

## **Samuel Lightfoot (1701-1777)**

Samuel Lightfoot was born in County Westmeath, Ireland. He is a descendant of three generations of Quaker ministers from Great Britain. His father, Thomas, removed the family from England and moved to Ireland due to religious persecution.

While growing up in Ireland, before 1716, Samuel trained to become a surveyor through an apprenticeship before he immigrated. It was possible to obtain excellent surveying skills in Ireland at this time.

In 1716, at the age of 15, Samuel came to the American colonies from Ireland along with his father and family members. They settled in Chester County, PA. Samuel's half-brother, Michael, came first and had already settled in New Garden, PA.

At the age of 15, in 1716, Samuel was a surveyor for William Penn and assisted in the surveys of the Mason-Dixon Line. Samuel surveyed the majority of Penn's Woods in Pennsylvania. From 1716 until after 1726, Samuel began a career as a deputy surveyor. He is responsible for mapping much of the land in Lancaster and Chester Counties.

In 1725, Samuel was age 24 when he married Mary Head (1706-1732). The marriage took place at the New Garden Meeting, Chester County, PA. Mary and Samuel had four children. Benjamin (1726-1777), Thomas (1728-1793), Samuel Abbott (1729-1759) and William (1731-1797).

Samuel Lightfoot owned over 1,000 acres in Pennsylvania. In Pikeland, he gave 250 acres to his son, Thomas, to build a sawmill there. Samuel gave William 250 acres next to Thomas. Area Pikeland farmers requested that Sam Lightfoot would build a grist mill. The Lightfoot Mill was built c. 1747 according to county tax records. William was the first Lightfoot to act as miller there. The mill remained in the Lightfoot family for three generations, until it was sold in 1812.

At the age of 33, Samuel Lightfoot's earliest known surveyor's field book is dated 1734. There may have been earlier field books that were lost.

In 1737, at the age of 36, Samuel is appointed deputy surveyor to the surveyor general of the Land Office of Lancaster County. By age 40 in 1741, Samuel is appointed deputy surveyor for both Lancaster and Chester counties.

When Samuel is 47 yrs old, records indicate that he is surveying in Berks County although it is not listed as a residence for him.

Upon the death of Samuel, his property, with the title cleared, passed to his son, William. Upon the death of William the estate was divided between the founder's two grandsons, David and Samuel. David (son of William) received 179 ½ acres of land and 1,100 pounds. William's son, Samuel (1799) received 105 ½ acres including the mill and 1,600 pounds.

Samuel Lightfoot, the mill founder, died on February 26, 1777 at the age of 76.