

## Early History of Hamiltonban Township (1730 – 1860)

The earliest European settlers came to the area in the 1730s. Before 1767, parts of what are now Adams and York Counties were claimed by both Maryland and Pennsylvania. Two disputed settlements in Adams County were "Digges Choice", in the vicinity of Littlestown and Hanover, and "Carroll's Delight," in the vicinity of Fairfield and Hamiltonban. Pennsylvania countered the claims of Maryland for the disputed areas by importing settlers. About 1729 the Governor of Pennsylvania, in order to stop further encroachment on the part of Maryland, sent word to the Penn brothers, sons of William Penn, to send him some fighting men. In response, they sent a colony of one hundred forty families from Ulster, Ireland, led by Captain Hance Hamilton. This colony of Scotch-Irish settlers landed at New Castle, Delaware, August 24, 1729, and went almost immediately to what is now Adams County, where they took up land and began to build their homes. Captain Hance Hamilton had a large family, including two daughters and six sons. One of his sons, also named Hance, became Sheriff of York County.

In 1735, the proprietor of Maryland, Lord Baltimore, granted 5,000 acres in what is now Hamiltonban Township to Charles Carroll, who named it Carroll's Delight. In 1741 Archibald Beard, John Withrow, James McGinley and Jeremiah Lochery purchased Carroll's Delight. At that time, the purchasers believed that the land was in Maryland, and it was not until the Mason-Dixon line was surveyed in 1767 that it was determined that Carroll's Delight was actually in Pennsylvania.

In 1739-40, the Penn brothers laid out, in what is now Adams County, Pennsylvania, a reservation for themselves and family of 43,500 acres which was called "The Manor of the Masque." They ordered all settlers to be removed from this tract, but the Scotch-Irish who had settled there refused to leave. This reservation included much of the land that had been settled by the colony led by Capt. Hance Hamilton besides many other colonists' that had moved into this section of the state. The Manor of Masque reservation adjoined Carroll's Delight to the east, and included what is now Gettysburg.

### Origin of the Name Hamiltonban

Hamiltonban Township was an original township of York county at its creation in 1749. In the early records of the county its name is often written Hamilton's Bawn, Bann, Bane, or Ban, as may be seen from 1759, 1770, and 1792 maps of the area. The township originally included what are now Liberty, Highland, and Freedom Townships as well as the boroughs of Fairfield and Carroll Valley.

According to the Bard Family: A History of the Bards of Carroll's Delight, Hamiltonban Township was "evidently named after Hamiltonsbawn, a village in the parish of Mullaghbrack, County Armagh, Ireland, so-called from the bawn built there in 1619, by John Hamilton, to whom the district was granted at the Plantation of Ulster." A bawn is a fortified courtyard, with stone or earthen walls, which may enclose houses or other structures, and is used to defend settlers and livestock from attack. The John Hamilton of the Armagh Hamiltonsbawn was a son of Hans Hamilton, minister of Dunlop, in Ayrshire, Scotland, and a brother of James Hamilton, first Viscount Claneboy, who was one of the two principal founders of the Scots settlement in Ulster, or what is now Northern Ireland.

The Bard Family History goes on to say that "Nearly allied with the Hamiltons of the Bawn was Captain Hance Hamilton, an early settler and prominent citizen of York county, Pa., and a distinguished soldier in the French and Indian War. Captain Hamilton lived in that part of the original township of Menallen, York county, that is now Franklin township, Adams county, which adjoins the township of Hamiltonban. His influence, no doubt, was potent in the choice of the name. That Archibald Beard united with Captain Hamilton in giving the name of Hamilton's Bawn to the township in which he settled is likely from

family affiliations if not because of actual kinship." It is also possible that the name Hamiltonban came from a bawn constructed in the area by Hance Hamilton and/or his sons for defense against the indians who inhabited the area prior to the French and Indian War (1754-1763).

Another prominent Hamilton at the time York County was created was the proprietor of Lancaster, PA, James Hamilton, who laid out the town of Lancaster on 500 acres deeded to him by his father, the distinguished lawyer, Andrew Hamilton, who was born in Scotland. James Hamilton was a member of the Pennsylvania Provincial Assembly for 6 terms beginning in 1734, Mayor of Philadelphia in 1745 and Lieutenant Governor of Pennsylvania from 1748 to 1754 and from 1759 to 1763. He may also have influenced the naming of Hamiltonban Township, since he was Lieutenant Governor of the state and proprietor of Lancaster at the time Hamiltonban was created as part of York County.

## Fairfield

On January 22, 1800, Adams County was formed from York County and Hamiltonban Twp became part of Adams County. In 1801, Liberty Township, which at that time included what is now Freedom Township, was formed from Hamiltonban Township. In 1839, Freedom Township was formed from Liberty Township.

The largest settlement in Hamiltonban, Fairfield, was laid out on 247 acres of land in Carroll's Delight purchased by John Miller in 1755. Squire Miller quickly sold off lots for the purpose of agriculture, and built a stone manor house in 1757, and licensed it as a tavern in 1786. The stone house is still in use as a tavern and restaurant, now called the Fairfield Inn. In 1801, William Miller, John's son, had the land surveyed and platted for a town to be known as Millerstown.

When it was learned that a town by that name already existed, the name was changed to Fairfield. Throughout the nineteenth century, Fairfield was part of Hamiltonban Township. In 1896, Fairfield was incorporated as a borough, with its own governing body separate from Hamiltonban. Carroll Valley Borough was chartered from Hamiltonban and Liberty Townships on September 30, 1974.

## Excerpts from the Historic Reflections – 1776

The following sections on Fairfield, Jacks Mountain, and Early Travel in the area are excerpts quoted from "Historic Reflections - 1776, Glimpses of Fairfield Area Past, 1776-1976." Historical notes not from this source are included in [brackets].

## Fairfield and the Surrounding Area

"The beautiful apple and peach blossoms in the spring on the hillsides and the fields being plowed and planted, makes one pause and take in all the color and freshness, for this is Fairfield and its surrounding area.

"Moving back to the middle 1700's, the picture differs with scattered log cabins and settlers in the fields scratching out a living from the newly made fields and meadows.

"John Miller of Castle County on the Delaware acquired land in Carroll's Delight, Maryland, as shown by an indenture dated December 19, 1755 from Charles Carroll of Annapolis in the province of Maryland. in

1786, John Miller sold three lots in the town. Later, in 1787, two lots were sold, and in 1793, three lots, and again, two lots in 1796.

"William, his son, became the new proprietor of the plantation after the death of John Miller in 1794. Behind the beautiful stone manor house, the barn still stands with the date marker of 1791. The Miller plantation house became a tavern and inn, although it has changed ownership many times, it is still being operated today as a tavern and Inn. [now known as the Fairfield Inn]

"Tavern keepers in 1753 displayed a sign stating that during the period of their licenses they may not "suffer any drunkenness, unlawful gaming, or sell any liquor to the Indians to debauch or hurt them, but in all things shall well and truly observe and practice all laws and orders of province to the business of tavern keeping belonging."

"In 1801, Squire Miller had the land surveyed and platted for a town. It was named Millerstown, but the Post Office rejected the name since a town of Millerstown already existed on the Juniata River. However, Fairfield for many years was also referred to as Millerstown.

"The hills and mountains could tell many secrets of past history as they overlooked the Indians hunting and tilling the soil, of the wars which were fought, of the settlers taking up residence, of villages being planned, the rise of saw, grit and grist mills along the creeks, the coming of roads, taverns, dray stops, and drovers Inns along the way. These mountains viewed the struggles and hardships of the pioneers along with their happiness in this new country.

"Two miles south of Fairfield another community flourished and faded in the early years of this area. McKessensburg, as shown on the 1792 map of York County, lay along the road and Tom's Creek at the foot of Jack's Mountain. A number of McKessens lived in this area, operated a saw mill on Tom's Creek, collected quitrents from those who bought their lots and lent their name to the community. For almost fifty years this village existed as shown by tax receipts and a later 1821 map which called it "McKissen." [The McKessens were early Scotch-Irish settlers in the area. The restored 'McKesson House', formerly known as the Bly home, is located at 18 East Main Street in Fairfield, about two miles north of McKessensburg. Built by William McKesson in 1801 (or earlier), this house was constructed in three stages. The original stone and log home can still be seen in the exposed interior walls. During the Civil War, this house was pressed into service as a hospital after the Battle of Fairfield on July 3, 1863. Major Samuel Starr of the U.S. Sixth Cavalry was captured by the Confederate forces and was cared for in this house after being wounded in the battle. Major Starr's wounds resulted in his arm being amputated soon after the battle, perhaps in this house.]

"Further south over Jack's Mountain road at the intersection of Emmitsburg and Waynesboro road was Fountaindale. From 1842 to 1854 a Lutheran Church and cemetery were located at this site. The church was dismantled and the stones used to build a house close by. The cemetery has persisted to the present time although a portion was recently covered by the Sunshine Trail road construction. Over the years the community of Fountaindale has moved westward several miles...

"...Southwest of Fairfield, between Jack's Mountain and Culp Ridge, flows Tom's Creek with hemlocks drooping gracefully over the edge of the water. Here one effort was made to exploit some of the local natural resources. A group of men, Thaddeus Stevens, Colonel James D. Paxton, John B. McPherson and General Thomas Craig Miller, organized a company to mine the iron ore, smelt the iron and produce

some manufactured outputs. It was called Maria Furnace after Colonel Paxton's wife. The furnace was not too successful because the stove plates which were produced were too brittle and the iron was of a low grade. In two years, McPherson and Miller sold out their holdings. The furnace was abandoned in 1836.

"During this period, Thaddeus Stevens introduced legislation in the state to build a railroad southwest from Gettysburg. Stevens' political opponents named it the 'Tapeworm Railroad' for its meandering nature. The road bed wandered around the mountains touching many of Stevens' properties and greatly extending the length of the road. Finally, after upwards of a million dollars had been spent, the funds were shut off and no track was ever laid on the bed.

[Today there is a railroad going through Hamiltonban, currently owned by CSX. The tracks for the current railroad were laid in the 1880s. In many areas, particularly between Gettysburg and Fairfield, the current railroad used the bed laid out for the Tapeworm Railroad, but in more mountainous areas, such as around Jack's Mountain, the Tapeworm bed was not used because the grades were too steep and the radius of turns was too small to be suitable for railroad use in the 1880s. The Tapeworm bed south of Orrtanna and the current CSX railroad tracks are shown on this large (2.7 Mb) map.]

"Further out, at the beginnings of Tom's Creek near Kepner's Knob, lies Snyder's Cemetery. Quite lacking in care, many of the stones are without names, just plain stone. One of the stone markers has Elizabeth Snyder, born 1700, and another, Nancy Mackley...

"...A very dominant feature of the Fairfield area is

#### Jack's Mountain

"Only a few miles southwest of Fairfield rises one of the larger mountains in the lower Adams County area, called Jack's Mountain, a part of the South Mountain range. Much local history occurred on the slopes, at the foot of, and in the valley adjoining Jack's Mountain. Its name apparently came from a local settler by the name of Jack.

[The Adams County Historical Society records show that James Jack was an early tavern keeper in Hamiltonban Twp., being licensed to sell liquor from 1769 through 1773. He died December 23, 1779. His will was proved on September 8, 1780 in what was then York County. His will named John Jack and Benjamin Reed of Hamiltonban Twp as executors. He left a wife, Agnes, 2 sons, John and Andrew, and 7 daughters, Elizabeth, Jean Wilkey, Agnes Kenahan/Kernahan, Ellaey Reed, Sarah Reed and Easter/Esther/Hetty Wilson. Jack's Mountain may have been named for him or one of his descendants. His sons and their children moved away sometime after his death. There was no one named Jack in the 1802 assessment roll of property owners and single men in Hamiltonban Township.]

"One of the earliest land grants containing the name Jack's Mountain was issued in 1792 to Dr. James Crawford. This grant was for two land sections on top of Jack's Mountain totaling 41 1/2 acres, and joined together by a narrow land corridor. A probable explanation for this grant was the establishment of a base for the extraction of ores or minerals.

"Atop the southwest portion of Jack's Mountain, a Mr. Thompson mined low-grade copper ore which was not commercially profitable. This was the plight of a number of other copper mines in this vicinity. However, just west of Iron Springs, iron was successfully mined and smelted, and manufactured items,

such as stoves, were produced at Maria Furnace from 1826 to 1838.

"As with all mountains, this one got in the way of the people trying to get around. However, travel and transportation networks did develop to bring them together.

### Travel and Transportation

"The smaller creeks and rivers in southwestern Adams County were not noted as waterways of communication and travel, but instead supported the mills which ground the grain and sawed the logs into lumber. most travel was afoot or by horseback. By the 1750's some roads began to appear allowing wagons to haul grain to the mills and markets and also providing better means of transportation for the settlers. The roads were often the expansion of the dirt paths and trails established by the Indians and early traders and settlers. One road or path from Gettysburg headed southwest to Fairfield and then south and west to Waynesboro, and finally south to the Cumberland Gap. The newly developed roads aided not only travelers but also the settlers. Crops could be moved to market and mill with greater ease and the settlers could attend church.

"Perhaps the best way to portray the development of a road network would be to here quote some of the "Early Roads of Hamiltonban Township - York County" records to describe the petitions of the settlers for improvements in their roads.

"April 30, 1751 - Inhabitants of Hamilton Bane and Cumberland Twp ask for a road from `Williby's Gap' [later caller 'Nichols Gap', then `Monterey Gap,' the gap in South Mountain where highway PA-16 goes through the borough of Blue Ridge Summit] to the head branches of Rock Creek and then to intersection with the road from John Musshet's(?) to Yorktown.

"April 28, 1752 - Petition from Hamilton's Bann, Cumberland, Manallen and Straban etc., asks for a road from John Steel's "the nearest and best way the ground will admit of two Yorktown."

"Oct. 30, 1753 - Inhabitants of Hamiltonbans Bann and Cumberland twp. and adjacent parts say the great road lately laid out by Lancaster Court from Willougby's Gap in South Mountain to John Hamiltons is so "miery" it is impractical to bridge and keep it in repair. Ask it to be altered..."

### Excerpts from the History of Adams County

A book titled The History of Adams County by Samuel P. Bates was published in 1886. In it, Chapter XXXV, Hamiltonban Township, contains the following quotes. Again, notes not from this source are included in [brackets].

"The streams of Hamiltonban Township are McDowell's Run, forming part of its northern boundary, rising at the foot of Green Ridge, flowing west to a point near the line of Franklin County, thence north to a stream running parallel with the Gettysburg & Chambersburg Turnpike. The western fork of Little Marsh Creek rises on the eastern slope of Green Ridge and flowing east to Little Marsh Creek completes the northern boundary of the township. Middle Creek has its source just northwest of Mussleman Hill,

receives Carrol Creek near Singley's old mill, flows through Fairfield to its confluence with Mud Run, which stream is entirely native to the northeastern part of the township. Tom's Creek rises in the springs between Kepner's Knob and Jack's Mountain, flows in a torturous course east to the Landis farm, and thence south. In Liberty Township it receives Miney's Branch, which drains the Fountain Dale Valley. Hay's Run and main Creek drain Green Ridge Valley on the west, while hundreds of sparkling rivulets leap down the hills in every direction.

"The mountains include Jack's Mountain, Green Ridge, Musselman's Hill, McCarny's Knob, Kepner's Knob, Russell Hill, Sugar Loaf and the Headlight, all bold hills, rich in all that is picturesque, and wealthy in their copper ores. Mount Hope near Fairfield is a high hill: Mary's Hill is 1,490 feet; White Rock, 1,800, and Green Ridge, 2,000 feet above the Atlantic.

"The valleys of the township, particularly Fairfield Valley, contain many fertile farms, and even among the hills the industrious husbandman finds a soil which well repays cultivation.

[During the French and Indian war (1754-1763) Hamiltonban was on the frontier, and there was much bloodshed in the area, both by settlers and Indians. There were two well-documented captures in Adams County of settlers by Indian during these years. Mary Jemison, was abducted on April 5, 1758 by Indians from a farm near Gettysburg. Another well documented abduction was that of Richard Baird or Bard, son of early settler Archibald Bard, who operated a mill in Carroll's Delight near what is now Virginia Mills. Five days after his capture on April 13, 1758, he escaped, and two years later was able to ransom his wife from the Indians and return to his home in Hamiltonban. He was born in 1736 in Hamiltonban and died there in 1799.] Here is a photograph of the Baird home and mill on Mount Hope Road, probably taken in the late 1800s when the structures were still standing.

"In 1758 or 1759, about the time of the Jemison abduction, the settlers formed companies for the defense of the frontier. Mr. Seabrooks said, in 1855, that one of the Dunwoodie brothers killed an Indian above Virginia Mills, on Middle Creek, northwest of Fairfield, buried him there and marked the event on a tree. Crawford killed in Indian at the same time, but was so ashamed of what he considered to be a murder that he did not speak of it.

"Under date March 10, 1789, a petition was presented to the president and supreme council of the State of Pennsylvania, signed by Isaac Robinson, William Waugh, James Brice, William Miller, David Blyth and Ebenezer Finley, asking for a resurvey of "Carroll's Delight." This set forth that in 1741 Archibald Beard, John Withrow, James McGinley and Jeremiah Lochery purchased of Charles Carroll 5,000 acres, which were taken up and surveyed years before this purchase, but were subsequently found to be in Hamiltonban and Franklin Townships in Pennsylvania. The petition asked for a settlement of the question. In 1762 caveats were entered in the land office against granting warrants for these lands, whether in Hamiltonban or Franklin Townships...

"Hamiltonban, which, in early years, comprised Highland, Freedom and Liberty, is one of the original townships...

## Fairfield

"This village was surveyed in 1801 for Squire William Miller and named by him Millerstown. He built the first house here the same year, graded a few streets and alleys, and made a good effort to build up a little village. The venture was premature, for fully twenty-one years elapsed before progress beamed on the Squire's paper city. In 1822 the Maria Furnace was constructed and put in operation at this point; religious societies were organized and local industries began to expand; then a church building was erected, a school was established, and the substantial beginnings of a town were formed and the name changed. Even prior to 1822 there was some public spirit manifested here, for we find that Amos Maginley and James Ried were appointed as a committee to collect for the Savannah fire sufferers in 1820.

"A reference to the original [1802] assessment roll of the township points out authoritatively the names and trades of those who were here at the beginning of the village, and of many who have been identified with its progress.