

THE ROYER FAMILY

Ironmasters of Blair County

PENNSYLVANIA



SPRINGFIELD FURNACE

(Civil War Days)

HISTORICAL SKETCH

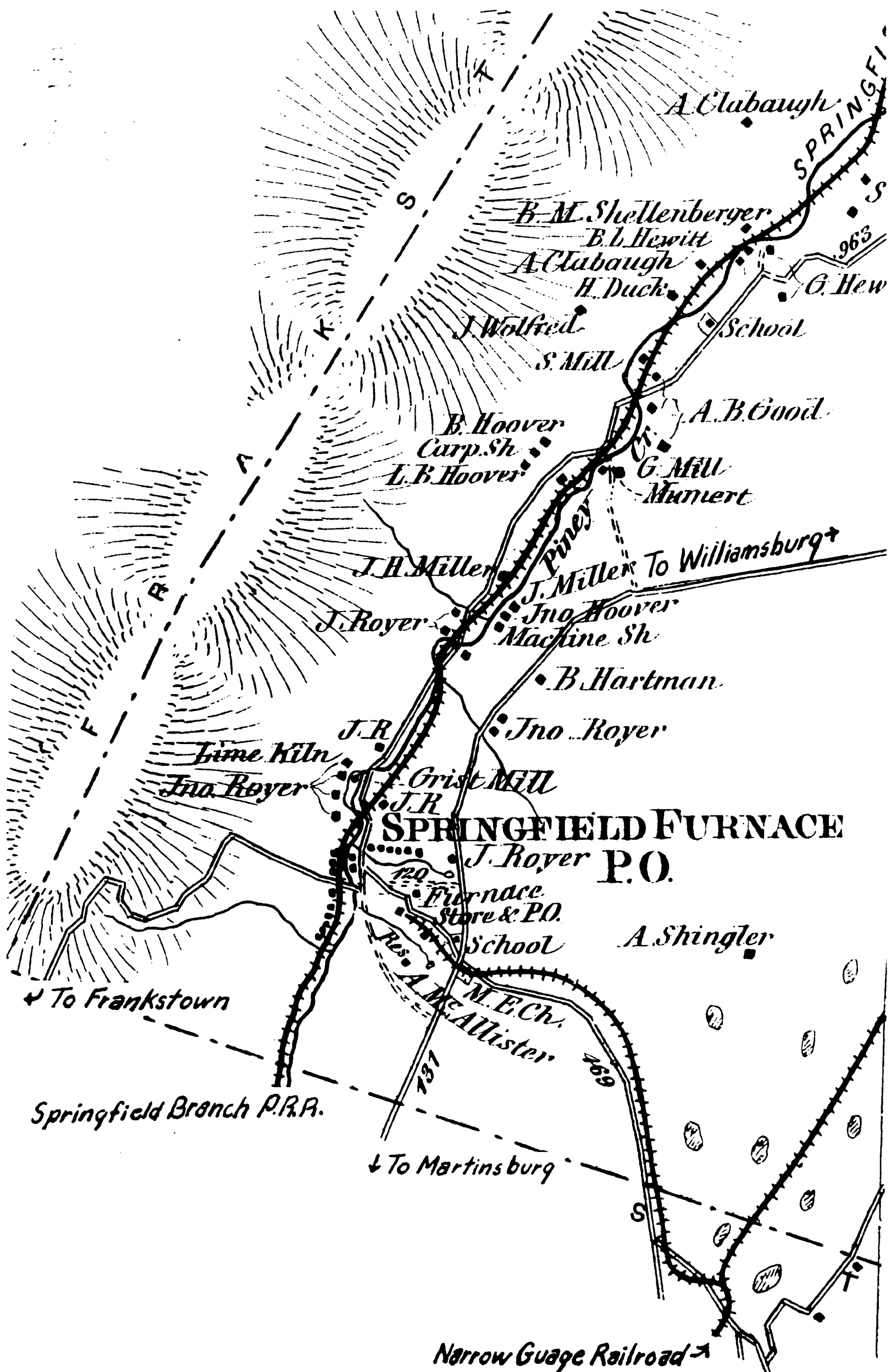
OF

SPRINGFIELD FURNACE, COVE FORGE
AND FRANKLIN FORGE



by W. RAY METZ and
FLOYD G. HOENSTINE

1951



Map showing a section of Woodbury Township, Blair County, Penna.
From Pomeroy's Atlas of Blair and Huntingdon Counties, 1873.

A Brochure
COMMEMORATING A VISITATION
BY THE
*Blair County Chapter, Pennsylvania Society
Sons of the American Revolution and
Members of the Daughters of the American Revolution
And Friends to the*
SAMUEL ROYER HOMESTEAD
*At Royer, Woodbury Township
Blair County, Pa.*

ON THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 1951

Reception for New Members

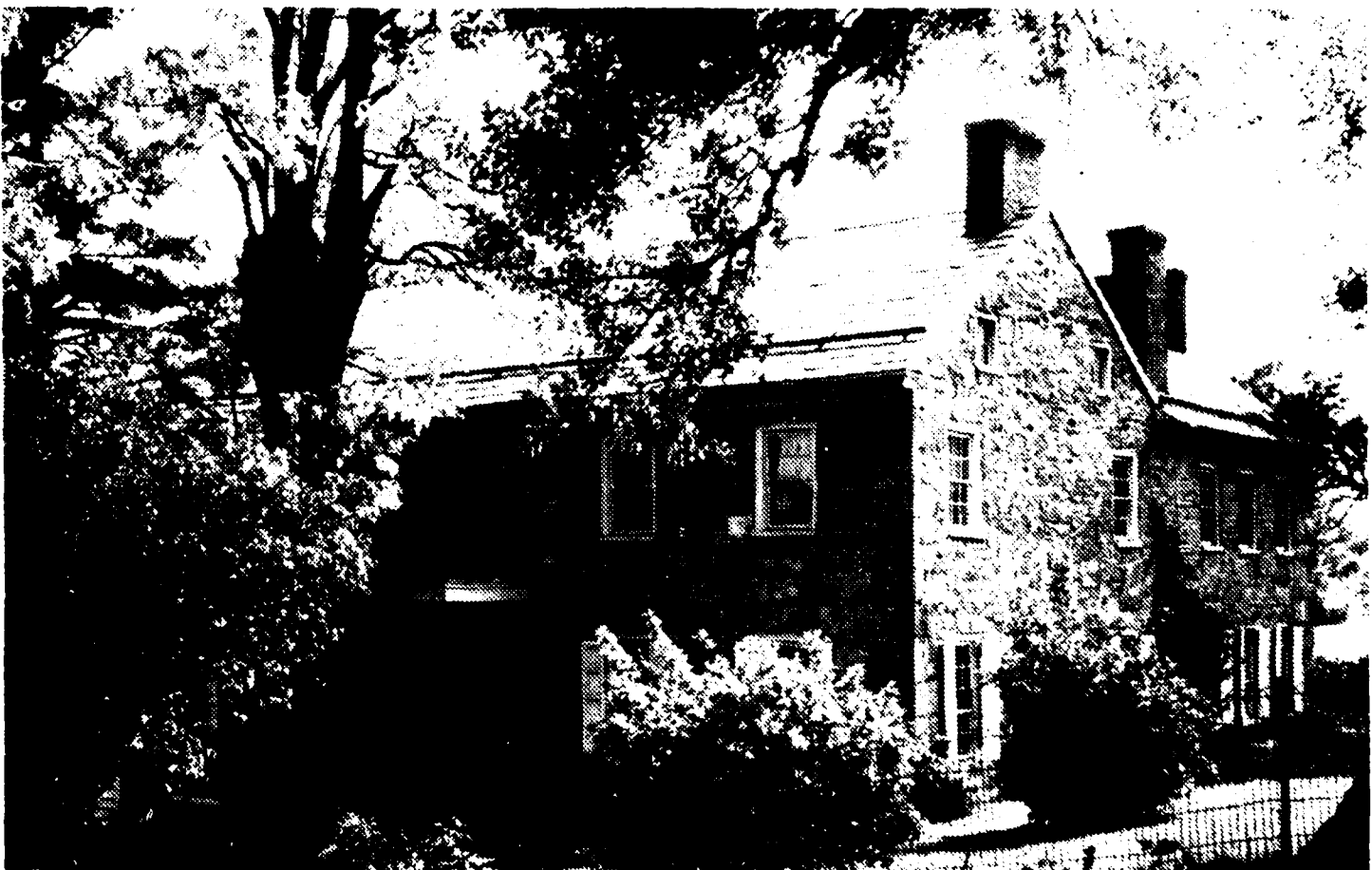


Photo by Claar Studio

SAMUEL ROYER HOMESTEAD

Life at the Furnace, Forge and the Forest

By W. Ray Metz

The remains of the past are rapidly diminishing with the changes of our American culture and the only things that still linger are the beautiful memories of the days gone by.

Scattered here and there over the wooded hills and valleys of central Pennsylvania, and especially in the valley of the Blue Juniata River and its tributaries, may still be found the ruins of many an old iron furnace or forge. Each is an interesting ruin. Although today they are merely piles of large stones or portions of old foundation walls just peeping through coverings of underbrush and briars, making breeding places for snakes and insects, these places were, about the beginning of the nineteenth century, the scenes of great activity. They were the centers of communities where the ironmasters and their dependents lived, loved, and labored. There the pioneer ironmakers of Pennsylvania, toiling hard, produced iron needed for manifold purposes. Thus, they played their part in laying the foundation of a great commonwealth.

Scarcely a trace is left of these once busy establishments — no longer can be heard the splashing of the water over the great water wheels or the thundering of the forge hammers. No longer can be seen the clouds of black smoke and red dust billowing from the furnace stacks or the sparks and flames spitting from the cupuloes. Gone are the bustling offices, stores, blacksmith shops and casting sheds, the charcoal sheds, the dams, and most of the little log or stone cottage homes of the workers.

Gone, also, are the familiar sounds of the forest, the thud of the axes, the crashing of the great trees, the loud call of the teamsters, the snap of the teamsters' long leather whips, the tinkling of their bow bells, the screech of their wooden axles, the whine of their brakes, and the smell of burning wood. Gone, too, are the workers and the ironmasters themselves. All have disappeared from the furnace, forge and forest, and today they are just another memory in my garden of beautiful memories.

In the spring of 1811, Daniel Royer of Franklin County and John Royer of Huntingdon County, ironmasters, came to Woodbury township, Huntingdon County, in search of a site to establish an iron plantation. They found a suitable location about three miles below Williamsburg on the south bank of the Juniata River and purchased of John Canan and Margery, his wife, six parcels of land by deed dated December 20, 1811, containing 2,113 acres and the three major necessities for a successful forge, viz; a nearby source of pig iron, water power and fuel. Here they established their plantation and named it Cove Forge. This forge, when completed, had two hammers and four fires, viz; three refineries and one chafery.

Bar iron was the principal product of this forge, and to transport it to Pittsburgh, the main iron market, involved an expense of \$20 to \$40 per ton.

Cove Forge continued in operation seventy-four years and employed about twenty-five to thirty men steadily.

From the time cast iron was first made in the fourteenth century or earlier, some process had to be devised for refining it. Thus, refinery forges came into existence. Like the bloomeries and blast furnaces, the refinery forges of Pennsylvania were patterned after those of England and the methods employed were English. Pig iron in rough bars from five to six feet long and about six inches wide was used. Two or three were put into the first hearth called the "refinery", one end being placed in the charcoal fire. As the ends softened under the heat of the blast in the deep fire pot, the portions of the bars outside the fire were pushed in. The "finers" worked the mass with long iron bars into a lump called a "half-bloom". This process was similar to that of making "blooms" at the bloomeries. The mass was slung by

means of hooks and tongs from the hearth and placed under a weighty hammer driven by a water wheel in order to refine it or to hammer out its impurities. The first process in the fire had done much to drive out the carbon. The half bloom, placed in the "refinery" once more and heated to a bright red color, was worked under the hammer again, this time into an "ancony" — a flat, thick bar with a rough knob on each end. These were sometimes sold in the market as bars of commerce. But more often, the "ancony" was reheated at another hearth called the "chafery" and worked under the hammer into long bars at the same forge. These bars were then cut into convenient lengths, and were ready for sale to blacksmiths, locksmiths, and others to be made into finished products of various kinds. The finished bars varied in length, width, and thickness. Often they were drawn about fourteen feet long, two inches wide, and one half inch thick; others were drawn several feet long and one inch or two inches square.

The forge hammer or hammers were massive. Each hammer head was of a heavy piece of wrought or cast iron weighing several hundred pounds. It was mounted on an oak beam and usually ran parallel to the water wheel shaft, the trunnions of which caught the helve or oak beam a little distance behind the hammer head. The foundation of timber and stones bore the weight of the heavy strokes on the resounding anvil. Water wheels measuring twenty-five or more feet in diameter furnished the power for the hammers and bellows which furnished the blast for the "fires".

Skilled men worked at the hammers and at the hearths. The iron was first worked by the "finers". The technique of swinging the half-bloom to the hammer and back to the hearth required much strength and practice. The hammermen, likewise, were experienced. It required no little degree of strength to draw the bars to exact given sizes. In addition to the three or four skilled workers, a few laborers and perhaps one or two apprentices completed the number who worked at each forge.*

For many years when the writer was a small boy, George Schell, better known as "Old Corkey", was the general handy man around my father's Hardware Store in Williamsburg, and it is to him that I am indebted for many wonderful tales of life on Tussey Mountain and in the forest when Cove Forge was in blast. His father, John Schell, worked for Mr. Royer, and lived on a small farm carved out of the virgin forest, far up on the west side of Old Tussey in what is now known as the Little Loop. It was Corkey who explained to me how the mountain was laid off in sections, called wood lots, and how one or more of these lots were allotted to each chopper or group of choppers; or, if a man had several grown sons to a family, to cut and rank cord wood. They were paid by the cord, usually in trade, at the company store. A cord is a pile of wood eight feet long, four feet wide, and four feet high, or one hundred twenty-eight cubic feet.

In looking over an old ledger of Mr. Royer's, I found the following interesting facts about the cost of living in 1813 and 1814, the depression years of the War of 1812: Hauling wood, 13½¢ per cord; coaling wood, 40¢ per cord; flour, \$4.40bbl; fresh beef, .036 lb.; bacon, 11¢ lb.; butter, 13½¢ lb.; salt, 3.25 per bu.; wheat, 1.12½ per bu.; eggs, .37½ per doz.; coffee, .45 per lb.; whiskey, 1.00 per gal.; nails, .15 per lb.; bar iron, .06 per lb.; window glass 8 x 10, .14; rifle gun, 14.80; coffins, 2.00 to 6.00 each; milch cow, 12.00; making coal baskets, .53 to .60.

As cash was a very scarce article in the early part of the 19th century, most of the business was transacted with orders. If one of the men working for Mr. Royer had any business with the Doctor, Undertaker, Preacher, or Priest, or any other business man, he paid them with an order in Mr. Royer's store, where they could

*Pennsylvania Iron Manufacture in the Eighteenth Century Pages 84 and 85

be exchanged for merchandise to be charged to the account of the man who gave the order. Some of the prices remain little changed today.

After the wood was properly ranked, tallied, and sufficiently seasoned, it was hauled to the Charcoal hearth where the colliers took possession and transformed it into charcoal.

Many of these old coal hearths can be seen on the local mountains and ridges today. They are about 25 feet to 40 feet in diameter, and perfectly level with a fair road leading to them from the main forest road. The wood was piled in a round conical pile about 12 feet high and 20 to 30 feet in diameter with a flue in the center. Over the whole is placed a cover of turf or charcoal dust and soil. The combustion of the wood is conducted from above downward and from the exterior towards the center. At the sides of the heap are holes for the admission of air, the number and size of which are a matter of importance. The first or "sweating" process lasts three or four days, during which the cover becomes moist with condensed water. The openings around about the base of the pile are then covered and a series of holes are made about half way from the top of the heap. As the smoke and flame ceases to issue from these, they are closed and others are made lower down until the whole has been burned. The tarry products collect at the bottom and are drawn off by means of gutters or pipes. One cord of wood usually made about 30 bushels of charcoal.

When all the watery and other volatile matter was removed and the finished charcoal was taken to the Forge to be used in refining the pig iron from the furnaces in Etna or Springfield.

The Charcoal Burners and Colliers lived in little log cabins near their work so as to be handy in case of fire breaking through the earth covering. They worked 12 to 14 hours a day and six days a week at \$6.00 a week, usually going down to the settlement on Saturday night to see their families, take a weekly bath (whether they needed it or not), have their clothes mended and washed, and lay in a new supply of grub for the next week — usually home made bread, salt fitch, beans, black strap molasses, and twist tobacco. They did their own cooking in their little log cabins.

As the charcoal was very light they used very large wagons drawn by 4 or 6 horses or mules to deliver it from the mountain to the valley. The men who drove the teams were experts in their line, and were very proud of their outfits. They could guide their horses with their voices, as well as their reins. The crack of their long leather whips and their cheery Gee and Haw could be heard for a quarter of a mile. The horses were well fed, and their well curried coats shone like a seal-skin. The harnesses were always kept well oiled and polished, and the metal parts sparkled like silver and gold in the sunlight. The harness was made of 5 or 6 inch leather straps and very heavy. The broad breeching and large decorated housings usually worn over the collar and hames almost completely covered the horses. In the summer the horses were covered from their ears to their tails with heavy leather fly nets.

The two wheel horses usually had bow bells attached to their hames, and these bells could be heard long before the team hove in sight through the forest, and people living along the road could tell whose team was coming by the sound of the bells.

These wagons were made entirely by hand — the wheel usually 5 or 6 feet high with four-inch treads. The large hubs made of gum wood turned on a home made lathe, operated by foot power. The spokes, made of white oak or ash, were split and shaved by hand, one at a time. The rims, or fellows, and the hounds were sawed by hand out of three inch white oak planks. The axle trees and bolsters were

made of hickory, and the beds of lynn. All this lumber had to be well seasoned, usually cut a year ahead, and carefully piled and stuck to dry.

The beds were very long, deep, and wide; high at both ends, and low in the middle. After the wheel-wrights had finished their part, the wagons were taken to the blacksmith shop to be ironed, and then to the painter to be finished. All these mechanics were really artists in their line of work, and any person familiar with these old coal wagons could tell what smith had ironed them by the idiosyncrasies each displayed in the fashioning of his irons.

On the end of the tongue was a large peculiarly shaped hook, or clevis, to which the lead and second teams were hitched. The irons, generally wrought in some odd pattern, often extending more than half way back on the tongue to keep the horses from cribbing. The same design would be carried out on the single and double tree frizzens, side braces, the end gate and tool box hinges and latches, and on the rubber and brake levers. Some of the wagons had covers on the end of the hubs, called sand caps, to keep the sand out and the linchpin in. A mixture of pine tar and tallow was used for axle grease, and small wooden bucket or firkin of this mixture usually hung from the rear axletree.

In 1815, four years after building Cove Forge, John Royer and his brother Daniel purchased a large tract of land on Piney Creek, called Springfield, where they had found the four major necessities for the manufacture of pig iron, viz; ore, limestone, water power and fuel.

Here they established a small village. They built a furnace, opened an ore mine and a limestone quarry. They built a number of small cottages for the workers, a store, a saw mill, and grist mill and etc., buildings usually found on a successful iron plantation.

This furnace was built in the form of a truncated pyramid of stone. Built into the side of a small hill in order that the ore, limestone flux, and charcoal could be put into the furnace at the top, it was an impressive sight when in blast. The intermittent roar of the forced blast could be heard a long distance away. From the top of the furnace stack a stream of sparks was occasionally emitted as the flames rose and fell. At night the almost smokeless flames cast a lurid glare upon the sky, visible for miles around, which illuminated the surrounding buildings. Within the main casting house or casting shed as it was called, which was built directly in front of the furnace, the "mysteries" of casting were carried on. Here the molten metal was run from the hearth into the waiting molds of scorched and blackened sand. Creaking wagons drawn by teams of horses hauled the iron ore up the furnace road. From the "bank", the fillers carried their baskets of ore, limestone and charcoal across the bridge to the furnace top. Pig iron was the chief product of the blast furnace, although pots, pans, kettles, stove-plates and fire-backs were also cast.*

The firm of Royer and Royer was kept busy much of the time casting ten plate wood stoves, so-called for the reason that it required ten plates to make a complete stove. This furnace was abandoned in 1885.

On June 14, 1820, Samuel Royer, a son of Daniel, purchased a large tract of land at the junction of Piney Creek and the Juniata River, and built a forge which he named Franklin Forge after his native county. The products of this forge were similar to those of Cove Forge, and the pig iron was obtained from Springfield Furnace, Canoe Furnace, and Juniata Furnace. Mr. Royer operated Franklin Forge until 1843 when he sold it to Elias Hoover of Williamsburg and Daniel H. Royer of Franklin Forge.

*Pennsylvania Iron Manufacture in the Eighteenth Century Page 33

ENSIGN DANIEL ROYER AND HIS DESCENDANTS

	Children	Born	Died	Married	To
	{ David Royer b. Oct. 16, 1790 d. m. to	{ David			
	{ Samuel Royer, Esq. b. July 10, 1792 d. Sept. 3, 1856 m. 1816 to Sarah Provines	{ Daniel H. Royer Jane Elizabeth Royer Henrietta P. Royer Dr. Benjamin F. Royer Lucy P. Royer Sarah Catherine Royer	1818 1883 1820 1911 1822 1898 1825 1865	(Single) 1838 1840 1851 1846	Dr Robert Hamill Arch. McAllister Martha McCahan J. Sewell Stewart
Ensign Daniel Royer son of Capt. Samuel & Catherine Lampshear b. Apr. 27, 1762 nr. Waynesboro, Pa. d. Mar. 26, 1838 Nr. Waynesboro, Pa.	{ (Second Marriage) m. Sept. 22, 1835 to Mrs. Martha McNamara	{ Newton Penn Royer Dr. Samuel M. Royer Asbury Patton Royer Anna Martha Royer	1913 1836 1838 1921 1841 1927 1846 1905	1857 1871 1867 1878	Dr. John Fay Carrie Kemp Charlotte Nicodemus Henriette Claybaugh Eldon W. Hartman
	{ Elizabeth Royer b. Dec. 2, 1794 d. Mar. 13, 1868 m. Mar. 23, 1826 to David Good	{ Dr. Daniel R. Good Catherine Good Anna Elizabeth Good Aaron B. Good Mary Rebecca Good Susannah Hadessa Good	1829 1909 1830 1915 1832 1868 1834 1903 1838 1892 1840 193	1859 (Single) Myron Knapp (Single) (Single) (Single)	Eliza B. Houtz
	{ Mary Royer b. July 25, 1796 d. m. 1819 to Geo. Schmucker	{ John G. Schmucker Samuel R. Schmucker Martin L. Schmucker Catherine R. Schmucker Ellen Schmucker Elizabeth Schmucker Melissa Schmucker	1825 1827 1906 1832 1900	1848 1850 1840	Sarah Ker Patience Defenbaugh Robert R. McKee Samuel Wampler
	{ John Royer b. July 14, 1798 d. Nov. 21, 1885 (Single)				
	{ Jacob Royer b. Apr. 28, 1800 d. (Single)				
Married Catherine Stoner dau. of Abraham & Mary Miller on. 1789 b. Nov. 9, 1769 in Franklin Co., Pa. d. May 7, 1858 Nr. Waynesboro, Pa.	{ Susan Royer b. Aug. 23, 1803 d. m. to Henry Reighart	{ Dr. E. Harry Reighart Susan Reighart		1859	Maggie S. Patton
	{ Rebecca Royer b. Nov. 5, 1805 d. m. 1831 to George W. Smith	{ Rev. Martin L. Smith James R. Smith George E. Smith Catherine Smith Samuel L. Smith	1833 1835 1838 1841 1843		
	{ Catherine Royer b. 1807 d. (Single)				
	{ Nancy Royer b. Feb. 14, 1812 d. m. to Peter Fahnestock				

HONORABLE JOHN ROYER AND HIS DESCENDANTS

	Children	Born	Died	Married	To
	Catherine Royer b. Mar. 10, 1807 d. Feb. 28, 1880 m. July 1, 1830 to Gen. Edw. Hamilton				
	John Boggs Royer b. July 9, 1808 d. m. Jan. 1, 1839 to Elizabeth Dennison				
Hon. John Royer son of Capt. Samuel & Catherine Lampshear b. Nov. 22, 1778 Nr. Waynesboro, Pa. d. Mar. 5, 1850 at Johnstown, Pa.	Samuel J. Royer b. Sept. 15, 1811 d. Aug. 28, 1883 m. Feb. 1, 1843 to Mary Ann Lowry	John L. Royer Catherine Royer		1873	John H. Dibert
	Theodore Royer b. May 30, 1813 d. Dec. 7, 1890 m. to Elizabeth Rodgers				
	Elizabeth Royer b. Apr. 16, 1815 d. 1861 m. to Dr. Chas. Pearson				
Married Jane Boggs dau. of John & Elizabeth Johnston on 1806 b. Mar. 13, 1784 at Franklin Co., Pa. d. Oct. 28, 1869 at Johnstown, Pa.	Alfred Royer b. July 23, 1817 d. Jan. 22, 1899 m. (Single)				
	Nancy M. Royer b. Aug. 7, 1819 d. 1901 m. to Wm. L. Shryock	Frank R. Shryock Emma Shryock James W. Shryock Addie L. Shryock George K. Shryock Robert Shryock Mary L. Shryock Samuel R. Shryock	1852	1878	Mary Gillam Jordon P. Pringle Leona Widderfield Ella Arnold
	Alexander Royer b. Mar. 9, 1822 d. m. to Elizabeth McClane				
	Sarah Jane Royer b. Mar. 7, 1824 d. m. to Robert Bingham	Mary Bell Bingham Jane R. Bingham William Bingham Catherine Bingham			W. R. Faxon J. B. Richards Robert W. Treese
	Andrew Francis Royer b. Nov. 12, 1825 d. m. to Carrie Livingston				
	Mary Letitia Royer b. Mar. 10, 1829 d. m. to Hon. C. L. Pershing	Bethed Pershing			Gordon Hartshorn

Royer Genealogy

by Floyd G. Hoenstine

EARLY ROYER ANCESTRY

The Royer family originated in the northern part of France, especially in the vicinity of Metz, from whence a number retired to the Palatinate in consequence of the Revocation. Sebastian Royer, the first to emigrate to America, was born near the city of Metz and in the year 1718 came to Pennsylvania where he settled near Brickersville, Lancaster County.¹

Sebastian Royer, a widower when he arrived in America, was accompanied by four sons; Emig, George (John George), Samuel and Henry. The Blair County members of this family are descendants through Samuel Royer, born 1711, whose wife's first name was Juliana.

CAPTAIN SAMUEL ROYER

Samuel Royer, son of Samuel and Juliana Royer, served as a Captain in the Cumberland County Militia during the Revolutionary War,² fought at Brandywine and wintered at Valley Forge where he was Commissary Officer. During that period he resided near Waynesboro, Cumberland County (Franklin County since 1784) where he took an active part in the development of the country.

As a resident of Washington Township (now Quincy Township) he was one of the signers of a petition presented at the 1784 Session of the General Assembly asking for the erection of a new county to be taken from the southwestern part of Cumberland County. He was commissioned on March 27, 1786, a Justice of the Peace for Washington Township in which capacity he served as Judge of the Courts for Franklin County.

Captain Samuel Royer was born in Lancaster County in 1738 and died in Franklin County in 1823. He married Catherine Lampshear in 1761. To this

1. Memorials of the Huguenots in America, by Rev. A. Stapleton, 1901.

2. Pennsylvania Archives, Fifth Series, Vol. 6, Pages 88, 90, 511, 514, 516, 531, 609



DANIEL ROYER HOMESTEAD
Near Waynesboro, Pa.

union were born daughters; Elizabeth and Catherine, and sons; Daniel, Samuel, John and Jacob. Samuel, Jr., married Susan Mack and continued to reside in Franklin County, while Daniel, John and Jacob came to Woodberry Township, Huntingdon County, (now Woodbury Township, Blair County) Pennsylvania. Daniel and John became noted ironmasters of this region while Jacob, who married Mary Keagy, became a successful farmer and tanner.

ENSIGN DANIEL ROYER

(See Chart page 8)

Daniel Royer (1762-1838) the first son of Captain Samuel and Catherine Royer was born April 17, 1762, and married about 1788 to Catherine Stoner (1769-1858) a daughter of Abraham Stoner who served during the Revolutionary War as a Private under Capt. Daniel Clapsaddle and under Col. James Johnston.¹

Daniel Royer served during the Revolutionary War as an Ensign, 5th Company, 1st Battallion, Cumberland County Militia, performing duty as a Ranger on the Frontier.²

The following story was supplied recently by Dr. B. Franklin Royer of Greencastle, Pa., who states that it was handed down by "word of mouth" through direct descendants and was related to the Cumberland Valley "Royer Clan" on the 2nd day of August, 1938, by Rev. J. G. Francis, editor and publisher of a history of Royers in America:

"During the severe winter at Valley Forge, 1777-78, Philadelphia Tories kept in touch with North New Jersey Tories and were continuously advising Howe's English Forces when herds were across New Jersey to furnish beef for Washington's Army at Valley Forge. Howe, in possession of this advice would then send out scouts to seize the herds and drive them to Philadelphia to be slaughtered for feeding the enemy forces in Philadelphia.

At this time of food scarcity and in desperation, Capt. Samuel Royer as Commissary Officer, ordered his young son Daniel (not yet sixteen) to bring his entire herd from the home farm at Five Forks to Valley Forge.

General Washington, on hearing of this generous gift and of young Daniel's accomplishment, sent for Capt. Samuel and son Daniel and thanked both for the Army and for the Government and for himself, and to show further appreciation, asked both to dine with him at his headquarters.

It is believed that Captain Royer's slave assisted Daniel in driving the herd through the Cumberland Valley to the crossing at John Harris' Ferry (Harrisburg) thence to the slaughter house hard by the Schuylkill near Valley Forge."

Daniel Royer acquired prominence during his early life, being elected County Commissioner for Franklin County in 1791 while yet under thirty years of age.³ He also served as a member of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania during the years 1794 and 1799, representing Franklin County,⁴ and on July 18, 1794, he was commissioned a Justice of the Peace.

In 1811, he and his brother, John Royer, purchased land in Huntingdon County, upon which Cove Forge was erected, and in 1814 another tract of land was purchased which became the site for Springfield Furnace. However, he continued to reside in the large stone house which he built on the south side of the highway where it crosses Antietam Creek a short distance east of Waynesboro, where he died March 26, 1838.

Upon Daniel Royer's return to his home in Franklin County, his interests in the iron industry were assumed and carried on by his sons: Samuel Royer (1792-1856) and John Royer (1798-1885), and by his sons-in-law David Good and George Schmucker.

1. American Revolutionary Soldiers of Franklin County, by Virginia S. Fendrick, 1944

2. Ibid.

3. Historical Sketch of Franklin County, by I. H. McCauley, 1878

4. The Pennsylvania Manual, 1947-48, Vol. 88

SAMUEL ROYER, ESQUIRE

Samuel Royer, son of Ensign Daniel Royer, was employed as a clerk, as manager of Cove Forge, supervised construction of Springfield Furnace in 1814 and became manager of Springfield Furnace in 1821. This furnace was owned solely by his father and he continued as manager for the heirs after his father's death in 1838. In 1820 Samuel Royer purchased land upon which he later erected Franklin Forge. From 1821 until his death in 1856 he occupied the mansion house at Springfield Furnace.

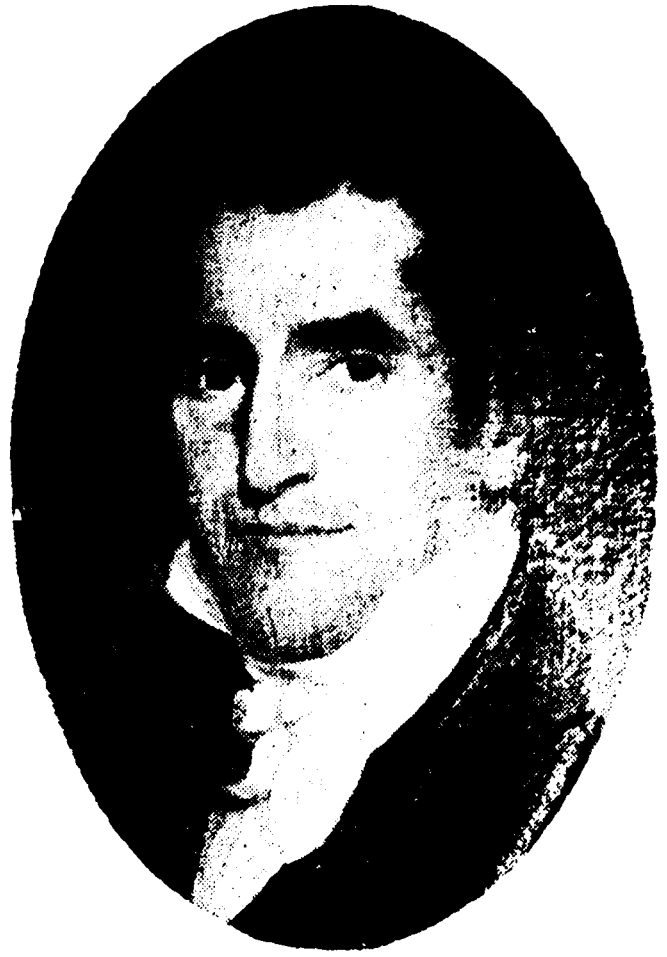
He was first married about 1816 to Sarah Provines (1796-1832) and their remains repose in the Royer cemetery on the slope of Lock Mountain, overlooking Springfield Furnace. He was married secondly to Mrs. Martha McNamara (1802-1881) a daughter of John Patton.

Samuel Royer occupied a prominent position in the affairs of his community, the county and the state. He was a member of the Royer Methodist Episcopal church and a guiding influence in its religious life.

His life work can be best recorded by quoting a letter dated Feb. 14, 1838, at Musical Fund Hall, Philadelphia, addressed to I. M. Porter, Esq., and now being preserved by Mrs. Royer P. Hartman, present occupant of the mansion house at Springfield Furnace, which reads as follows:

"Sir: — Having received a note from you, under date of the 13th inst; desiring a biographical sketch of my life; which I shall proceed to give you, in a condensed form; I was born in Franklin County, in this State; on the tenth (10th) day of July, 1792, with-in one mile of Waynesboro; where my parents continue to reside; my education was the common english school, and, quite limited. In the winter of 1810, I left home, for Centre County, and, secured a clerk-ship, at Iron-Works, in the vicinity of Bellefonte, Pa. During the summer of the same year, my employers relinquished the business, at that place. I then went to Cove Forge, Huntingdon County, within two miles of Williamsburg, on the banks of the river Juniata, where I remained, in the capacity of clerk, and, after-wards Manager, until 1814, when I went to superintend the building of Springfield Furnace, with-in five miles of Williamsburg; in 1815; I went to Williamsburg, and, commenced the mercantile business; about 1820, I was appointed Post Master of that place; in 1821, I discontinued the mercantile business, and, returned to Springfield Furnace, where I became interested in the establishment, and, continue to reside there; about the year 1823, I was appointed Post Master, at Springfield Furnace; in 1832, I was elected to the Legislature of Pennsylvania; and, previous to taking my seat, resigned the office of Post Master; after serving one session in the Legislature, and returned home; I addressed a letter to my constituents, for the honor conferred, and, declined being considered a candidate again; in 1834, I was again appointed Post Master., at Springfield Furnace, which situation I continue to hold; at two several state conventions, held at Harrisburg, Pa., on the 4th of March, 1836, by the Whig and Anti-masonic delegates, my name was placed on the Electors ticket, pledged to support Gen. Harrison; in August 1836, I was nominated for a member of the Convention, to revise and amend the Constitution of Pennsylvania; and, in November, following, was elected to a seat in the Convention, by a majority of upwards of eleven hundred: having thus given you a brief sketch, I remain, — Very Respectfully, Samuel Royer."

To the above we can only add, that Mr. Royer died at Springfield Furnace on the 3rd of September, 1856, and his obituary related at length his prominence and virtues, stating that he enjoyed "the confidence and friendship of those dependent upon him for they found him a man of kind heart and charitable disposition."



SAMUEL ROYER, ESQUIRE

Members of the Samuel Royer family who continued in the iron industry included Daniel H. Royer who was employed by his father as manager at Franklin Forge and became co-owner in 1843 with Elias Hoover, continuing until 1854 when they sold their interests to J. Sewell Stewart, a brother-in-law, husband of Lucy P. Royer.

Archibald McAllister, whose wife was Henrietta P. Royer, was employed at Springfield Furnace, and in 1873, was listed as "Manager Springfield Furnace and Superintendent of Springfield Mines."¹

Dr. Samuel M. Royer of Martinsburg operated Rebecca Furnace for one year and other members of the family have found employment more or less in the iron industry.

JOHN ROYER, BACHELOR

John Royer (1798-1885) a brother of Samuel Royer, Esq. and a son of Ensign Daniel and Catherine Royer was born in Franklin County, Pa., and came to Cove Forge at the age of 15 where he was employed by his uncle, John Royer, as a clerk.

Upon erection of Springfield Furnace in 1815 he transferred from the forge to the furnace where he was employed until 1821 when he and his brother-in-law, George Schmucker, purchased Cove Forge which they continued to operate until 1854 when Mr. Royer bought Mr. Schmucker's interest.

John Royer came into sole possession of Springfield Furnace about 1865 and from that date became one of the largest property owners in Blair County. His holdings in addition to Cove Forge and Springfield Furnace included several thousand acres of mountain lands and large holdings in farming lands. At the time of writing his will in Oct. 1872, he bequeathed direct \$185,000 to relatives, not including library, furniture, mansion house and an anticipated residue.



JOHN ROYER, BACHELOR

In 1882, it was written that he "is now close upon the eighty-fifth milestone in the journey of life, and yet he is so hearty and active that his physical nature seems to tell the story of a man only moderately aged."²

Mr. Royer was never married. His entire life, with the exception of his early youth, was devoted to the iron industry of the present Blair County. From 1821 until his death in 1885, a span of sixty-four years, he resided and operated Cove Forge which upon his death was closed, being the first and last iron forge to operate in Blair County.

David Good (1796-1864), brother-in-law of Samuel Royer, Esq., operated Springfield Furnace as David Good & Co., and in 1858, he and his brother-in-law John Royer purchased the interests of the other heirs of Daniel Royer and became partners in the operation of the furnace.

1. Pomeroy's Atlas of Huntingdon and Blair Counties, 1873

2. Africa's History of Blair County, 1882, page 238

George Schmucker (1794-1879) also joined with his brother-in-law John Royer in the purchase of Cove Forge from John and Jane Royer in 1821. The operation of this forge in partnership continued until 1858 when Mr. Schmucker, at that time residing in Cedar County, Iowa, sold his interest to his partner.



JOHN ROYER HOMESTEAD
at Cove Forge

HON. JOHN ROYER

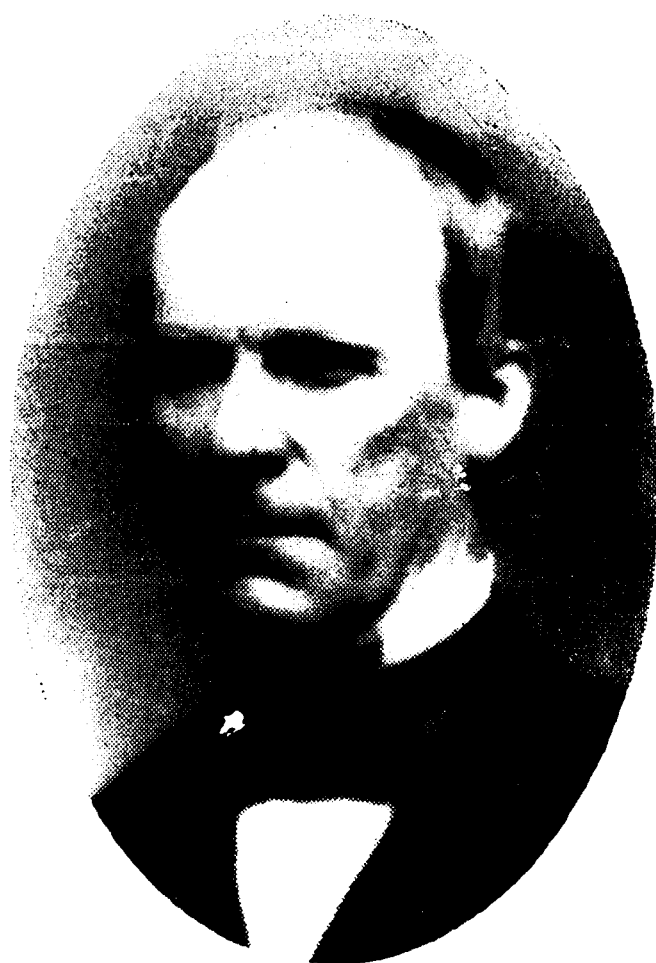
(See chart page 9)

John Royer (1778-1850) the third son of Capt. Samuel and Catherine Royer, was born in Franklin County Nov. 22, 1778, and married, about 1806, Jane Boggs (1784-1868) a daughter of John and Elizabeth (Johnston) Boggs of Franklin County.

Mr. Royer's early experience in the iron industry was acquired as a clerk at the Chamber's Iron Works in Franklin County, then in partnership with his brother-in-law Andrew Boggs operated Logan Furnace near Bellefonte, Centre County, Pa.

John Royer, Ironmaster, of Huntingdon County and his brother Daniel of Franklin County purchased in excess of two thousand acres of land in Woodbury Township, on Dec. 20, 1811, located a short distance below Williamsburg, and engaged in the building of Cove Forge which was completed the following year.

They then purchased, on April 23, 1814, a tract of land upon which they built Springfield Furnace. It is believed that the stone mansion houses were built at about the same time.



SAMUEL J. ROYER
Son of Hon. John Royer

In 1820 John and Jane (Boggs) Royer sold their one-half interest in Springfield Furnace to his brother, Daniel Royer, of Franklin County, and the following year John and Jane (Boggs) Royer sold their one-half interest in Cove Forge to his nephews, John Royer, son of Daniel, and George Schmucker.

In 1821 the Honorable John Royer moved to Williamsburg and was the successful candidate for the General Assembly of Pennsylvania, representing Huntingdon County, and in 1832 Mr. Royer and his family removed from Blair County and after residence at several places west of the Alleghenies he located at Johnstown from where he was again elected a member of the General Assembly for the year 1841, representing Somerset and Cambria Counties.

Mr. Royer's family moved with his business and industrial interests and of his eleven children; Catherine and John B. were born in Franklin County, Samuel J., Theodore, Elizabeth, Alfred and Nancy M. at Cove Forge, Alexander at Williamsburg, Sarah Jane and Andrew Francis at Kiskiminitas, and Mary Letitia at Saltsburg or Blairsville. Mr. Royer died at his residence on Washington St., Johnstown, Pa., on Mar. 5, 1850.¹

Of the members of his family who followed the iron industry, it is known that Samuel J. (1811-1883) had charge of the Martha Furnace in Blair County and at a later period he had charge of the books of the Bloomfield Furnace Company of Blair County.

1. John Royer and His Descendants, by J. M. Shank, 1899 (manuscript)



COVE FORGE
(Civil War Days)

1951

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