
Dr. Simeon Hovey: An Extract from *Early History of Truby-Graff and Affiliated Families*

Dr. Simeon Hovey, born 1759 in Connecticut, was the son of **Ebenezer Hovey and Dorcas (Corbin) Dwight**, widow. Ebenezer was a grandson of **Nathaniel, son of Daniel**. Daniel, the first to come to America, settled at Ipswich, near Salem, Massachusetts. Dr. Hovey came to western Pennsylvania before the Revolution. He served as surgeon under General Wayne during the Indian campaigns of the latter and afterwards settled in Greensburg. Hovey Township (Armstrong County) was named for him. He married **Mary Ann**, youngest daughter of **Colonel Christopher Truby** of Greensburg, but they had no family. They adopted **Elizabeth and Frederick Rohrer III**¹, children of the deceased **Frederick Rohrer, Jr.**, and wife **Catharine Truby [Marshall]**. Captain Frederick Rohrer died in 1794.

In 1812 came **Elisha Robinson**, a native of Windham, Connecticut, a nephew of Dr. Hovey, to western Pennsylvania. He was a son of **Andrew Robinson and Olive Hovey**, sister of Simeon Hovey and also made his home with the Hoveys. In time Elisha fell in love with **Elizabeth Rohrer** and married her. Dr. and Mrs. Hovey located in what is now Hovey Township. For many years the Doctor was the only medical advisor for the entire northern region of Butler and Armstrong Counties, as well as for considerable portions of Venango and Clarion Counties. He had a liberal education and fine abilities and had many friends. He was very successful and his home was surrounded by eleven hundred acres of land (Depreciation Pay)² which he received for his services to his country during the Revolutionary War.

¹ **2006 Note:** “*They adopted*” is a 20th-century term which means something different today than it did in the early 1800s. Court records show that Simeon Hovey became the guardian of Betsy Rohrer. Frederick Augustus Rohrer was under (first) the court-appointed guardianship of his Uncle Christopher Truby, and (second) of Greensburg attorney George Armstrong. As well, Simeon and Mary Ann Hovey reared Mary Ann Marshall, the young half-sister of the Rohrer children, as their own from the time of the death of Catharina and John Marshall in 1806. And indirect evidence points to the child Samuel Marshall also being reared by the Hoveys. These arrangements were in place without “adoption” as we know it today.

² **2006 Note:** “The vast areas north of the Depreciation Lands were designated Donation Lands and were set apart to be allotted to the officers and soldiers of the state (Pennsylvania) troops in the Revolution” (SOURCE: Francis R. Harbison, *Flood Tides Along the Allegheny*. Pittsburgh: Published by Francis R. Harbison, Park Building, 1941; page 54). My thanks to **Charles S. L. Robinson** for making me aware of the difference between Depreciation Lands and Donation Lands.

The following is taken from the *Kittanning Gazette and Columbian*, obituary of Simeon Hovey, died July 1, 1837:³

DIED: At his residence 'Happy Retreat' in Perry Township, on Saturday the 1st day of July, inst.--**Dr. Simeon Hovey**, in the 79th year of his age. He was a native of New England, immigrated westward when young and settled in Greensburg, Westmoreland County and practiced his profession with skill and success. He intermarried with a daughter of **Colonel Christopher Truby**, an old officer who rendered much service on our Frontiers at an early period against the Indians.

The Doctor, after becoming independent in his circumstances, removed to his farm on the Allegheny River, and put it into a fine state of cultivation and improvement, where with a hospitality which was one of the noblest traits of his character, he indulged himself in the entertainment of his friends, acquaintances and strangers. He stood preeminently high in their esteem. He was gentlemanly in his deportment, of the strictest honor and integrity, benevolent and kind to the poor.

He ever professed his grateful acknowledgement to providence, for his goodness and kindness toward him.

(Communicated)

Parkers Landing, Penna., Cemetery, Presbyterian Church:

In Memory of
DR. SIMEON HOVEY
Who departed this life
July 11, 1837
In the 78th year of his age

MARY A.
Wife of
DR. SIMEON HOVEY
Died April 30, 1868
In the 93rd Year
of her age

SOURCE

Mary Truby Graff, *Early History of Truby-Graff and Affiliated Families*, 1941; pages 81-83.

³ *Note* the discrepancy between the date of death in the obituary and on Hovey's gravestone.