

EXETER TOWNSHIP.

EXETER, as now existing, is the remainder of old Exeter, one of the "seventeen townships," which originally included Franklin and Ransom. It contains an area of about twenty-three square miles in the extreme north-eastern corner of Luzerne county, on the right bank of the Susquehanna. The census of 1880 shows that there are 91 farms and a population of 1,023 in the township.

Agriculture succeeded lumbering as the chief employment of the people, and since Pittston and West Pittston have become large consuming markets gardening has come to be profitable on the farms along the river and in the southern part of the township, while the upland farms are used quite largely for dairy purposes, the milk finding a market in the boroughs.

PIONEERS.

The first settlements were made near the river, but improvements have been at last extended to the remote corners of the township. In 1796, while Franklin and Ransom were included in Exeter, a list of the taxable people was made and recorded. Stewart Pearce in his *Annals of Luzerne* has carefully preserved this list with slight changes. The names were:

Joel Atherton, Joseph Black, Moses Bennett, Timothy Beebe, Roswell Beach, Peleg Comstock, Joseph Dailey, David Dailey, Jacob Drake, William Foster, Isaac Finch, Richard Gardner, John Gardner, Thomas Gardner, Abraham Goodwin, Richard Halsted, William Harding, Samuel Hadley, James Hadley, Stephen Harding, David Harding, Edward Hadsall, John Hadsall, Joseph Hadsall, William Hadsall, Peter Harris, Micajah Harding, Thomas Harding, Artimedorus Ingersol, Benjamin Jones, sen., Nathaniel Jones, sen., Majah Jones, Justus Jones, Benjamin Jones, jr., Thomas Joslin, sen., Palmer Jenkins, Thomas Joslin, jr., John Jenkins, Thomas Jenkins, John Knapp, Comfort Kinyan, Andrew Montanye, John McMillen, Benjamin McAfee, Benjamin Newbury, William Oden, Jacob Wright, William Slocum, William Stage, James Sutton, Moses Scovell, Elisha Scovell, James Scovell, David Shauntz, David Smith, David Skeel, William Tripp, Abner Tuttle, David Smith, jr., Gilbert Townsend, Lazarus Townsend, William Thompson, Thomas Williams, Ebenezer Williams, Allen Whitman, Zebediah Whitman, Nathan Whitlock, Joseph Whitlock and John Scott.

Two years later Captain Stephen Harding, John Jenkins, Peter Harris, David Smith, S. Dailey and J. Phillips were made commissioners to lay out additional public roads in the township.

EXETER IN 1778.

It was near the site of the Harding Cemetery that some men hoeing corn were attacked by the Indians just before the massacre of 1778. The Indians are said to have first attempted, by stealth, to gain possession of their rifles; but the youth John Harding had been left to watch them, and gave the alarm. The men all ran toward the river pursued by the Indians. Benjamin and Stukeley Harding reached their boats, but both were shot—one after he was in his boat and the other as he was entering it. John Harding swam under the willows and escaped. Daniel Weller and John Gardner were made prisoners.

The Indians then passed over to Sutton's creek, and encamped by a spring one or two rods in the rear of Samuel Bailey's house. Near here they killed James Hadsall and his negro, and his nephew, James Hadsall. Daniel Carr and Neezer Reynolds, both sons-in-law of the elder Hadsall, were taken prisoners. Reynolds made his escape, took his wife and children, departed, and has never been heard from. Carr returned after a captivity of seven years.

His wife, supposing him to be dead and thinking she had waited a proper time, had engaged herself to be married to another man, and was preparing for the wedding. One day she heard some one come into the house; she went to see who it was, and met her husband face to face. She was so overcome she fainted. Of course the new match was never consummated.

The British and Tories continued down the river, and landed at fort Wintermoot. Parties have since the Revolution been here inquiring about the lands at the old fort who were thought to be descendants of the Wintermoots, who left the valley with the British after the massacre. Here the Indians joined their forces, and near by the battle of Wyoming was begun.

EARLY BUSINESS ENTERPRISES.

Exeter, being an old settlement, was among those having the earliest business establishments.

In 1776 James Sutton, with James Hadsall as partner, built the first grist-mill and saw-mill on Sutton's creek, (now called at that place Coray creek). There the first grist was ground, and the first board sawed. Hadsall was murdered and the mill destroyed during the invasion of 1778, and all that remains of the old mill is a crank preserved by the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society as a relic of the oldest mill in the Wyoming valley.

Several years later Samuel Sutton, a son of James Sutton, built a second grist-mill on the same site, and in 1846 E. A. Coray, having become owner of this site, erected the present grist-mill. Subsequently another saw-mill was built farther up the creek, which is operating at the present time.

Loyd Jones operated a plaster and clover mill on Lewis creek in 1845. The farmers brought their clover seed in the chaff to the mill to be separated and cleaned. The introduction of horse power threshers put an end to this enterprise.

The Indian trail through Exeter was along the old turnpike, now the public road along the river. One of the first taverns here was built by Lewis Jones in 1806, near the present residence of George Miller.

The old "Red Tavern" on Peter Sharpe's place was built the same year, and was kept by John Harding. Mr. Sharpe's house was formerly kept as a stage house by Isaac Harding. There was also another tavern, kept by the Scovells, down the river near Esquire Slocum's. It was used for years as headquarters for the raftsmen on the river.

Mr. Jones had near his inn a still house, which did a