



## Harrogate's Family Tree

by Sonnie Sperati

IT IS 1853 AND EVAN BROWN has inherited us from his father Thomas Brown. The American Republican newspaper of West Chester reported his death, "In New Garden, near the Delaware line, on 21<sup>st</sup> July, Thomas Brown, aged about 70 years. He was highly esteemed by all who knew him, and his loss will long be regretted by a large circle of friends and acquaintances."

Evan was born about 1810. He married Joanna Taylor I would guess around 1830 as their first child, Sarah, was born 12 March 1835. The couple had four more children, George, Elizabeth, Mary Ellen, and Ruthanna. All the census records I checked list him as a farmer. In the 1870 and 1880 censuses many of the men listed on the same page as Evan are from Ireland and their occupation is brick yard worker.

Now why does this have significance? Because of clay, China Clay, Virginia Clay. All are names for the same thing -- a fine clay for making porcelain and later firebricks for the iron furnaces. The first deposit was discovered on the farm of Israel Hoopes (location of St. Anthony's in the Hills) who had little interest in developing a mining business. However some was mined, sold and used to manufacture Tucker China of Philadelphia between 1825 and 1838.



Tucker China in Chester County Historical Society

In 1845 Israel died and his son Isaac Hoopes now in possession of the farm built a kiln and fired bricks. Isaac Hoopes hired Hamilton Graham, a mining consultant, to develop the brick making operation. Graham first became a partner of Hoopes, then sole owner, but took another partner later. It was for him and his company that the first railroad spurs throughout the area were laid out to accommodate and ease the transport of the fine white potters' clay from the quarries where it was mixed.

He sold his company for fifty-thousand dollars. Its new owner, Charles Lenning, sold it to Howard Spencer for a colossal \$100,000. And thus began the American Kaolin Company in New Garden. There were two principal quarries -- what is now SAITH and one in Hockessin (area

called Southwood just over the DE/PA line along Limestone Road).

By 1870, the Wilmington and Western Railroad completed its tracks from Hockessin to Landenberg. A station was built near the brick kilns in Hockessin. From 1870 to 1910 150,000 bricks were shipped from the Southwood brick yard by way of the Southwood station. The station was located in the area now occupied by the Estates of Southwood just over the DE/PA line along Limestone Road.

The tracks ran under what is now Limestone Road into what is now the Estates. An access road ran parallel to the tracks. Mary Simon of Landenberg is a volunteer for the Wilmington and Western Railroad and the author of a book about the W&W railroad in Landenberg, "Landenberg's



Site of access road



Southwood Station site in Estates of Southwood

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Forgotten Railroad". She very graciously took me to the site of the station.



Railroad ties



Half of a Southwood brick found at station site (South is stamped on the face of the brick)

Other companies were formed to mine kaolin near Landenberg and Hockessin. One vein has some significance for Harrogate property. Surreptitious test borings made at night confirmed the location of clay veins on the McIntire property, next to Harrogate on the West and which is now Somerset Lake. The family was infuriated by the test borings. Despite many offers to buy the land, they refused to sell. It was not until 1893 when the last McIntire, Eliza, died that her heirs sold the property and development began. Clay

from that site went to Hockessin for the owners did not set up a washing operation on the site.

Well, how does our owner, Evan Brown, fit into this? His brother David lent Hamilton Graham money to enable Graham to buy the Hoopes kaolin lands. The railroad ran through Evan Brown's land and he granted the right of way to the Wilmington and Western. In the West Chester Jeffersonian newspaper in 1872 we find this, "The Southwood Station on the new Wilmington and Western Railroad owes its name to Miss Brown, daughter of Evan Brown, of that place." I do not know which of the daughters it was. However Elizabeth is a good guess since she married Joseph Graham, the son of Hamilton Graham. Joseph was in the clay business too. In fact, when they married they built their home with Southwood bricks.

Evan Brown was a Quaker and it is not surprising then that he became a member of the newly formed Republican Party in 1854. The party was organized to combat the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which threatened to extend slavery into the territories. And Evan also was elected treasurer of the Fremont and Dayton Club created to help elect as president John C. Fremont, the famous explorer who mapped much of the Oregon Trail.

In the Oxford Press of February 6, 1878, we find the reporting of a party given for Joanna's 66th birthday by their children and grandchildren. When they arrived at their parents' home, they found it locked because Evan and Joanna were at a meeting of Friends at New Garden. The children persevered in gaining admittance and surprised Evan and Joanna with "a long table spread and groaning with the sumptuous dinner provided by the guests which was partaken of freely after a hearty welcome on the arrival of the host and hostess." After dinner, Evan and Joanna were each presented with gold spectacles.

Joanna Brown died on February 7, 1883. Evan, a month later, sold his property to Francis Walker of Wilmington, Delaware. Evan died February 18, 1890. I believe he was living in West Grove at the time of his death. The Browns are buried in the New Garden Orthodox Friends Cemetery.

## Pizza Night Update

Unfortunately Donna and Paul have migrated to Florida. They were the underpinnings of the Harrogate Friday Pizza Nights at Anthony's pizza in Pike Creek. Even though they have departed Harrogate, Pizza Night Goes On!

Susan and Bob Herr have graciously stepped into the void and will be organizing the weekly event. Pizza Night starts at 5:30 p.m. every Friday. If you would like to join your neighbors in this very relaxed but fun night, let Susan or Bob know by 3:30 p.m. on Friday. If you would like to be on the e-mail list reminder, contact Susan or Bob.