RESEARCH OF

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COLLECTED SHORT ARTICLES FROM BUCKS COUNTY

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[The following articles are rather short, but they all pertain to our Indian History in Bucks County, so I am presenting several of Uncle Don's articles of research in this one document. I will list all of them below and they will fall in order, one after the other. - Wipunkwteme]

2. SKETCH OF DR. JONATHAN INGHAM

2a Aquetong Spring 2b Aquetong Creek 2c Aquetong

Solebury Township: Ingham's Spring; Auquetong

George MacReynolds, "Place Names in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Alphabetically Arranged in an Historical Narrative," (published by the Bucks County Historical Society, Doylestown, Pa., 1942, 1955, 1976), pages 10-12.

Rises in Aquetong Spring, Solebury Township, and flows eastwardly about two and half miles, emptying into the Delaware River at New Hope. The creek naturally takes its name from the famous spring.

On November 2, 1710, Richard Heat, "of Northern Liberties, Philadelphia, gentleman," received from William Penn a grant of 1,000 acres of land in two contiguous tracts of 500 acres each, fronting a mile on Delaware River and extending back in the woods to the border of "the Great Spring tract," embracing the entire site of the present borough of New Hope.

The "Mill Tract" of this grant covered the lower Aquetong Creek valley. On this creek Robert Heath, the father, and Richard Heath, the son, probably jointly, built a grist mill in 1707. The clatter of the Heath mill was the first industrial sound that broke the wilderness silence of mid-Bucks County. Plumstead pioneers, who had gone horseback twenty-five miles to Pennypack mills, now came by the same means down the bridle trail, afterwards known as Sugan Road, to the nearer Heath mill. It will be noticed that the mill was built three years before the grant of 1710, indicating the Heaths may have moved there and were operating at the earlier date on a lease concession.

After the building of the Heath mill the little valley soon became the scene of much mill activity. A fulling mill was built as early as 1712 by Philip Williams. In the old-time process of making woolen cloth, a fulling mill was the establishment where the fabric was shrunk by means of heat and moisture.

The first saw mill on the stream was built in 1740. Benjamin Canby, operator of the ferry, built a forge along the creek in 1744. Jonathan Ingham, who bought the spring tract from James Logan in 1747, erected a fulling mill some distance below the spring and carried on the business of fuller and

farmer. This mill passed to his son, Dr. Jonathan Ingham, and in turn to his son, Samuel D. Ingham, who gained possession upon attaining his majority in 1800.

It is probable that Samuel D. Ingham abandoned the fulling mill. The same year he built a paper mill, which he operated until his death in 1860. He had learned the paper making trade in a mill on Pennypack Creek and also had experience in operating a mill in Bloomfield, New Jersey. In the Library of The Bucks County Historical Society are preserved fine specimens of laid writing papers made in 1805-1810 at the Ingham Springs Paper Mill, bearing the mill's plain watermark, I. S.

Benjamin Parry in 1789 purchased the Dr. John Todd mill in New Hope, believed to have been erected in 1768, and established a flaxseed oil and flour mill in connection with his lumber business. This old building, long abandoned as a mill, has recently been remodeled and converted into a modern playhouse.

In 1870 two Philadelphians, James B. Thompson and H. C. Tagg, leased from A. Jackson Beaumont, then owner of the spring farm, a small piece of ground near the spring spillway for a fish hatchery.

Beaumont, of Huguenot descent, who had a good deal of sportsman's blood in his composition, was sympathetic towards the project, as he himself had a fish pond somewhere back of his dwelling house, where he was quietly experimenting in a gentlemanly way with raising black bass from stock he had obtained from the Hudson River. This was about the time great activity was developing throughout the county in fish culture. It soon became the major hobby of the day.

By 1871 the Thompson and Tagg plant was fully equipped with ponds and spawning beads. Crowds came to see the place. Although heralded as an enterprise more for the projectors' pleasure than profit, everybody paid 25 cents to go through the plant. It was reliably reported that 100,000 shad, 60,000 to 70,000 brook trout, 9,000 salmon and 100 terrapin were raised the first year and distributed for stocking purposes.

Soon the fish culture fad died out, and also the hatchery. Some of the brook trout escaped into the lake and furnished good sport for anglers until they grew so big and lazy they would no longer rise to a fly.

About fifteen years ago an effort, sponsored by the Bucks County Fish, Game and Forestry Association, was made, to have the State established a fish hatchery below the breast of the dam that impounds the present lake. Dr. Richard V. Mattison, who owned the spring at that time, favored the project. The Commissioners of Fisheries, some of whom personally inspected the proposed site, considered it one of the finest for the purpose to the State, but something intervened to divert the hatchery to a less desirable site in a western county.