

## **STOVERDALE or STOBBERDALE ?** **THE STOVERDALE/STOBBERDALE CONNECTION**

**STOVERDALE** was a parcel of land on the Swatara Creek near Hummelstown, PA that belonged to one Edward Stover. As far back as 1866 Mr. Stover offered the area to the local United Brethren Church for their summer Campmeeting.

**STOBBERDALE** is one of the “neighborhoods” of Mount Gretna on land previously owned by Abraham Kauffman who developed the area. Jacob H. Stober acquired the land now known as Stoberdale and built the Stober House Restaurant, now the Mt. Gretna Hide-a-way.

### **DISCONTENT AT STOVERDALE CAMPGROUND**

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After origination of the Stoverdale United Brethren Campmeeting in 1866, by 1891 some of the ministers, laymen, and cottage owners were increasingly dissatisfied with the Stoverdale camp due to changing norms at the camp. Excursion trains ran on Sunday. Candy, soda, peanuts, and magazines were sold. Other “nefarious” activities occurred as racing of horses and buggies. A committee of association members was formed to search for a new site and approached Robert H. Coleman about land in Mount Gretna. In 1892, a section of the Stoverdale United Brethren Campmeeting parishioners leased land from Coleman and relocated to Mount Gretna. It is now called the Mount Gretna Campmeeting Association.

On behalf of the Cornwall & Lebanon Railroad Co., owned by Robert Coleman, agent R.B. Gordon gave the Stoverdale church leaders a tour of the Mt. Gretna Park area. They were offered a lease of 20 acres for 20 years at the cost of one dollar.

In addition, C & L workers would clear the land, erect a store, dining hall, dormitory and chapel area. Water would be provided for the cottages, lighting, access to public kitchens, and “the best sanitary” conditions. There would be no trains running on Sundays during the Campmeeting gathering or sale of *frivolous items*.

In addition, Mr. Coleman offered to relocate 27 Stoverdale cottages to Mount Gretna by way of his railway. However, Mr. Edward Stover, owner of the Stoverdale camp refused. Mr. Coleman paid cottage owners \$120 cash stipends to build anew in Gretna. The whole package was hard to refuse. A portion of the Campmeeting population left the Stoverdale location to start anew in Gretna, today the Mount Gretna Campmeeting Association.

## **EARLY HISTORY OF STOBBERDALE**

The area of Mount Gretna now known as “Stoberdale” was originally owned by Robert H. Coleman, Iron Baron. Over time the land changed hands, Abraham Kauffman bought it in 1910 and named the area “The Willows.”

Kauffman built a store just outside the 1<sup>st</sup> Street gate to the Mt. Gretna Campmeeting grounds that included a bakery and ice cream parlor. He also built an icehouse to produce his ice cream where the present Mount Gretna Volunteer Fire Company is located.

Across the street from the Kauffman Store a hotel was erected and to the north a working garage for his son-in-law, Andy Daigneau.

Mr. Kauffman suffered financial disaster and by 1928 the land was taken over by the Farmer’s Trust Company. Jacob H. Stober purchased the land and opened a restaurant where Andy’s Garage used to stand.

### **THE STOBER FAMILY ROOTS**

The Stober family immigrated from Germany 1746 on the ship Snow Molly. They settled in Schoeneck, Pennsylvania where they established a farm. The farm was located on what is now Stober’s Dam Road. Over time, the Stober kin spread out to Ephrata and Mount Gretna, PA and prospered owning ice houses and a feed company among other occupations.

### **THE STOBER HOUSE RESTAURANT**

Jacob H. Stober lived in Mount Gretna for 35 years until his death in 1965. His brothers, John H. and William H. Stober also lived in Gretna.

Jacob, known as “Jake” and his wife Blanche opened the Stober House Restaurant in 1937. The building still stands, now the Hide-a-Way Restaurant. Jake advertised the establishment as having the *“Best Eats, Cold Beer and Mixed Drinks Served”*\* and reasonable prices. In addition, a refrigeration system was installed *“for the benefit of Mt. Gretna and the Community.”*

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