



Devil's Elbow, Campbellville

Dec. 23, 2020

TOURING SULLIVAN COUNTY'S MUSEUM . . .
while dusting

Ever hear of the term "Elbow" with reference to a road? How about "Devil's Elbow" for the same description? Well, you'll find one in Sullivan County, Pennsylvania. It's in Forks Twp. on Campbellville Rd. To get there you can either leave Estella on Rte. 4009 all the way to a T with a stop sign and hang a right or come from Dushore out Dushore/Overton Rd. to a stop sign, hang a left, go down Hottenstein Hill Rd.

turning right at the bottom onto Campbellville Rd. Campbellville today only has one dwelling and according to the last resident, Mary Litzelman, it was actually the suburbs.

From Burke Campbell's book published in 2003 we've some history on the history of Campbellville. David Campbell's ancestry was from Scotland but he was born in PA prior to the American Revolution. He married Mary Watson on Jan. 31, 1793. They lived in Lancaster and he was a Naylor (nail maker). On Dec. 22, 1793 their first child, John, was born at 2 p.m., as entered in the family Bible. The couple went on to have fourteen children, only six to survive to adulthood. In 1799 the family moved to Northumberland County due to father David's feeling that it was becoming too crowded in Lancaster. Then in 1805 they moved again to Mahoning Township. Although David could read and write, his wife Mary could not. But because she had an appreciation of hearing the Bible read to them by David, she insisted that all her children would and did attend school. While growing up, John (and none of their other children) had decided at a very young age that he did not wish to follow in his father David's footsteps to become a Naylor.

At the age of 16, John pronounced to his father that he wished to go into the milling business, apprenticing with Daniel Montgomery. He completed his apprenticeship to be a full-fledged mill-wright by the age of 21. In 1815 at the age of 22, John Campbell married Mary J. Winterstein. He continued to work for his mentor, Wm. & Daniel Montgomery until 1833 when he moved his family to Monroe Twp., Bradford County to operate a new mill for C.F. Wells. John and Mary had 8 children. He then moved the family to Wyalusing, continuing to work for Mr. Wells. In 1843 he purchased sixty acres of land in Albany Twp. for \$70. He'd left the mill in Wyalusing to his oldest son, Caleb. John was by now 51 years of age. Having befriended Rev. Richard Bedford from the newly formed Sullivan County in 1847, John began to think about the advantages of moving to the "Highlands" as much of the frontier county was referred to. The following year, John along with sons Hiram and James visited an area recommended to them. John was referred to a Mr. Thomas Coggins who had land for sale and had in fact sold land in the same vicinity to George Hunsinger for that man's saw mill. The land in question for Mr. Hunsinger contained the waters of Lick Creek and Streby Run. John went north to the location of Lick Creek and Level Branch. In both men's cases, the running water was the key to establishing both a saw mill and a grist mill. For John, at what was to become Campbellville, the space at the joining of those two waters was exactly what was need to make a millpond and thereby enable the control of flowing water to operate the gristmill. Settling on this location for this soon to be retirement age gentleman, John

purchased from Coggins 17 ½ acres for \$37.50. Although not yet a town, this was the meager beginnings of what today is called Campbellville.

This article comes about because of the major renovations done to the confluence of this section of a country road after the devastation from the 2017 storm to this area. We'll continue with this article but for now we sincerely wish all of you health and happiness. The museum is closed until further notice because of the Covid virus but thru email or phone messages you may contact us for any information you may need. The email address is museum@scpahistory.com and the phone is 570-946-5020 or you may also visit our website at www.scpahistory.com.

