

22 Lancaster Pa., New Era—Monday, April 21, 1975

[photo caption]

Col. Ervin V. Johnson, commander of the U.S. Army garrison at Indiantown Gap, yesterday placed a wreath on James Buchanan's grave in Woodward Hill Cemetery in honor of Buchanan's 184th birthday. Johnson is flanked by J. Fred Sener III, cemetery board representative, left, and Ronald D. Miller, pastor of Trinity Evangelical Congregational Church.

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### **Cemeteries Mark Buchanan's Birth**

15th President's Historic Star Rising, Junior Historians Head Says

By JACK BRUBAKER

New Era Staff Writer

While most Americans were reacting passively to the 200th anniversary of "the shot heard 'round the world" this weekend, Lancastrians gathered to celebrate actively the 184th anniversary of James Buchanan's birth.

Buffeted by strong breezes which whipped the flag above Buchanan's grave atop the rise in Woodward Hill Cemetery, a hardy group of local memorializers paid tribute to the nation's 15th President.

There were more participants than spectators at the Sunday afternoon service, although those who pulled up their collars and held down their hats to watch the annual proceedings numbered over 100.

### **Brave Chill**

They braved the un-springlike weather to hear area musicians and dignitaries praise the birth of Lancaster's foremost resident.

Noting that Buchanan has not been given enough credit for his ability to mediate between North and South on the brink of civil strife, James Kinter III, main speaker of the day, said Buchanan's historic star is rising.

Briefly outlining Buchanan's multi-faceted political career, the Penn Manor senior and outgoing president of the Pennsylvania Federation of Junior Historians, said Buchanan's prime virtue was his ability to compromise.

"This week marks the beginning of the country's Bicentennial celebration," he added, "and so it is difficult for us to turn our attention to the celebration of our 15th President's birthday." He noted, however, that a parallel can be drawn between the battles of



Lexington and Concord, which initiated the Revolution 200 years ago, and Buchanan's mediation which helped delay the start of the Civil War 114 years ago.

Under the cold, gray sky, the 324th U.S. Army Materiel Command Band from Maryland's Aberdeen Proving Ground played some brassy martial music to open the ceremonies.

### **Honor Guard**

White-helmeted honor guard members of the Army garrison at Indiantown Gap Military Reservation marched to stand at attention at the gravesite while Mrs. Blanche Shepler sang "The Star Spangled Banner" on the cold hill.

Mount Eden Boy Scout Troop 89 led the assemblage in pledging allegiance to the wind-flapped flag, and Ronald D. Miller, pastor of Trinity Evangelical Congregational Church, presented the invocation for the ritual.

Fifth graders from James Buchanan Elementary School sang appropriate patriotic tunes, and Jane M. Abbott, president of the Lancaster Pilot Club, which maintains the gravesite, welcomed the audience.

### **Lays Wreath**

Following Kinter's address and a rendition of "Stars and Stripes Forever," by the Army band, Col. Ervin V. Johnson, commander of the garrison at Indiantown Gap, made remarks preparatory to laying the wreath on Buchanan's stone.

A veteran of three wars and 11 battle campaigns, Johnson said he has accomplished many things during over 30 years' service in the military, but this was the first time he ever had represented the President of the United States at a commemorative event.

"Patriotism is alive in the United States and particularly here in Lancaster," said the soldier. "And not only is it alive but, as we can see in this weather, it is well."

### **Voice Cracks**

As his voice cracked with "a sense of humility and a real sense of fierce pride," Johnson then noted, "This is one of the great moments of my life."

He tenderly laid the large wreath on the grave of the man born 16 years after the first confrontation of British and colonial soldiers in America.

An Army bugler blew "Taps" on the wind-swept hill as a fellow horn player echoed the plaintive tune in the valley below.

And there were tears in the eyes of veterans who heard the sound.

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[handwritten above photo]

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[photo caption]

[Note: some text was missing on the jpg. It was restored from newspapers.com,



<https://www.newspapers.com/image/562380156/?terms=%22Lancastrians%2Bpay%2Btribute%2Bto%2BJames%2BBuchanan%22> ]

### **Lancastrians Pay Tribute to James Buchanan**

Lancastrians commemorated the 186th anniversary of the birth of James Buchanan Sunday at the 15th President's grave in Woodward Hill cemetery.

Shown above is the crowd which gathered at the tomb and stood at attention as an [honor guard, garbed in uniforms of past and early conflicts, presented arms.]

Col. Ervin V. Johnson, commander of Fort Indiantown Gap, represented President Jimmy Carter at the ceremony and placed a wreath from the White House on the Buchanan grave. Col. Johnson also spoke briefly.

[Music for the program was furnished by] the First U. S. Army Band, Fort Meade, Md., and the James Buchanan Sixth Grade choral group. Barry Reynolds was soloist.

Also taking part in the program were Mrs. Earl F. Rebman, representing the Pilot Club; Lt. Col. Harold E. Nunemaker, [Fort Indiantown Gap chaplain.]

Lt. Gen. Daniel B. Strickler (retired) was master of ceremonies; Capt. Ron Waddell, commander of Hanover Twp. Rifle Battalion, presented a resume of President Buchanan.

Lancaster Mayor Richard M. Scott assisted at the wreath-laying ceremony.]

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32—Intelligencer Journal, Lancaster, Pa., Friday, June 9, 1978

### **Philadelphia Author to Lead Tour of Woodward Hill**

Philadelphia writer John Francis Marion, author of "Famous and Curious Cemeteries," will help commemorate the 110th anniversary of the death of President James Buchanan on Sunday by leading a promenade through Woodward Hill, the site of Buchanan's tomb.

The walk is open to the public free of charge. Marion will leave the main entrance of the cemetery on S. Queen St., at 2:30 p.m.

In his book, Marion listed some of the prominent people buried in Woodward Hill.

"When I did the book," he said this week, "I covered about 75 cemeteries in depth and detail, and touched briefly on about 200 more."

"The Lancaster cemetery," he said, "was one of the 200. Actually I had never visited the cemetery until about a month ago when I went there to get ready for Sunday's walk." He added that Woodward Hill's inclusion in his book lists only a roster of the famous people buried there.

Marion said that these included, in addition to Buchanan, Edgar Fahs Smith, a former provost of the University of Pennsylvania; James Shulz, one-time governor of the



commonwealth; Clement B. Grubb, the Revolutionary iron master; Gottlieb Henry Muhlenberg, pioneer botanist; and Jacob Eichholtz, the famed painter.

Commenting on the upcoming promenade, Marion said he would direct the group to the graves of the famous, but he would also point out and discuss gravestone, tombs, and monuments which are unique and reflective of periods during the walk.

Sunday's cemetery stroll is part of the anniversary program which will also include a luncheon at Wheatland, the restored Buchanan mansion on the Marietta Pike, for members of the James Buchanan Foundation for the Preservation of Wheatland.

In addition to writing the cemetery book, Marion was honored for another book "Bicentennial City," which outlined several walking tours and anecdotes on famed Philadelphians.

He is also the author of "Philadelphia Medica," a history of the city as one of the world centers of medicine.

He says he is currently working on two new books — a history of historic Charleston, and a life of Rebecca Gratz, granddaughter of Joseph Simon, an early Lancaster trader. A Philadelphia society belle, she is believed to have been the model for one of the heroines of Sir Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe."

