



Stories Behind The Names of Bucks County Places

Do you know where the following Bucks County locations are or how they got their names?

Devil's Half-Acre
Featherbed Hill
Castle Valley
Playwicky
Sugar Bottom
Pickpocket
Elephant
Chicken Foot

Devil's Half Acre is a bit of land located between the Delaware Canal and River Road in Plumstead Township. It is believed that the location was named during the 1830s when the Canal was beginning to be built. At that time, the place had a bad reputation for "devilish" activities, including rowdy parties.

Featherbed Hill is located in western Doylestown Township, and there are a few tales about how the hill received its name. One tale describes a weary traveler who placed a lone feather on a rock atop the hill, then laid down on it. He claimed that this hard "mattress" was his "featherbed." Another tale tells of a man who traveled across the hill with his household goods only to have his featherbed rip. Feathers were scattered to the wind all over the hill's trees and bushes. According to this story, this incident gave the hill its name.

Castle Valley is the name of a small settlement in Doylestown Township on Neshaminy Creek where Almshouse and Lower State Roads cross. Located above the creek is a hill and, in the 1700s, a young man named Tom Meredith began building a stone and wood castle atop that hill. Meredith worked to collect the materials for his castle, including hauling rocks up from the valley and cutting logs from the wooded hillside. He died before he could finish his tower and complete his vision. It's said that many of the stones collected for the castle were later used to build a bridge over the creek at this spot.

Playwicky is located in Lower Southampton Township. Its name comes from a Lenape Indian word meaning "the place full of turkeys." In William Penn's time, this location was a Lenape settlement in Lower Bucks County.

Sugar Bottom is the name of both a road and an area in Warwick Township along Neshaminy Creek. Today, Bridge Valley Elementary School can be found on Sugar Bottom Road. It is believed that the

name comes from the sugar that was once made there using the *sorghum* plant. A sorghum mill, used to crush this cultivated cereal and extract its juice, was supposedly located there.

Pickpocket is a tiny village that was located where Emilie and Newportville Roads cross – right on the line between Bristol and Middletown Townships. Stories are told about robberies that occurred there, which possibility gave the place its name.

Elephant is a small settlement located in Bedminster Township. In this location was a hotel of the same name, and the hotel's signboard featured a picture of an elephant, which may be how the settlement received its name.

Chicken Foot is a spot in southern Middletown Township where five roads came together. On old maps, the pattern that the roads made looked like a chicken's foot. It became a landmark for many residents of Lower Bucks County.

**Here are a few more strange location names in Bucks County.
No one knows for certain where these names came from!**

Slobbery Run – a short stream in southwestern Plumstead Township

Mount Misery – the location of an old schoolhouse near Bridgeton in Upper Bucks County

Dimple Creek – a small stream in Haycock Township that connects to Tohickon Creek

Coppernose – A steep hill in Solebury Township between the villages of Lumberville and Lumberton overlooking the Delaware River

**How many other unusual, strange or humorous place names
do you know of in Pennsylvania?**