

THE JAMES LOGAN TRACT

From Eastburn Reeder, *Early Settlers of Solebury Township, Bucks County, Pa.*, compiled from Deeds, Wills, and the Records of Friends' Meetings, first published in the Doylestown *Intelligencer* in 1900, edited into book format by The Bucks County Historical Society, Doylestown, Pa., 1971, 2nd edition.

This tract of land is said to have been granted by William Penn to James Logan, of Philadelphia, November 3d, 1701.¹ It was for 500 acres, but a subsequent survey made it very nearly 600 acres. It was confirmed to Logan September 12th, 1735. This tract of land is bounded on the north by the Scarborough tract, on the east by the Heath tract, on the south by the Heath tract and Penn's Manor of Highlands, and on the west by the Scarborough tract. The lines bounding this tract are as follows: Commencing in the public road a few rods northwest of the toll gate on the New Hope and Lahaska turnpike, thence N. 40 E. by lands then of John Scarborough 350 perches to a corner, thence S. 51 E. by the Heath tract 276 perches to a corner, thence S. 38½ W. by the Heath tract and the Manor of Highlands 350 perches to a corner, thence N. 50½ W. 276 perches to the place of beginning. The celebrated Aquetong or Great Spring is located near the centre of this tract, and affords five of the finest water powers in the county. James Logan disposed of this tract as follows: By a deed dated May 26th, 1747, he sold 202 acres 82 perches to Jacob Dean², being about one-third of the tract, and on the southwestern side; and by deed, dated May 1st, 1747, he sold the remainder to Jonathan Ingham, being 409 acres and 66 perches.³ In both of the deeds made by Logan to Dean, and to Ingham he placed perpetual ground rents, to be paid annually to him during his life time, and by his will to the Longanian Library Company, of Philadelphia, forever thereafter. The terms of these ground rents, as set forth in the respective deeds were as follows: In the deed made to Jacob Dean it was stipulated that the yearly rent was to begin in 1754/5, and for seven years the rent was to be 10 pistoles (A pistol is a gold coin of Spain, worth 16 shillings, or \$3.60 United States money.) of fine coined gold weighting 4 pennyweight and seven grains, or other good silver coin of equal value, on March 1st of each year, and at the end of seven years for the next one hundred years, from 1761 to 1861, the rent was to be ten pounds sterling annually.

In the deed made to Jonathan Ingham in 1747 it was stipulated that the said Ingham was to pay "a yearly rent or sum of Twenty one pounds sterling in English money or in foreign good coined silver or gold equivalent to the same" on the first day of March, which will be in the year of our Lord 1754/5, and "after the expiration of the said seven years, for and during the full term of one hundred years, the yearly rent to be the sum of twenty-five Pound Sterling" annually on the first day of March yearly; the first payment of which last mentioned rent to be made March 1st, 1761, and after the expiration of this mentioned term of 100 years, which will be A.D., 1861, the said tract of land, with all the improvements thereon to be valued by four judicious, impartial men, to be indifferently chosen by the heirs and assigns of James Logan of the one part, and the executors, administrators and assigns of the said Jonathan Ingham of the other part, and by how much the true value of the said land and improvements, shall in the estimation of the said four persons exceed the rent herein reserved, one full half or moiety of said excess shall be added to the said rent herein reserved, and from that time becomes a new rent and shall be yearly paid to the heirs and assigns of James Logan, by the executors or assigns of the said Jonathan Ingham, on the first day of March yearly forever. And in like manner the like proceedings shall be renewed at the expiration of every term of 121 years forever hereafter. By the terms of the rent for the first term of 100 years, that is twenty-five pounds sterling, on the 400 acres, the annual rent would amount to about 31 cents per acre, upon each acre of land held. This, on a farm of 100 acres would make an annual rent of \$31, which seemed to be a small rental, and, no doubt, James Logan thought he was making easy terms with his purchasers, and also securing something to be paid to himself, and after his decease to the library company in Philadelphia, which he had founded, and which was a special object of his pride and care. Things thus went on very smoothly for the term of 100 years, the

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occupants of the lands making improvements the same as though the lands were wholly their own. But in 1860 there was destined to come a great and marked change.

This year 1860 ushered in the time when the land was to be revalued and appraisers were appointed. On the part of the library company David Landreth and Charles H. Murheid, of Philadelphia, were chosen, and on the part of the occupants of the land John Blackfan and Stacy Brown, of Bucks county, were chosen. The meetings of the appraisers were held at New Hope. Several sessions were held, examining witnesses as to the value of the property and in viewing the same. The results of this appraisement was that hereafter the yearly rental was to be \$1.80 per acre, being nearly six times as much as it had been before. A farm of 100 acres that formerly paid \$31 annually would now have to pay \$180 annually. The entire tract which had previously yielded an income of \$180 a year, would now produce an income of more than \$1000 a year. This sum now is equal to a full rent of the property, and the present owners of the land are now put in the position of renters in practice, as well as in name. It has had the effect to stop all improvements both to the buildings and to the land itself. It is by no means unlikely or improbable, that, in some instances, at least, the land will revert back to the heirs and assigns of James Logan, by default of rent, before the time for the next valuation rolls around in the year 1981.

The soil of this tract is principally limestone, and the reputation of the Ingham lime has extended far and wide. The present owners of this tract of land are as follows: Lizzie C. Eastburn 125 acres, T.T. Eastburn 75 acres, George Beaumont 60 acres, J.W. Balderston 17 acres, Eastburn Reeder 10 acres, Solebury Deer Park 80 acres, Harry Pierson 30 acres, Amos Johnson 113 acres, C.H. Breban 40 acres, Jesse Naylor 22 acres and several other small lots in the vicinity of Aquetong post office.^{4,5}

Footnotes:

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| 1. William Penn to Abraham & William Lloyd, 500 acres, 1681 | WARRANT 93 |
| a. Proprietary Commissioners to James Logan, 500 acres, 1702 | SURVEY 4-98 |
| b. Proprietary Commissioners to James Logan, 500 acres, 1735 | PATENT A-8-42 |
| | SURVEY 5-99; D-85-256; |
| | D-88-6; D-85-251 |
| 2. James Logan to Jacob Dean, 202.5 acres, (library funds), 1747 | DEED 25-197 (recorded
1789) |
| 3. James Logan to Jonas Ingham, 409.5 acres, (library funds), 1737 | DEED 14-408 |
| 4. (area of Aquetong) | see AQUETONG |
| 5. (area of Aquetong) | see AQUETONG |

Transcribed by Suzanne Crilley