

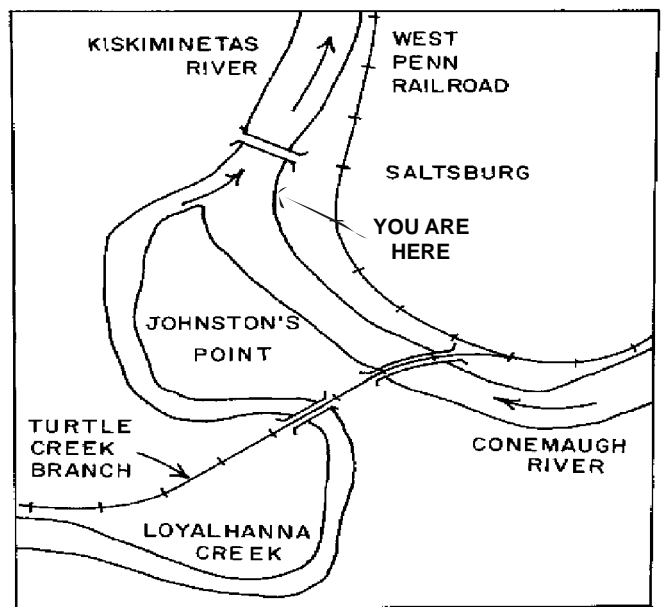
WEST PENN TRAIL

at

JOHNSTON'S POINT [Port Johnston]

JOHNSTON'S POINT is the finger of land between the Conemaugh River and Loyalhanna Creek, at the confluence of the two streams. Pioneer William Johnston settled here in 1794, built a cabin and then erected a grist mill; later, he added a saw mill, blacksmith shop, cooper shop, store house, and barn. Johnston's busy place was known also as Port Johnston, for here was a resupply depot for the boatmen floating down the river on rafts and flatboats, bound next for Pittsburgh, there to pick up iron and glass merchandise, and then go on to New Orleans, with their initial cargo of flour, salted meats, and shooks. Shooks were barrels or kegs, disassembled for transport, that had been made at places further up the river, toward Johnstown.

At New Orleans, the boats were sold for their lumber value; the shooks were reassembled, filled with sugar, and then carried upriver, by steamboat, to Pittsburgh. Shooks also went on to Cuba, there to be filled with molasses or rum and the barrels carried by sea to Atlantic ports.



William Johnston is best known as the venturer who bored the first brine well in this region and so established the Great Conemaugh Salt Works that became the third largest salt-producing center in America, shipping 500,000 bushels of salt in 1830.

DIED, at Port Johnston, near the Conemaugh Salt Works, last week, Mr. William Johnston, a very industrious and enterprising citizen. He was the first person who bored for salt in this part of the country.

Pittsburgh Mercury
January 19, 1821