

First Historical Events of Warren Township

The European history of Warren Township begins in 1774, under the colony of Pennsylvania. In that year, a small part of Warren Township was guaranteed to a Benjamin Chew, Esq. as part of a very large parcel in the southwest corner of what was then named "Archerstown" and later identified as parcel number 76. Therefore, Warren Township could count the year 1774 as its earliest historical date. This sector was the only location in our township surveyed prior to the Revolution, between the 1st and 3rd of November 1774. The original owner, Benjamin Chew, Esq., was a distinguished lawyer at Philadelphia, a Quaker immigrant among the men who created the first life insurance company in America (Presbyterian Ministers' Fund), in Philadelphia. Benjamin Chew, Esq. used bonds to reinforce the insurance contracts and he was also named Chief Justice of the Pennsylvania colony. In short, he was a person of the first consequence in Pennsylvania before the Revolution, greatly esteemed as a gentleman and for his knowledge of the law. He had a son also named Benjamin, equally respectable as his father, and several daughters. One daughter married a Philadelphia merchant, Mr. Nicklin. The senior Benjamin Chew had two brothers Samuel and John, both living in 1797.

(<http://www.mindspring.com/~shugotenshi/maclin702/pafn64.htm>). In addition, Benjamin Chew, Esq. was a member of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania and highly involved in the last of these Indian treaty meetings at Lancaster, on Wednesday, 11 August 1762.

(http://www.gbl.indiana.edu/archives/dockett_317/317_58a.html) . He obtained warrantee title of the 3246 acres, 11 perches on 20 August 1774. In addition to his involvement with the Indian treaty meetings, Benjamin Chew, Esq. was probably the Register-General for the Probate of Wills, in and for the County of Chester by 1768

(http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~duffy/reports/talley/rr01_003.htm) . He is later identified as the Register General at Reading in and for the County of Berks by 1771

(<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~mickey/georgchrist1770pg.html>) , and the Register-General for the Probate of Wills in York Pennsylvania by the time he received this large land tract (<http://homepages.rootsweb.com/~farmerie/ullrich/UlrichPetit.htm>). Given his extensive list of activities in the southern part of Pennsylvania and the fact that he built an impressive estate called Cliveden, at 6401 Germantown Avenue in Philadelphia, in the mid 1760's, it is quite likely that he never came north to actually see the property he possessed in this isolated corner of what would eventually become Bradford County (<http://www.newsmakingnews.com/lm7,1,02,harvardtoenronpt5.htm>) . This 3246 acres, 11 perches large "Archerstown" was subdivided from the start, but not occupied until the 19th Century. This would have seemed a relatively small tract of land to Benjamin Chew, Esq. His wife, Elizabeth, was the cousin of Joseph Turner, a merchant of the City of Philadelphia and partner in the firm of Allen and Turner. When he had died in 1783, his property holdings included an estate in Philadelphia, New Castle Co., Sussex and Morris Counties, and West New Jersey, Iron Tract; amounting to eleven thousand acres in total. Benjamin Chew, Esq. was the executor of his estate (<http://ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/pa/philadelphia/wills/willabstrbks.txt>) .

The first Pennsylvania title deed patent for this same "Archerstown" in what would later be Warren Township was issued to Samuel Meredith on 15 January 1801. Samuel Meredith was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1741, the son of merchant Reese Meredith, a native of Radnorshire,

Wales, and Martha (Carpenter) Meredith. After being educated privately in Philadelphia and Chester, Pennsylvania, Samuel Meredith joined his father's business in Philadelphia, "Meredith Sons". Prior to the American Revolution, Samuel Meredith was a signer of the famous "Non-Importation Resolutions" adopted in Philadelphia, on 7 November 1765. Samuel Meredith married Margaret Cadwalader (daughter of Dr. Thomas Cadwalader, born in 1748) on May 19, 1772. Together they had seven children. One daughter, Martha Meredith, married John Read, Jr., a lawyer and senator. One son, Thomas Meredith, was also a lawyer and helped manage his father's estate. General Meredith was evidently an owner of property in Trenton as early as 1770, as he was a vestryman of St. Michael's parish in 1770, and again 1807-12. Meredith was the owner of "Otter Hall," an estate on the Delaware two miles below Trenton. The place was advertised for sale in the *Pennsylvania Journal*, February 7, 1774. He attended the Provincial Convention as a deputy from Philadelphia, in 1775. During the Revolutionary War, Meredith served as an officer of the 3rd Battalion of Associators, also known as the "Silk Stocking Company." He served with distinction in the battles of Trenton, Princeton, Brandywine, and Germantown. Because of his outstanding service, he was promoted to brigadier-general of the Pennsylvania militia, on April 5, 1777. He resigned from the army in 1778, and returned to his business. In 1780 he and his brother-in-law, George Clymer, each gave £20,000 to carry on the war. Between 1778 and 1783, Meredith served three terms in the Pennsylvania Colonial Assembly, and in 1786 was elected to the Congress of Confederation, in which he served until 1788. After serving less than a year as surveyor of the Port of Philadelphia, Meredith accepted an appointment as the first Treasurer of the United States, at the urging of George Washington, a close personal friend. He began his duties on September 11, 1789 and served until his health and financial matters required his retirement on October 31, 1801, within the year that he received title to this same tract of land in the northeast corner of what would become Bradford County. During his tenure in office, Meredith lent the government more than one hundred thousand dollars, a sum that was never repaid. Upon his retirement Samuel Meredith returned to his estate in Wayne County, Pennsylvania and managed his lands there, but there is no clear record that he ever visited "Archerstown" here in the township. The property included the area now occupied by Christiansen Tires. It is not likely that any of the Samuel Meredith Letters and Documents now in the University of Delaware refer to this property because those documents date to the period of 1786 to 1798. Meredith died at his Wayne County estate, on 10 February 1817 (<http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/findaids/meredith.htm> and <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.com/~trenton/historyoftrenton/revolutionary.htm>).

Soon after the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, in November of 1768, the most valuable tracts of land were "assigned" to the friends of the Pennsylvania government, such as Benjamin Chew, Esq., to be held or leased to their faithful allies. This did not mean that settlement quickly followed. The Sullivan-Clinton campaign of 1779, against the Iroquois and their allies, the British, was not only a major campaign in the Revolution but also opened this region to settlement. The Iroquois, British and Loyalists had been terrorizing the northern frontier with raids at Cherry Valley, NY and Wyoming, PA that sent shockwaves through the colonies. General George Washington had developed a plan involving a three-way invasion of Iroquois Territory. One force was to start at Easton, PA and move northward to Wyoming, PA then up the Susquehanna River to Tioga Point (Teaoga Diahoga). The second force was to leave Albany, NY, proceed westward along the Mohawk River, then south along the Susquehanna River to join the main

army at Tioga Point. A third force was to leave Fort Pitt (Pittsburgh) and proceed north to Geneseo, NY where they would join the other two forces. Washington also planned that this invasion would establish an American claim to what was then the western frontier. General Sullivan was appointed to head the army coming from Easton. His forces marched into Wyoming, gathered troops and supplies, and loaded onto 214 boats that poled up river. Additional supplies went by land. When the army reached Tioga Point (near Athens, PA), they erected Fort Sullivan on the spot where the Susquehanna and Chemung Rivers were about 100 yards apart. General Clinton met a group from Sullivan's army at Union (Endicott, NY) and moved down to Fort Sullivan, making a combined force of 5000 soldiers.

On 26 August 1779, these combined forces moved westward up the Chemung River toward Newtown (Lowman, NY). There was a hotly contested battle, which resulted in a major colonial victory. Sullivan decided to not attack Fort Niagara because of his ailing men, lack of equipment and the fact that the army coming from Pittsburgh did not show up. Clinton's forces returned to Albany, NY and Sullivan set up a new Fort Reed in Elmira, NY. Later, both forts, Reed and Sullivan, were destroyed as the army returned to Wyoming, but Native American and British resistance had been permanently weakened and this territory was opened for colonial settlement. Thus, except for the earlier 1774 parcel identified as "Archerstown," our earliest Warren Township warrantee records, granted through Pennsylvania, date to the period of 1784 through 1787. After 1784, the rest of the land area of Warren Township, including parts of Windham, Orwell Pike and sections of Susquehanna County, was divided into 75 parcels of roughly 400 acres each. Only two parcels were not warranted until the 19th century. Parcel number 68, having 326 acres and 44 perches, was first warranted to Benjamin Buffington on 27 October 1828 and parcel number 69, having 206 acres, 101 perches, was first warranted to Samuel Wheaton on 26 September 1828. It appears from their location that these two parcels had been originally drawn up as one and were later subdivided to accommodate a sale to those two parties. The northwest part of the Bradford County was also opened to Pennsylvania settlement following the purchase of 1784, but none settled in Warren Township before 1798.

Additional information concerning the Delaware:

D. G. Brinton, *The Lenape and Their Legends*, 1885.

Eli Lilly, *Walam Olum or Red Score: The Migration Legend of the Lenni Lenape or Delaware Indians*, 1954.

W. W. Newcomb, Jr., *The Culture and Acculturation of the Delaware Indians*, 1956.

A. F. C. Wallace, *King of the Delawares: Teedyuscung*, 1949.

P. A. W. Wallace, *Thirty Thousand Miles with John Heckewelder*, 1958.

N. Z. Dobrin, *Delawares*, 1963.

Additional information concerning Samuel Meredith:

Dictionary of American Biography. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961. Vol. 6.

Graham, S. M. Meredith. A Short History of the Three Merediths, [n.d.]