Barr ~ Ellis Families Histories

The connection between the Barr and Ellis families begin with Harvey Joseph Barr and Sarah Henrietta Ellis, both of Pottstown, Montgomery County Pennsylvania. The Barr ~ Ellis families began with Harvey’s father, Joseph Barr’s, connection with the Ellis [[1]](#endnote-1)-Lessie iron mills.

In 1879, Joshua, George and three other men started what would eventually become the Ellis-Lessig Steel and Iron Co. Located on 14 acres between the Reading Railroad and the Schuylkill River, upstream from the mouth of the Manatawny Creek, the company employed about 600 men by the beginning of the 20th century. [[2]](#endnote-2) The Ellis and Lessig iron firm was organized 33 years ago (1879) by William S. Ellis and George B. Lessig, now both deceased…” [[3]](#endnote-3)

Harvey’s father, Joseph Barr; “… for about five years he was an engineer, then boss at the Emaus furnace for two years. Moving to Pottstown, he built the rolling mill for Hope Iron Company and when they sold their plant, he was employed by the Warwick Iron Company as chief engineer. Returning to Emaus, he prepared plans and constructed the Emaus Pipe Foundry, returning again to Pottstown, he built the Ellis [[4]](#endnote-4)-Lessig iron mills. Coming to Allentown, Pennsylvania, August 14th 1888, he became interested in the cement business, being associated with the Lehigh Portland Cement Company…” [[5]](#endnote-5)

Harvey’s family line is one of the earliest Colonial Pennsylvania families in our lineage, whose patriarch arrived in Colonial Philadelphia in 1743 from the Switzerland region; Canton of Zurich and later in the Palatinate region of Zwiebrücken Germany. Joseph Barr family line would live and work in and around the Pottstown region, which is located in the western most portion of Montgomery County where Chester, Berks and Montgomery counties all come together.

Sarah’s grandparents were James Ellis and Mary Ann Luxeon. [[6]](#endnote-6) James Ellis and Mary Ann Luxeon lived in St. Austell, Cornwall Great Britain (England) when they on September 24th 1836. [[7]](#endnote-7) They left Liverpool Great Britain on the ship George Thacker, and entered America through the ports of Philadelphia in April 1849. [[8]](#endnote-8) For a short time they lived in Shannonsville Lower Providence Township Montgomery County Pennsylvania. They then settled in the Pottstown and Boyertown areas of Montgomery County Pennsylvania, and later in Reading Berks County Pennsylvania.

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Bibliography

1. Iron Furnaces and Iron Works, Montgomery County Index Pennsylvania Iron Furnace Sourcebook A Tribute to the Iron Masters and Iron Workers that built and keep in-blast the old Stone Blast Furnaces of Pennsylvania, by Raymond A. Washlaski, Historian, Archaeologist & Web Master, Ryan P. Washlaski, Technical Advisor. Virtual Museum of Pennsylvania Iron Furnaces & Iron Works A Publication of the 19th Century Society of Pennsylvania

End Notes

1. There are a few companies with the Ellis name, which we will look at for a relations to our Ellis family: The Hope Milling Company was sold to the Pottstown Iron Company; Ellis-Keystone Agricultural Works of Pottstown, Ellis & Lessig Nail Works, and Ellis & Lessig Steel and Iron Company of Pottstown. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. The Mercury, Sunday March 4th 2012, Joshua Bechtel, Lessig Family Built Legacy in Pottstown, by Michael T. Snyder, Journal Register News Service. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. This snippet on the owners of the Ellis-Lessig Iron Works came from a 1912 newspaper article, Reading Chronicle, dated 1912. Taylor ~ Graham Library, 479 County Line Road, York Springs Pennsylvania 17372. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. There are a few companies with the Ellis name, which we will look at for a relations to our Ellis family: The Hope Milling Company was sold to the Pottstown Iron Company; Ellis-Keystone Agricultural Works of Pottstown, Ellis & Lessig Nail Works, and Ellis & Lessig Steel and Iron Company of Pottstown. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Pages 33 – 44, History of Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, and a Genealogical and Biographical Record of Its Families, Volume 2, Lehigh County Historical Society, Lehigh Valley publishing Company, Limited, 1914. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. The name Luxeon is spelled as the family spelled it. It is also spelled on page 18, Harrisburg Telegraph, Thursday, July 24th 1944. The name has also been spelled without the “e”; Luxon, which appears in the records for St. Austell Area Genealogy, Parish Church of Holy Trinity, and Marriage Registers. Luxeon may have been from the place in Cornwall, which is normally spelt Luxulyan. Mining and quarrying are (or rather, were) major industries in Cornwall, particularly for tin and copper, and for china clay, Taylor ~ Graham Library, 479 County Line Road, York Springs Pennsylvania 17372. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. St. Austell Area Genealogy, Parish Church of **Holy Trinity, Marriage Registers, 1834 through June, 1839,** Taylor ~ Graham Library, 479 County Line Road, York Springs Pennsylvania 17372 [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Ship Passenger List, National Archives Series No. 425, Microfilm No. 68, List No. 46, Taylor~Graham Library, 479 County Line Road, York Springs Pennsylvania 17372 [↑](#endnote-ref-8)