

PENN'S CREEK MASSACRE

Good day everyone...it's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.

The year 1755 was anything but good for the Pennsylvania pioneers who had gone into the frontier to colonize this nation. General Edward Braddock, was defeated in the west July 9, 1755. This defeat was a terrible disaster and left the frontiers of Pennsylvania threatened with ruin by the victorious French. They pressed through the passes into Central Pennsylvania and encamped on the Susquehanna at what is now Liverpool, some thirty miles north of Harris' Ferry. The Provincial Government at Philadelphia did not act with the energy that this emergency demanded, so that the entire wilderness from the Juniata River to Shamokin, now Sunbury, was filled with parties of hostile Indians--scalping, murdering and burning. Every post sent word to the government for help, but--this sounds frightfully familiar--the Assembly and the Governor were deadlocked--no money bills could be passed. Then the Indians, in great number, having crossed the Alleghenies, arrived at Penn's Creek. They struck the settlement along the creek and a terrible massacre occurred there on October 16--today is the 217 anniversary--fifteen were killed, ten carried away. Philadelphia was advised by Conrad Weiser and his two sons, but did nothing. John Harris rushed to the rescue of those in defense, with 46 men from Paxtang. They marched to Penn's Creek helping those in need, burying the dead, then proceeded to Shamokin to learn the attitude of the Indians there. Of those taken prisoner, one child died of starvation--the rest were taken to the Indian centre at Kittanning, and held

prisoner until Colonel John Armstrong destroyed the town a year later. Still they were not rescued, (these prisoners of the Penn Creeks Massacre) --from Kittaning, their captors took them to Kuskusky, and finally on a forced march to the Muskingum, in the present state of Ohio. Somehow, early in 1759, still alive they were able to make their escape and reached Fort Pitt fifteen days later. They testified to the events of the Penn's Creek Massacre later that year in Philadelphia. A bronze plaque, unveiled 57 years ago, is on the site, and can be seen above the bridge over Penn's Creek on the Susquehanna Trail, leading from Selinsgrove to Sunbury. It marks the site of one of the most horrible of the massacres in Pennsylvania. This was an event that provoked the French and Indian War, which began the next year, a conflagration that reached around the world; to Europe and to the black hole of Calcutta in India and marked almost the end of French colonialism. It all began here in Pennsylvania, with the Penn's Creek massacre.

This is Pete Wambach. It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.