

Wolf's Hollow County Park

Chapter One

In 1681, William Penn granted 5,000 acres to Admiral William Crispin, who died in Barbados on his way to Pennsylvania to become Penn's Surveyor General and first Chief Justice. Upon Crispin's death, 1,000 acres were transferred to his daughter, Rachel. In 1694, the grant was "lost in the Wars of Ireland" and reissued to Rachel and her husband, Thomas Armstrong. In 1733, Philadelphia merchant Samuel Mickle requested a warrant, or applied for ownership, for the 1,000 acres.

Samuel Mickle issued mortgages to Joseph Buckley (1738), John Dunn, James Moore and William Moore (all in 1743). The Dunn parcel appears to be at the center of the park, and the possible site of the existing stone house. The Dunn survey shows the parcel was divided in 1755 between James McCullough and Thomas

Gibson. During the growing unrest of the 1750's and 1760's, it appears residents were somewhat transient, not completing their patents after warrants were made or sold, and moving to Virginia. Neither McCullough nor Gibson appears to have completed the patent.

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Wolf's Hollow, Chester County's sixth regional park, was named after the 1789 land patent granted to James and David Sterrett. One of our first projects was to identify any structures that might provide information about the park's history. We began with the stone house (right) and stone work forming on what appears to be a dam (above). During an early spring walk along the creek, about a quarter mile south of Mercer's Mill Covered Bridge, we encountered an unusual pattern of stone walls and the remains of a structure (below right). Exploring, about a mile further down yielded a much smaller system of walls and a more intact building that appears to have been a residence. Stay tuned as we hike through history exploring Wolf's Hollow.



After the War for Independence in 1786, John Richardson applied for a warrant for 230 acres for Dr. John McKinly. That same year, a patent for 417 acres, *Summerseat*, was awarded to McKinly, who owned two adjoining parcels. It appears he never lived on any of them, rather being a resident of New Castle, Delaware. McKinly was the first President of Delaware, and was taken as prisoner of war after the Battle of Brandywine.

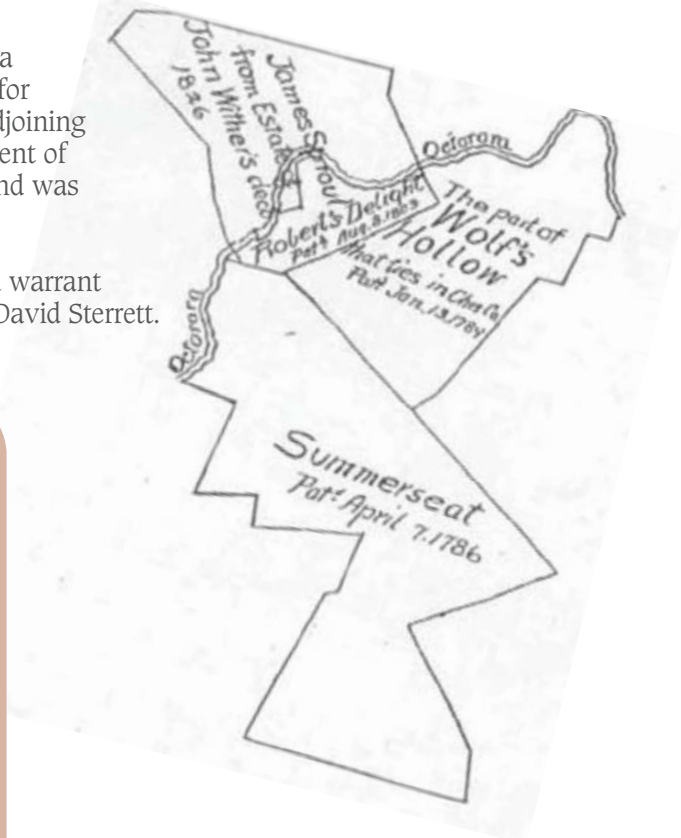
In 1788, Samuel Cochran, local boy and Surveyor General, took out a warrant for Wolf's Hollow and patented it within three months for James and David Sterrett.

WHAT IS A WARRANT?

The official land acquisition process from the Proprietors of Pennsylvania was established beginning in the late 1730's.

- ◇ The application to Warrant was the request for ownership (purchase) and a Survey.
- ◇ The Warrant was a description of the land and the official request for a Survey.
- ◇ The Survey was the official definition of the land to be purchased.
- ◇ The application for a Patent initiated the review for final purchase of the property.
- ◇ The Patent was the official title once payment had been received.

Special thanks to Robbyn Kehoe, President, Board of Trustees, Atglen Public Library and a neighbor of the park, for her research.



Initial research indicates they were in the war and this land may have been compensation for their service. (A Capt. Sterrett recruited soldiers here). They had adjoining property, but again, are not recorded as living here. In 1816, the parcel was lost to sheriff's sale for non-payment of county taxes.

If you would like to join us as we continue to explore the history of Wolf's Hollow County Park, please contact Heritage Preservation Coordinator Karen Marshall at 610-344-6415 or kmarshall@chesco.org.