

deacons. Meetings were held at private houses and at the school-house at the mouth of Bowman's creek until 1850, when the present church was completed and occupied.

Rev. William Frear was the pastor until his death, in 1874, more than half a century. He was born in Pittston, Pa., November 12th, 1792. His parents were members of the first Baptist church in that place, his mother being the first person ever baptized in the Wyoming valley. In 1798 the family moved to Eaton and in 1804 to the farm now in possession of the family. When sixteen years old William carried the mail from Tunkhannock to Binghamton by way of Great Bend, often on foot over roads almost impassable, running through miles of unbroken forest infested with wild animals. In 1814 he went with Captain Camp's company to the defense of Baltimore. In 1818 he married Hannah Wheelock, of Tunkhannock. He educated himself. He joined the Abington church in 1820. In 1822 he was licensed to preach and ordained. His life was singularly pure and his influence widely and favorably felt. He attended the dedication of Keystone Academy, and while receiving the greetings of his friends he fell insensible into the arms of one of them, and in a few moments breathed his last. During his last years Revs. J. Kennedy, A. J. Furman, P. S. Everett and N. Whitney were associated with him in the pastorate. The next pastor of the church was Elder Grow, who was succeeded by Arthur O. Sterns, since the close of whose pastorate in 1877 there has been no stated pastor, though regular meetings have been maintained.

Jackson Smith was the clerk of the church from 1823 to 1856; Samuel Harding and J. M. Miller have since filled the office. The present deacons are George Rinker and A. Fratchey. The Sunday-school numbers forty-five scholars. The superintendent is D. W. Herman.

## EXETER TOWNSHIP.

**E**XETER is one of the original townships. It was named from Exeter, R. I., and is known as Little Exeter, in contradistinction to the larger part of the original township just across the line in Luzerne county.

Among the pioneers were a Mr. Stule, who settled in the north end of the township, opposite Keeler's Ferry; Paul Keeler, after whom the ferry was named; the families of Smith, Hadley, Swartwout, Harding, Coolbaugh, Burgess, Montayne, Dymond and others.

A post-office was established in 1812 at Keeler's Ferry, and Asa Keeler was appointed postmaster. He moved up into North Moreland township, taking the office with him. He was postmaster till his death, in 1867, at Keelersburg.

The population of this township fell off from 211 to 151 between 1870 and 1880.

## FALLS TOWNSHIP.

**T**HIS township was formed from Tunkhannock, in 1824. John Osterhout, an early settler, wished to have it named in honor of Stephen Meredith, while Jacob Sickler urged the name "Buttermilk Falls." After discussion and due deliberation the court decided on "Falls."

Matthew Sherwood was among the first settlers. He came in the autumn of 1789, from Danbury, Conn., with his wife and seven children and all his earthly effects on a cart drawn by a yoke of oxen and a span of horses. He located two miles up the river from Buttermilk Falls, having bought 200 acres between the farms of John Fitch and David Morehouse, who had settled here the year before. Among the other pioneers we find the names of Gideon and Jeremiah Osterhout, Ephraim Lockwood, Jesse Jones, Peleg Comstock, Ebenezer Williams and Thomas Joslin.

At that time there were no roads except the old Davis path from Old Forge to Wyalusing. This former Indian trail had been considerably improved by two distinguished land speculators living in Philadelphia, Davis and Nicholson, but was not wide enough for a wagon.

We regret that we cannot dwell on all the circumstances of pioneer life here, but such experiences have already been sketched, and cannot be repeated for each township. Deer and bears furnished most of the meat, and johnny cake was the prevailing bread. In 1795 some fur traders from Harrisburg came up the river in boats, and traded salt, ammunition and iron for furs and skins. The salt was a special God-send to the settlers. These traders came again in 1796, with a stock to barter for salt shad, furs, skins and venison, the chief articles of export. Powder and lead were among the most important imports. As long as their ammunition lasted the pioneers were secure against starvation, and when it was gone there was no place near where they could get a supply, unless they found a new comer who had some and would divide. The first clothing was made from the skins of animals, tanned with their brains and buffed with a ball of yellow clay rubbed over the surface of the leather, which added a beautiful lustre. Home spun linen and woolen, however, soon furnished the summer attire.

In 1792 the population had materially increased. David M. Delevan had come. Reuben Taylor had settled on the flats above the falls, and for a number of years that neighborhood was called Taylortown. David Daily settled at the foot of the narrows below Osterhout's, and Nathan Jones and an old negro named "Ding" came and lived with Jesse Jones. Levi Townsend settled near Benjamin Jones, on the flats below Buttermilk Falls. Peter Harris, the tory, also settled near Benjamin Jones.

During the winter of 1792-93 Zuriel Sherwood made the first pigeon net in this valley and the first seine used on the upper Susquehanna for catching shad; and the first haul of shad was made by Mr. Sherwood with his