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***The Vance Family
Association***

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Newcom House was one of the historic buildings in Carillon Park
on the 2015 VFA Reunion Tour in Dayton, Ohio

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We are always looking for articles and genealogical information for the newsletter from our membership. Please include supporting information for your family histories and trees. Send to: newsletter@vancefamilyassociation.org. Submit text in Microsoft Word and pictures in jpg format and transmit via electronic mail. For hard copies, send to: VFA, 2806 Bodega Bay Place, Davis, CA 95616-2966.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Our thanks to following VFA members who have generously sponsored one of our repository libraries for the coming year:

- Allen County Library—Bill J. Allen
- Clayton Library for Genealogical Research—Fran Ellsworth
- Dallas Public Library—K. Ron Vance
- Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County—Philip R Vance
- Uniontown Public Library—Bruce V. Vance
- Western Pennsylvania Genealogical Society Library—Charles T. Vance
- Birmingham Public Library—Judith Lowery
- Ellen Payne Odom Genealogical Library—Judith Lowery

- Mid-Continent Public Library—Independence, Missouri
- Denver Public Library—Denver, Colorado
- Handley Region Library—Winchester, Virginia

Now is a great time for individual members to sponsor one of these libraries for the coming year to help defray the cost of sending them the newsletter for the public’s use. The cost to sponsor one of these libraries is \$20.00 per year, the same as a hard copy membership. If you wish to sponsor a library please contact Mary Vance, VFA Membership Manager at membership@vancefamilyassociation.org

President's Letter

Greetings! I hope everyone is enjoying their summer travels and vacations. We had a very nice VFA reunion in Dayton Ohio in July (see story). At our business meeting, we confirmed the installation of officers—there are no changes from last term. We reviewed the 2014 Treasurer's Report and it was unanimously approved. I encourage anyone who wants to participate in the workings of the VFA to volunteer now. We have lots to do and our membership is growing each year.

Business: We discussed the need for an editor and the proposal to compensate this position. There were no objections to the proposal. Please see the help-wanted notice in this edition of the newsletter. We are also considering compensating writers who prepare genealogical articles for the newsletter. The proposal is to split the traditional historian's responsibilities into two activities, research and writing. We have lots of people doing research, but very few write up their work. It is possible to hire people who like to write to prepare articles for the newsletter. For example, we have considerable information on an Ezekial Vance (bc. 1745) who married Elinor Curry, their sons were William (b. 1764) and Ezekial Jr. (b. 1768). The research was done by Carolyn Shearer and Debora Bowman. This would make a good story. Let me know if you are interested.

Cousins Project: Our first attempts to bring descendants of common ancestors together had only limited success. A second way to do this is to let our pedigree database manager know you are interested in corresponding with known cousins who are active VFA members. Liz Heal can then send them your e-mail address and they can respond to you if interested. This helps ensure privacy.

Contact Liz at pedigrees@vancefamilyassociation.org.

Historians Archives Project: After eight full days of scanning our historians' files, we are finished. Now the process begins of posting them on the members-only pages of our website. Like the VFA newsletters, these files must have addresses and phone numbers redacted, which means each page must be reviewed. There are several thousand pages to review, so it will take at least a year to get these posted. This information will be most interesting to those who are researching their ancestors. There are family trees, court records (deeds, wills, probates), military service records, maps, church records, cemeteries, and obituaries. We are most grateful to former VFA Historian Mary Vance Norfleet for organizing these files years ago. We will also have some Vance information based on the states and counties where they lived.

New Projects: Our Secretary and Membership Manager Mary Banks Vance has developed a very large Vance Family Tree using the Ancestry.com website. We expect to have this linked to our members-only pages so that active members can have another resource for Vance family genealogy. As a guest, you will have the ability to comment on and improve or correct information in the tree, or as an historian, to add your line to the tree directly.

Bill Vance

VFA 2015 Reunion in Dayton, Ohio

Contributed by Bill Vance

Our biennial reunion in Dayton, Ohio was a little different this year because it was combined with a four-day workshop for digitizing our historians' files and records. We stayed and worked at the Holiday Inn in Fairborn-Dayton. Dayton was the home of Orville and Wilbur Wright who were the first to develop sustained powered flight. We visited one of their four bicycle shops. This one they operated from 1895–1897. It was beautifully restored and had lots of history on their bicycle business, which supported their research on flying machines. Next door was the Dayton Aviation Heritage Museum operated by the National Park Service. Absolutely first class! There was a movie theater with audio animatronics of some of Dayton's more famous persons, including Orville and Wilbur. Their story of powered flight at Kitty Hawk, NC was impressive. The items on display also told an excellent story of the development of aviation in Dayton.



Vice President Neal B. Vance (L) and President Bill Vance (R) at the Dayton Aviation Heritage Museum. In the background is a Wright Flyer glider. (Photo by K. Ron Vance).

After lunch at the Carillon Brewing Company, we walked to Carillon Historical Park, another five-star attraction in Dayton. This is an outdoor museum of turn-of-the-(last)-century technology, trains, automobiles, gas station, auto repair shop, school house, grist mill, historical homes, a restored 1800s log home, a restored

1796 tavern that belonged to Col. George Newcom (b. 1771) and, of course, one of the Wright brothers' airplanes (the original 1905 Wright Flyer III, restored about 1945).



William Huss, Judith Lowery and Mary B. Vance
2015 VFA Reunion, Dayton, OH. (Photo BV)

The weather on Sunday was perfect for a stroll in this beautiful outdoor park. Many thanks to Neal Vance for planning and arranging for these trips, events and venues.

We held our banquet at the Holiday Inn. The food was good and the company even better. Mary B. Vance presented her ideas for a Vance Family Tree that

would be accessible on our website. This tree could easily become a very popular attraction to our website because it allows members to comment on, or to contribute to the tree through Mary. We also discussed potential meeting sites for 2017. The two suggestions were Salt Lake City, UT and Asheville, NC. Both have great attractions—the LDS genealogy libraries and the home of Zebulon B. Vance. If you are familiar with either location or would like to contribute other ideas for venues for the 2017 VFA reunion, please let us know.

Sunday was another day at the museum, one of the largest in the world, the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Aircraft, both powered and lighter-than-air, from the earliest days to the present, are on display in three separate hangers. One simply cannot see everything in one day, but we tried. Our past editor, Bill Coup, showed us the Tan Son Nut Air Base Memorial in the gardens adjacent to the museum. Bill and his buddies helped to get the memorial installed at Wright-Patterson. The 2015 reunion and business meeting came to a close on a great afternoon after two history-filled days. I hope all of you can visit these museums and historical buildings in the future.



Elizabeth "Liz" Heal, Ron Vance and Bill Coup at
the banquet for the 2015 VFA Reunion. (Photo BV)

Help Wanted Editor, Historians and Writers

The VFA needs an editor for its quarterly newsletter. We are primarily looking for a person who can do layouts. This entails inserting pictures and formatting pages and text so they are easily readable, placing headers and footers on content pages, and creating or finding short articles, notes, commentaries of general interest that can be used as “fillers” between major articles. This may require some transcribing or retyping of existing material. The editor will work with authors to ensure their work is correctly presented. Please see our recent newsletters for desired format. There is no expectation for the editor to create content. It is expected that the editor will receive contributed articles from the membership or historians. Most articles are submitted to the editor in Microsoft Word or in a portable document file (pdf). The final version of the newsletter is subject to approval by the president or his/her designee. Compensation will depend on the size and/or difficulty of a specific newsletter, but will range between \$150 and \$200 per edition. The final work product will be an electronic file with a printable newsletter. The editor is not responsible for distribution of the newsletter.

The VFA also needs historians who like to do genealogical research. Specifically, develop family trees and collect family histories or biographies. This can include obituaries, wills, deeds, military service, church records, and court records. The goal is to collect enough information which can be used by another person to write a family history article for the VFA newsletter. The research historian would work with the writer to develop the article. The research historian will have access to all relevant VFA genealogical files and records. It is hoped the research function could be performed by volunteers.

Finally, the VFA needs writers who can use the research done by others to develop a family history story for the newsletter. This would involve reviewing the material that has been collected, determining what else would be helpful, placing an “information wanted” ad in the newsletter or on the public forums on the Internet, and developing an outline for the article. The outline would be used to negotiate a fee for writing the article. One form of compensation could be extending your subscription to the newsletter for a number of years, or money, or some combination of both. Upon payment, the author(s) will release a limited copyright to the VFA to publish the article. The primary researcher(s) should be acknowledged or included in authorship.

Please contact any of the past or current people who have performed these functions if you would like more detail on what is involved (see e-mail addresses on the backside of the front page of the newsletters). Please contact Bill Vance at president@vancefamilyassociation.org if you are interested in any of these positions. Thank you for your interest.

Maj. William Vance, Parents, Children and the Marquis Family

Contributed by William A. Vance, Lt. Col. USAFR (ret) © 2015

(Note: Bolded names appear in the story that follows.)

- I. David Vance Sr.
 - A. David Vance Jr. (b. ca 1710, d. 1768) m. 1st to Jenet Colville
 1. **David Vance** (b. __, d. 19 Dec 1816 OH) m. **Sarah Quimby**
 2. **Ann Vance** (b. 1751, d. 17 Apr 1788) m. **Joseph Vance** (b. 1750 d. 1832)
 3. Mary Vance (b. 15 Mar 1752, d. 1806 TN) m. 15 Aug 1775 to Andrew Greer Sr.
 4. **Joseph Colville Vance** (b. 1759, d. 1809) m. in 1781 to **Sarah Wilson**
 5. Martha Vance (b. __, d. 1823-4 PA) m. to Solomon Vail
 6. Jannet Vance (b. __, d. 1842 OH) m. in 1777 to Miles Wilson
 7. John (b. __, d. ca 1804 in Frederick Co., VA)
 - B. James Vance (b. ca 1715, d. 1751) Elizabeth Gamble Glass. They had five children.
 - C. **Maj. William Vance** (b. 1718, d. 1788) m. ca 1749 to Mary Colville
 1. **David Vance** (b. __, d. 1819). Moved from Frederick Co., VA to Westmoreland Co., PA, to Belmont Co., OH and died in Lawrenceburg, Dearborn Co., IN. On 16 Oct 1761 married to Margaret Colville.
 2. **Joseph Vance** (b. 1750, d. 6 May 1832). Moved from Frederick Co., VA to Washington Co., PA where he died. Married 1st ca 1773-74 to his cousin **Ann Vance** (b. 1751, d. 17 Apr 1788), daughter of David Vance and Jennet Colville.
 - a. William m. 1st to Rachel Patterson; m. 2nd Hannah Patterson
 - b. Joseph
 - c. John, Col. in War of 1812, bc. 1779, d. 24 Nov 1841
 - d. Elizabeth m. William Wylie
 - e. Mary m. Robert Lee
 - f. Janet or Jeanette m. James Stevenson
 - m. 2nd to Anna Cooke (bc. 1754, d. 27 Feb 1819)
 - m. 3rd to Mary Moore (b. 1783, d. 2 Jan 1851)
 - g. Anna Mary m. William Brady
 - h. Hannah m. Edward Morgan
 3. **Elizabeth Vance** (b. __, d. bef 1788). Lived and died in Frederick Co., VA.; married in 1765 to William Marquis (bc. 1748-49, d. 15 Jan 1815 VA) son of Thomas Marquis and Mary Colville (see below). They had 10 children. William married again and had 2 more children.
 4. **Mary Vance** (b. __, d. 25 Dec 1829 Washington Co., PA). Lived in Frederick Co., VA, died in Washington Co., PA; m. 1767 to James Marquis (bc. 1750, d. 4 Feb 1805). They had 11 children.

The Marquis Family:

- I. Thomas Marquis (b. __ d. aft 1751) m. Mary Colville (b. __, d. bef 1762), both died in Frederick Co., VA. Their children (not necessarily in birth order):
 - A. **William Marquis** (b. 1749 d. 15 Jan 1815 Frederick Co., VA) m. 1st **Elizabeth Vance** (d. bef 1788); m. 2nd Elizabeth Brown (1754-14 Apr 1844), widow of Edward Hoge, lived in Frederick Co., VA. After William died, she married Henry Prinz.
 - B. **James Marquis** (bc. 1750, d. 4 Feb 1805 in Frederick Co., VA) m. **Mary Vance** (b. __, d. 25 Dec 1829 Washington Co., PA), lived in Frederick Co., VA.
 - C. **Rev. John S. Marquis** (10 Jun 1750, d. 25 Feb 1822, Washington Co., PA) m. Sarah Griffith (b. ca 1756, d. 14 Nov 1838, Washington Co., PA), moved from Frederick Co., VA to Washington Co., PA.
 - D. **Anne Marquis** (b. __, d. aft 1802 in Washington Co., PA) m. 1st **William Park*** (b. __, d. 1782 Washington Co., PA); m. 2nd Isaac Cowen, moved from Frederick Co., VA to Washington Co., PA.
 - E. **Rev. Thomas Marquis** (b. 10 Jun 1753, d. 27 Sep 1827 in Logan Co., OH) m. **Jane Park** (b. ca 1749-50, d. 19 Jan 1841), moved from Frederick Co., VA to Washington Co., PA.
 - F. Sarah Marquis (b. __, d. ca 1823 in Sullivan Co., TN) m. John Vance (b. __, d. bet 1830-1837 in Sullivan Co., TN), moved from Frederick Co., VA to Westmoreland Co., PA then to Sullivan Co., TN.
 - G. Elizabeth Marquis (b. 1754, d. 29 Jul 1829 Frederick Co., VA) m. Daniel McCauley (b. 1743 Ireland, d. 4 Jul 1829 Frederick Co., VA), lived in Frederick Co., VA.

* There is controversy about his name. In a piece called "Commemorative Biographical Record of Washington County, Pennsylvania," published in 1893 (online, p 183), Anne Marquis, sister to the Rev. Thomas Marquis, is reported to have married "Maj. James Park, who was killed by Indians." Anne named the only son of that marriage, possibly born posthumously, James Park (b. 1781, d. 1853 Knox, Ohio). Note that this family name is "Park" and not "Parks." James Park's sister, Jane, married the Rev. Thomas Marquis in Washington County, Pennsylvania.

However, in two other sources, the man killed and scalped by Indians in Washington County Pennsylvania and husband to Anne Marquis is identified as "William Parks." The first source is "The History of Cross Creek Graveyard, Washington County, Pennsylvania" published 1894 (online pp 5,7). This source even describes an instance where his remains were accidentally unearthed and re-identified in 1828. The second source naming William Parks is "The History of Washington County, Pennsylvania" published 1882 (online, p 772).

To confuse matters, another man named Capt. William Parks was killed and scalped by Indians on 30 May 1776 in Powell's Valley, Washington County, *Virginia*. He married 1. Tabitha Ware and 2. Mary Anne Dawson.

Vance's Fort at Cross Creek, Pennsylvania

Contributed by William A. Vance, Lt. Col. USAFR (ret) © 2015

Preface

Have you ever wondered how our ancestors lived on the frontier during the westward expansion of the original thirteen colonies? The indigenous population clung to its lifestyle and defended their homeland against these intruders from the east with tactics that were barbaric and would be considered terrorism today. But, the lure of virtually free land in the Ohio River Valley brought more and more intruders (settlers) whose desire for a plantation or farm of their own overcame their fear of the unknown and unthinkable risks to their lives. The primary concern upon arrival to these lands that bordered the wilderness was defense against the Indians. That defense manifested itself as forts and blockhouses that became a sanctuary during Indian raids and attacks on the settlers. There were at least 37 forts and blockhouses in Washington County, PA alone. One of those was Vance's Fort, erected about 1773-74 by Maj. William Vance and his son Joseph, with the help of many of their neighbors. Nothing is left of Vance's Fort today; it is only a memory. The story that follows tries to describe what the fort may have looked like based on very limited descriptions, a few comments in the literature, and what we know about other forts and blockhouses during the same time period. Through this story, one can gain a better perspective of the courage and tenacity of our ancestors who settled this area 240 years ago.

Settlers Forts

White settlement of the area that would become Washington County, PA began about 1768 [1]. The Indians who inhabited this area claimed white settlement was in violation of a former treaty. "A council was held at Fort Pitt on April 26, 1768, to settle this dispute over the Indians' lands. It was of great importance to the handful of settlers then in Washington County, for upon it their very lives depended. An Indian war at that time would probably have wiped out every white person in what are now Washington, Greene, Fayette and Westmorland Counties. The Indians were angry with white settlers who had crossed the Allegheny Mountains. They asked George Croghan [a deputy Indian agent] to send them back, and in case they refused to go, the Indians expected Governor Penn and the Pennsylvania Assembly to force the intruders to leave this new land. The Pennsylvania authorities attempted to comply with this request, and all settlers were ordered to return back across the mountains, with death as the penalty for all who refused. But the settlers refused to move, and the governor and assembly were unable to enforce the order. This condition of affairs continued until, by the treaty of Fort Stanwix, New York of November 4, 1768, the Iroquois lords of the wilderness consented to the settlement of Washington, Greene, Fayette and Westmoreland

Counties. A rush followed, and by the spring of 1774, when the bloody Indian war known as Dunmore's War swept the western frontier, thousands of settlers had found new homes in what had been an unknown wilderness [1]."

After 1774, the British encouraged the Indians in this area (West Augusta County) to harass and attack the white settlers. With increasing sentiment to break from British rule, loyalists like Governor Lord Dunmore and Dr. John Connolly also encouraged the Indians to attack the settlers. This continued all through the American Revolution and did not end until about 1784. For the safety of their families and their neighbors, the early settlers in the counties of Washington, Westmoreland, Fayette and Greene erected forts and blockhouses, often before they built their homes or cabins. "These [forts] were always built of logs and near a spring, in some central location, so that all of the settlers in the vicinity could reach them in a short time when the alarm was given [2]." In 1824, Joseph Doddridge [3] and later in 1858, James Veech [2] described these early forts. Joseph Doddridge grew up in a fort constructed by his father John. "The forts were erected by the associated effort of settlers in the particular neighborhoods, upon the land of someone whose name was thereupon given to the fort [2];" for example, Vance's, Lindley's, and Wells' forts. "They consisted of greater [one or more acres] or less [than an acre] space of land, enclosed on all sides by high [ten to twelve feet (2,3)] log parapets, or stockades, and cabins adapted to the abode of families [2]." Note here that the cabins are described as being inside the stockade while the settlers' log homes were outside the fort. The number of settlers needing refuge would have determined the size of the fort. E.R. Forrest relates that "in the fall of 1781, . . . between twenty-five and thirty families were there [Vance's Fort] for protection [1]," which he likely read in Doddridge [3]. If true, this would be over 100 men, women and children inside the walls of the fort. Vance's Fort may indeed have been "one of the most noted forts in Washington County [1]." Author C. Hale Sipe described "Lindley's Fort (erected 1773), [as] the strongest fort in Washington and Greene counties, near Prosperity [4]," but there was no other description of the fort itself for comparison to Vance's Fort.

"The settlers would build a stockade by clearing a space of woodland and using the trees, whole or chopped in half, with one end sharpened on each. They would dig a narrow trench around the area, and stand the sharpened logs side-by-side inside it, encircling the perimeter [5]." The cabins often formed one of the walls of the stockade and were separated by a few erect logs of the stockade wall (See Figs. 1 and 2). "All these erections were of rough logs, covered with clap-boards and weight poles, the roofs sloping inwards [2]" (See Fig. 2). We can get an idea of what this may have looked like from pictures of Old Fort Harrod posted on the Internet [6, 7]. The only external openings were a large puncheon [split logs] gate and small portholes among the logs, through which the unerring rifle of the settler could be pointed against the assailants [2]."

In the mid-1800s, James Veech described a “regular-built fort, of the first class, had at its angles [corners] blockhouses [or bastions] and sometimes a ditch to protect a vulnerable part [2].” A blockhouse or bastion extending two feet horizontally beyond the corner walls of the stockade would allow the defenders to fire upon anyone standing next to the stockade walls (See Fig. 3). A minimum of two such blockhouses diagonally opposite each other would allow defensive coverage of the four walls of the stockade and the puncheon gate. “These blockhouses projected a little past the line of the cabins which formed one wall of the stockade (See top of Figs. 1-3), and the upper half was made to extend some two feet further, like the over-jet of a barn, so as to leave an overhanging space. The blockhouses were secured against entrance by heavy log floors, with small holes [in the second floor], for repelling close attacks, or attempts [by attackers] to dig down [under the walls of the first floor], or [to set] fire to the forts [2].” “The stockades, bastions, cabins and blockhouse walls were furnished with portholes at proper heights and distances. The whole of the outside was made completely bullet proof [3].” Bastions in these old wooden forts could simply have been V-shaped protrusions of the walls fitted with portholes.

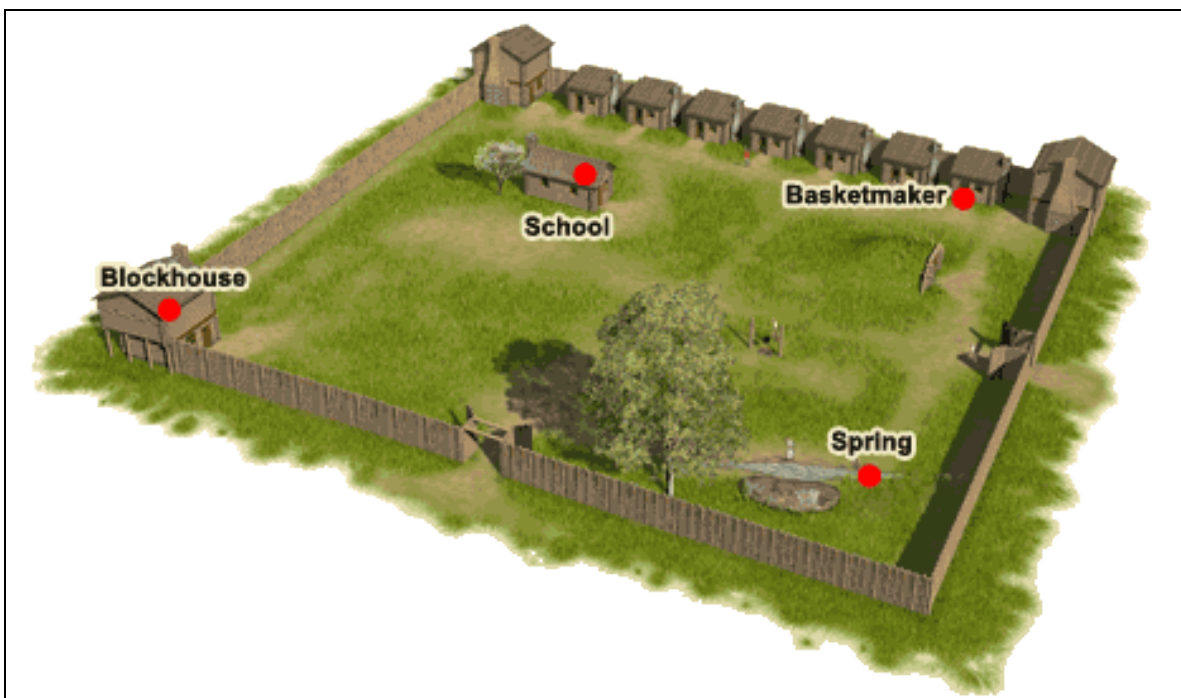


Fig. 1. Artist's concept of Old Fort Harrod in Harrodsburg, Mercer Co., KY. Photo credit: Kentucky Educational Television (KET), with permission.



Fig. 2. Reconstruction of Fort Harrod located at Old Fort Harrod State Park in Harrodsburg, Kentucky. Built in 1775, Fort Harrod was the first permanent American settlement in Kentucky. Note the arrangement of cabins along the left wall with roofs sloping inward and the extension of the second floor of the blockhouse beyond the stockade wall. Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons [6].



Fig. 3. Reconstruction of Apple River Fort originally built in 1832, now a state historic site located in Elizabeth, IL. Note that the posts appear to be set in the ground and that the second floor of the blockhouse has a clear view of the outer wall of the stockade. The portholes, also called loopholes, were for the flintlock rifles used by the settlers. Photo credit: Wikipedia "Stockade."

The cabins inside a settler's Fort were very uncomfortable as they were smaller than their log homes outside the fort. Adding to the discomfort was the duration of time spent in a fort cabin each year. Because the Indians rarely made raids in the winter months when snow was on the ground, the settlers were obliged to remain within the confines of the fort for as much as nine months out of the year. This long period became known as the "Indian Summer."

These raids continued from 1774 to 1783 [3]. We know of at least two families that took refuge and lived in Vance's Fort. One was the Thomas Marquis family, who had come to Cross Creek in 1774 [8,9]. Mrs. Marquis related her story thus: "Not long after our arrival, the Indians fell upon our new settlement, and my poor brother [William] Park was the first to fall, tomahawked and scalped close to our own cabin [home]. Then we fled from the settlement and all the neighbors gathered within Fort Vance while those who had rifles and could use them sallied forth to scout. We were shut up within the log court and the block house walls, grieved, sore disappointed and in terror, and knowing not what to do [9]." Her brother William Park was buried in the old Cross Creek Cemetery in the spring of 1782 [10]. Anecdotally, Mrs. Marquis' husband Rev. Thomas Marquis and his brother John were part of small party of whites in the summer of 1779 that helped William Reynolds pursue a small band of Indians who had attacked Reynold's house (home) during his absence. The Indians had captured and carried off Mrs. Reynolds and her child and then murdered both during their retreat [5]. Reynold's blockhouse was about two miles south of Vance's Fort (See Fig 4). Rev. John S. Marquis and his wife Sarah Griffith were also "obliged to keep [their] family in Vance's Fort, while he tried to clear his farm [8]". John is remembered as the settler who outran the Indians that were killing his hogs. "It was a race for life, and although the Indians were so close to him at the start that he heard their footsteps in pursuit, yet he outran them and arrived in the safety of Vance's Fort [8]."

What do we know about Vance's Fort? Most of the history books [1,3,5,11,12,13] tell us it was a stockade fort built in 1773-74 about one mile north of today's Cross Creek Village and about three miles southwest of today's Burgettstown, the fort being on the headwaters of a branch emptying into Raccoon Creek (See map in Fig. 7) [3]. There is general consensus that the proprietor was Joseph Vance and the fort was built with the help of his neighbors. From Earl R. Forrest's history of Washington County [1] we find "after selecting his land, Joseph Vance built a fort at the head of a small stream which empties into Raccoon Creek, and one mile north of historic Cross Creek Village. This fort, one of the strongest in the Western country, consisted of several cabins and blockhouses [Note: plural is used for both] surrounded by a stockade. A large spring which gushed from the hillside induced Vance to locate there, and this furnished water for the people of the fort."

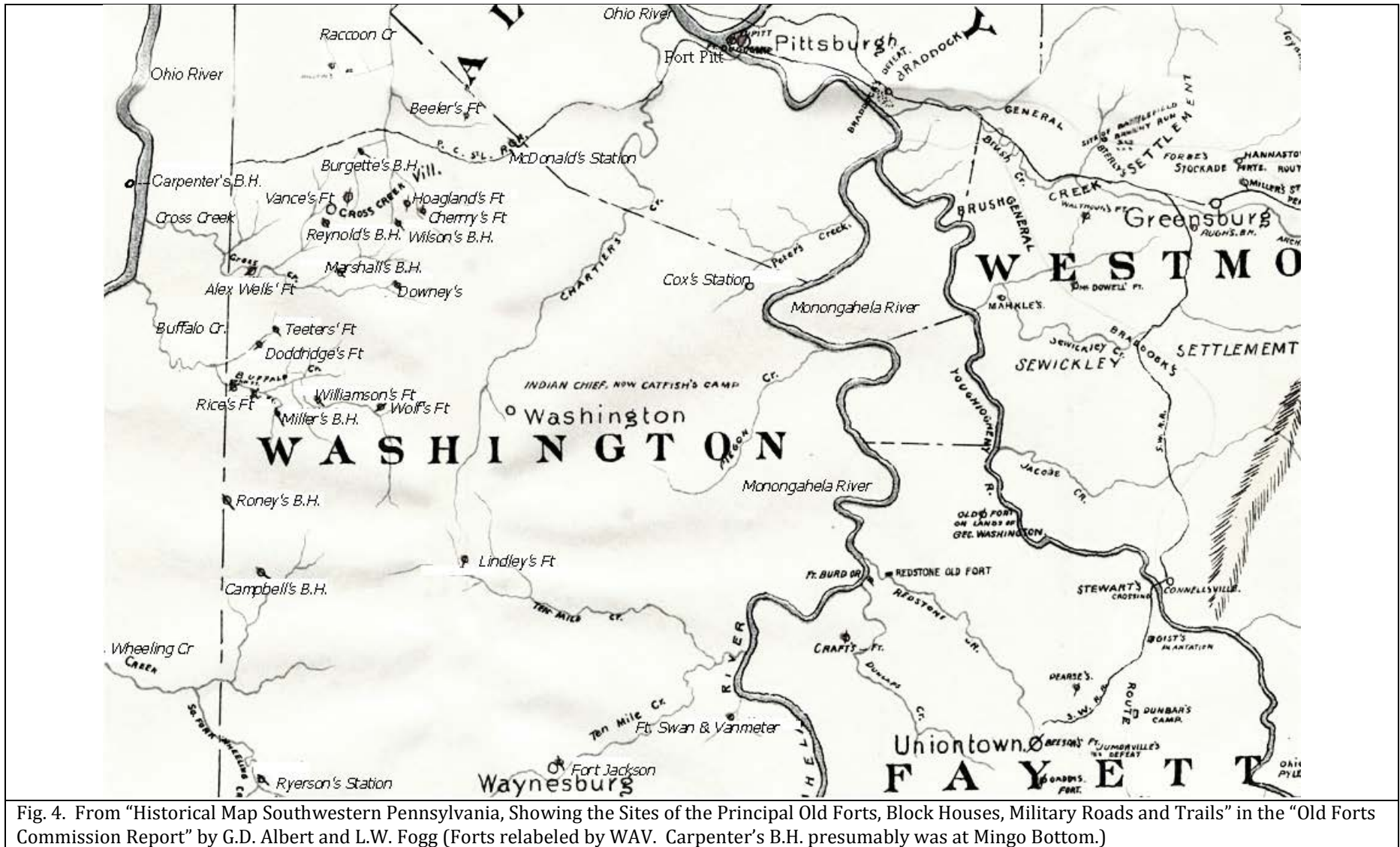


Fig. 4. From "Historical Map Southwestern Pennsylvania, Showing the Sites of the Principal Old Forts, Block Houses, Military Roads and Trails" in the "Old Forts Commission Report" by G.D. Albert and L.W. Fogg (Forts relabeled by WAV. Carpenter's B.H. presumably was at Mingo Bottom.)



Fig. 5. An example of a basic blockhouse would be James Davis' blockhouse built about 1857 on Whidbey Island, state of Washington. It was restored in 1930. Note the loopholes on the second level, the absence of windows, and the use of saplings to fill cracks on the first level. Blockhouses built in the 1700s were not likely to have logs hewn or milled flat as seen on the second level. Photo credit: John Stanton 2009, available under Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike.

E.R. Forrest goes on to say, “[T]he fort stood a short distance from the old Vance homestead, which has been standing for a hundred years [1].” Forrest was probably referring to Joseph Vance’s home and not the Fort. An 1876 map shows the location of the fort, built 102 years earlier, as not being far from Allison Vance’s home (See Fig. 7). In 1830, 56 years after the fort was erected, Joseph moved to a brick home he built next to the Cross Creek Presbyterian Church. This 1830 house is still standing today (2015), but not the fort. Forrest further states in 1925 “A slight depression, which [was] probably the site of the central blockhouse, is the only sign that is left [1]” of the fort. Forrest is one of only two references found that mentions a blockhouse or blockhouses as part of Vance’s Fort. In as much as his book was published in 1925, with very few citations to his sources of information, either written or verbal, it is not certain that blockhouses were part of Vance’s Fort. However, Earl Forrest was an avid researcher of Washington County’s history and visited locations of many of the settler’s forts, including Vance’s Fort, between 1910 to the early 1920s.

H.C. McCook, in his 1898 historical biography of the Latimer family [6], created a very plausible dialogue that he attributed to Mrs. Thomas Marquis after an Indian attack on their settlement: “[A]ll the neighbors gathered within Fort Vance . . . [T]here we were, shut up within the log court and the blockhouse walls.” It is not unreasonable to assume that Vance’s Fort included one or more blockhouses, but it is very difficult to confirm this today.

While Joseph Vance was, and still is widely considered to have been the “proprietor” of the fort, it is not clear that the fort was originally built on his land. A newspaper article written in 1876 by John Stockton, D.D. [14] mentions religious meetings led by pious men in “Vance’s Fort [who were] Major Wm. Vance (on whose farm the fort was), James Campbell, John Stone, Robert Barr, and Wm Wilson.” [Note: The parenthetical comment is part of Stockton’s published article.] A close examination of the plat map for Maj. William Vance’s land, the Oat Field, shows that it was taken out on a warrant dated 4 Mar 1785 for 320 acres, surveyed 11 Oct 1785, but patented to Jos. Vance on 5 Feb 1800 (See Fig. 6). The patent was assigned to Joseph because Maj. William Vance died in June of 1788 and he had willed his land to his sons Joseph and David [33]. It is important to note that Maj. William Vance’s land, the “Oat Field,” and his son Joseph’s land, “Rich Flatts,” were adjacent to one another (See Fig. 6). After Maj. William Vance died, the fort would have been on the land Joseph inherited and would remain in Joseph’s possession for the next 30-some years (the actual date of transfer from Joseph to his son William was not found). It is understandable that the people in this area at that time would not distinguish between William and Joseph as to who was the original proprietor. It should also be taken into account that Rev. John Stockton was born in 1803 and personally knew Joseph Vance Sr.; he speaks to this familiarity in his 1876 article [14]. This friendship extended to Joseph’s son William, who named one of his sons John Stockton Vance (b. 1827 d. 1905). It seems reasonable that Rev. Stockton learned firsthand from Joseph where Vance’s Fort was built.

If we knew today exactly where Fort Vance was built, then an examination of the surveys of Rich Flatts and the Oat Field should show on whose land the fort was built. We know from Forrest’s narrative [1] that James L. Vance owned the farm where the fort was once located and the Vance Family Association’s genealogical records show that Allison Vance was James L.’s father. The question is, did Allison inherit land that was originally part of his father’s Rich Flatts or part of his grandfather Maj. William Vance’s land, the Oat Field, which Joseph inherited? Robert Campbell Vance, a brother of James L. owned the farm adjacent to James L.’s land and told Mr. Forrest about 1924 that “he (Robert) had plowed up stones at this place, such as are used in building chimneys [1].” Perhaps they were used in the cabins inside the fort or Joseph’s original log home. About 1924, Forrest reports that he observed, “[T]here were two large log barns, which (he speculated) were probably built of logs from the fort [1].” Robert C. Vance told Forrest that the barns “were there for as long as he could remember and he had lived there all his life [1],” which would be 74 years since R.C. Vance was b. June 1850. R.C. Vance would have been about 26 years old when the 1876 map was drawn. This begs the question of whether the 1876 map (Fig. 7) shows the location of the fort itself or remnants of the fort, such as the log barns. Nonetheless, it is clear that the fort was on land once owned by Allison S. Vance.

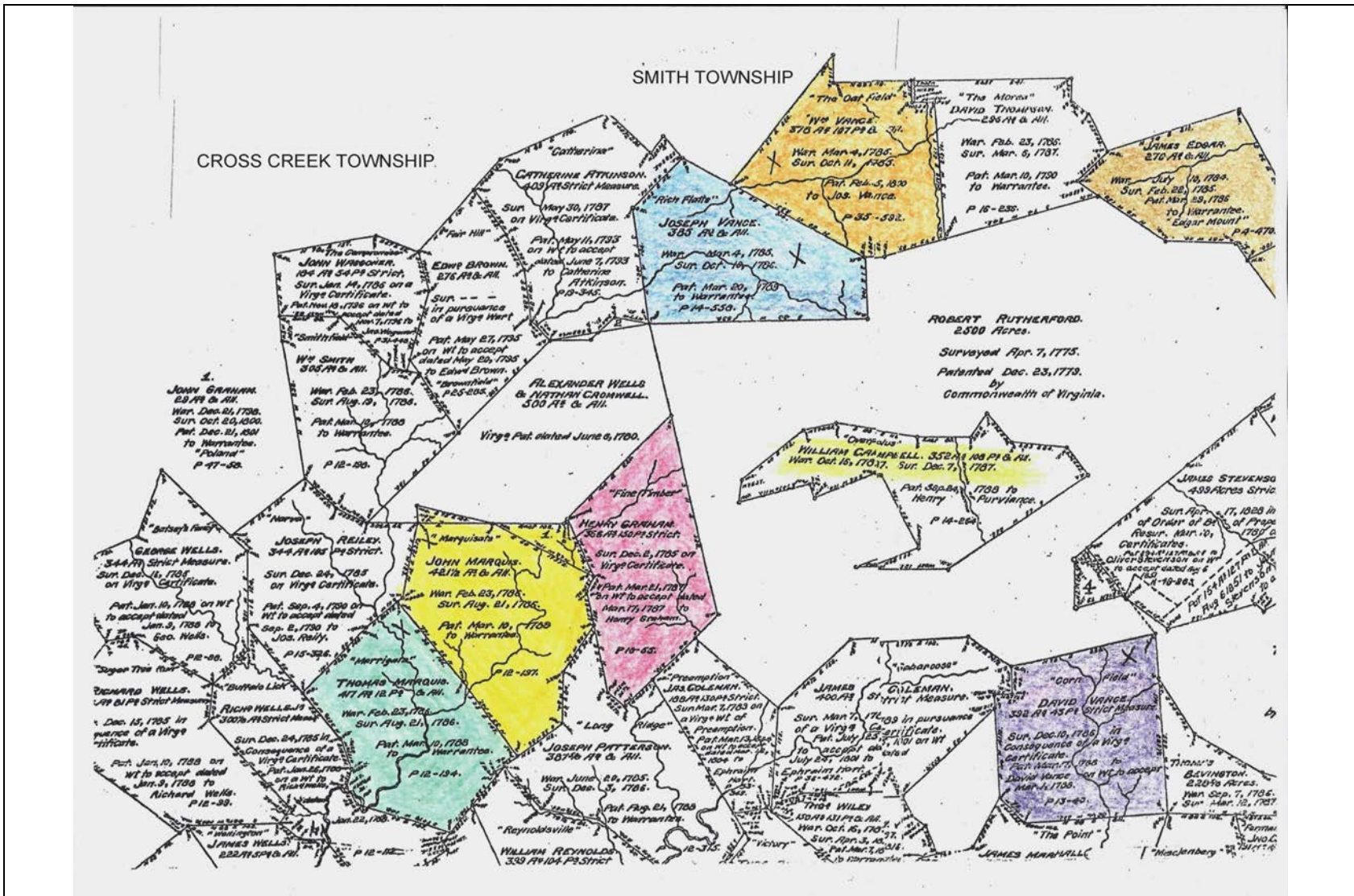


Fig 6. Partial plat maps of Cross Creek and Smith Townships in Washington County, PA [30]

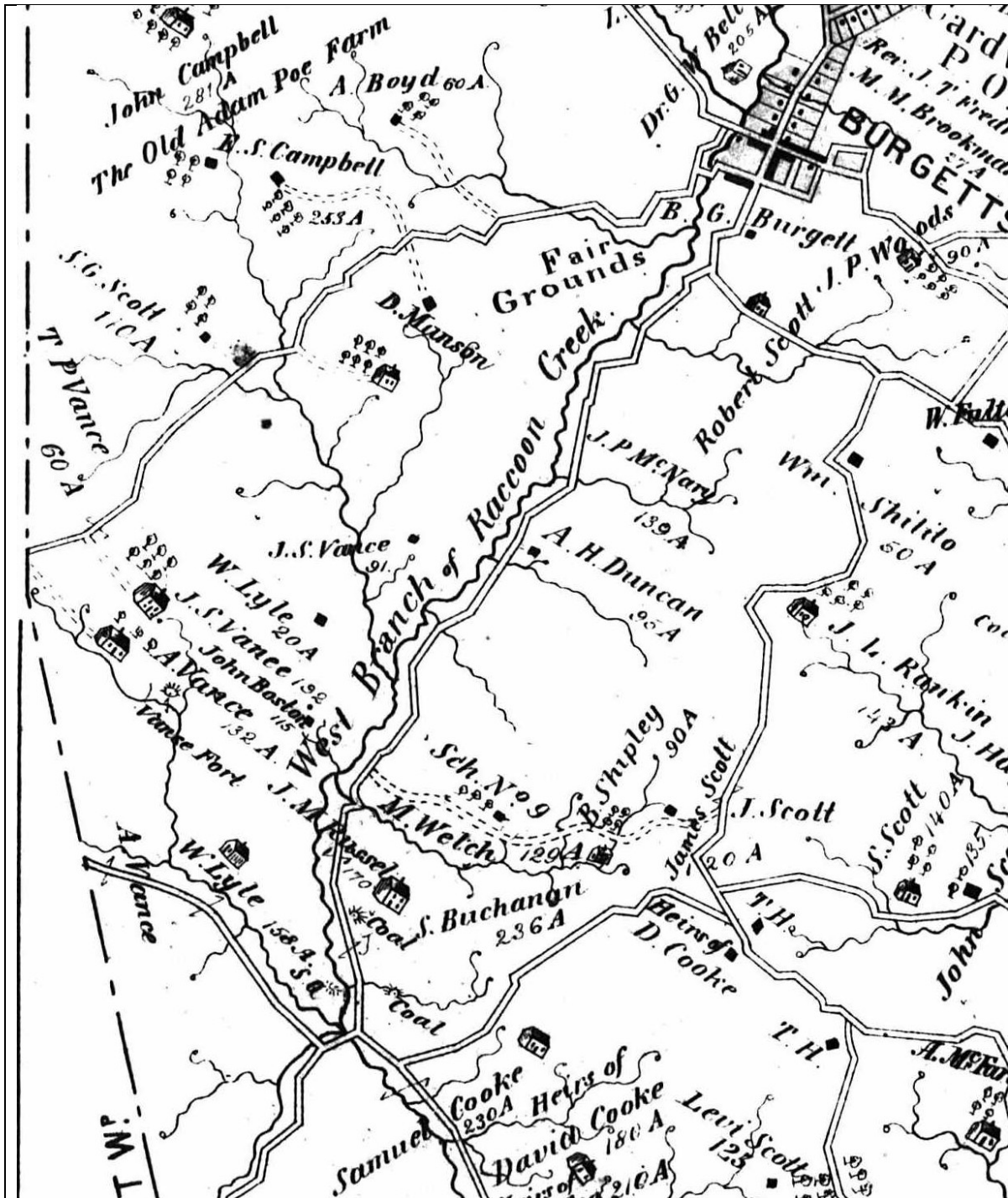


Fig. 7. Partial map of Smith Township showing the proximity of Vance's Fort to Allison Vance's and John Stockton Vance's homes [15]. Burgettstown Fairgrounds are in the upper right corner.

James Veech gives us some insights as to where forts were erected: “[T]hey were always located upon commanding eminences sufficiently remote from coverts

and wooded heights to prevent [being taken by] surprise [2].” We obviously don’t have pictures of the unimproved land upon which Vance’s Fort was built, but we do have present-day pictures of the farms that were once part of Rich Flatts and the Oat Field. VFA member Aaron Dodds, a descendant of Allison Vance, took the picture below (Fig. 8). The view is from Vance Road (or Drive) looking northeast. The driveway to the brick farmhouse near the mid-left side of the picture begins at Cross Creek Road (not visible) at the mid-right side of the picture. The driveway actually splits into a Y about mid-picture where the east (far) branch of the driveway goes to the brick home near the left side of the picture. (John Stockton Vance’s home (not shown) was a little further left (west) of his step-brother Allison’s home.)



Fig. 8. Part of “Rich Flatts” showing Allison Vance’s former home and approximate former location of Vance’s Fort in foreground. Photo credit: Aaron Dodds , with permission.

The brick home in this picture was the old Vance homestead and may be on the same site as Joseph’s first log home. Vance’s Fort is thought to be in the vicinity of the lone pine tree and clump of trees to the right and in front (west) of the driveway. There no longer appears to be any old log barns either in this picture or in satellite images on Google Maps. Access to the site of the old fort has been discouraged by the current residents.

The photo in Figure 8 shows that the location of Vance’s Fort would be lower than the surrounding terrain, which is not consistent with what was described by James Veech for settlers’ forts in general. There is no commanding view of the

surrounding area as the high ground is along Vance Road (from which the picture was taken) and to the south (right side of picture) along road T-437. It may be that the location for Vance's Fort was driven by the location of water, which was a spring that E. R. Forrest described as "gushing," but "is now (1924) little more than seepage [1]." Aaron Dodds describes the location of the fort as being just north of a small pond along the driveway where two small streams (seasonal?) converge [16]. As noted by Veech, the location might also have been determined by the proximity of neighbors and how long it would take them to reach the fort in time of danger. Each neighbor had a vested interest in the fort because they not only helped build it, but they also provided the extra marksmen to defend it and their families. Imagine if you will, over 100 people in a stockade fort similar to that shown in Fig. 1 located in the green field in the foreground of this picture. There are only seven cabins and three blockhouses in Fig. 1. Vance's Fort may have had even more cabins.

Military Service

Both Maj. William Vance and his son Joseph were Indian fighters. No records could be found for any service in the Revolutionary War itself. However, their service in the militia during the Indian Wars allowed other men to serve in the Revolutionary War and its eastern campaigns. As noted in an article on Capt. Robert Vance [17], there were regiments of the Virginia Militia serving on Continental assignment in the Western Department stationed at Fort Pitt. These troops helped to build the military forts and protect the western frontier from Indian attacks. Service in the county militias also allowed men to tend their farms and protect their families. Maj. William Vance was performing his military service as a captain in the Virginia Militia as early as 1755, during the French and Indian Wars. Orders were issued to a Captain Vance of the Militia on 10 Oct 1755 by Col. George Washington from Winchester, VA:

I do hereby Strictly order and Require of you, to Halt at Joseph Edward's on Cacapehon, until further orders; unless you should be drove from thence by Superior Force. You will be quickly joined there by Numbers sufficient to prevent those insolent Invaders from committing such inhuman outrages; and I hope to Retaliate their Crimes. [18, 20]

Joseph Edward's "strong" dwelling became a center of the community and a rallying point for the settlers when they were threatened by Indian raids. With the erection of a stockade, this place became known as Fort Edwards and was manned by a Virginia Regiment upon the orders of Col. Washington [19]. The aforementioned orders of October 10th were directed to Capt. William Vance [20] so he would have seen how forts were constructed in the 1750s. In 1758, we can find Major William Vance cited in the records of a Court Martial for two Quaker men held in Frederick County, VA on Friday, the 27th of October 1758 [21]. Also, in "Virginia Genealogies," Major William Vance is said to have "commanded a company of Frederick County troops, 58 men under Lord Fairfax, 1756 . . . doubtless the same one [Maj. Wm. Vance]

of Winchester, VA who had [sons] Joseph and David [22].” William Vance voted for Colonel George Washington in the election of Burgesses for Frederick County on 18 May 1761 [23].

Joseph Vance (b. 1750 d. 1832) was reported by L.C. Walkinshaw to be a “captain of the Yohogania County militia [13].” Yohogania County was formed out of West Augusta County (Virginia) in 1776. A 1776 map of the District of West Augusta County confirms that Vance’s Fort was in Yohogania County where Cross Creek was part of the boundary between Yohogania and Ohio Counties. The Pennsylvania Archives show Joseph was in the Associators or Militia of Washington County. He served as a private in Capt. Henry Graham’s Militia that mustered on the waters of Cross Creek and Raccoon, Sept. 29, 1781 [24]. Joseph was not on the list of Washington County lieutenants (actually most were colonels) or sub-lieutenants for 1781 (who had the authority to call out the militias). In the History of the Cross Creek Graveyard, James Simpson comments on Joseph’s headstone: “[k]nown as Col. Joseph Vance, he was the proprietor of Vance’s Fort and took part in some of the noted campaigns against the Indians on the frontier [10].” Simpson’s book was first published in 1894. In 1882, Boyd Crumrine wrote “David Vance, a brother [actually a cousin] of Col. Joseph Vance and son of Maj. William Vance [actually he was the son of David Vance, Maj. William Vance’s brother], took out a Virginia certificate . . . [12].” No military records have been found to support Joseph’s rank as a colonel, but it was the custom of those times to allow men in the militia to elect their own officers, in contrast to a commission issued from a state or federal military authority. Under Pennsylvania law, the commanders of the militia units could not order their men into battle, but could encourage them to fight. The process of electing their officers was like a vote of confidence in their ability to fight the Indians. Such elections resulted in leaders the men would be more likely to follow. There is a burial card for Joseph Vance made out by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Military Affairs. This card shows Joseph Vance with the rank of Pvt with dates of service from 1776 to 1783. The card indicates the source of this “information [was] given by Hist of Cem on 3/1932 [25].” This could mean that it was taken from James Simpson’s book on the history of the Cross Creek Cemetery, but the card does not say Colonel Joseph Vance.

Moravian Campaign

One of the campaigns Joseph may have been part of was against the Moravian Indians in March of 1782. From this story, we learn a little bit more about the history of Vance’s Fort and Joseph Vance. James Simpson relates that “at the funeral of David Hays in 1793, Robert Lyle and Joseph Vance were appointed to ride in front of the funeral cortege, which was going to Cross Creek. Soon after starting, their conversation turned to the Moravian massacre. Lyle denounced it as a murder and act of barbarism. Mr. Vance then said that the expedition was planned at his cabin [in 1781]; but said, “We did not go out there [Gnadenhutzen] to kill them, but intended to

either make them remove further west or bring them again to Fort Pitt, so that the hostile Indians could not have it [Gnadenhutten] as a stopping place in making their invasions on the settlers . . . [10].” However, William Farrar, in his 1891 publication on the topic, relates a somewhat different story for the plans made in 1781:

*Driven from their homes and shut up within the fort, the men became very impatient and frequently discussed the situation with much earnestness. Prayer meetings were held daily, and often in the Vance cabin, which stood outside of but near to the stockade. After one of these meetings, Vance and **two** of his neighbors remained after the others had returned into the fort, and while talking over their troubles one of them said, "There is no use in talking, this thing will never be better until the half-way towns are destroyed." "Yes," replied another, "and I will be one of a company to go and **wipe them out**," to which the others [this would include Joseph] assented, and that then [1781] and there the Moravian Massacre originated. The proposition was thereupon stated to those in the fort, who approved it and pledged their assistance to carry it into execution, but what steps were taken to communicate with the other frontier settlements and secure their cooperation is not known. The organization was, however, complete, and the intention to move promptly on the half-way towns (at Gnadenhutten) [was] about to be carried out . . . [26]*

It is difficult to know how Farrar might have learned of a conversation that took place in Vance’s cabin 110 years earlier, viz. in 1781. Farrar did not document his source(s) or who related this story to him. Clearly, it was not first hand as all the residents of the fort would have been deceased by 1891 (publication date of Farrar’s book). As an attorney, Farrar would have known this conversation to be hearsay unless it had been written down by a witness years earlier. Nonetheless, this account is important because it is plausible, and if true, then it would implicate Joseph and many of his neighbors in a conspiracy to kill (the intent was clear) the Moravians, which didn’t happen until the 8th of March of 1782. Neither James Simpson nor Dr. Joseph Doddridge implicated Joseph Vance in the massacre itself. On the contrary, Joseph Vance was regarded by Doddridge as one of 18 men who refrained from the executions on that fateful day in March. But again, there is no proof of this either.

Military records from Fort Pitt for 1781 show that relocation was in fact the intended purpose of the first attempt to engage with the Moravian Indians. “*But [Col. David] Williamson [the commander] found himself anticipated by an expedition from Detroit that had already removed the Missionaries and their converts to Sandusky, and finding but half a dozen Indians there, who had either strayed into the place or found their way back after the removal, they were taken back and delivered to the authorities at Fort Pitt, who soon after released them, thereby giving great offense to the settlers, who thought they should have been killed. The authorities were denounced, Williamson*

severely censured . . . [26].” This event became known as the first Williamson Expedition.

The second Moravian Expedition in March of 1782 was more spontaneous in nature and was presumably initiated without the knowledge of the commanders (General Irvine and Col. Gibson) at Fort Pitt [27]. But, it was again led by Col. David Williamson which has lead many to believe it was a military expedition. In 1888, a list of names of those who participated in the massacre was published in the Pennsylvania Archives [28]. The list includes the names of five officers, one sergeant, and 51 privates of the Washington (County) Militia. This list is acknowledged as being incomplete as there were reportedly 160 men “under the lead of the brave Williamson [28].” There were no Vances on this list. It is interesting that the 4th Battalion of the Washington County Militia was orderd to rendezvous the 1st day of March, 1782 [24], a full week before the massacre. The reason or purpose for this muster was not stated. The official returns dated the 9th day of March 1782 for the 1st and 2nd Classes under Capt. Henry Graham do not include any Vances, nor were there any names from Lt. Col. Davidson’s list [28]. For comparison, the returns for eight classes under Capt. Henry Graham for the 29th of September 1781 (five months before the massacre) did include Joseph Vance and his cousin David Vance [24]. We might conclude that if Joseph Vance did participate in the campaign against the Moravians in March of 1782, it was not in any official military capacity.

Doddridge [3] and Farrar [26] believed that the campaign against the Moravians may not have been sanctioned by the military. Col. Gibson, acting commander of Fort Pitt, learned of the expedition, but not in time to prevent it [26]. There were investigations into the atrocities months after the event, but military commanders were reluctant to make written reports with any detail of the events or a list of the participants (some say 160 to 300). There was sentiment among the settlers at that time that the massacre would help prevent further attacks on their families. That Joseph was on this expedition came from a list of 17 names added by the editor of the 1912 edition of Joseph Doddridge’s 1824 book [3]. The editor attributes 16 of these names to “Simpson” without citing any of Simpson’s writings [3]. The 17th name was added by Col. Obadiah Holmes and appears in a two-page footnote in the 1912 version of Doddridge’s book. Earl R. Forrest also states that “the names were compiled by James Simpson, historian of Cross Creek village [1],” and lists 15 names attributed to Simpson, without a citation to Simpson’s writings. Joseph Vance is at the top of this list of 15 or 16 names [1].

The footnote by Col. Holmes [3] includes a narrative that describes how the second Williamson campaign began: “It is credible tradition that the expedition, the actual campaign, was first proposed in a small company of frontiersmen gathered and talking in an informal way at Carpenter’s blockhouse in the latter part of February or the beginning of March 1782.” The frontiersmen had become most frustrated with the lack of response from the government to their calls for help in defense against the

Indians. “Out of those calls, or by reason of them, came the authority for the expedition and the expedition itself. The rendezvous, and the place of Colonel Williamson’s election, was at Mingo Bottom [3].” It is not clear who officially called out the militia to rendezvous at Mingo Bottom around March 4th, but “Colonel Marshel, the county lieutenant had already called out some of the militia for frontier defense [35].” Were these the musters of March 1, 1782 [24]? It is clear that it was the militia and other volunteers and not government troops from Fort Pitt that participated in the second Williamson Expedition. This better explains the list of participants found in the Pennsylvania Archives [28]. It may be true that the plan for the 1781 expedition against the Moravian Indians originated at Vance’s Fort, but the impetus for the 1782 expedition began at Carpenter’s blockhouse (presumably John Carpenter’s blockhouse in Jefferson County, OH near Mingo Bottom [AKA Mingo Junction]). It should be noted that if Joseph Vance was indeed part of the expedition, this did not prevent him from being elected as a representative to the Pennsylvania General Assembly in 1802 and 1803 [12].

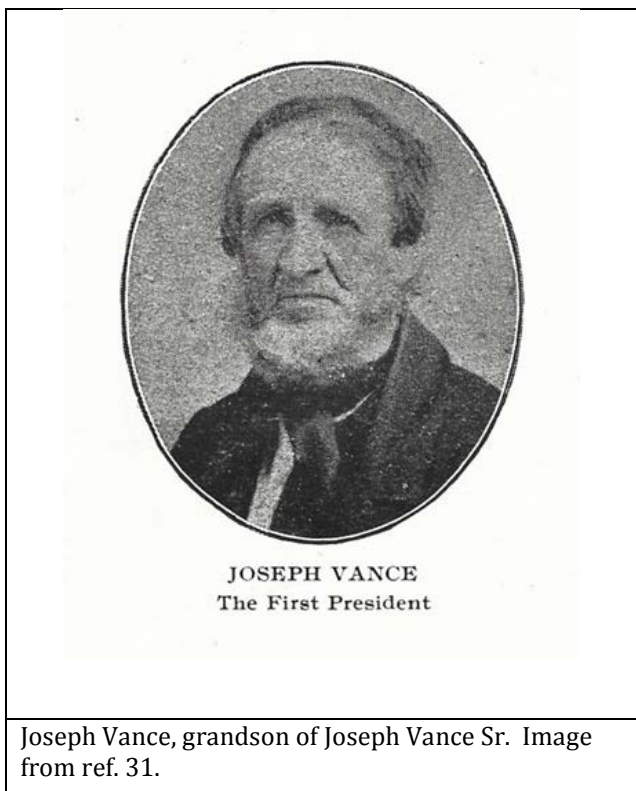
Religious Activities

From about 1773 to 1783, the settlers’ forts were the focus of social life and religious worship. Organized social worship in the Cross Creek area began in 1776. Prior to this, religious meetings were held in the home of Maj. William Vance [29]. Thomas Marquis, Jr. and his wife Jane Park were converted in one of these meetings before Autumn of 1778 [14]. He became a minister, a natural orator whose tone of voice was so musical that he was called the “Silver-tongued Marquis.” Rev. John Stockton in his 1876 newspaper article entitled, “The Revival in Vance’s Fort,” relates that in the Winter of 1776-77 there were pious men that led religious meetings which included Maj. William Vance, James Campbell, John Stone, Robert Barr and William Wilson, and in the Summer of 1779 by James Edgar [14]. The surnames Marquis, Campbell, and Edgars can be found on an early plat map of Cross Creek Township to be within a distance of three farms from Joseph and Maj. William Vance’s fort (See Fig. 6). These neighbors may have also lived in the fort during the Indian Summers. (A similar plat map of Smith Township was not readily available to search where Stone, Barr and Wilson lived in relation to Vance’s Fort.)

Defense against the Indians and religion were the bonds that held a community of settlers together during the early years on the western frontier. But forts soon gave way to log churches as the place of worship for the settlers. The first church at Cross Creek was built in 1779 and the fifth and present one was built in 1864 (during the Civil War)[29]. Major Vance, Robert McCready and Henry Graham selected the site and Henry Graham donated the property [29]. The plat maps in Fig. 8 show Henry Graham’s 368-acre farm “Fine Timber” about one mile south of Joseph Vance’s farm “Rich Flatts.” The first church, “an *unhewn* log house twenty-six by twenty-two feet, was erected on or near the site of the present building [29].” Maj. Vance’s son Joseph was a ruling elder of the church for many years.

Rev. Thomas Marquis, Jr. homesteaded the 417-acre farm, the “Marrigata,” which was about two miles southwest of the Cross Creek Prebyterian Church (See Fig. 6). He served as pastor to the churches at Upper Buffalo and Cross Creek from 1794 to 1798 and to just Cross Creek from 1798 to 1826 [29].

Agriculture and Animal Husbandry



Joseph Vance and his descendants were engaged in agriculture from the time they arrived in Washington County in 1773-74 until the end of the 19th century. At one time, the old Vance homestead (Rich Flatts and the Oat Field) was divided into 12 Vance farms. Joseph Vance (b. 1802 d. 1866), grandson of Joseph Vance was the first president and a founder of the Agricultural Fair in Burgettstown in 1856 [31]. He had previously been a livestock judge for cows, calves, and yearlings for the Washington County Society for promotion of Agriculture and Domestic Manufactures in 1831 [32].

The Vance Homestead

On 27 May 1826, Joseph Vance published his last will and testament in Smith Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania [34]. At this time, he was married to his third wife Mary Moore (bc. 1783 d. 1851) by whom he had two daughters, Annamary (b. 1820) and Hannah (b. 1824). All the children by his first wife Anne Vance (bc. 1751 d. 1788) were adults (33 years or older) by 1826. Joseph’s will reflects his concern for the welfare of his two youngest daughters, two and six years old, and his wife Mary. In 1826, Joseph was still living in his (log?) house on Rich Flatts. Joseph bequeathed to Mary all his personal estate and “the profits of the real estate on condition my two children named [*viz.* Annamary and Hannah] be maintained and educated at the discretion of my Executors.” At the death of his wife Mary, Joseph bequeathed “to my two daughters . . . all my real estate to be equally divided between them [Annamary and Hannah] . . .” Joseph’s friend Hugh Lee and his son William were named as sole executors of his estate [34].

Joseph's concern for his two young daughters would appear to show great preference for them over his other five children by his wife Anne. It seems more likely that Joseph had sold or given farms to his sons William and John prior to or about 1826. Appreciate that Joseph inherited his father's farm (the Oat Field) consisting of 378 acres and he himself owned 385 acres (Rich Flatts). This is over one square mile of land (640 acres). We know that William's sons inherited land that their grandfather Joseph owned or had inherited from his father Maj. William. For example, William's son Allison inherited land where Vance's Fort once stood.

By 1830, Joseph had built a new brick home on one acre and forty-two perches adjacent to the Cross Creek Presbyterian Church. He bought this land from John Graham (See Fig. 8). Joseph added a codicil to his 1826 will on 15 Dec 1830 that bequeathed this new house and parcel of land to his two daughters [34]. In a second codicil dated 19 Dec 1831, Joseph acknowledged that he had sold the real estate cited in his 1826 will subsequent to 1826 [34]. This second codicil made it clear what land Joseph could bequeath to his two young daughters.

Acknowledgments

The author gratefully acknowledges the information communicated by Aaron Dodds and the use of the photographs of his ancestor Allison Vance's farm. The family trees of Major William Vance prepared by M.V. Norfleet, without which it would have been nearly impossible to know who descended from whom and when because given that names were frequently recycled. Debbie Vraninin of the Fort Vance Historical Society shared the 1949 Upper Buffalo and Cross Creek church bulletin, the Burgettstown Fair pamphlet, newspaper clippings, and pictures.

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30. Horn, W.F. "Early Westward Movement on the Monongahela and Upper Ohio 1765-1795," p. 60, Vol. 3, an atlas, with imprint: Waynesburg, Pa., Pub. For a committee of the Greene County Historical Society, by the Hagstrom Company, New York, N.Y (1945). A VFA member at the Oklahoma History Library in Oklahoma City, OK copied this page and the pages for the adjacent townships.
31. ____, Burgettestown Fair 1854.
32. ____, A July 1831 Burgettestown newspaper listed the Agricultural Society's judges of various events for a July Exhibition.
33. Vance, William [Maj.] "Last Will and Testament" written 31 May 1788, witnessed 27 Jun 1788, recorded in Will Book No. 1 at p. 82, on file at the County Courthouse, Washington County, PA.
34. Vance, Joseph "Last Will and Testament" written 27 May 1826, followed by two codicils, the last written 19 Dec 1831, recorded in Will Book No. 5, at pp. 39-41, on file at the County Courthouse, Washington County, PA.
35. Hassler, Edgar W. "Old Westmoreland: A History of Western Pennsylvania During the Revolution," pp. 153-161, pub. J.R. Weldin & Col, Pittsburg (1900).

More Information About Maj. William Vance

Contributed by William A. Vance, Lt. Col. USAFR (ret) © 2015

I. Evidence for William Vance's presence in the vicinity of Allegheny County in January of 1772 (then Augusta County, VA, later Westmoreland and Yohogania Counties) is a promissory note found in the estate papers of William Vance on file at the Washington County Clerk's Office, Washington, PA:

*I Promise to deliver or cause to be delivered to **Doctor Jno Connoly** or assigns at or upon the 20th day of May ensuing a Horse Mare or Gelding valued by Mr. **John Stephenson**, & **Robt Vance** at fourteen Pounds Pennsylvania Currency for Value received as Witnessed my Hand this 15th day of January Anno que Domini 1772.*

Wm Vance

Signed in the presence of Mr.

Wm Christy

Robert Vance

Allegheny County F

*Before one of the Justices of the peace in and for said County, Came **William Christy** one of the above being witness to the above obligation and said oath according to law, deposeth and saith that to the Best of his knowledge and remembrance did on the day of the date of the above obligation see William Vance sign his name & acknowledge the said above obligation to be his act & deed & that he the deponent did therein subscribe his name as a witness.*

Sworn & subscribed before me the 10th day of May 1790

Jno Wilkins

William Christy

Who were these people?

William Christy served as a Lt. under Maj. John Connolly and Gov. Dunmore.

Robert Vance served as a sergeant under Capt. **John Stephenson** during Lord Dunmore's War against the Indians in 1774. Robert was a cousin to Maj. Vance through their Colville marriages.

Dr. John Connolly served Lord Dunmore; he was a scoundrel and both were Tories from Virginia during the Revolutionary War.

II. Proof that Maj. William Vance did not die on 18 April 1788, even though this is what was written on his tombstone (see III below):

Last will and testament of Maj. William Vance (without edits or corrections)

*In the name of God Amen. This the **31st Day of May in the Year of our Lord Seventeen Hundred and Eighty Eight** I William Vance of Washington County State of Pennsylvania, being sick and weak in body but of Perfect Mind and Memory, Thanks be to God for the same, calling to mind the Mortality of my Body, and remembering that it is appointed to all Men Once to Die, do Make this and ordain this my last will and testament that is to say, Principally and first of all, I give and recommend my Soul to God who gave it, and my Body to the Earth, to be buried in a Christianlike and decent manner, at the discretion of my Executors, nothing doubting, but at the General Resurrection, I shall secure the same again by the mighty power of God, and invoking such worldly estate wherewith it hath pleased God to Bless me in this life.*

I give, Devise, and dispose of the same in the manner and form following, that is to say in the first place, I give my beloved wife One Bed and Clothes and the Furniture therewith belonging, One Roan Horse Colt, One New Saddle and Bridle (at Least worth Five Pounds) Two Cows and One Sheep, and the Fourth part of the remainder of my movable Estate, after the payment of all my just Debts, and Funeral Charges. My Movable estate to be divided into Four Equal Parts and to be disposed of in the manner following Viz. One Fourth to my beloved Son David, One Fourth to my beloved Son Joseph, and the other One Fourth to my beloved daughter Mary Marques, As Touching the Estate the House I now Live in and the Out Houses and Garden and Patches about the House and What Bottom Land is Cleared and Fenced, I leave for the support of my well beloved wife during her natural Life, or until the time of Her Second Marriage, which first may Happen.

My Land I leave to my Sons David and Joseph to be with all appurtenances thereon belonging (except as before excepted to my Two Sons David and Joseph, my only executors of this my last and Testament, and I hereby utterly absolve and revoke and Disannul all and every Will and Testament, other former Wills and Testaments.

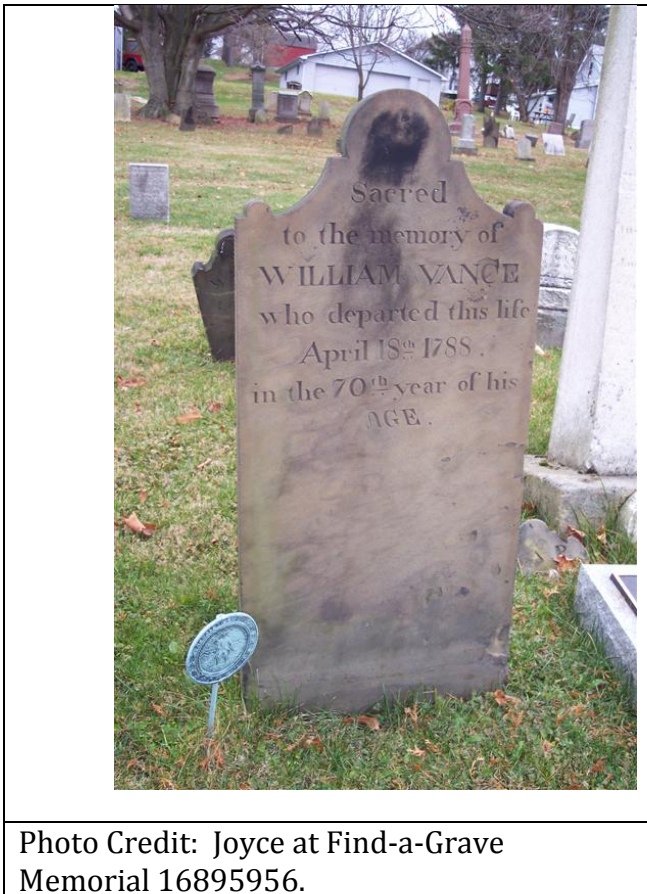
I Herewith set my hand and affix my Seal the Day and Year Written.

William Vance

Signed Sealed and Published and Pronounced by said William Vance as his Last Will and Testament in the Presence of us.

Henry Grayham
John Newell
John Sanders
June 21th, 1788 (possibly June 27th)

III. Maj. William Vance's headstone in the old Cross Creek Cemetery



Maj. William Vance's estate was settled in February 1798, his wife Mary probably passed away between 1793 and 1798. If Mary was buried in the Cross Creek Cemetery, there is no headstone to mark her grave today.

Photo Credit: Joyce at Find-a-Grave Memorial 16895956.

IV. Joseph Vance's burial card from Mar 1932.

Form MAGO-41—200M—6-35 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Military Affairs		RECORD OF BURIAL PLACE OF VETERAN		Washington County	
NAME Vance, Joseph			DATE OF BIRTH	DATE OF DEATH 5/6/1832	
VETERAN OF Indien			WAR	SERVED IN ARMY (X) NAVY () MARINE CORPS ()	
DATES OF SERVICE 1776- 1783		ORGANIZATION(S) Soldier in Campaign		RANK Pvt	
CEMETERY OR PLACE OF INTERMENT		NAME LOCATION Cross Creek Old Cem			
LOCATION OF GRAVE IN CEMETERY		HEADSTONE Sand Stone			
SECTION LOT No.	RANGE GRAVE No.	GOVERNMENT () COUNTY () FAMILY ()			
INFORMATION GIVEN BY Hist of Cem		REMARKS			
DATE 3/1932					
After being Recorded in the County Veterans' Grave Registration Record This card is to be sent to THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, for final Record.					