

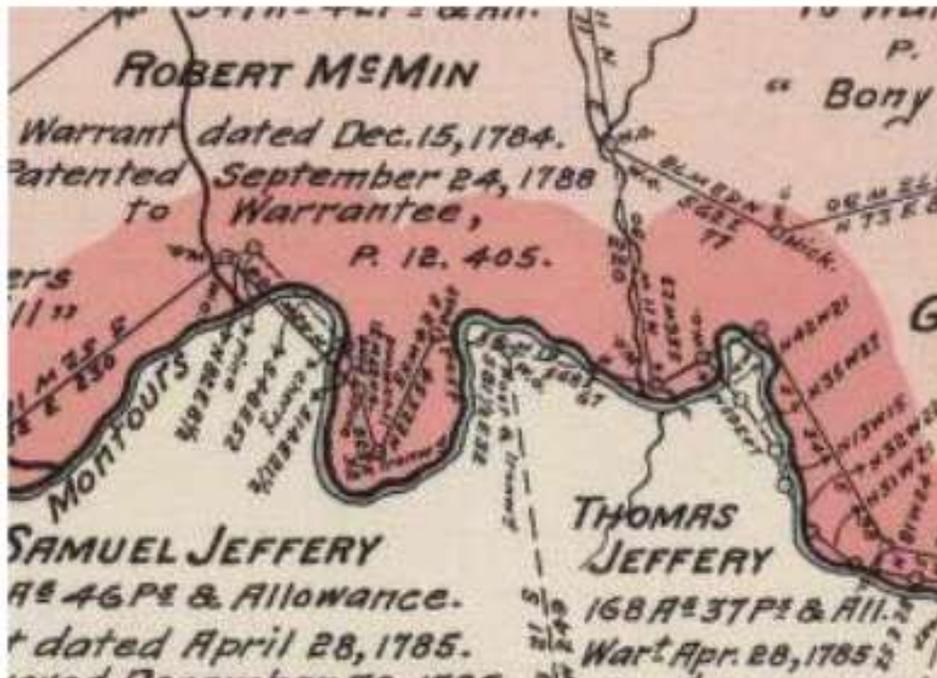
Jeffreytown Tunnel

By Bob Ciminel - Montour Railroad Historical Society

A tunnel by any other name is still a tunnel, and the Jeffreytown Tunnel west of Trail Milepost 7 (Montour RR Milepost 9) is no exception. I'll call it Montour Tunnel No. 1 for starters, but the first tunnel on the Montour Railroad has two different names, one used by the Montour Trail Council (Enlow Tunnel) and the other used by Montour Railroad aficionados (Jeffreytown Tunnel). As we journey into the tunnel's past, let's start from the beginning, before the Montour Railroad came into existence.

In the *Warranty Atlas of Allegheny County*, published in 1914, Plate 28 lists the original recipients of land grants located near the tunnel. Montour Run provided the north-south boundary line the land grants surrounding the tunnel.

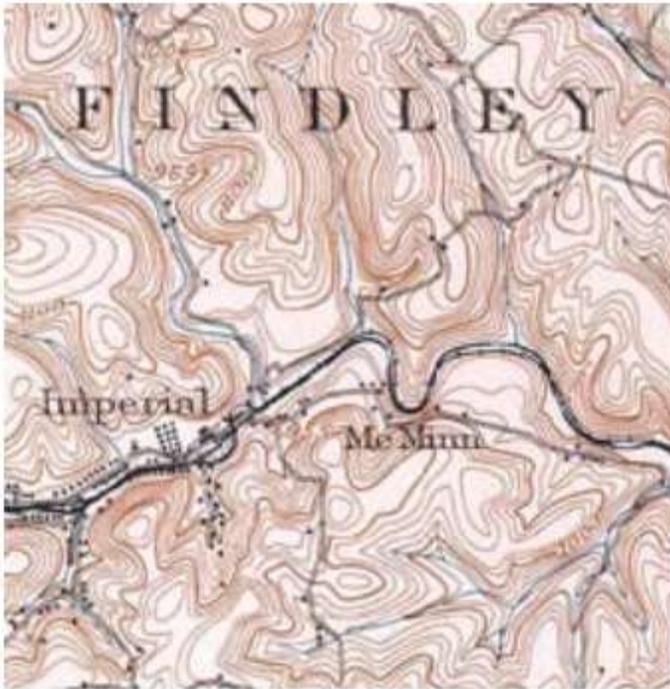
On the south side of Montour Run, Samuel Jeffery was granted 353 acres in April 1785. Robert McMin was granted 347 acres the north side of Montour Run on December 1784. McMin's grant included the rock outcrop where the tunnel would be built in 1924. Robert McMin's earlier deed would provide a precedent for calling it McMin Tunnel.



1914 Warranty Map showing the future location of Jeffreytown Tunnel on land owned by Robert McMin. (Source: (<http://images.library.pitt.edu/w/warrantee/>))

Designating it McMin Tunnel is also supported by a 1906 topographic map of the Carnegie Quadrangle that identifies the small community near the tunnel as McMinn. The map does not support calling it either Jeffreytown Tunnel or Enlow Tunnel because

there is no mention of Jefferys or the communities of Jefferytown or Enlow. However, Jeffreytown does appear in the historical records of Allegheny County and in the *Montour Railroad Public Timetable No. 16*, which was issued on April 25, 1915. The historical record usually lists the community as Jeffreystown.



1906 topographic map showing the Montour Railroad right-of-way before the tunnel was bored. (Source: <http://historical.mytopo.com/getImage.asp?fname=crng06nw.jpg&state=PA>)

Montour Railroad employee timetables do not list the tunnel; however, a 1962 Montour track diagram identifies the station nearest the west end (timetable direction) of the tunnel as Jeffrytown, without the second e in the name. This was probably a typographical error.

Gene P. Schaeffer's book on the Montour Railroad refers to the tunnel as Jeffrey Town in the chapter titled *Montour Junction to Imperial Realignment* on Page 66.

The Bridges and Tunnels of Allegheny County web site also lists the official names of the tunnel as Enlow or Jeffrey Town.

Given the above information, there appears to be no correct answer regarding the name for the tunnel. Jefferey is only mentioned in the Warranty Atlas and does not appear again in any official documents. McMins owned the land through which the tunnel was actually bored, but it has never been called the McMin Tunnel.

To add to the confusion, over the years both McMin and Jefferey were spelled Jeffrey and McMinn. The U.S Geological Survey's list of geographic names lists both Enlow and McMinn as the communities near the tunnel, which would lend credence to naming it the Enlow Tunnel.



C. 1978, a Montour train enters the western (timetable direction) portal of Jeffreytown Tunnel after crossing Montour Run. (Ray Parkinson photo, Gene P. Schaeffer collection)

Regardless of who owned the land, the Montour right-of-way did not exist until construction began in 1878 and the tunnel did not exist before 1924. In keeping with railroad tradition, stations were usually named for the landowner who sold the right-of-way to the railroad, or for a well-known geographic landmark or industry in the immediate vicinity. When the Montour Railroad was an operating entity, the tunnel was called Jeffreytown or Jeffrey Town. After the Montour Trail Council obtained the former Montour right-of-way it chose to call the tunnel the Enlow Tunnel.

Either term is correct; it simply depends on your point of view.

This column appeared in the September-October, 2012 Montour Trail Newsletter.
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