

## RIDLEY TOWNSHIP DERIVED NAME IN 1682 FROM RIDLEY CREEK

### Ridley and the Darbys

Ridley and Darby are two more names one finds in Delaware County.

Locally the names have each been applied to a township, a borough and a creek.

The origin of Ridley dates back to 1682. John Simcock located one of his large purchases of land immediately north of what was then known as Amers Land. He named it Ridley after the place in Cheshire, England, from where he had emigrated.

For awhile, the district continued to be known as Amers or Amos Land. The name Ridley, however, was applied to Ridley Creek before the township was popularly known by this name. Ridley township was organized in 1687 and included Amers Land and Tinicum Island.

Although now extinct, the name Amers Land has the interesting derivation. It is said that in very early times a celebrated nurse lived in this district. The Swedes were the principal residents at that time and they devised the name from the Swedish word for nurse - amma.

Historians trace the name Darby back to old England. Early settlers adopted the name in remembrance of their home. There are two ideas on the name's origin.

One says that the English county of Derby was named so "because it standeth on the River Derwent." Another theory is that Derby is a combination of the "olde English" personal name "Doer" meaning wild beast or deer - and the word "by" - meaning a town - therefore - "Town of the wild beast".

There is also speculation about when and where the spelling of the name was altered. Historians point out that the corruption of Derby to Darby was evident in England. Therefore, it is believed that the spelling was changed in England and brought here by the early settlers, as Darby. Others say it was simply an error of spelling when the early settlers bestowed the name here.

Originally, Upper Darby and Darby Township were one. Darby borough was the heart of Darby Township. Today - little of the original remains as Darby Township with most of the land incorporated into the newer boroughs.