

Notes and Queries

FORBES ROAD—Letter from Dr. Donehoo.

When at the recent meeting of the Westmoreland-Fayette Branch of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, it was my pleasure to meet the Rev. Felix Fellner, O.S.B., who is the professor of history at Saint Vincent Arch-Abbey, at Latrobe. Father Fellner was with the party of "Path Finders" who were tracing the course of the Forbes Road in 1910. He is deeply interested in the history of the early settlement of "Old Westmoreland", as Saint Vincent's occupies the ground through which the Forbes Road ran and is in the immediate vicinity of old Unity Presbyterian Church.

Father Fellner told the writer at this meeting that he had recently come into possession of a valuable document, which helps to solve the problem as to the course of the Forbes Road through that section of Westmoreland. Since returning home I wrote Father Fellner, asking him for a copy of this document. This, he has kindly sent to me.

The tract of land mentioned in this "Military Grant" is now a part of the monastery property near Beatty station. Father Fellner received the original grant from John Hunter, the great-grandson of Joseph Hunter, who purchased the land from John Fraser.

This is one of the earliest "Military Grants" west of the mountains. The following is a copy of the original, which is now in the Archives of Saint Vincent Arch-Abbey.

"To John Fraser of Bedford.

"Whereas it appears that the Commanding Officer at this post has been authorized to give permissions to sundry persons, to settle on different stages on the Roads leading to Fort Pitt, for the better accommodating and supplying his Majesties Troops employed on this communication, I do therefore permit you to settle and improve at a certain place above Fort Ligonier known by the name of the Fourteen Mile Run two miles above a claim of Patrick Harfords. Thereon to build and improve for your own private use and advantage as soon as your conveniency suits, in consideration of which grant from the Crown you are to pay an acknowledgement Twenty Shillings Sterling per Annum Ground rent if demanded, given under my Hand and Seal at Fort Pitt this 10th. day of February in the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty six and in the Sixth Year of the Reign of our Sovereigne Lord George the Third King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc. etc.

Will. McMurray Capt.
in the 42nd. Regt.

Captain William McMurray, who signed this document, was one of the officers in the 42nd. Highlanders, known as the "Black Watch",

which took such a prominent part in the expedition of Colonel Henry Bouquet and in the Battle of Bushy Run. He was evidently in command at Fort Pitt in February 1766, when this "permission" was granted to John Fraser.

Geo. P. Donehoo.

DURING THE CIVIL WAR the main building of the College of William and Mary, at Williamsburg, Va., occupied by Federal troops, was burned, and the library was scattered. In some instances Federal soldiers picked up books and documents and carried them away as souvenirs, and such have been found still in the possession of Northern families. In connection with the interesting work of architectural restoration now going on at Williamsburg, both architects and librarian would be glad of information regarding any such possessions. Documents showing anything of past conditions of Williamsburg buildings will be especially welcome. Address Dr. Earl G. Swem, Librarian, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Va.

BACK NUMBERS—

The office of our Society has a call for some copies of the issues of January 1918, Vol. 1, No. 1 and January 1919, Vol. 2 No. 1. also January 1921 and 1927. October 1919 and 1924 of which issues our supply is exhausted. If any of our readers have copies of these which they do not care to retain, a favor will be conferred upon us if they will mail such copies to The Historical Society of Western Penna., Bigelow Boulevard, Parkman Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa.