

The Jenkin Jenkins Family Comes to Pennsylvania

The Jenkins Family of Gwynedd and neighboring townships is descended from Jenkin Jenkins, a Welshman, who came to this area about 1729. The family record in an old Welsh Bible which was formerly in the possession of John Jenkins of North Wales shows that Jenkin Jenkins was born in 1659 and died September 15, 1745 at the age of 86. Mary Jenkins, his wife, was born in 1690 and died November 27, 1764 at the age of 74 and their first son, John Jenkins was born on February 15, 1719, married Sarah Hawkesworth and he passed away in 1803. Other children of Jenkin Jenkins included Jenkin Jenkins, Jr. who married Mary Thomas, Mary Jenkins, unmarried, and Elizabeth Jenkins who was born in Hatfield Township and married John Hawkesworth. She died in April 22, 1812.

On November 17, 1730, Jenkin Jenkins purchased 350 acres of land from Joseph Tucker. This land was in what would later become Hatfield and Upper Gwynedd Townships, in Montgomery County, PA. We know that the land reached at least to the Cowpath Road and from the Montgomery Township line running to the road from Lansdale to Colmar (today's present Walnut Street).

Jenkin Jenkins settled on this land, and he was "of Hatfield" when he made his will in 1745, but we do not know the exact location of where he first settled in that township. In 1738 he had previously bought, from the proprietaries, the Penns, 357 acres of land on the Conestoga Creek in Earl Township, Lancaster County. These lands closely adjoined the Welsh settlers of Caernarvon and Brecknock Townships. As there were families with the name of Jenkins among them, it is likely that they may have been kinsman, and that Jenkin may have come over from Wales with some of those settlers—their arrival being about 1729 also.

John was the only son of Jenkin Jenkins who had a son who married and carried on the Jenkins family name. His brother Jenkin had no married son. John was a prominent and useful citizen and was assessor of Gwynedd Township as mentioned in the 1776 tax list. John inherited about 220 acres of his family's land that covered approximately the area between Line Street, Cowpath Road and Walnut Street to approximately the Upper Gwynedd Township line. He bought land in Gwynedd Township in 1746 that adjoined Lansdale and at that time built a log cabin on the site of the present Jenkins Homestead. The first part of the present homestead was added to the cabin in the 1770s as the family grew and needed a larger house. The Revolutionary War intervened and the second section of the house was completed about 1787 after the old log cabin was torn down.

John died in 1803 and had eight children: Levi, Sarah, Elizabeth, Mary, Edward, John Jenkins II, Anna and Jesse.

John Jenkins II then occupied the Homestead. He was born in 1742 in Hatfield Township and died in July 13, 1805. He and his wife, Elizabeth Walker Lukens had six children. Elizabeth was born in 1751 and died November 30, 1843. She lived in the "Mansion" for 67 years until her death. Their six children were John III, Edward, Owen, Jesse, Sarah and Elizabeth.

John Jenkins III occupied the Homestead next and it remained in the family until about 1871 when it was sold. John was born August 5, 1783 in Gwynedd Township and died October 5, 1880. He married Ann Todd, who was born September 28, 1784 and died August 18, 1865. He and his wife had six children: Naomi, Charles, Ann, Silas, John and Milton.

When the house was sold, the Jenkins family was no longer involved with the property. It had numerous residents over the years and eventually was converted into apartments. It was

going to be torn down but, at the request of a group of Lansdale residents who formed the Lansdale Historical Society, it was purchased by the Borough and the society started the restoration of the property.