oct. 1, 1764, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. In 1778, at the age of 14, he came with his father and brother to Washington County, helped clear the wilderness land for a new home and spent the winter with a neighbor on an adjoining survey, while his father and brother went back home to bring the rest of the family. During his boyhood days he worked on this father's farm, and seeing the water power of old 'Cross Creek,' he became interested in milling which was an important industry in those early days.

"In 1794 (the same year as the old 'Stone House' was built) he bought land from his father and from other land-owners at what is now 'Pattersons' Mills,' and erected there a grist and flour mill.

"On Oct. 6, 1795, he was married to Elizabeth Findley, daughter of Hon. William Findley, of Westmoreland County. Thomas and Elizabeth Findley Patterson began housekeeping in a log cabin which was formerly a store; later he moved the stock to the mill which he had erected on the North Branch of Cross Creek. In this pioneer home 12 children were born: William, James, Samuel, John, Thomas, Findley, Moses, David, Mary, Elizabeth, Rosanna and an infant unnamed.

"Politically, Thomas Patterson was a Democrat, and he won an honorable record as a statesman. He was a member of the Electoral College in 1816, and a member of Congress from 1817 to 1825. He was



GRANITE MONUMENT OF Thomas and Elizabeth Patterson in West Middletown graveyard.

present during the contest which resulted in the election of John Quincy Adams to the Presidency by the House of Representatives, and steadily and invariably voted for Jackson, while his brother, John, as invariably voted for Adams.

"He was also noted in military circles, and held all commissions of militia rank to that of Major General. During the Indian raids of the early days, he was one of a Company of picked men among which were Lewis Wetzel and Frank McGuire, led by Captain Wells. This Company was composed of the best men in the land and was organized independent of all authority for the purpose of guarding the frontier citizens. The Company often followed marauding parties of Indians as far West as Muskingum River, sometimes overtaking them and killing the entire party of red men. General Patterson followed the trail of the

red men, in company with the celebrated Wetzel and Frank McGuire, on several occasions.

"One of his descendants relates an interesting incident of one of these raids. While the Indian hunters and scouts were eating their lunch at noon, Thomas Patterson laid aside his hat and rifle and stepped down to the spring several rods distant for a drink. When he returned to his companions, Wetzel reproved him sharply for his imprudence. The young men of the party were overheard to say, by the old and experienced Indian fighter, that they did not think he was as careful himself as he advised them to be; whereupon he told them that if any of them caught him with his rifle (which was a very fine one for those days, and quite an object of envy by the whole party) out of his reach, they might have it. He was watched closely every minute and only once



PATTERSON'S MILL, BUILT by Thomas Patterson, son of pioneer William Patterson. The mill was built around 1794, operated for a full hundred years under the Patterson name, until sold into other hands. It was torn down about 1925. Original picture courtesy Margaret Hines.

during the entire scout was he caught off his guard for a moment.

"Another instance of the hardships of early life is shown in the story of one of General Patterson's southern trips. He built a chain of fortified flat-boats and made a voyage to New Orleans with a cargo of flour, which proved to be very eventful. They were attacked by a strong band of Indians which they repulsed. The savages then made a furious onslaught on an emigrant boat which was in advance of Patterson and, no doubt, would have captured it but for the arrival of the General and his men (which was a double well picked crew.)

"They saw the danger, rowed to their aid and with a few deadly fires from their port-holes drove the enemy off. Another boat which had been traveling within hailing distance had fallen to the rear and

was now attacked by the defeated savages, and captured, owing to the fact that General Patterson could not row his boats against the current to their aid. He arrived at New Orleans without further adventure, discharged his crew and disposed of his cargo, receiving the entire amount in silver coin.

"When about to start home he was stricken with a fever. As soon as he was able to sit on a horse, he bought two ponies, piled the silver upon one and riding the other, succeeded in making his journey home safely, although his way led through several Indian countries and one vast wilderness, and almost the entire distance he was alone. His friends at home had given him up for lost.

"During the War of 1812, General Patterson organized a Company and started to the relief of Detroit,

but when they had only reached northern Ohio, Hull surrendered the fort. His nephew, James Patterson, was Captain of a Company from Highland County, Ohio, and was taken prisoner at Detroit.

"General Patterson was active in church affairs, being an elder in the Middletown Church. He was a wealthy farmer, mill owner and sheep raiser, and an influential citizen. After the death of his wife (Jan. 8, 1837), his sister, Rosanna McElroy, kept house for him. He died of apoplexy, Nov. 17, 1841, and his body lies in the old graveyard in West Middletown, his being the first monument of marble erected in that graveyard."

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TALL TREES GROW in the indentation in the ground and a modern-day automobile rounds the bend where once stood Pattersons Mills.

By Kathryn Campbell Siasor
For The Enterprise

PART XXI

Much more is recorded concerning the character and the lifetime activities of General Thomas Patterson than is said about the fact that he was responsible for the building of the mill.

Quotes from the book of Mary L. Patterson, written in 1924, state the following descriptions of this great man:

"Being a man of great piety, and largely endowed with the nobler qualities of our race, he always shrank from the acknowledgment that he had taken the life of an Indian; but he was engaged in many pursuits of, and skirmishes with, the Indians, and it was well known that his rifle seldom varied from its mark, and he had frequently had occasion to use it in Indian warfare.

"General Patterson was kind-hearted and generous, but is said to have been very vain of his personal appearance. He was a man of considerable wealth and employed many people to work for him; his wife also employed much help, as many as six women at one time. Many anecdotes have been told by older members of the family concerning the life and character of the General and those of his generation, but unfortunately they were not preserved in writing, and cannot all be now remembered."

The record of his death in the Washington Examiner, Dec. 4, 1841: "Died, at his residence in

From out of the past....



JOHN BAKER SEARCHES through the snowy woods for some possible remains of the log cabin near Pattersons Mill where his mother was born. Nora Myrtle McNutt Baker was born in 1887, and was a daughter of the miller at that time.

Cross Creek Township, in this county, on the 16th U.S. General Thomas Patterson, aged 77 years."

He retired early the previous evening in his usual health, and his death came very suddenly, even before his family could all be called to his home, and a physician summoned.

In the year 1816, he was elected by the people of Washington

County as their representative in Congress of the United States, which important post he held for four successive terms of two years each, until the year 1824, when he declined re-election.

He had been Major General of this Division of Militia for several years. A part of his noble character is illustrated by the following incident: During the War of 1812, be-

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PATTERSONS MILL DAM stood a few hundred feet above the mill on the rippling waters of Cross Creek. Only a portion of the dam remains.

tween the United States and Great Britain, and at the gloomy period of the surrender of the traitor Hull, he volunteered his services to march to the front; loading his wagon with flour, which was then high and in great demand, he distributed it gratuitously to the volunteers then on their march.

As a politician he was never neutral; but schooled in the Democratic faith, at an early date he became a leading politician. In every situation he acted out his part, and left the pattern of a well-spent life to his numerous descendants and those friends who survive him.

From the notes of A.D. White: "Perhaps the most prominent of William Patterson's sons was Thomas, the 'General,' as he was known, because of his military activities on the frontier. He early became interested in the milling industry, for in 1794 he purchased land from his father and established Patterson's Mill on the North Fork of Cross Creek and about a mile and one-half upstream from the Wells' Mill. At this point, water could be gathered into the mill races from two branches of the

stream, which made it an ideal location from the stand-point of good water-power. At this point, eventually a small village grew up, and this hamlet is still known as Patterson Mills.

"In addition to its importance as a milling center, this small place became a community center, having at one time a store and post office.

"At this place in the Civil War years, the Patterson Mill Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church was established, and joining it was the West Point Graveyard, now a modern cemetery having both Protestant and Catholic sections. Here was also the three-room building of the Patterson Mills School, long part of the Cross Creek Township School systems until closed by a merger a few years ago.

"Thomas Patterson established a 'fulling mill' on a property several hundred yards up stream from his other mill, and this, he placed in charge of his son, William, who established his own home on this same property."

(Interest has been aroused concerning the definition of a "fulling mill." Mary L. Patterson in her book of family history written in 1924, says, "The old stone fulling mill is still standing, and now used as a tenant house. The industry has long since died out, as the present generation buy material of clothing without the former primitive labor of spinning, weaving and fulling the cloth." The best explanation of a fulling mill comes from Joyce Takah, of Bethel Ridge. Joyce called the librarian at Washington, who read her a definition: "A fulling machine is one used for the process of shrinking and thickening wool fabric, causing the fibers to felt. It uses moisture, heat, friction and pressure, in felting."

Since this process has not been used in making felt, or any cloth within today's recollections, suffice it to know that General Thomas Patterson built a fulling mill!

Names, dates and events mentioned in this story are solely for the enjoyment of readers. They are as accurate as possible, but should not be used for documentation.

Avella Area and the Patterson Family Connection (Pg. 2) **The Enterprise-July 19, 1995 Edition**

Fort Vance Historical Society

By Kathryn Campbell Slasor
For The Enterprise

From out of the past....

PART XXII

The Pennsylvania Pattersons, though their ancestors came from Ireland, all assert their Scotch blood and resent the term, "Irishmen." To quote Mary L. Patterson in her book of family history, "Scotch-Irish they were; and Scotch-Irish they are."

Another book, "The Scotch-Irish in America," by John W. Dinsmore, states it this way: "The Scotch-Irishman is a lowland Scotchman who moved over into the north of Ireland and there lived for a generation or more, or lives there still. This migration was due to several causes, some of them industrial, some political and most of them religious. They were Calvinists and Presbyterians, people whose fathers had suffered for their faith and who themselves had been cruelly persecuted in that behalf."

"During the last quarter of the seventeenth century and early in the eighteenth, these Scotch-Irishmen began emigrating to America. They had a strong craving for rich lands, hence the largest stream of migration flowed into the Cumberland Valley, westward to the Alleghenies, over them and on toward the setting sun. They were born pioneers; no other people broke the way for them; they broke it for themselves and for others who followed."

"The Quakers complained that the Scotch-Irish wanted to dominate everything round about them. Well, of course they did. There never was a Scotch-Irish community anywhere that did not want to dominate everything round about it. They dominated simply because in the nature of things it could not be otherwise. They searched out the good lands and were not backward in laying hold of them with a hand that could not be shaken loose. It was once said that 'The Scotch-Irishman is one who keeps the commandments of God and every other good thing he can get his hands on.' They never invited a quarrel, but once in, they could be depended upon to stay in to a finish. In Washington County today, many of the farms are in the hands of the lineal descendants of the men who drove out the Indians and leveled the forests."

Two of the most prominent Scotch-Irish pioneer families to emigrate west of the Alleghenies and to settle in and raise their large families here were the Vances and the Pattersons. Joseph Vance came from Virginia about 1773, settled in Smith Township, built a cabin, then the fort that carries his name to this day. He became the father of six children, the oldest of which was William, born in 1775.

William Patterson settled on Cross Creek about 1778. He became the father of five children to his first wife, and ten to the second. Among the second family were daughters, Rachel, born in 1778, and Hannah, born in 1786. This son of Joseph Vance and these two daughters of William Patterson

were destined to color the history of the Cross Creek area with the drama of the ages. The Vances and the Pattersons were the great-grandparents of Mrs. Edna Foster Chambers of Zelienople. This is her story in part.

"As a child attending the Cross Creek Church I asked my mother one day following a communion service why an uncle did not take

communion. She replied, 'Some of the Vance men do not belong to the church.' Most likely my next question was, 'Why?' I then heard the story.

"Following earlier services held at Vance's Fort, the Cross Creek Church was formally organized in 1779, Joseph Vance becoming an elder a few years later. The Pattersons, who arrived about that

time, also became members of the Church. And so it is not surprising that about twenty years later William Vance, as a young man of 24, chose as his wife a young woman of the congregation, William Patterson's daughter, Rachel, 18 at the time, and married her the day before Christmas 1799. They took up residence on the Vance tract, and by the year 1817 when Rachel



CROSS CREEK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



VANCE'S FORT, AS sketched in 1969 by Peter Gobleck Jr. The first sermon preached west of the Alleghenies supposedly was under the oak tree at Vance's Fort in 1774 by the Rev. James Powers.

died, they had become the parents of nine children.

"It was the custom in those days when women often died young, for an unmarried sister of the deceased to attend the motherless children. And so it happened that Hannah Patterson, Rachel's younger sister, came to live in the Vance household. She was about 31 at the time.

"About a year and a half after Rachel's death, William, who had apparently become enamored of Hannah, announced to the church that he and Hannah wanted to be married.

"'Oh, no,' said the elders of Cross Creek church, 'You cannot do that,' and cited chapter and verse in the Book Leviticus which they said forbade the union of a man and his dead wife's sister. This rebuff was not taken kindly by William, who was then a mature man of 43, had become a member of the Pennsylvania Legislature in 1816, a counselor and advisor among his friends and no doubt considered himself quite a local power. He was not persuaded by the church fathers that this union was either illegal or against the rules of the church, and he and Hannah were forthwith married in a civil ceremony in June 1818.

"This, as they say, 'brought the house down' — the house of Presbyterian doctrine upon the shoulders of William Vance. The Session of the church met and voted to excommunicate him. This so angered William that he made an appeal to the Synod and later to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church but was turned down all the way. In later years the ban against such a marriage was reversed, but not in William's lifetime.

"Even though William and Hannah continued to attend and contribute to the church, they were never again received into membership. All of this consternation did not keep William and Hannah from producing a second family of five children, of whom my grandfather, John Stockton Vance, was the fourth.

"The greatest furor centered in the church itself, as families formed their own opinions of the ruling, and it made very difficult the pastorate of the Rev. Thomas Marquis, a 'home town boy' who with his wife, Jane, had been converted much earlier at a service in Vance's Fort.

"And what did the Pattersons think of all this? They accepted the decision of the church elders and refused to let daughter Hannah return to her former home. On a visit to Mary Patterson, the last of the Pattersons, at the old homestead about 1955, she told me that Hannah's saddle was still hanging in the barn and that William Patterson had let Hannah out of his will, but said if Hannah was ever in need the family was to help her. This, Mary said, was a family joke, for the Vances were much more affluent than the Pattersons.

"So ends the story of William and Hannah. Descendants have scattered the length and breadth of

the United States. But it remained for the Pattersons to be true to their faith and their church to the end. The will of Mary Patterson contained a bequest of \$50,000 to the Cross Creek Church. This, I am sure, was money that had been saved through generations of the Pattersons, earned by hard work on their farm and at the mill, and it went at last to their church where they most likely would have wanted it to go."

In addition to the story as told above by Edna Foster Chambers, the late A.D. White shared his own version as to the ending of the tale.

"Ever believing themselves to be right in their relationship, they never expressed any remorse or repentance, and so they were never again admitted to take communion in the church. But they were faithful in attendance at public worship and continued so all the rest of their lives. But when communion time came, they had to 'sit apart' from the communing congregation.

"Mr. Vance carried his 'case' in this matter to all the higher courts of the church, but the judgment of the Session of the Cross Creek Church was never reversed. But while that was the official attitude of the Presbyterian Church in 1820, this writer does not consider it a sacrilege to state that the Lord of All Life seemed to bless the marriage of William and Hannah Patterson Vance, since they were permitted to live together for almost 38 years, until Mr. Vance's death on April 18, 1856, when he was 81 years of age. Hannah Patterson Vance lived 23 years after the death of her husband, until May 12, 1879, when she died at the age of 92 years. On the day of her funeral, which it was said was the largest in the Cross Creek Country within the memory of the oldest inhabitant, the funeral procession stretched from the Vance Farm to Cross Creek Graveyard, a distance of nearly two miles."

And whatever happened to Hannah's side-saddle of which she was never allowed to return? Versions of the story vary. It was left "hanging in the barn," or "hanging in the attic of the Old Stone House." Regardless of where it was left "hanging," it must have been a bitter punishment for Hannah, as a Patterson woman's side-saddle was always a part of her dowry when she married, a portion of her possessions that she would carry to her husband on what should have been the happiest occasion in her life.

The "sale bill" published in the newspapers when Mary L. Patterson finally sold the farm in 1955 lists among the ancient relics "a saddle." Was this the same saddle? A.D. White said it was! A little calculation reveals that it must have been hanging there 137 years!

Names, dates and events mentioned in this story are solely for the enjoyment of readers. They are as accurate as possible, but should not be used for documentation.

Part XXIII

It was called the "Patterson Wheel."

It rested in the barnyard of the old Patterson farm for many years, until it deteriorated into nothingness.

Prior to this, it was a primitive fixture in the big barn, where it served just as primitive a purpose as a threshing machine.

Built by James Murdoch, a wheelwright, probably around 1830, it was no doubt installed in the barn when it was built in 1831.

For many years prior to its tragic demise, passersby on Patterson Road mourned its rotting condition but were unable to save this mechanical threshing machine, one of the first that was ever made in America.

The device consisted of a white oak shaft about 20 feet long.

It rose from the middle of the barn, with one end set on a pin on the barn floor, the other end fastened to the barn rafters. A wooden cogged wheel circled the pole near the roof of the barn.

The pole was turned by horses hitched to beams inserted through slots in the bottom of the pole.

The cogs on the large wheel turned a smaller shaft which turned a smaller wheel.

A belt on the smaller wheel turned a drum.

The drum, set with spikes, threshed the wheat as it was fed beneath it, and the grain fell through a latticework on the barn floor, while the chaff was forked out of the high door.

Not a nail was used in building the thresher, and the main shaft had 16 sides, all smoothly hewn.

Murdoch was the great-grandfather of Jane Murdoch Fulcher and Nancy Murdoch Smith, both of West Middletown.

James Murdoch came from



THE OLD THRESHER in the Patterson barn was an antique piece of farm equipment. It was known as the Patterson Wheel, and turned easily and silently to thresh the grain. It deteriorated after the farm was no longer in the Patterson name, about 1955. Efforts by the county commissioners to save the wheel at that time were in vain.

the east into probably the Canonsburg area, before arriving on what later became the Murdoch farm in 1822.

This was part of the Dordridge tract and is now occupied by Dale and Marcie Tudor.

The Tudors, with their son, Nigel, have named their home Weatherbury Farms.

The description of the wheel was given by writer Leonard Thompson in an article written in the Sunday edition on Feb. 19, 1956.

The original photo was taken by Stewart Love.

In addition to the description of the Patterson Wheel, Thompson tells of a corn sheller that was made and used by early owners of the home to shell corn for the chickens on the farm.

It consisted of a crank handle and a concave wooden drum set with nails.

Also, Thompson wrote, a nearby building was used for both a spring house and a smoke house, and it appeared to have been built at about the same time as the main home. In the lower part of the building a single piece of stone about 10 feet long had been cut to form the water trough for cooling containers of milk.

The upper part of the stone structure served as the smoke house where meat was cured.

The fireplace was in the lower side of the little building.

These three buildings — home, barn and spring house — made up the framework of life for the first dwellers at Oddity.

The basement hearthstone was their factory where the spinning wheel hummed.

Pittsburgh was only a struggling village; Chicago was prairie; and the Washington County Pattersons called on

the land itself to yield their needs. Thus it was in 1794 in the area where Avella would later be built.

The old stone house on the Patterson homestead was 30-by-40-feet in size, made of native rough-hewn stone, and contained 17 rooms.

None of the rooms had closets or cupboards. But pegs for clothing lined the bedroom walls.

Much life and living took place at the old stone house. Usually a great event was a wedding.

One of these took place on Sept. 14, 1918, between Rosanna Patterson and Henry McElroy. Rosanna was born Dec. 31, 1772.

Simple calculation shows that Rosanna was 44 years old when she was married. Mr. McElroy, however, was but 22.

Mary L. Patterson, in her book, says that "in order to make a more effective entrance to that room, they went down the hall and in through another room, making many turns."

Her husband left her, and after the death of General Thomas Patterson's wife, she returned to the stone house and kept house for her brother.

Rosanna Patterson McElroy died Feb. 9, 1849, and is buried in the old graveyard at Cross Creek Village.

As to the fate of the old stone house — James Drain of Ligonier bought the stone and moved it to Ligonier, where he erected it into a home, an antique shop and part of a wall.

Mary L. Patterson, the last of the family, and the last to live in the house, sold it in 1955.

She died 10 years later in 1965.

The house was torn down about 1970.

Avella Area and the Patterson Connection The Enterprise-August 2, 1995 Edition

Fort Vance Historical Society

By Kathryn Campbell Slasor
for The Record-Enterprise

Part XXIV

James Patterson, born 1708 in County Antrim, Ireland, was the first American ancestor of the Cross Creek Country Pattersons.

He had left his homeland on a sour note with his father, who prevented him from marrying the young lady of his choice. On his emigration to this country, he never reached any farther west than Lancaster County, where he settled and raised the family that was to change the course of history in the Cross Creek corner of Washington County.

One of his 10 children was a son, William, who ventured farther west and eventually built a great stone house on the waters of Cross Creek. Here generations of Pattersons were born, lived, married and died. The house remained until about 1970, nearly 200 years before it was removed to Ligonier and partially rebuilt.

One of William's 15 children was Thomas, who exhibited much pioneer spirit when he remained on the "oddy" tract during the winter when his father returned east for the rest of the family. Thomas had a leaning toward milling, an important industry in early days. He built a grist and flour mill which he powered from two forks of Cross Creek, in an area which carries the Patterson name today.

The wheels at Pattersons

Mills turned for a century or more, before the sounds of which sadly passed into oblivion.

With another generation came another William, the first of 12 children of Thomas and Elizabeth Findley Patterson. This William took charge of a "fulling" mill built by him and his father, Thomas. Fulling was a step in the making of cloth, similar to spinning and weaving. William married Margaret Lyle, daughter of Aaron Lyle, of a prominent family of the Cross Creek area.

The family of William and Margaret Lyle Patterson consisted of 10 children, the oldest of whom was a son, Lysander. Born on his father's farm in Cross Creek Township, Lysander attended the English department of Washington College, and took private lessons from renowned mathematician, Professor John Armstrong, who at that time was teaching in Franklin College, New Athens, Ohio.

After leaving school, Lysander returned to his father's farm, near Pattersons Mills, and there he spent a large part of his life, engaged in farming and surveying. He was appointed by the courts of Washington and Beaver counties to survey and mark the line between them, and also by Beaver and Lawrence counties to mark their line.

When a young man, he was commissioned captain of a Company of State Militia called the "Independent Grays," an office he held while the organization was in existence.

On March 27, 1845, he mar-



THE CROSS CREEK FARM of Capt. Lysander Patterson, as sketched in Caldwell Atlas in 1876. Nothing remains today of the farm.

ried Elizabeth M. Wallace of Allegheny County, by whom he had 10 children. He and his wife reached their golden wedding day without having a death to break the family circle. This was a record that is equalled by very few families.

Lysander had spent the summer of 1841 in what was then

the far West-Wisconsin and Iowa-surveying land. He returned and became interested in blooded stock, particularly fine wool sheep, Devon cattle and Chester White hogs. He played a large part in the organization of the Burgettstown Fair.

Later his work as surveyor

demanding all his time and he left the farm and moved to Washington. He lost his sight from cataracts and returned to Pattersons Mills. After an oper-

ation which restored his sight, he moved to Imperial. Lysander Patterson died Feb. 13, 1909.

A year after the marriage of Lysander Patterson to Elizabeth McKee Wallace, a son, David Wallace Patterson, the first of their 10 children, was born. The story of David Wallace Patterson was told earlier in this Patterson series.

David Wallace was the school teacher who was in his 50th year of teaching when he drowned in the high waters of Cross Creek, near the old Wells mill, Oct. 16, 1919.

The children of David Wallace Patterson were Alva, who attended Cross Creek Academy and who chose to remain at home to care for her mother; Lester, who worked in the capacity of an engineer in various locations, passing away in 1951; Lena, who was born in the old fulling mill building built by her great-great-grandfather in 1802; and Effie, who died in 1906 at the age of 17. Lena married Harry McConnell in 1916, and spent many years as a teacher.

None of the children of David Wallace Patterson had any issue. This particular branch of the family ended with these four, who made up the sixth generation of Pattersons down the line from the love-sick youngster, Jamie, who, in 1728, defied his father and left Ireland for America to find a home in a strange land.

Avella Area and the Patterson Family Connection The Enterprise-August 9, 1995 Edition

Fort Vance Historical Society

By Kathryn Campbell Siasor
for The Record-Enterprise

Part XXV

At least 501 members of the family are mentioned by Mary L. Patterson in her book, "A History of the Patterson Family of Cross Creek Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania," compiled in 1924. Assisting and compiling the "Family of James Patterson," was Thomas M. Johnson.

Both histories are intertwined under one cover. Books are no longer available, due to a fire many years ago. However, those few treasured copies are indispensable when referring to any of the Pattersons and their connections.

The Pattersons, as did most families of the past, named their children for others in the family. This practice makes for much difficulty in tracing genealogy. Eighteen males named James are spoken of in Mary's book. Each held a place on the family tree.

The next three articles in this series will concern James Patterson, second son of Thomas (builder of Pattersons Mill) and grandson of William (builder of the great stone house,) and his immediate family.

James Patterson was born April 24, 1798. The head of this branch of the Patterson family was unlike his forebears as he did not turn to politics at any time during his life, but was always a staunch Democrat. He was, however, a born



THE JAMES PATTERSON HOUSE as it was restored. Although it is not certain whether the house originally was built with columns, as shown, a double porch as shown did exist.

financier. Wherever he went he would "start a store." It has been said that if he stayed all night in a place he would have a store started by morning.

His reputation for truth and honesty was such that he soon built up a paying business wherever he located. The store he built near the Patterson homestead was one of the best in the northwestern end of Washington County. Old account books show all manner of dry goods, groceries, hardware, boots, notions, candies, tobacco, cigars and others. Goods were freighted from the East over the National Pike to Washington, then to Pattersons Mills. It was an exciting time when the wagons arrived loaded with store goods.

James Patterson also dealt in real estate, buying and selling farms, and helping many poor couples to acquire homes. He settled many estates, and there are receipts among his papers dating back to the Revolutionary War.

In 1838, James Patterson built a brick home high on a hillside to the rear of what is today known as Cedar Grove. It was here that he and his wife, Eliza, raised their 10 children. The house has had a number of owners over the past decades, and has seen much of life and living. Prior to being bought in 1972 by Carrie and the late Emanuel Paris, it was owned by the Jacob Mueller family, who moved there in 1940.

James Patterson was an

active member of the Cross Creek Presbyterian Church, which he and his family attended. There was found among his effects a number of Bibles, many of them well worn. He conducted a "family altar" each morning and evening in his home.

James Patterson died on Aug. 17, 1861. He was laid to rest in the old graveyard in Cross Creek in the Patterson row of graves, one of which was his grandfather's, William Patterson, a soldier of the Revolutionary War, and who was the

pioneer who early settled in the Cross Creek country.

One of James' sons was Thomas McCall Patterson, who was born in 1827. He married Sarah Jane Barber, and they continued to live in the house. Two of the Patterson sisters also made their home there. Thomas and Sarah had no children, and are buried also in the Cross Creek cemetery.

Mary L. Patterson, in her family history book, wrote of Thomas McCall Patterson:

"The fourth child and first son of James Patterson was very fond of horses. At the age of fourteen, he was given a six-horse team which he drove for many years. He went to Pittsburgh nearly every week to exchange farm produce for other articles.

"After a few years of general farming he sold his farm and became a partner with his father in the mercantile business at Pattersons Mills, and later became associated with his younger brothers. In 1861 after his father's death, he sold his interest in the store and bought the home farm where he resided until his death.

"He was a breeder of fancy Shorthorn cattle and Cheviot sheep of which he had a fine herd of each, together with a full line of farming equipment of the best. In politics he was a Democrat and many township offices were thrust upon him.

Thomas McCall Patterson died April 17, 1896 and is buried in Cross Creek."

Another son of James and Eliza Walker Patterson was Alexander Walker Patterson, who followed what was beginning to be a trend in this family, that of the mercantile business.

Alexander married Jane McGugin Hodgens, and they located in Paris, Pa. Here he conducted a general store and bought wool and other produce from farmers. He later moved to Steubenville, Ohio and entered the wool business which he followed the rest of his life.

For many years he handled the bulk of wool grown in southwestern Pennsylvania, the panhandle of West Virginia and eastern Ohio. He later lived in Chicago and in New York City. He had made a success of the wool business, and left his five sons and daughters well cared for financially.

He was a member of the Presbyterian church in Steubenville and was buried there upon his death in 1888.

In Mary L. Patterson's book, she says, "Being in attendance at the burial, on turning away from the grave, I heard a man remark that there lies the body of as honest a man as ever lived. Certainly this was a fitting tribute to the last sad rites from a friend."

Avella Area and the Patterson Connection The Enterprise-August 16, 1995 Edition

Fort Vance Historical Society

By Kathryn Campbell Siasor
for The Record-Enterprise

Part XXVI

Many old houses in the area where Thomas Patterson built his mill in the late 18th century, were built, or at least lived in, by a Patterson connection. The old mill stood in the inside curve of an acute bend in the road, at a fork of two branches of Cross Creek. The mill is now only a memory, as are several of the old houses, including the great stone house erected in 1794 by William, the first Patterson ancestor to enter the Cross Creek area of Washington County.

One of the houses that remains is located on a small bluff overlooking the bend in the road. This brick home of the Hofrichter family, with its quaint porch and decorative bric-a-brac, was built in 1854. Available records do not state how many Pattersons have lived here. It is the belief that David Wallace Patterson was preparing to move from this house to the one later purchased by the Zatta family, when he drowned in the high waters of Cross Creek in 1919. A Wagner family also lived there but the old house was empty when the Hofrichters arrived from Pittsburgh.

The house was old and unattractive at this time, and Fred and his wife were not too happy with it. Although they reluctantly moved in with their little twin girls, they mentally planned to dismantle it, and build themselves "a nice house" on the property. It was then that the late A.D. White came to the rescue.

On a visit one day, he explained some of the history of the house, telling how fortunate they were to be living there. His story was convincing, and Fred and Beverly began tearing down the lowered ceilings, restoring the beautiful old winding staircase and discovering the fireplaces. They then took on the task of remodeling to today's standards, yet retaining the old look that the builder intended more than a century before.

Fred installed cupboards, closets and bathrooms in some of the tiny cubby-holes, including the one that had secretly hidden the slaves of Civil War days. Today, Fred and Beverly are proud of their one and one-half story home with its original doors and windows, and point to the walls they have lined with pictures of their children and grandchildren.

Another Patterson whose history extended into the present generation was the youngest son of James, the second son of Thomas and a brother of Ambrose, who was killed when he was run over by a train in



ONE OF THE PATTERSON homes near Pattersons Mills, now the home of Fred and Beverly Hofrichter.

Plattsmouth, Neb., in 1886. This was David Findley Patterson, born Oct. 10, 1839, and married Dec. 25, 1862, to Mary Gardner, daughter of David and Nancy Donovan Gardner of Jefferson Township.

He was graduated from Cross Creek Academy and Bethany College, among other institutions of learning. After graduating from law school, he became editor of the Review and Examiner in Washington, then principal of Washington High School.

He afterward became associated with Boyd Crumrine in the practice of law, and soon became one of Pittsburgh's leading attorneys. An operation for a throat malady impaired his speech, but his opinion was much sought after by his associate attorneys.

Mary Gardner had been born on one of the Gardner farms in Jefferson Township on May 26, 1843. Her father, David Gardner, had built the first Greathouse Castle on this farm for her mother, Nancy Donovan Gardner, in 1820. It is believed that when this house had outlived its usefulness, David Patterson replaced it with another, for his wife, Mary Gardner Patterson.

This house has been restored in recent years by present owners Alan and Florence Gould. Colonial-type columns have given the house a stately appearance, and the Goulds are proud of its taste and beauty.

It is not known, however, exactly when Greathouse Castle was dismantled and when the Gould house was built on almost the same foundation.

The deed to the farm indicates that Mary Gardner Patterson acquired the land in 1893. The Goulds believe the present house was built after that year, possibly around 1900-1905. Dates carved in the rafters of the old barn confirm that the barn was in existence during these years.

Usually all outbuildings and barns were built along with the house, as these structures were necessary to life in those days.

Stories have been handed down about the parties and social functions hosted by "Moll



MARY GARDNER PATTERSON died at age 92 on Jan. 2, 1936, on the Gardner farm in Jefferson Township. (Picture courtesy Viola Gillespie.)

Patterson," after the present house was built. Friends and neighbors thronged to the house on Saturday nights to attend a party or a dance. From miles around they came, on foot or by horseback, following a day of hard work. They were never too tired to dance the night away and return home by the light of the moon.

It has been said by those who related the stories of the gala affairs to their descendants, "In those days you were nobody unless you attended Moll Patterson's parties."

Alan Gould's mother, Marian Black Gould, adds another human interest memory to the story of the Patterson house on Eldersville Road. She recalls the "elaborate six-holer" outhouse, the foundation of which may yet be seen in the Gould's backyard. She believes that it was built also at the time the new house was constructed. The builder of the house, the barns and the outhouse is unknown at this time.

Attorney David Patterson died in 1914. Mary Gardner "Moll" Patterson lived until Jan. 2, 1936, when she died at the age of 92. She was the last of a family of 13 children. She was survived by a son, James Alex Patterson, who was then postmaster at Avella, and a former partner in the Cheesebrough and Patterson Lumber Co.

Avella Area and the Patterson Connection The Enterprise-August 23, 1995 Edition

Fort Vance Historical Society

By Kathryn Campbell Siasor
for The Record-Enterprise

Part XXVII

James Patterson, son of Thomas, the builder of Pattersons Mills, was married to Eliza Walker, daughter of Alexander and Betsy Norris Walker, of Jefferson Township. Eliza died Dec. 9, 1886.

James and Eliza were the parents of 10 children, several of whom married into other prominent families of the area—Johnson, Marquis, Richey, Campbell, Wells, and Gardner, among others. The story of Ambrose Patterson, seventh of the 10 children, is of special interest.

Ambrose Patterson was born Feb. 8, 1834. He married Margaret Ann Richey on Aug. 21, 1855. They located on a farm afterward bought by his oldest sister, Elizabeth, who married Russell Thayer Johnson.

In the fall of 1858, he moved to Rock Bluff, in Nebraska territory. He became a great lover of horses, and could see all the defects of a horse at a glance.

Ambrose engaged in the freighting business from points on the Missouri River to Pike's Peak, Salt Lake and Santa Fe.

After the completion of the Union Pacific Railroad he lived a short time in Philadelphia and in Norfolk. He soon returned to the West and located at Plattsmouth, Neb., where he conducted a livery and sales stable until the time of his death.

On Oct. 15, 1886, the Daily Journal, of Plattsmouth, Neb., carried a lengthy story of the death of Ambrose Patterson. Headlines read, "Ambrose Patterson, a Pioneer of Plattsmouth Fatally Mangled by the Cars." The story reads in part:

"The city was thrown into a state of consternation at 7:30 last evening by the report that Ambrose Patterson, the well known liveryman, had been run over by the cars. Crowds of people surged to and fro. Engine 22 was pushing a train down the river track that runs past the east side of the depot. There were twenty-four cars in the train, and others down the track further. A stop was made by the depot to allow the train men to ascertain just how close they were to the other cars, so they could approach them cautiously.

"After the train, engine and all, had backed down past the depot, Clif. Shepherd, who had been walking with some ladies, discovered the body of a man



THE SPRINGHOUSE ON the James Patterson farm, owned later by Jacob Mueller and at present by Carrie Paris, is just above the stone wall that extends from the lower side of the house. The wagon shed is in the upper right of the picture. Both were probably built around 1838 when the house was built, and restored in later years. The stone wall is also believed to have been built around the same time.

lying upon the track, near where the wagon road crosses the track. The wheels had passed over both legs at the knees, crushing them into shapelessness. It was also found that the wheels had passed across the left hand, cutting away about half of it.

"The mangled body was carried into the depot, and the doors locked against the surging crowd, climbing over each other to peer through the windows at the ghastly spectacle within. Mr. Patterson was in a state of semi-consciousness, suffering the most intense agony. The left leg had

been completely severed at the knee, the severed portion lay near by with the boot still on. He was carried to his home on Vine Street. Consciousness had faded before the home was reached and at 11:40 death claimed its victim.

"Just how the deceased came to be thrown beneath the cars is not known. Those who knew him said he had been looking for a car of stone, for which he had telegraphed to Cedar Creek yesterday, to be used in his new barn. He had been in the habit of going down to the depot to examine the cars to see if any stone had come in for him. In looking for it, he had fallen under the cars. Neither is it known how many cars passed over him, or if any did other than the engine.

"Deceased was one of Nebraska's pioneer settlers, and was a prominent business man in the early history of Cass county. Born in Washington County, Pa., he removed to Nebraska in 1858, being then 24 years of age. He was 52 years of age at the time of his death. He was known as a man of honor, integrity and industry. He was a man who would wrong no one so quickly as himself. His death is the occasion of genuine sorrow for all who knew him."

The Daily Journal three days later carried the following:

"The funeral of the late Ambrose Patterson occurred at 1 o'clock this afternoon from the family residence on Vine street. Before the hour arrived the house and grounds were filled with sympathizing friends and neighbors who held in high esteem the deceased. The service was most impressive and affecting.

"The remains lay in a rich and massive casket in the sitting room, with the panel removed to permit those who wished to take a last look at the face of the deceased. The casket was fairly covered o'er with rare and fragrant flowers.

"The three or four hundred people present passed through the room. The casket was borne to the hearse and the solemn procession formed and moved toward the cemetery. Rev. Baird's carriage led the way, followed by a light wagon carrying pall bearers, then came the hearse followed by the immediate family.

"Six other carriages containing brothers and cousins came next, followed by some fifty-five or sixty other vehicles, each with its load of sorrow-stricken friends."

Avella Area and the Patterson Connection The Enterprise-August 30, 1995 Edition

Fort Vance Historical Society

By Kathryn Campbell Siasor
for The Record-Enterprise

Part XXVIII

Mary L. Patterson, in her compilation of the family history in 1924, summarizes some of the characteristics of the family members.

"With such a long family line, running through so many generations with all the various branches and many members in each, we note with surprise the absence of professional men. They did not preach the gospel; they lived it. They did not read law to settle their neighbor's quarrels; they made just laws. They did not become doctors to cure bodily ills; they lived well and strong.

"They were farmers, men of the land. They first sought out good lands, then tilled and improved them, and their children and grandchildren followed in the footsteps of their ancestors. Almost without exception we find them on farms, raising grain to feed the hungry, and sheep for wool to clothe the needy. Two things only called them from the land, and when these two great needs were answered, they came back to their country homes.

"Of these two great calls, the first was "Patriotism," service to their country in time of war; and the second, no less patriotic, service in time of peace, to make wise and just laws for the government of the country."

In summarizing this great pioneer family that early left the Cross Creek Country for service farther abroad, it seems necessary to mention a few members of the various generations and their accomplishments.

Mary Amanda Patterson was born in 1825. She married Richard W. Wells, and they added to their original tract totalling about 300 acres. A grower of fine wool sheep, he received a diploma for raising the highest grade of fine wool in the county. They are buried in the new cemetery in Cross Creek.



ONLY THE PIERS remain where the railroad once crossed near Pattersons Mills. A flood in 1912 swelled through Cross Creek Valley destroying most of the remaining railroad .

Emily Ann Patterson was born in 1841, and was a sister of Mary Amanda. She met her husband, Samuel Glenn Latta, in Nebraska, where they settled on a quarter section and followed farming. They later located on the line of the Missouri Pacific Railroad, platted their land and sold lots. They donated ground for a school and a church. The result is the town of Murray, Neb. Through the couple's influence, the town was named after the first minister of that church.

Samuel Patterson was born in 1800 on what became known as the "Mill Property," in Cross Creek Township. He took charge of the mill for several years, but became more interested in agriculture. They moved into the "Old Stone House" and made some repairs. He married Anne McClave, of Jefferson County, Ohio. He bought land in Bedford County, Va., settling part of his family there, while still retaining his land interests here. He made many trips, about 300 miles,

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across the mountains between the Pattersons Mills in Virginia and the Pattersons Mills in the Cross Creek Valley. He and his wife are buried near their old home in Virginia.

Thomas Patterson, child of Samuel, was born in 1824. He also went to Bedford County, Va., to the Pattersons Mills. When the Civil War came, he was ordered to remain at home and operate his mills for the benefit of the surrounding community and the Confederate Army. He was made captain of the militia, where he was later ordered to the front. He was sent to Point Lookout, an officers' camp for Confederate prisoners, where he was held for several months. While there, he wrote music to a song, "Never Forget the Dear Ones," and a fellow prisoner wrote the words. He had married Pheby J. Lawton, later, Virginia Hopkins.

Findley Patterson was born at Pattersons Mills in 1808. He studied surveying in Philadelphia. He settled on his grandfather's land in Armstrong County and built a sawmill and a flour mill. He was later elected county commissioner and then to the state Senate. He represented Armstrong County in the legislature. He was married to Martha Bingham.

Joseph D. Patterson was born in 1836. Most of his early life was spent at the "Old Stone House" with his uncle, later traveling west to teach and survey. He married Clara Thompson. In 1867 he moved to Brazil, South America to farm. His wife and all but one of his children died from climactic causes and were buried in Brazil. He then married Maria de Miranda and had several more children. He moved back to Nebraska and taught for many years, being founder of Naomi Institute at Rock Bluff, and also county superintendent of Sarpy County.

Thomas Patterson, born in 1806, was married to Elizabeth Howard Wells. He also moved to Nebraska, where he died in 1869. Thomas and Elizabeth were the parents of 20 children.

Silas C. Patterson was born in 1846 in the "Old Stone House" but was soon taken to Virginia.

After his father's death, he was brought back to the old home where he was cared for by his brother, Robert M. Patterson. When young, he went to Nebraska and joined a group who were hauling freight across the Plains with ox teams to the Mormon settlement at Salt Lake City. Among the freight was a threshing machine, which he helped to operate before he continued his journey to California. Later he moved to Texas where he had a corn and cotton plantation. He was also made a state road commissioner. His wife was Katherine A. Irwin. He died in Nebraska in 1918.

Caroline Patterson was born in 1829. She attended Washington Female Seminary prior to her marriage to William McMillen Lee. They moved to Holidays Cove where they became involved in the work of the Presbyterian church. Two of their daughters, Jane Varenia and Caroline Virginia, went to China as missionaries where they taught for many years. Jane became principal of the Girls' School while Caroline taught at the Boys' School, both near Shanghai.

Robert M. Patterson was born in 1829 in the "Old Stone House" where he lived his entire life. He was married to Lydia A. McClave of Jefferson County, Ohio. There were eight children of whom Mary L. Patterson, author of the family history book, was one and the last of her immediate family. Three died very young, leaving Frank, Charlie, Annie Luella and Rachel Ellen, as well as Mary, all of whom spent their entire lives in the "Old Stone House." Mary, in later years, when the others were gone, moved to Washington.

The farm was sold in 1955 when Mary left it, but it stood until after her death in 1965. It was torn down about 1970, moved to Ligonier and the stones were used to build another house and a wall.

The saga of the Pattersons could go on. Seventy years have passed since Mary compiled the history of the family. Seventy years of Pattersons have come and gone since then.

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