

WILKES-BARRÉ  
PENNSYLVANIA



## NAMING OF WILKES-BARRE

When the Connecticut people came to Wyoming to settle, the second party, which arrived here in February 1769, was led by Captain Durkee. Shortly after he arrived, he built a fort which he called Fort Durkee, and he named the town he founded Wilkes-Barre in honor of his friend Isaac Barre and an English statesman, John Wilkes. You will know why he selected this name when you learn who Isaac Barre and John Wilkes were, and what they did to cause Captain Durkee to name a town in their honor.

### JOHN WILKES

John Wilkes was born in England in 1727. His father was rich, and John received a good education. He was not a very good looking man, but he was a pleasant, gentlemanly fellow who could write unkind and unpleasant letters and cause those about whom he wrote to get very angry. He became interested in politics and was elected to Parliament. He attacked the King's ministers in a paper that he had published and the King ordered these ministers to have him arrested. They did so, but on a form of paper called a warrant that Wilkes said was against the law. Many others had been arrested before on the same form of paper, but Wilkes was the first man who claimed that this was a method of taking from the people their liberties. He was imprisoned in the Tower of London, and when the people took up his cause, the Court ruled that the King and his ministers had no right to arrest or imprison anyone with that form of warrant. He was released and from that time no Englishman could be arrested except by the law of the land.

The King was very angry and would not give up; so he declared Wilkes an outlaw and had Parliament dismiss him. The way this was accomplished was a violation of the rights of English citizens. Wilkes fled to France but soon returned to England. The people again elected him to Parliament. Again he was dismissed. This happened four times in a number of years. Wilkes was imprisoned for 20 months and during all this time the people came to his assistance and showed the King and his ministers that they were in favor of him because he was fighting for their rights. This continued for 11 years, and in the end the King had to give up and permit the people to choose the man they wanted to serve them in Parliament, for this was their lawful right.

Wilkes was the most talked of man in England, and the story of his fight with the King, and the King's ministers, was well known in America. The people in America had the same idea of liberty that Wilkes had, and they were delighted to see him victorious. Bonfires were lighted, banquets were held, and money

## WHY THE DIAMOND CITY?

When Major Durkee laid out the town plot, in the center of the plot was a space containing four acres and forty-one perches of ground. This space was diamond shaped, as if in prophetic intimation of the day when the black diamond would throw luster upon the commercial life of the settlement. This area is known as Public Square or as it was then Center Square.

Also, "because the town was entirely underlaid with a vast wealth of black diamonds, and is overlaid with hospitality, cultivation and beauty -- qualities which, like the chief characteristics of the diamond, are distinctive and attractive."

Harvey's "History of Wilkes-Barre"

## WILKES-BARRE

Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, was laid out and settled in the Summer of 1769, and is the business and social center of the historic Wyoming Valley.

At an Indian Conference held in Philadelphia in 1742, the Delawares, an Indian tribe dwelling at what is now the City of Easton, were ordered to leave there and settle at either "Shamokin or Wyomin". They selected the latter place, and established their village in what is now the Tenth and Twelfth Wards (South Wilkes-Barre) of the City of Wilkes-Barre; "and so far as is now known, this was the first settlement of human beings within the present City limits."

The first permanent white settlers came from Connecticut under the auspices of "The Connecticut Susquehanna Company," under the command of Major John Durkee, in 1769, and effected a settlement, establishing a fort at a point near what is now West River and South Streets.

Major Durkee, coined, and bestowed upon the infant settlement shortly after it was founded, the unique name which ever since, has been borne by our town. It is compounded



of the surnames of Colonel John Wilkes and Colonel Isaac Barre, two prominent and distinguished citizens of Great Britain, who were steadfast friends, and zealous advocates of the rights of the American Colonies during the troubling times of 1765 to 1783.

By an act of the Pennsylvania Legislature, passed September 25, 1786, Luzerne County was erected and Wilkes-Barre was designated as the County seat. March 17, 1806, the "Town Plot", a village of Wilkes-Barre, was incorporated into a Borough -- May 4, 1871, by legislative enactment, the Borough of Wilkes-Barre was incorporated into a City.

Wilkes-Barre was originally spelled Wilkesbarre (one word). A movement to have the name officially recognized as Wilkes-Barre (to give recognition to both Colonel Wilkes and Colonel Barre to do honor to both men), grew in strength and this form of spelling became the common usage. On August 10, 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt visited Wilkes-Barre and as a direct result of his coming, the name of the City is now spelled correctly, with a hyphen and Capital "B" in all government publications.

INFORMATIVE FACTS REGARDING THE  
CITY OF WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA

Wilkes-Barre, located in the historic Wyoming Valley, Pennsylvania, is the county seat of Luzerne County and the center of 30 contiguous municipalities which--as Greater Wilkes-Barre--comprise the cultural, social, and economic metropolis of north-eastern Pennsylvania.

Fronting on the Susquehanna River, which flows through the Wyoming Valley, Wilkes-Barre lies 552.5 feet above sea level. The Valley itself is a natural cup of some eleven and one-half square miles, rimmed by the slopes of the surrounding mountains.

Wilkes-Barre was settled in 1769 by colonists from New England under the leadership of Major John Durkee and named after Colonel John Wilkes and Colonel Isaac Barre, defenders of American colonies in British Parliament. It was incorporated as a Borough on March 17, 1806; as a City on May 4, 1871; and the Third Class City Charter was issued on September 22, 1898. Miners Mills and Parsons Boroughs were annexed on January 3, 1927. The City adopted the Home Rule Form of government on January 1, 1976, and is operating under this form of government, which consists of one Mayor and seven (7) councilmen.

Wilkes-Barre, which was long established as the anthracite capital of the world, has diversified its economy and now boasts a variety of industries from pencils to pylons.

Wilkes-Barre has many highschools in the city. The public school system in the area ranks high in the State of Pennsylvania. There are two 4-year colleges, Wilkes and Kings, having a day and evening enrollment and offering degrees in varied fields. The Pennsylvania State University Center offers a two-year associate degree in engineering; the Wilkes-Barre Business College offers a certificate in the field of business; L.C.C.C., a 2-year institute offers a variety of career degrees. On the graduate level, Wilkes College offers a Master's Degree in engineering and physics.

Wilkes-Barre maintains a splendid public library within ready access of the Wyoming Geological and Historical Society museum. The total number of volumes available in the Osterhout Library is approximately 142,609.

The citizens of Wilkes-Barre and surrounding communities are very proud of the fact that the Angeline Elizabeth Kirby Memorial Health Center, the magnificent gift of the late Fred M. Kirby in memory of his Mother, is located within the confines of Wilkes-Barre. It was built at a cost of over two million dollars and to endure for three hundred years, or more, and is one of the finest structures of its kind in the world.



The purpose of the establishment of the Angeline Elizabeth Kirby Memorial Health Center is to preserve and promote the health of the people of the City of Wilkes-Barre, neighboring communities and the public generally, and the control and elimination of disease.

The Greater Chamber of Commerce, 72 S. Franklin St., Wilkes-Barre, is the representative civic, industrial and commercial organization of the City and the Wyoming Valley. They will gladly supply additional information upon request.

History: Settled in 1769 by colonists from New England under the leadership of Major John Durkee and named after John Wilkes and Colonel Isaac Barre, defenders of American colonies in British Parliament. Incorporated as a Borough March 17, 1806; as a City May 4, 1871, and third class city charter issued September 22, 1898. Adopted the Home Rule Form of Government January 1976 with one (1) Mayor and seven (7) Councilmen.

#### WILKES-BARRE AT A GLANCE

POPULATION-- 47,523 (1989 Census)

AREA-- 7.61 square miles

CHURCHES-- 101, all denominations

SCHOOLS-- 15 elementary, 3 high schools, 1 <sup>university</sup> credited colleges, 2 two-year associate degree colleges and a two-year business school.

LIBRARY-- 1 public library with 3 branches

HOTELS AND MOTELS-- 16

AIRPORTS-- 2

HOSPITALS-- 5

AIRLINES-- 7

BANKS-- 10

RADIO-- 8

RAILROADS-- 1

TELEVISION-- 3 (ABC, CBS, NBC)

BUS LINES-- 3 interstate, 6 intra-state and 4 local

PARKS-- 5, with total of 950 acres and 17 playgrounds

NEWSPAPERS-- daily, 2; Sunday 2



PAVED STREETS-- 105 miles

SEWERS-- 185 miles

GAS MAINS-- 99.02 miles

WATER MAINS-- 124.30 miles, carrying 20,000,000 pumpage gallons,  
supplied by privately-owned water plant with capacity  
of 12,000,000,000 gallons.

File  
4/20  
1893

## CITY HALL

City Hall was designed by Benjamin Davey, Jr. and W. W. Neurer. Construction started in the Victorian building in September, 1892 and the building was dedicated in the winter of 1893.

The exterior materials include: red brick, local red sandstone, slate and copper roofs.

The building's interior and exterior have been altered considerably since its construction. In 1956, the three roof towers at the corners of the buildings facing Washington and Market Streets were removed and flat roofs installed. Later, the chimney on the Washington Street facade was also removed.

An interesting note, City Hall is erected on a plot of land that was used as a city grave yard. The remains were disinterred and transferred to the new City Cemetery along North River Street and the Hollenback Cemetery in the same area. Prior to the settlers using this plot as a graveyard, the Indians used it as a burial ground.

Mayors of the City OF Wilkes-Barre

		<u>BORN</u>	<u>OCCUPATION</u>
1871-1874	1) Ira Kirkendall	Dallas Twp.	Grocery/Flourist & Feed Lumber
1874-1877	2) Michael A. Kearney	Maryland	Miner/ W-B Police Chief
1877-1880	3) William W. Loomis	Levanon/Ct.	Harnessmaker
1880-1886	4) Thomas Brodrick	Londonderry, Ireland	Coal mining interests
1886-1892	5) Charles B. Sutton	Exeter Twp.	Grocery/Insurance
1892-1902	6) Francis M. Nichols	Bradford County	Lawyer
1902-1905	7) Charles H. Price	Wilkes-Barre	Lumber/ Banker/Grain Bus. Co-owner
1905-1908	8) Frederick C. Kirkendall	Wilkes-Barre	Times Leader/IRS collector
1908-1911	9) Lewis Kniffen	Dallas	Mortician/Sheriff
1911-1920	10) Joseph V. Kosek	Bohemia	Lawyer
1920-1933	11) Daniel Hart	Wilkes-Barre	Playwrite
1933-1944	12) Charles N. Loveland	Wilkes-Barre	Lawyer
1944-1948	13) Cornelius J. "Con" McCole	Glen Lyon	Miner/Dept. Treasury/ Luz. County/ Humorist
1948-1960	14) Luther M. Kniffen	Wilkes-Barre	Mortician
1960-1968	15) Frank Slattery	Wilkes-Barre	Lawyer
1968-1970	16) John V. Morris	Wilkes-Barre	Funeral Director
1970-1972	17) John McGlynn	Pittston	Registrar/Vital Statistics
1972-1976	18) Con Salwoski	Wilkes-Barre	Dept. Head/Luzerne County
1976-1980	19) Walter W. Lisman	Wilkes-Barre	Funeral Director/Insurance
1980-1988	20) Thomas V. McLaughlin	Wilkes-Barre	Mortician
1988-19956	21) Lee A. Namey	Wilkes-Barre	Teacher
1996-	22) Thomas D. McGroarty	W-B	Heavy Equipment Salesman



# Historical Sketch of Wyoming

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**W**ILKES-BARRE, the oldest community of Northeastern Pennsylvania, together with its environs, is the original *Wyoming*. The name "Wyoming" is a corruption of a Delaware Indian word, meaning "broad or large plain," and was applied, as it still is, to a glacial valley drained by the Susquehanna, of which the city is the business and social center. Post office records indicate that one state, sixteen counties and some sixty-four lesser municipalities have been given that name in commemoration of the peculiar history of a community which has no parallel in the annals of America.

The Wyoming Valley had long been a chosen hunting ground of the Iroquois Confederacy, but its authentic history began in 1702, when a tribe of Shawanese settled near the present Plymouth.

Various other tribes were later permitted a temporary residence in the Valley, the most noted and numerous of which were the Wanamie Delawares, under King Teedyuscung, whose log "Castle" stood along Riverside Drive, near Terrace Street, in Wilkes-Barre.

As early as 1750, the rich soil and great beauty of Wyoming was heralded abroad, and in 1753, a considerable number of Connecticut residents organized the Susquehanna Company, for purposes of settlement. The rights of Connecticut to Wyoming were based on a Charter from Charles II, in 1662, granting "all lands between the forty-first and forty-second parallels, from sea to sea." Pennsylvania's claim to the territory arose from a conflicting grant, by the same king, to the Penns. in 1681.

With the first attempted settlement, by Connecticut, in 1762, began a series of costly and bloody conflicts, between rival claimants to Wyoming, known to history as the Yankee-Pennamite Wars, which were to last for a period of nearly forty years.

Alarmed at the destruction of life and property, the Continental Congress, in 1782, appointed a Commission to sit at Trenton, New Jersey, and determine the claims of the two states.

After forty-one days of deliberation, and by what is known to history as the "Decree of Trenton," the Commissioners, on December 30, 1782, held that the jurisdiction and pre-emption of all the territory lying within the Charter limits of Pennsylvania, and then claimed by Connecticut, belonged of right to Pennsylvania.

The "Decree" settled nothing in its immediate effects. The Connecticut settlers had rebuilt their homes, after the Battle of Wyoming; had restocked their farms and become deeply attached to the land of their adoption. To have their titles thus annulled by a Commission whose decision was based rather on policy than on right, merely quickened the impulse to cling to these possessions at any cost. Finding that ordinary processes of law failed to evict the Connecticut settlers, Pennsylvania, in 1784, sent forward its militia which occupied Fort Wyoming and drove off more than one hundred and fifty Connecticut families, at the point of the bayonet.

Then began the second Yankee-Pennamite War, marked by the confinement of many of the first settlers in jails, at Easton and Sunbury, by reprisals on the part of the evicted inhabitants and their friends, by bloodshed, arson and cruelty unspeakable. In despair, the Pennsylvania Legislature, in November, 1784, ordered that the Connecticut claimants be restored to their possessions. Fort Wyoming was evacuated by the militia on November 27th, and was immediately razed by the surviving settlers.

Within the limits of the Borough of Wyoming and between the site of Forty Fort and the battlefield of July 3, 1778, stands the Wyoming Monument, "commemorative of these events and the actors in them."

Nearly 300 casualties were recorded in the battle and some 200 more lives, mostly of women and children, were sacrificed during the flight from the Valley. It was not until the fall of 1778 that the remains of the victims were collected from the field by returning refugees and buried in a common grave. Strange as it may now seem, the location of this grave remained unknown to subse-



quent residents for nearly fifty years. Interest was revived in 1832 by survivors of the battle and descendants of the slain, to the extent of searching for the location of the common tomb. It was eventually discovered by means of an iron rod driven down into the earth at various points where tradition recorded the burial. Vainly seeking the aid of Connecticut and the Congress for subscriptions to a suitable fund for a proper monument, inhabitants of the Valley decided to raise the fund themselves. On July 3, 1832, the hecatomb of the dead was opened with impressive ceremonies. It is narrated that nearly every skull of the victims discovered in the grave bore marks of bullet or tomahawk and scalping knife. A year later the corner stone of the present monument was laid, but in another year the funds gave out and work towards its completion was not resumed until 1841. On July 3, 1843, the monument, as it now stands, was dedicated with elaborate exercises.

The Wyoming Valley is rich in sites of Frontier Forts. Many of these are marked and can be readily visited. In May, 1769, the first "Forty Settlers" who had been driven from the Valley by adherents of Pennsylvania, returned with additional recruits from Connecticut and built *Fort Durkee*, named in honor of their leader, Major John Durkee. This was a strong stockade, surrounding some twenty log cabins. The site of this early defense against Pennsylvania invaders is marked by a stone on South River Common, near West South Street in Wilkes-Barre.

*Fort Wyoming* was erected by Pennsylvania claimants to Wyoming a few hundred yards northeast of Fort Durkee in 1771. Its site is likewise marked by a stone on the Common at West Northampton Street.

*Forty Fort*, named in honor of the first forty settlers, was erected by the inhabitants of Kingston in 1772, and historically is best known of all early defenses of the Valley owing to its connection with the battle. A stone on the river bank near Commerce Park marks its site.

*Fort Wilkes-Barre*, marked by a stone and tablet on the Square, was built in 1776 as an additional defense against Indian invasion.

All of these forts were repaired and strengthened in 1778 and were surrendered by the settlers when *Forty Fort* capitulated after the battle. In addition to these, other early defenses of the Valley were classed as Frontier Forts. Among these were Ogden's blockhouse, near the present General Hospital; Lazarus Stewart's blockhouse in upper Hanover Township; Wintermute's Fort in Exeter Township; Lackawanna Fort at Pittston, and Shawnee Fort at Plymouth.

#### FRANCES SLOCUM

The story of Frances Slocum, "The lost sister of Wyoming," is known to almost every school child. In November, 1778, as a child of five years, she was seized by a band of Delawares and carried into captivity from her father's house, which stood near the present site of the Frances Slocum playground, at North Pennsylvania Avenue and Scott Street. Before her whereabouts could be discovered, fifty-nine years had passed. Believing herself dying, the widow of a Miami chief then living near Peru, Indiana, disclosed her identity and desired to see some of her white kin. Brothers and other relatives from the Wyoming Valley visited her, but she could never be induced to return to civilization.

#### THE SULLIVAN EXPEDITION

Wilkes-Barre was the mobilization point of the army of Major General John Sullivan, entrusted by General Washington to avenge the battle of Wyoming, as well as wipe out the granary of the British by destroying the villages and crops of the Six Nations. In June, 1779, the first units of Sullivan's forces reached Wilkes-Barre, where camp was established. Other troops arrived at intervals during the summer. General Sullivan established his headquarters on the Common near Northampton Street. Maxwell's Brigade was encamped on Fish Island, opposite Wilkes-Barre; Procter's Artillery Brigade encamped along what is now Riverside Drive; Hand's Brigade occupied the southern portion of the Common, while Ogden's Regiment and Hubley's Regiment occupied the Common, north of the General's headquarters. More than 600 boats were constructed on the Common in order to carry supplies for the army and two redoubts were constructed on the ridge east of the present Court House.

On July 28, 1779, the Sullivan Expedition broke camp and began its victorious march up the



Susquehanna against the Confederacy. Events of the expedition and its subsequent return to Wilkes-Barre are matters of history.

Having failed in its policy of military control, Pennsylvania then adopted a more conciliatory attitude in sending to Wilkes-Barre, Col. Timothy Pickering, of Massachusetts, at the head of a Civil Commission to determine the rights of soil among conflicting claimants, to set up the government of the new County of Luzerne, erected by Pennsylvania, in 1787, out of the limits of what had been Westmoreland County of Connecticut, and to act as mediator between and counselor to, the inhabitants.

The administration of Col. Timothy Pickering, although marked by turbulence and his eventual abduction by those Connecticut settlers who, under the leadership of Col. John Franklin, refused to take the oath of allegiance to Pennsylvania, eventually restored order out of chaos and laid the foundations for the future prosperity and well-being of the growing community. The quieting of titles to the lands of Wyoming—there being a Pennsylvania patent as well as one from Connecticut to almost every acre of land within its borders—was begun by a Commission, pursuant to the Compromise Act of 1799, and finished in 1805, the processes of which settlement form one of the most unique chapters in the jurisprudence of America.

Colonel Pickering had been Quartermaster General of Washington's army before being chosen by Pennsylvania as a Commissioner to Wyoming. He became a large landholder in the Valley and, in 1788, built the Pickering House, which formerly stood at 130 South Main Street. The timbers of this oldest structure of Northeastern Pennsylvania were taken apart carefully and are preserved by the Miner Estate in order that the mansion may later be restored in one of the city's beautiful parks. Colonel Pickering left Wyoming in 1791, to become Postmaster General of the United States. Subsequently he was Secretary of War and Secretary of State in Washington's Cabinet, his public duties so occupying attention that he never returned to Wilkes-Barre.

In 1778, it became known that the British had decided to employ the Six Nations against the frontiers of the infant United States, in a desperate effort to end the Revolutionary War.

Wyoming, it was quickly recognized, lay directly in the path of invasion from the north. Congress was petitioned to return to Wyoming, as a measure of defense, its two Independent Companies of volunteers, then with Washington's army. But Congress delayed action and the settlers were compelled to face invasion with a few veterans, then on leave, and with those of its male population unfitted for military service by reason of youth or age.

To "Butler's Rangers," a battalion of British Provincial troops, then stationed at Fort Niagara on the Canadian frontier, was added a force of some seven hundred Indians, under Sayenqueraghta, a Seneca chief, and in the late spring of 1778, this formidable force started southward. Appraised of their approach, the settlers gathered at Forty Fort, on June 30th. Some four hundred men and boys comprised the strength of the defenders. A council of war, held within the Fort, determined that this feeble band should meet the enemy in the open, rather than permit him to burn and rob at will.

On the morning of July 3, 1778, under command of Col. Zebulon Butler, on leave from the Continental army, the defenders moved from the Fort several miles northward to Abraham's Plains, where the battle was fought. No historical event of the American frontier is better known in song and story than that of the battle and subsequent massacre which followed. Nor had any episode of the Revolution more influence in quickening the sympathies of France and encouraging friends of liberty, the world over, to outspoken resentment of British methods of warfare in America than this broadly heralded event. At first it seemed as if the small band of patriots would pierce the British position. During the latter stages of the battle, the Senecas and their Indian allies, hidden in a swamp to the left of the American line, stealthily emerged. A confusion of orders, understood by many as a signal for retreat, followed the unexpected onrush of savagery, and the day was lost.

On July 4th, the patriots surrendered to the victors, and under the terms of capitulation, signed at Forty Fort, the various garrisons and forts within the Valley were demolished. Not content with victory, however, the Rangers and their allies looted, burned and destroyed practically the entire settlement.



# The Beautiful Wyoming Valley

IT is singular and significant that almost the first white man who visited Wyoming Valley uttered the first eulogy to it. Conrad Weiser, on a mission for Governor Gooch of Virginia, passed up the Susquehanna in 1737, and in his report writes, "The 26th we reached Scahantowano . . . Here there is a large body of land, the like of which is not to be found on the river." Scahantowano, like Maughwauwame, Meehayomy, Meeahowming, Wyomick, and others, are former names for Wyoming.

It is evident that vivid reports of this beautiful and fertile valley were taken back to the coast settlements by the pioneers, such as Weiser, who forced their way into this section. The historian, Oscar Jewell Harvey, writes: "To many of the inhabitants of rocky and unfertile eastern Connecticut, about the year 1750, the marvellous richness and beauty of this valley of Wyoming had become known through the enthusiastic reports carried back from here, from time to time, by a few adventurous traders and explorers." Blake, a Connecticut historian, says that, in the eyes of Connecticut people who had heard of this valley, "It was a land flowing with milk and honey, waiting to be occupied by the chosen people."

So, after securing from the Six Nations a right to the coveted spot by treaty and purchase, a group of Connecticut Yankees, organized into the Susquehanna Company, braved the dangers of the Shades of Death—their name for the great Pocono swamps—threaded the forests of the Endless Mountains and came into this peaceful and beautiful valley.

The story of this new settlement, its "primitive manners and happiness, as well as the miserable desolation which it subsequently underwent in the Revolutionary War" is the subject of much fiction, song and poetry. That its happiness was at least partially attributable to the beauty which surrounded it, seems established by the frequency with which the authors of the works refer to the charm of nature here.

Colonel Timothy Pickering, later a resident of Wilkes-Barre and, as a member of Washington's Cabinet, a man of national importance, writes of the scenery he observed while visiting here in 1786, "The most beautiful tract of land my eyes ever beheld! . . . industrious husbandmen would make the whole a garden."

Charles Miner, in his history of 1845, describes the charm of this locality thus, "Lovely as ever enthusiast dreamed of, or poet sung."

And, though on innumerable occasions the settlements of the valley were ravaged with bloodshed and fire and, as Colonel William L. Stone, a well known editor and author of New York City, declared, though Wyoming was "the theatre of more historical action . . . than any other inland district of the United States of equal extent," the beauty of the spot persisted.

Rev. Edmund D. Griffin of Columbia University, New York City, expressed his praise as follows after a visit here in 1817: "A scene more lovely than imagination ever painted presented itself to my sight—so beautiful, so exquisitely beautiful, that even the magic verse of Campbell did not do it justice."

Professor Benjamin Silliman of Yale College, who visited here in 1830, wrote: "Splendid and beautiful in the scenery of its mountains, rivers, fields and meadows; rich in the most productive agriculture; possessed by the still surviving veterans and by the descendants of a high-minded race of men; full of the most interesting historical associations, and of scenes of warfare, where the precious blood of fathers, husbands and sons so often moistened their own fields, the valley of Wyoming will always remain one of the most attractive regions to every intelligent and patriotic American."

The Reverend Nicholas Murray, D. D., a pastor in Wilkes-Barre from 1829 to 1833, and a world traveler of some note, said: "I turn to Wyoming as unsurpassed in quiet beauty by any vale that I have ever seen."

As mentioned before, innumerable poems, lyric and epic, have been written in praise of the beauty of Wyoming and the fortitude of its founders. Perhaps in his description of Wyoming Valley, Colonel William Stone, himself a poet, unwittingly explains why it has so often been an inspiration to poets. He said it is "one of the richest and most beautiful landscapes upon which the eye of man ever rested . . . indeed a lovely spot, which had Milton seen it before the composition of his immortal epic, might well have suggested some portion of his gorgeous description of Paradise."

## ISAAC BARRE

Isaac Barre's forefathers came from France and settled in Ireland. Isaac was born in Dublin in 1726. His people were not rich, but Isaac was educated as a favor in Trinity College. After he left Trinity College, he was appointed ensign in an English regiment and became very well acquainted with a Lieutenant Colonel whose name was James Wolfe. This was the famous General Wolfe of the French and Indian War. Later on, Colonel Wolfe made Barre his Brigade Major. When Wolfe was sent to America to fight the French, he took Barre with him. When Wolfe was appointed Major General of the English Army in America, he made Barre his Adjutant General with the rank of Colonel. At the famous battle of Quebec, both General Montcalm, the French Commander, and General Wolfe, the English Commander, were mortally wounded. General Wolfe died in the arms of Colonel Barre.

After the war ended, Colonel Barre was elected to Parliament and was always on the American side in all the troubles that Parliament had with America. He fought for American liberty in the English Parliament as hard as he fought for England in America during the French and Indian War. Colonel Barre died in 1802.

During his long life he was Adjutant General in the British Army, Governor of Sterling Castle; Vice Treasurer of Ireland; Treasurer of the Navy; Paymaster of the Army; and Clerk of the Pells. He was also a member of the House of Commons for 40 years.



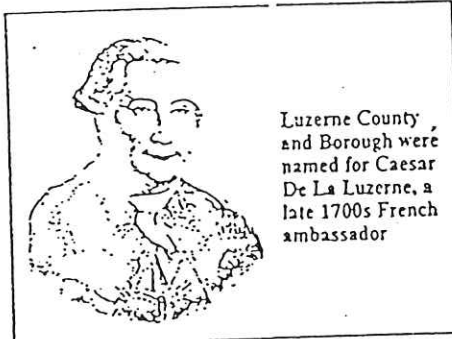
# Travel

## From whence came their names

*Our area towns have interesting beginnings, right down to their names. Some were named for location or natural features. Others were named in memory of local families or famous people. Still, some have Indian names in honor of their first inhabitants.*

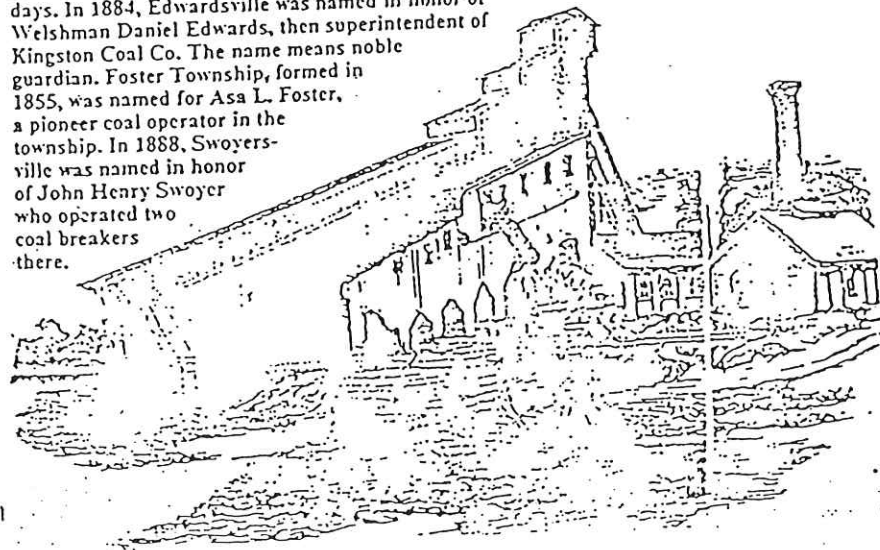


Many area towns and sections were named in honor of early settlers such as Buck Carverton, Hunlock, Jermyn, and Huntsville



Luzerne County, and Borough were named for Caesar De La Luzerne, a late 1700s French ambassador

Some town names grew from the early coal mining days. In 1884, Edwardsville was named in honor of Welshman Daniel Edwards, then superintendent of Kingston Coal Co. The name means noble guardian. Foster Township, formed in 1855, was named for Asa L. Foster, a pioneer coal operator in the township. In 1888, Swoyersville was named in honor of John Henry Swoyer who operated two coal breakers there.



By NANCY KATHRYN HUFF  
Staff Writer

Pleasant Valley was a quaint place to live in the early 1800s.

Albert McAlpin built the first industry there—a box factory. Life was just as the name implies, pleasant.

Then, disaster struck. In 1855, 33 town residents were killed in a train crash. In memory of the dead, a year later, town's name was changed to an Irish word that in English means "Vale of Tears" or "Sorrows".

That town is Avoca. Not all area towns have such colorful beginnings. Some were named for their location, natural feature, plants or animals. Others were named for local families or famous people. Still, some have Indian names in honor of the first inhabitants.

The origin of town names has fascinated several area historians. Three references were used for this story: a voluminous account written by the late Edward Phillips, a local historian; The Historical Record, a collection of turn-of-the-century news items from the Wilkes-Barre Record; and "Pennsylvania Place Names," published in 1925 by the Pennsylvania State College.

**ASHLEY** — A town of many names, Ashley was known as Skunktown, Peastown, Hightown, Newtown, Scrabbletown, Coalville, Nanticoke Junction, Alberts and Hendricksburg before in 1870 finally being named Ashley. All three sources list three different people for whom the town was named: O.D. Ashley of Albany, N.Y.; H.H. Ashley of Wilkes-Barre; and H.O. Ashley, one of the largest stockholders of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Co. which opened a shop in town.

**ASKAM** — It was named in 1798 after a tailor Billy Askam, from London, who expanded his business to involve buying and selling just about anything.

**DEAR CREEK** — It was named in 1856 after a creek there where numerous bears roamed.

**BUCK TWP.** — It was named in 1833 in honor of George Buck, who settled there in 1782 and owned the first tavern.

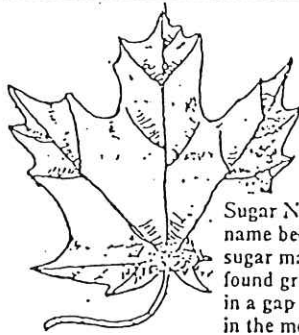
**CARVERTON** — It was named in honor of Samuel Carver who settled there in 1801.





Many area towns were named after Indians. Nanticoke was named after the Nanticoke Indians, "Tide Water people," who settled there in 1740. Plains, incorporated in 1851, was originally called Jacob's Plains after an Indian chief named Jacob. It was eventually shortened to Plains. Shickshinny: "where five mountains meet." Tunkhannock: "full of timber." Wyoming: "great flats."

Franklin Township was named for Col. John Franklin, one of the area's early settlers



Sugar Notch got its name because of the sugar maple trees found growing there in a gap or "notch" in the mountainside

Samuel Carver who settled there in 1801.

**CENTERMORELAND** — Tradition says this section of Franklin Township was so named because William Penn once stood there and told the Indians they had reached the "center of more land."

**CONYNGHAM BORO and TWP.** — Both were named at the turn of the century in honor of Capt. Gustavius Conyngham, a commander of the first American privateer to carry the American flag into the English Channel during the American revolution. He was a cousin to the Conyngham family living in the valley today.

**COURTDALE** — Initially, it was called Pringleville because it was once owned by Thomas Pringle. It was also known as Tattletown and Gabtown and Brownville. Around 1870, it was renamed Courtdale in honor of the Courtright family who owned a farm in the upper end of the borough.

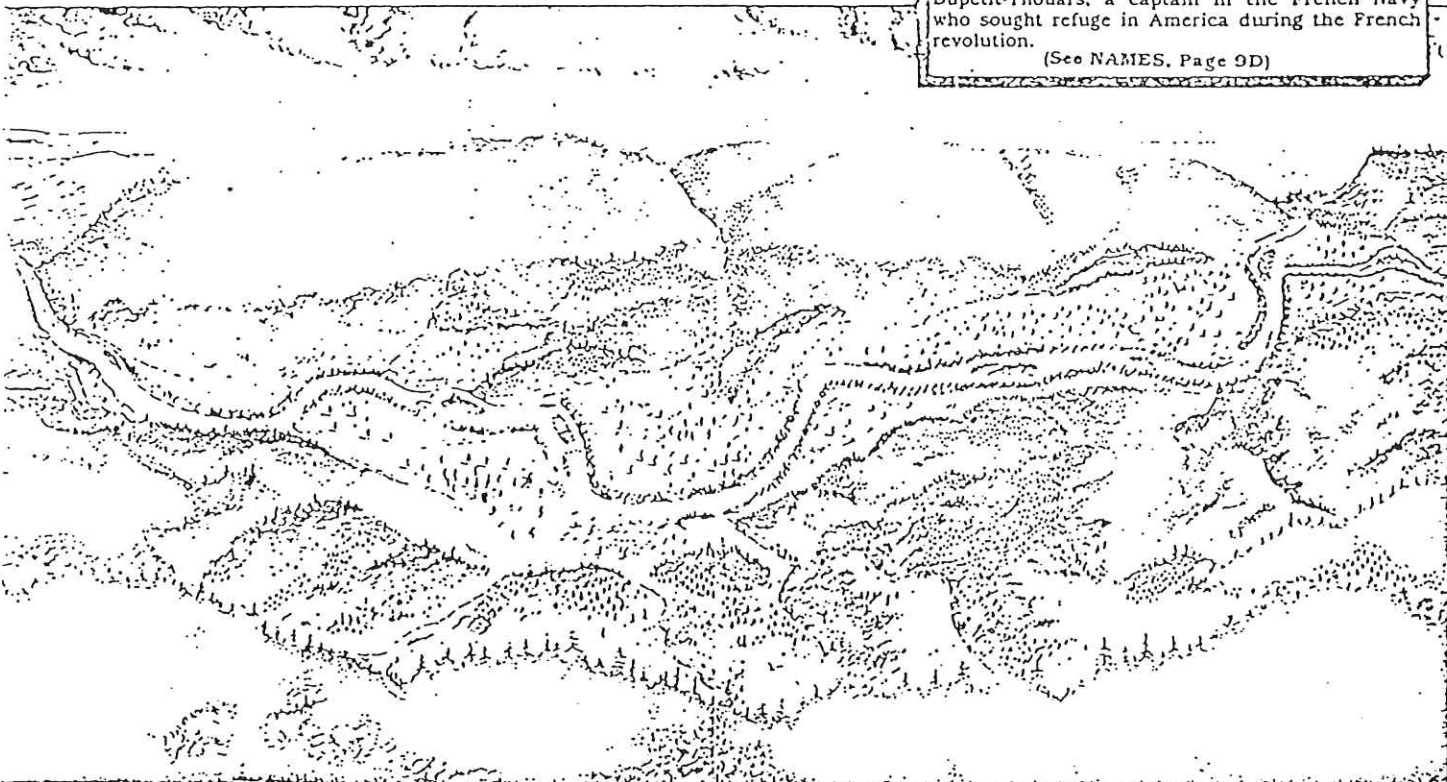
**DALLAS** — Incorporated in 1879, early names include McClellandville and McLellonville after early residents before being named Dallas in honor of Alexander James Dallas, a Washington politician.

**DORRANCE** — Incorporated in 1840, it was named in honor of Col. George Dorrance who fell in the Wyoming Massacre.

**DURYEA** — Originally, it was called Babylon because of the numerous languages spoken there and Marcy Township in honor of an early settler. The name was changed around 1900 to Duryea in honor of Col. Abram Duryea who owned many mines there.

**DUSHORE** — The name is a corruption of the surname of the town's founder: Aristotle Aubert Dupetit-Thouars, a captain in the French Navy who sought refuge in America during the French revolution.

(See NAMES, Page 9D)



**THE BEAUTIFUL VALLEY OF WYOMING.**

AS IT APPEARED JULY 30, 1778.



# Names

(Continued from Page 8D)

**EXETER BOROUGH** — Incorporated in 1884, it was named for Exeter Township which got its name from early settlers who came from Exeter, R.I., which was named in honor of Exeter, England. Early names included Stanton Hill in honor of an early settler, George W. Stanton.

**FAIRVIEW** — Formed in 1869, it was so named because of the beautiful view from the crest of the mountains.

**FORTY FORT** — Incorporated in 1867, it was named in honor of the original 40 settlers who came to Wyoming Valley from Connecticut in 1769.

**FREELAND** — Around 1875 when the borough was plotted out to sell, it was known as "free land" to distinguish it from coal company lands which surrounded it.

**HARVEYS LAKE** — It was named after its discoverer, Ben Harvey of Plymouth, who happened upon the lake in 1781 while trying to avoid being recaptured by the Indians.

**HAZLETON** — Incorporated in 1891, its name can be traced back to a grove of hazel bushes growing along Hazel Creek. The misspelling — "le" instead of "el" in the middle of the name — is traced back to an attorney who reversed the letters when writing the city's name on the incorporating papers.

**HANOVER** — Originated in 1790, it was named after Hanover in Dauphin County. It was originally called Nanticoke Township.

**HUNLOCK TWP.** — Incorporated in 1877, it was named after the original owner, Jonathan Hunlock, who was one of the proprietors of the Susquehanna Purchase.

**HUNTINGTON TWP.** — Formed in 1793, it was named by the Connecticut settlers in honor of Samuel Huntington, then governor of Connecticut and a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

**HUNTSVILLE** — A section of Jackson Township, it was named after William Hunt, the first store owner there.

**INKERMAN and SEBASTOPOL** — Founded in 1854, they were named after battles fought in the Crimean War.

**JACKSON TWP.** — Formed in 1844, it was named in honor of Gen. Andrew Jackson, who was president of the United States when the township was formed.

**JENKINS TWP.** — Formed in 1852, it was named in honor of Col. John Jenkins, an early settler.

**JERMYN** — It was named after an early English settler, John Jermyn, to whom the town owed much of its material prosperity.

**KINGSTON** — Incorporated in 1857, this town borrowed its name from Kingston, R.I., from where the first settlers came.

**KUNILE** — A part of Dallas, it was initially called Outlet as a station of the Lehigh Valley Railroad. It was given the name Kunkle in honor of Conrad Kunkle who settled there, or in honor of its first postmaster, J. Wesley Kunkle.

**LAFILIN** — Incorporated in 1889, it was originally called Nash and White Oak Hollow. It was eventually named in honor of H.D. Lafilin, the founder of the Lafilin Powder Works.

**LAKE TWP.** — It took its name in 1841 from Harveys Lake.

**LARKSVILLE** — Originally Blindtown, the name was changed in 1895 after Peggy Lark, the oldest resident who ever lived

## Pennsylvania Prof

by Patrick M. Reynolds

IN FEBRUARY, 1769 MAJOR JOHN DURKEE, A FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR VETERAN, LED A GROUP OF SETTLERS FROM CONNECTICUT INTO THE WYOMING VALLEY IN NORTH-EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA. THEY BUILT FORT DURKEE, SHOWN HERE, AT THE CORNER OF PRESENT DAY SOUTH AND RIVER STREETS, WILKES-BARRE.

TO REINFORCE CONNECTICUT'S CLAIM ON THE AREA BUILT "SETTLING" TOWNS: KINGSTON, HUNTINGTON, ETC.

DURING THE SUMMER OF 1769 DURKEE ESTABLISHED A TOWN NEXT TO HIS FORT AND NAMED IT AFTER OFF-BEAT BRITISH POLITICIANS WHO PUSHED FOR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS OF THE AMERICAN COLONISTS.

Mr. Wilkes & Mr. Ba



PRIOR TO HIS ELECTION TO PARLIAMENT, IRELAND-BORN ISAAC BARRE SERVED AS AN ENSIGN IN AN ENGLISH INFANTRY REGIMENT IN THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR UNDER GEN. BRADDOCK IN SOUTH-EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA. HIS AFFINITY FOR AMERICAN FREEDOM CAME AS A RESULT OF WORKING WITH A SCOUT NAMED DANIEL BOONE AS A YOUNG MILITIA OFFICER—COL. GEORGE WASHINGTON.



there. She is said to have died at age 1. The name was changed from Blindtown.

**LEHMAN** — Formed in 1829, it was originally Bedford Township, then changed to Lehman in honor of William Lehman, a Philadelphia legislator who was friendly to Luzerne County.

**MOOSIC** — Its name was drawn from the great herds of moose that used to roam Lackawanna County.

**NEWPORT** — Incorporated in 1790, one of the original townships in Luzerne County, it took its name from Newport, R.



JOHN WILKES NEVER SET FOOT IN AMERICA, BUT CAMPAIGNED FOR AMERICAN LIBERTY WITH SUCH FERVOR THAT HE WAS KICKED OUT OF PARLIAMENT, SENT TO JAIL AND EXILED FROM ENGLAND. HE RETURNED, BECAME LORD MAYOR OF LONDON AND CONTINUED TO HARASSUE KING GEORGE III WITH SUCH COMMENTS AS, "THE AMERICANS, SIR, ARE A PIOUS, VIRTUOUS PEOPLE... AND CAN NEVER BE CONQUERED, SINCE THE AMERICANS PROPAGATE CHILDREN FASTER THAN THE BRITISH COULD KILL THEIR PATRIOTS."



WHILE THE BRITISH HIERARCHY OF 1776 SCOFFED AT THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, WILKES AND BARRE PRAISED THE AMERICANS AND ACCUSED KING GEORGE III OF DRIVING THEM INTO INDEPENDENCE. THE CROWN'S MOST UNBARRASSING MOMENT WAS WHEN THE KING'S SON, THE PRINCE OF WALES, BURST INTO THE ROYAL CHAMBER YELLING "HURRAH FOR WILKES AND LIBERTY!"



from where many of its settlers came.

**OLD FORGE** — The name comes from a forge built there in 1789 by a pioneer physician, Dr. William Hooker Smith. A decade or two later, the forge was abandoned and left to decay. The "old forge" became a landmark for travelers.

**ORANGE** — A section of Franklin Township, it was so named because many of its original residents came from Orange, N.Y.

**PITSTON** — It was named in honor of Sir William Pitt, an English statesman.

**PLYMOUTH** — Both the township and the borough got their names from Plymouth, Conn., where the settlers came from. Plymouth, Conn., was named in honor of Plymouth, Mass.

**PORT BLANCHARD** — This section of Jenkins Township was named after its first settler, Capt. Jeremiah Blanchard and called "Port" because it had a dock for the river ferry and was along the old canal.

**PORT GRIFFITH** — It was named in honor of William A. Griffith, a purchasing agent from the Pennsylvania Co. of Harrisburg. Freight moved along the canal was unloaded at this point.

**PRINGLE** — Incorporated in 1914, it was originally known as Scot Hill because of the colony of Scots living there. It was eventually named Pringle in honor of either Samuel or Thomas Pringle, early settlers.

**RICE TWP.** — Incorporated in 1928, it was named after Judge Charles E. Rice who was admitted to the bar association in Luzerne County in 1870.

**ROSS TWP.** — Incorporated in 1842, it was named for William G. Ross, then associate county judge.

**SCRANTON** — Not surprisingly, this town was named in honor of the Scranton family, which was among its earliest settlers and helped get the town out of debt by loaning it \$10,000. Today's state Lieutenant Governor, William Scranton III, is a direct descendant of that family. Before being known as Scranton, it had eight other names, including Deep Hollow and Slocum Hollow. In 1845, it was renamed Harrison in honor of the president, William H. Harrison. It was changed again to Lackawanna Iron Works before ending up as Scranton in 1851.

**SHAVERTOWN** — It was named in honor of early settler Phillip Shaver. In the 1870s, it was known as Bloody Run because of the number of butchers plying their trade there.

**SLOCUM TWP.** — Incorporated in 1854, it was named in honor of the Slocum family, one of the early settlers, whose daughter, Frances, was abducted by the Indians.

**SWOYERSVILLE** — It was named in 1888 in honor of John Henry Swoyer who operated two coal breakers there and was respected for treating his employees fairly. Swoyer is derived from a German word for strong, vigorous and powerful.

**TRUCKSVILLE** — It was named in honor of William Trux (some sources spell it Trucks) who came here from Connecticut around 1800 and settled in what was originally called Branchville.

**TUNKHANNOCK** — Its name is an Indian term for "full of timber."

**WARRIOR RUN** — It was formerly called Nattanhutter Path then changed to Warrior Run. Through the town was a trail used by Indian warriors running from Wyalusing to Bethlehem with news of Indian uprisings.

**WHITE HAVEN** — Formed in 1842, it was named in honor of Josiah White, a Philadelphia stockholder of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Co. which opened shops there.

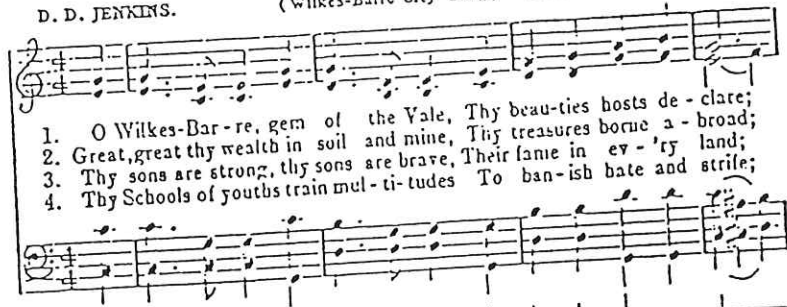
**WILKES-BARRE** — Incorporated as a city in 1871, it was named in honor of two members of the British parliament who were friendly to the struggling colonies of America: The Right Honorable John Wilkes, Lord Mayor of London, and the Right Honorable Isaac Barre.

**WRIGHT TWP.** — Incorporated in 1851, it was named after Col. Hendrick B. Wright, a Plymouth resident, who eventually became a local congressman.

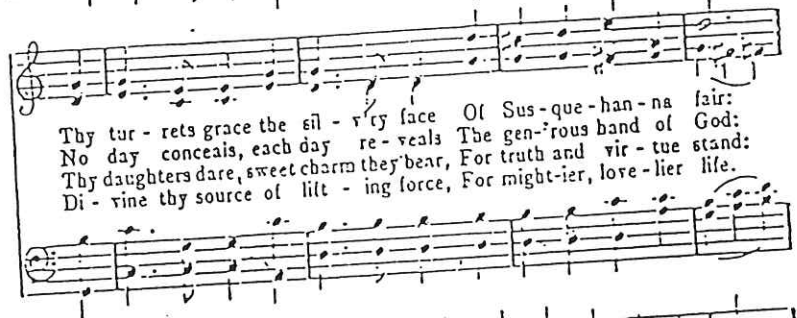
# WILKES-BARRE

D. D. JENKINS.

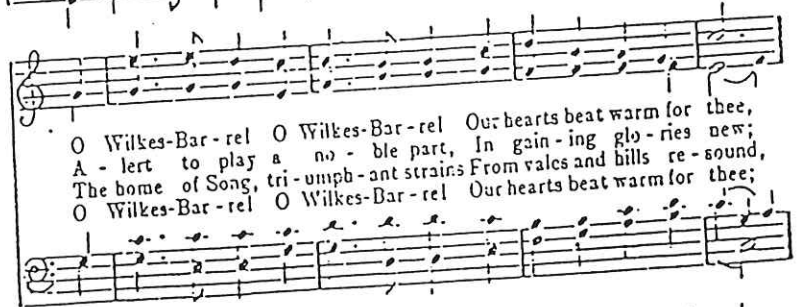
(Wilkes-Barre City Song) "Materaa." S. A. WARD.



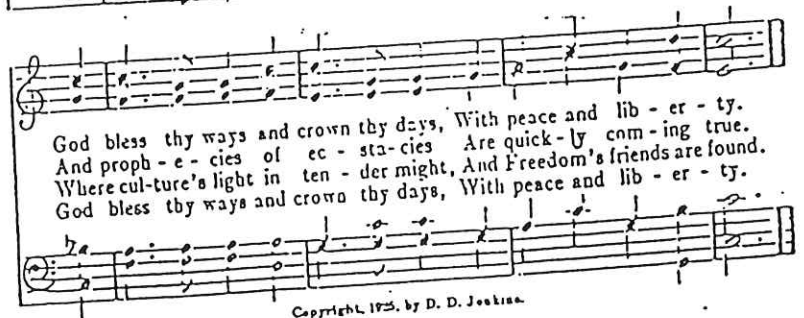
1. O Wilkes-Bar-re, gem of the Vale, Thy beau-ties hosts de-clare;  
2. Great, great thy wealth in soil and mine, Thy treas-ures borne a-broad;  
3. Thy sons are strong, thy sons are brave, Their fame in ev-'ry land;  
4. Thy Schools of youths train mul-ti-tudes To ban-ish bate and strife;



Thy tur-rets grace the sil-ry face Of Sus-que-han-na fair:  
No day conceals, each day re-veals The gen-erous hand of God:  
Thy daughters dare, sweet charm they bear, For truth and vir-tue stand:  
Di-vine thy source of lift-ing force, For might-ier, love-lier life.



O Wilkes-Bar-rel O Wilkes-Bar-rel Our hearts beat warm for thee,  
A-vert to play a no-ble part, In gain-ing glo-ries new;  
The home of Song, tri-umph-ant strains From vales and hills re-sound,  
O Wilkes-Bar-rel O Wilkes-Bar-rel Our hearts beat warm for thee;



God bless thy ways and crown thy days, With peace and lib-er-ty.  
And proph-e-cies of ec-sta-cies Are quick-ly com-ing true.  
Where cul-ture's light in ten-der might, And Freedom's friends are found.  
God bless thy ways and crown thy days, With peace and lib-er-ty.

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## THE FLAG OF THE CITY OF WILKES-BARRE

WHEN MAJOR DURKEE LAID OUT THE TOWN PLOT, IN THE CENTER OF THE PLOT WAS A SPACE CONTAINING APPROXIMATELY FOUR ACRES. THIS SPACE WAS DIAMOND SHAPED, AS IF IN PROPHECIC INTIMATION OF THE DAY WHEN THE BLACK DIAMOND (ANTHRACITE COAL) WOULD THROW LUSTER UPON THE COMMERCIAL LIFE OF THE SETTLEMENT. THIS GREEN AREA IS KNOWN AS PUBLIC SQUARE OR AS IT WAS THEN, CENTER SQUARE.

WILKES-BARRE WAS CALLED THE DIAMOND CITY, PARTIALLY BECAUSE OF THE SHAPE OF THIS PLOT AND (TO QUOTE HARVEY'S 'HISTORY OF WILKES-BARRE') "BECAUSE THE TOWN WAS ENTIRELY UNDERLAID WITH A VAST WEALTH OF BLACK DIAMONDS, AND IS OVERLAID WITH HOSPITALITY, CULTIVATION AND BEAUTY -- QUALITIES WHICH, LIKE THE CHIEF CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DIAMOND, ARE DISTINCTIVE AND ATTRACTIVE."

THE ORIGINAL FLAG OF THE CITY OF WILKES-BARRE WHICH IS DISPLAYED IN THE MAYOR'S OFFICE, IS WHITE WITH A GREEN DIAMOND IN ITS CENTER AND IN THE CENTER OF THE DIAMOND A GOLD BEEHIVE WITH BEES IN FLIGHT AROUND IT.

THIS DIAMOND IS SYMBOLIC OF THE ORIGINAL DIAMOND TOWN PLOT, THE BEEHIVE SIGNIFYS THE CENTER OF COMMERCE AND THE BEES SURROUNDING THE HIVE ARE INDICATIVE OF THE INDUSTRIOUSNESS OF THE PEOPLE.

THE COLORS: GREEN FOR THE LUSH GREEN OF THE AREA, AND GOLD FOR THE FIELDS OF GRAIN THAT WERE ONCE GROWN UPON THE FERTILE FARMS ALONG THE SUSQUEHANNA RIVER IN THE CITY.

THE NEW BANNER WE USE CARRIES THE SEAL OF INCORPORATION OF THE CITY OF WILKES-BARRE WHICH ALSO KEEPS WITHIN ITS CIRCLE THE ORIGINAL SYMBOL OF THE BEEHIVE AND BEES, AND THE ORIGINAL COLORS OF GREEN AND GOLD.