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BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

Trips and Trails Chairman
Pittsburgh Council, A.H.Y.
6300 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh Pa.
15232

Dear Sir:

I have been working on a genealogy of my ancestors in western Pennsylvania, and saw the Baker Trail on a map, and thinking it might be a pioneer trail, searched for information on it. I obtained one of your Baker Trail booklets and found it to be a modern trail.

In studying the booklet I then found that it runs very close to an undiscovered spot which does have some historical interest.

My 3great-grandfather in 1811 or earlier had a powder mill at or near where Pine Run flows into Crooked Creek. Another reference also mentions in addition a grist-mill.

From Smith's 1886 "History of Armstrong Co." pg. 369
As early as 1811 George Beck (Sr.) commenced the manufacture of gunpowder near the mouth of Pine Run.

From Beer's 1913 "History of Armstrong Co.", pg. 466 (under Doverspikes) George Beck settled on Crooked Creek, Armstrong Co. He was a farmer and gunsmith, a mechanical genius, and operated a gun and powder mill, on the Kittanning Road, as early as 1811. The mill was located near the mouth of Pine Run, on Crooked Creek, and powder in 50 pound kegs, was transported to Pittsburgh in canoes. On June 29, 1826, an explosion injured his sons John Beck & Daniel Beck, and Daniel Died. Daniel was my 2great-grandfather. Unquestionably this mill would have made gunpowder for the war of 1812.

from your
booklet

About the center of page BT-3, the line reading, "follow the low lands to point where you can see Crooked Creek. This Area is abundant in poison Ivy." This spot appears to me to be near the mouth of Pine Run, and the approximate site of this powder mill.

I am wondering whether you have ever had any reports of any hikers finding anything resembling foundations, or evidence of old buildings, dams or mill race, which would resemble the remains of a powder mill or grist mill. Either would have used a waterwheel, and required a dam and mill race.

Possibly some of your hiking members with historical interests might, with the above information be able to find something of interest.

Yours truly, *Paul M. Smith* Paul M. Smith