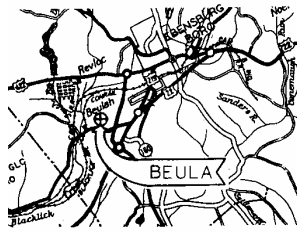


BEULA (on the BLACKLICK)

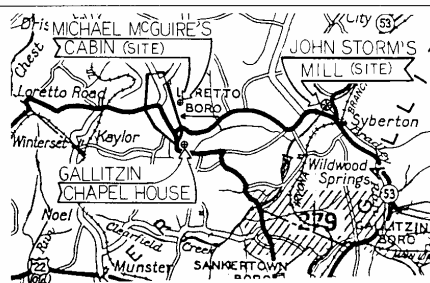
The mystery of this "lost village" has inspired almost two centuries of speculation. Summer visitors to Ebensburg's Victorian spas rarely failed to hire a carriage to picnic in its ruins and meditate on the ephemeral nature of human endeavor. Morgan John Rhys in the summer of 1797 brought over



100 "professionals and mechanics" up on the mountain and, rejecting the site chosen by his advance party, mounted the organized assault of his Cambrian Company on the forests of the Blacklick three miles to the west. His surveyor laid out a town one mile square with 395 acres reserved for public buildings, schools, a library, a seminary and 200 more for a religious society. Calculated optimism presided over its birth and streets were named Truth, Zeal, Hope, Joy and Free. Town lots were acquired by famous people like Joseph Priestly, the discoverer of oxygen, and M. Boudinot, Master of the U.S. Mint. Morgan John campaigned tirelessly for his Beula and even succeeded in having it named first polling place and US Post Office in Cambria County, but morale crumbled under the brute labor of coaxing tillable land from rocky forest soil and Beula slipped into the shadow of Ebensburg where the Welsh vanguard was still struggling.

Beula periodically stirs the imagination of scholars and history buffs. The BBC featured its story in a 1980s television documentary. Today a roadside marker stands by an obscure lane through the woods to its lonely cemetery. Nothing else can be found.

THE NORTHERN SETTLEMENTS



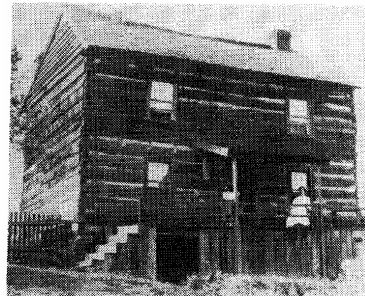
These lie east of the Continental Divide along the headwaters of the West branch of the Susquehanna and its tributary creeks, the Clearfield and Chest. They originate with Irish and German Catholic settlers entering via the old Kittanning Path route from Frankstown.

MCGUIRE'S SETTLEMENT

There is no more stirring image in the history of Cambria County than that of the Revolutionary patriarch, Captain Michael McGuire, coming over the mountain at the age of 71 years with a string of grown sons, Cornelius, Luke, Richard, Peter and Michael, to found a new home for his family at the very limits of our infant nation.

Long before the War for Independence, McGuire had come from his native Maryland (where he recruited and commanded a company of the Fredrick militia in 1776) to hunt and built a lodge above Ashville about 1768. On later visits he explored higher waters of the Clearfield Creek and in 1785 bought 1400 acres (now Loretto) which he occupied with his family in 1788. He encouraged others to join him and in the first census year, 1790, Bradleys, Ashcrafts, Storms and Burgoons were recorded at his settlement. Sensitive to the spiritual needs of his community, he set aside livestock and lands in excess of 200 acres for a church, cemetery, and support of a resident priest.

His legacy created a unique milestone in the history of Roman Catholicism in America: the arrival in 1799 of Prince Demetrius Gallitzin, first priest wholly educated and ordained in America, to found the first Catholic parish between the Appalachians and the Mississippi.



Michael McGuire's Farmhouse

Captain McGuire's original cabin stood on the hill near the clubhouse of the present Immergun Golf Course and the log barn and house of the traditional homestead of later years lay just below there on the Syberton road.

STORM'S MILL

The Syberton road starts just behind St. Michael's Church in Loretto and follows the water downstream through old McGuire land to where Bradley's Run comes down from Gallitzin to join the Clearfield Creek. Here in 1792 John Storm built a small grist mill, thought to be the first in Cambria County, which contributed much to the viability of the settlement's precarious early economy. The mill operated for many decades, later as Siebert's Mill from which the name of the locality, Syberton Station, comes.

ST. JOSEPH'S MISSION CHURCH (at HARTS SLEEPING PLACE.)



St. Joseph Mission Church 1830

A generation after white settlements had been founded at Loretto, Ebensburg, Croyle's Mill, Johnstown, etc., much of Cambria County remained pathless, wilderness occupied by frontier farmers "improving" isolated forest homesteads. Serving the spiritual needs of these pioneers required "outreach" or "mission" churches based on better-established town churches. The Welsh Protestant community at Beula-Ebensburg had outposts at Bethel (1833) and Salem (1839) which are still visible. The earliest of these, however, is the Carrolltown Benedictine wilderness mission of Father Peter Henry Lemke, OSB, built and blessed in 1830 by Prince Gallitzin. This old log church stands today a monument to pioneer spirit in general and is the cradle of rural Roman Catholicism in northwestern Cambria County. It is laden with lore and legend. Here lies John Weakland who rose to defend Prince Gallitzin against angry parishioners. Tradition holds that when Weakland's body was transferred to St. Joseph's Cemetery his right arm which wielded a fence rail in defense of Prince Gallitzin was preserved incorrupt, in odor of sanctity. One need not be Catholic to experience the magic of St. Joseph's; its splendid isolation and simplicity amid the "new" strip mine wilderness of the Allegheny will not fail to touch the visitor, whatever his religious persuasion. It is the oldest surviving house of worship in Cambria County.

WILDERNESS INDUSTRY

Most primitive industry on the frontier was devoted to very immediate and basic needs: grinding grain, sawing lumber, tanning hides, etc. Mills lined the streams which provided water power. There was at least one important exception to this: the smelting of metals, mainly iron and lead. Clearing forests for tillable land made charcoal available as a byproduct to fire the "furnaces" which were a notable feature of the pre-industrial landscape. Cambria County has an exceptionally fine example: Eliza Furnace (see page 1).

Look for the Markers

Most of the sites listed in this folder are identified on-the-ground by standard markers placed by the Cambria County Historical Society. They are also well known to local people. Watch for the markers