

Noble Crawford

Noble Crawford was born in County Donegal, Ireland, in 1768 or 1769. His father wanted him to be a doctor so Noble was sent to a good school. Noble was 17 when his father died. His brother, being the oldest, inherited the estate and title giving Noble a small sum of money and passage to America.

At Philadelphia he continued his studies briefly then secured a job in a cooper shop making flour barrels. After mastering the craft he took a teaching position. After the school term he returned to barrel making.

He continued this pattern of teaching and making barrels during the off months, later moving farther west in Pennsylvania to Thompsettown. Here he taught several terms and married Mary Stuart in 1789. Son, William Stuart Crawford, was born in November 1790.

The spring of 1791 found the Crawford family along with several other pioneer families floating down the Ohio River to Maysville, Kentucky. Here Noble settled his family and made peddling trips through Kentucky and Tennessee. On one of these trips, traveling with Samuel Crockett, Davey Crockett's brother, the peddlers lost horses and equipment to Indians. Through luck and bravery, all were gotten back and they returned safely to Maysville.

Next Crawford and two brothers-in-law moved their families to Pike County, Ohio, along the Scioto River. They purchased land from a man they thought was a Revolutionary War veteran and owner of the land. After a year, the real owner came along and the settlers had to gather up their crops and move on.

They bought 1400 acres in western Ross County along the Buckskin Creek, some 18 miles west of Chillicothe. Crawford built the first house in what was to become Buckskin Township. Here four more children were born to Noble and Mary. He also built a mill here but in 1806 he sold the mill and land, bought land farther down the creek and built another mill.

In 1810 Crawford sold this land and bought land at the northeast corner of Main and Second streets in Greenfield. In 1812 he built Travellers Rest, the first stone building in Greenfield, and began the operation of an inn. Many travelers passed through the town as it was located on the old Lebanon Road, a major east-west route through Ohio.

Noble Crawford became the first postmaster of Greenfield and Travellers Rest became the post office in 1813. The mail rider would carry the mail from Chillicothe once a week. He would blow his horn as he came down the hill east of town and the townspeople would stop what they were doing and head to the inn for their mail. Each letter would cost the receiver 37 ½ cents.

In 1820 Crawford's daughter married Dr. Garvin Johnson, the first doctor in the area. He set his office up in the inn. Later in 1829 Crawford sold the inn to Dr. Thomas McGarraugh who used the building as his home and office.

After selling the inn, Crawford built a log house, another stone house and later a sawmill in town while continuing farming on thirty acres next to Greenfield. In 1838 he sold all town property and farm and moved to farm property a mile from Greenfield. In 1847 he moved back to Greenfield where his wife died the following winter. He then lived with his son-in-law near Austin in Ross County until his death in 1853.