

JOHN PEARSON'S DESCRIPTION OF LANCASTER AND COLUMBIA IN 1801

John Pearson believed that the "various abilities and different pursuits of men" should be exerted for "the information and instruction of the whole." He was one of the founders and ardent supporters of "the Friendly Society for diffusing usefull knowledge" which was formed at Darby in Chester County in 1786. For seven consecutive years, 1786-1792, he was elected secretary of the Society. John Pearson was "fully convinced of the utility of such an institution but ignorance, inattention and an unhappy division in politics" destroyed it in 1792 and prevented any attempt on his part to revive it.

John Pearson was born in Darby on August 17, 1740 and died at New Castle on January 22, 1829. He was the second son of Thomas Pearson (1708-1763) and Hannah Blunston (1714-1778), a niece of Samuel Blunston of Wright's ferry. Little is known about John Pearson's early life. He grew up in a strict Quaker family and married Ann Bevan on December 15, 1763. She died on July 1, 1775, and he then married Sarah Johnson. During the American Revolution contrary to the doctrine of the Friends, he undoubtedly served in the military, for the **Pennsylvania Archives** record him as a member of the Chester County Militia between 1780 and 1787. At the same time he held the commission of justice of the peace in Chester County. He presided at three terms of the Court of General Quarter Sessions of the Peace in Chester during 1785 and 1786. When the county seat was moved to West Chester he did not regularly attend the court, but after Delaware County was formed in 1789 he received a new commission and presided over the newly created county's Court of Quarter Sessions at Chester during 1790 and 1791. On September 1, 1791, the Constitution of 1790 terminated the commissions of the justices of the peace and ended their ancient right to sit at quarter sessions. Within a year after he lost his position, John Pearson also lost the support of his home county when he joined the

ranks of the Jeffersonians. In 1798 he ran for Congress and was soundly defeated by the Federalist candidate, Richard Thomas. But in 1800 John Pearson's support of Thomas Jefferson and the Republican party was vindicated when he was elected a state senator to represent the city of Philadelphia and the counties of Philadelphia and Delaware.

When he went to Lancaster to take his seat in the Senate on November 5, 1800, John Pearson did not forget the prime purpose of the Friendly Society which he had helped to organize. Although he did not keep a diary in the strict sense of the word he was keenly observant and usually managed to jot down his impressions of the new places that he visited and the interesting things which he saw. He found the new seat of government of Pennsylvania and the surrounding area an intriguing place about which to write. During his four year term in the Senate, he was also able to visit and describe every major town in the western part of the state. He referred to all of the informative notes that he took as his "gleanings."

Certain parts of his writings were compiled in 1910, but they were never published. This typewritten material which was organized by John Pearson's great grandson is now in the library of The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, and it includes a description of Lancaster and Columbia which was written by John Pearson. The original manuscripts are still held by the Pearson family. The following text is an exact copy of John Pearson's original notes on Lancaster and Columbia which were made some time during the winter of 1801.*

University of Pittsburgh

JAMES H. MAST

* John Pearson did not date these notes. After annotating the descriptions it appears certain that they were written during the first session of the Senate that he attended in Lancaster. To be exact, the latter part of the description of Lancaster had to be written after Thomas Hartley's death on December 21, 1800 and before Samuel Postlewaite left the Senate for the final time on February 27, 1801. John Pearson's reference to the completion of the Poor House and his article in *The Intelligencer, & Weekly Advertiser* substantiate the winter of 1801. The quoted material in the first paragraph of my introduction is contained in the Articles of the Society and the secretary's concluding statement which are included in John Pearson's gleanings under the heading, "Transactions of the Friendly Society."

Lancaster is distant about sixty three miles from Philadelphia on the turnpike road, the mile stone standing about two hundred yards to the east of the Court House; it's built in a hollow except to the southward when the ground descends gradually; a small run passes through the town to the west of the court house which rising on the Northern hill could be brought in pipes near the centre of the town which would be of inestimable benefit in case of fire.

I recommended to the inhabitants through the newspapers, to apply it in that way and construct suitable reservoirs to contain it but from what I see of them there is very little public spirit amongst them.¹ The number of houses I believe is not ascertained; some estimate them at eight or nine hundred.² The street connected with the turnpike runs nearly east and west called King street. Queen street crosses it at right angles, at the junction the Court House³ is erected, there are some other streets run regularly but two⁴ of them extends angularly from the beginning of the turnpike and falls into Queen street a considerable distance from the Court House; the prin-

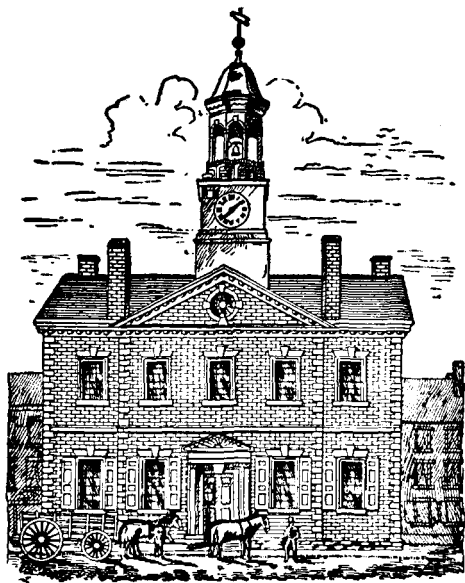
cipal streets are about sixty feet wide and generally paved with brick or stone next the houses about two feet wide and posts set along them as heretofore in Philadelphia. I mean King and Queen. There are very few pumps on the streets and rarely trees. There are several vaults under the pavement as in the city. The Court House stands as above mentioned in the junction of the two chief streets, viz., King and Queen streets; the south end of Queen street is sometimes called "Talleyrand." The house is a handsome building about sixty feet square, two stories high and built with brick, excepting that the foundation is raised with excellent hewed stone about five feet high. The corners of the building are also of hewed stone; there are four doors, one to each quarter, two only of which are at present used, to wit, the east and south; you ascend at each door by five steps of large well cut stone; there is a belfrey on the top with a large vane; there is also a clock which looks well and strikes regular so as to be heard I suppose over the town; the stories are probably fifteen feet high and the carpenter work appears well finished.

The House of Representatives occupies the room on the first floor and the Senate the Chambers; the rooms are large commodious and pleasant, from the Senate Chamber you have a fine view of the three streets issuing as it were from the building; you are prevented from seeing the eastern street as the stairs are on that side⁵ (near the middle of the house) and a committee room on each side. When I rode into the town in the evening about dusk I thought it made a dreary appearance and brought the Bastile to my remembrance. From the commencement of the buildings (and the turnpike) the Court House appears to block up the street but when you are at the house the view is good; the streets from it to the north and east are nearly level for a distance perhaps of two hundred yards and then rise gradually to the top of the hill. To the south the street with little variation descends and opens a pleasant view to the neighboring country; to the west the street descends considerably to the run distant about one hundred and fifty yards rising easily from thence to the top of the hill which bounds the view as on the north and east.

There are several houses appropriated for religious worship, the buildings generally good, some of which have small steeples or belfries and built with brick or stone. To the German church is annexed a steeple⁶ pretty high finished well and built of brick, from which is a fine view of the town and some parts of the adjacent country.

In some parts of the town the houses are close and compactly built made of various materials interspersed; you see excellent three story brick two story stone & the old fashioned ones composed of wood & brick, some of frame only, some are of black limestone procured from the neighboring high grounds (for there are no rocky hills near); others of an excellent stone to work brought from a distance of a dirty yellowish cast and is well cut. I observed in a good house in King street the door and window frames of that kind of stone brought I believe from Coleman's hills⁷ about fourteen miles distant; the roofs are generally of oak, some of cedar and some of white pine, many of them painted; tile is rarely seen. In the principal streets and near the center and most valuable parts of the town are many very mean houses of a single story but perhaps half the houses are of one story, some of the wealthy citizens to this hour build houses of that kind, four rooms on a floor and apparently well finished, by which it appears that their opinion is favorable to one story houses. You

will observe many of the genuine German kind a frame bricked with a great number of ties and studs the studs frequently lean and often are hewed crooked I suppose for ornament and stand in almost every direction. Their brick walls are painted in many instances; they are a composition of the consistence of white wash which they daub over and then pencil with white wash (I believe) on the joints for the composition they use an equal proportion of venetian red and spanish brown mixed with water in which glue is dissolved, which helps the color of their brick and is said to have an effect for many years. Brick is made about a mile from the town. I think the clay is not to be compared to the best about Philadelphia or its neighborhood, appears when burned pale and looks to be not half tempered and their dust I think



Court House Erected 1784-6, Razed 1853

(from an old drawing)

is mixed too much with sand. It appears to me their cellars must be dark and damp; its rare to see a window large enough to admit a sufficiency of air; there are few of any kind and many of those are about a foot by sixteen inches with two upright bars.

In one of the southern angular streets I counted fifty-four one story houses and only one solitary two story house in the street; almost all of them were built on the south side of the street, consequently the fronts were extremely cold. In the next street in the same strange angular direction there are about thirty seven houses of the same kind, and generally fronting in like manner, without a single two story house among them.

In some parts of the town the limestone rocks appear near or on the surface of the ground, a curled crooked kind of stone unfit for a quarry and can only be separated for building with gunpowder; indeed the stone generally brought to the town I believe is procured in that manner and appears very short in the walls.

They have excellent fences about the town; pale fences are frequently to be seen of a great length; some of them split pales and others sawed; many of them have three rails and are often six feet high, for quantity exceeding any with us. Its common to see lots containing an acre and upwards, gardens & orchards, inclosed with boards, generally white pine, some few of poplar, the boards sprung, put close, and six or seven feet high, some higher, the posts of Locust; the posts are about seven or eight feet apart and a board between them to stiffen the fence.

The lanes or alleys in many parts are at right angles and some I believe cross two squares; they are foolishly laid out being only about fourteen or fifteen feet wide, utterly unfit to build on tho' some by making the fence crooked near the building make shift to get to a stable &c.

About one third of the distance from the Turnpike to the Court House I am informed there are two wells, one on each side of the street and not far from it, one of which is forty-eight feet deep, the other twenty one, the latter has the greatest plenty of water; the first passes twenty feet thro' the black limestone rocks with remarkable streaks of white in it.

North west of the court house distant perhaps five hundred yards is a well which some person has completed at a considerable expense; when walled up to the surface of the ground he enclosed it about two feet and an half high with excellent stone completely hewed, circular preserving the usual diameter set up one on each side about five feet long and one across, all well dressed, to the upper one was fastened a wheel and two buckets were applied to draw; the barbarians who now have the charge of it neglect it entirely and it does not appear from the looks of it to be used.

On the neighboring high grounds are found on the surface of the earth a curious stone almost always at right angles, some of them about an inch square, very few larger some thin retaining the square angles and lessen to an eighth of an inch, hard & smooth; there are none such in our part of the country. Its said that water is frequently scarce in their wells and generally unfit to wash and causes them chiefly to depend on rain water, for which purpose they have trim pipes to collect it.

When I observed before that there was a fine view from the steeple I had not been up it but am returned this moment from viewing it, its a fine view indeed; the town under your feet, distant houses, extensive fields, woods and ridges of mountains many miles remote make it a beautiful prospect; it reminded me of Brydone^s on the Summit of Etna, the once celebrated Island of Sicily appearing as a map under foot, distant islands in view and the Mediterranean sea rolling around.

There are about thirty-three licensed public houses in the borough.

Their one horse carts are geared very differently from ours; they put an old saddle on the horse and such chains as are used for other purposes and hitch the

hooks to the body of the cart bed at the fore part, sometimes wrapped once around the shaft, consequently the ends of the shafts must strike against the shoulders of the horse in rough roads.

They have purchased about 90 or 95 acres of land on which to erect the necessary buildings to accommodate the Poor of Lancaster County;⁹ they have built the principal house, it was completed last fall; its of stone 150 feet long and forty-two feet wide, it stands on the south side of the turnpike road something more than a mile from the Court House. The front is rough cast and white washed its distant from the road about two hundred yards; the ground from the road descends very considerably which I think hurts the view but when you are at it appears to stand pleasantly; on each side and near to the house (in length) the ground falls off each way completely; back of the building its level about fifty yards and more than the width of the house (lengthways) which is inclosed with a white pine board fence, locust posts six or seven feet high, the back fence from the house is near the edge of a pretty high and very steep hill near the bottom of which rolls the Conestoga Creek, a beautiful stream of water. You see it coming as it were towards you, it turns and passes from you to the southward perhaps its rare to find so pleasant a place; to the left up the creek about three-quarters of a mile is a mill dam over which the stream falls near five feet, just below you is a fish dam, the murmuring fall of the waters thus united is very agreeable; all the edge of the hill and to the right and left is covered with wood and the tops of tall trees appear not much higher than the ground you stand upon.

The house is two stories high in front and so raised that the cellar windows appear (twelve in number) above ground; the back is three stories high with a piazza. There are three doors in front the middle one of which appears to be used; there are twelve windows in the first story and fifteen in the second with nine doors and windows four chimneys at the ridge of the roof and the tops of four others appear at the back of the building (from the road). Part of the lower story is used as a kitchen part of it made about two or three feet lower used as a cellar and weavers shop, the bottom all rocks and the kitchen part paved with brick; in it are fixed their kettles on Rumford's plan;¹⁰ its clean and in good order. The building appears substantial and well constructed divided into large and small rooms, clean and airy, with well contrived entries in the second and third stories, the garret is not plastered. It being so lately finished the remant of materials are yet lying about confusedly as usual about buildings; the ground appears to be good and suitable for gardening and other purposes. The person who showed me the building a steward¹¹ I suppose appears to be a decent attentive man but not well informed for overseeing the raising of vegetables, utterly unacquainted with the big or window bean and the sugar loaf or other early cabbage, how competent about other things of that kind I know not; there are eighty poor at present in the house, about twenty seven of whom are women; some few deranged ones I did not chuse to see, the sight of others is disagreeable enough; to see "the human form divine" in ruin as it were is a melancholy sight. The rooms are in good order, the people sufficiently clothed and comfortably warm, some of them employed, chiefly of the women.

Rents are pretty high and have risen greatly its said in consequence of the seat of Government being established here.¹² Where I lodge, more than two squares from the Court House, a brick house two stories high, small rooms and a store of

middling size of brick adjoining, about half an acre; the whole lot and a frequent scarcity of water, lets for seventy-five pounds p. ann.

A house occupied as a tavern, not far from the Court House in West King street, roomy but ill contrived stabling and sheds ordinary, about half an acre of ground in all, lets for 75 pounds. Tenant pays taxes which is about forty dollars p. ann.¹³

Materials for building. White pine boards are bought at the Susquehanna by the raft from 4/6 to 7s. p. hun'd. Pitch pine about 6/; white pine shingles 2/9 long average 5 inches at 6 or 7 doll. p. thousand distant ten miles and costs 2s. p. hun'd. hauling.

The people of the town appear to be industrious, tho' I acknowledge the number of taverns have an ill aspect. There are a great variety of trades carried on here; it seems strange to hear them threshing not far from the center of so large a town; it appears to me that there is much spinning done, the women are engaged at it early and late and it was mentioned to me by a person who supposed himself competent to judge, that some of them spun exquisitely fine.

There are two singular men in the place, Moses and Myers Simon,¹⁴ sons of a wealthy old man; they are probably thirty-five or forty years old. Last sessions Moses who was a violent federalist attended the senate and Myers the House of Representatives;¹⁵ Moses in consequence hated Gov'r. McKean¹⁶ and could scarcely be prevented from stoning him; the Gov'r. very prudently had him brought into his lodgings conversed freely with him and pretended to make him a General, since which he has become a Republican and now attends the House of Representatives. Myers on the contrary sits in Senate amongst the members peaceably, generally on the step which is at the foot of the Speaker's chair, bows & moves his hat, shakes hands very complaisantly and sometimes brushes their clothes; he rarely speaks; and is this instant sitting by the fire in a chair by Col. Johnston¹⁷ Postlethwaite¹⁸ &c.; as soon as the Speaker¹⁹ takes the chair and calls to order Myers retires to the gallery or place allotted to strangers until the Senate adjourns; he is generally in the chamber as soon as the members and continues usually the whole time whether the house is on business or not. I know not how he employs himself when the house is not in session.

Moses will frequently get a book in a tavern put himself in a proper attitude (as he supposes) to plead, place one foot on a chair, open the book, mark the pages very gravely, address the audience as if in a Court of Justice on some dispute respecting Adams & Jefferson and quotes "Hartley No. 2, page 45," recollects himself (since Hartley's death) and swears poor Hartley's dead.²⁰

When the Legislature is not sitting he calls frequently to see every person who is sick with the most anxious solicitude and invariably attends the funeral.

Columbia is distant about ten miles from Lancaster; the country between them near the road is highly valuable and said to be worth about twenty-five pounds p. acre; the hills along it are generally of easy ascent; the houses and barns are chiefly mean, the land good but improves in goodness towards the Susquehanna. The woods for the most part small the trees appearing to be from five to forty or fifty years old; black, spanish and white oaks but principally black oaks interspersed with some few walnut locust and ash. I had almost forgot to mention the hickory of which there is a considerable quantity and many of them old; among the smallest timber you see some of all kinds who appear to have survived the frequent conflagrations of former

times when it was the practice of the Indians to burn the woods annually; as you approach the river the land becomes very fertile, a deep black loose mould, with a great number of locust trees, some small and thriving, many of those through the fields are old and pretty large. I did not observe any which appeared to have grown from the seed lately. A field near the river had the greatest quantity of wheat stubble on it and is the most fertile soil I ever beheld of upland, and seems fully equal to marsh meadow, and is as light and mellow as that was when first cleared; it was not sown with grass seed which seems to be generally neglected along the road. As far as I could observe some of the timber near the river is of a large size. I measured a button wood tree, sound, and found it seventeen feet six inches in circumference three feet from the surface of the earth. A Spanish oak, sound apparently and measured at the usual height for cutting, seventeen feet five inches, round. An English walnut planted by Barber²¹ about seventy years ago is eight feet six inches round. There are sumacs of a larger growth than with us, sixteen feet high or upwards, some of which its said formerly were large enough to make (and did) four rails.

The Susquehanna, opposite the town, is a fine stream, some small falls appear above, regular across, and large rocks below. Its a mile and twelve perches over measured on the ice.

Columbia is beautifully situated on the east side of the river from which the ground rises gradually for about a mile where is a large burial ground inclosed with brick in which is deposited the remains of Samuel Blunston & his wife,²² one of the first and principal proprietors of land in that neighborhood; the building which he occupied stands on a fine eminence about two hundred yards from the river, it must have been at its erection a magnificent building, part is of frame, part stone, the stone rough cast and still in good preservation, part of the house is utterly neglected (the large room of the frame part) the door closed up, the piazza which formerly so usefully adorned it removed; of course you have no view of the river only out of the windows of the stone apartment thereby losing one of the finest prospects imaginable. The English cherry trees planted by him are large but greatly declining, as is the orchard, and the tomb which contained the remains of the venerated pair is falling rapidly to ruin and he who well deserved it has no inscription on the stone to tell future enquirers where he lies.

The plain extends about two miles along the river where it's bounded by two high hills, here it's said in ancient times was fought a great battle between the Indians many of whose skeletons are dug up at this time; two were lately found intire on digging a foundation for a building. On the hill up the river which is very high and on the highest part next the water is the remains of the grave which tradition says covered the chiefs who were slain in the conflict; there are probably eight perch of stone but the rude hand of curiosity in searching for the bones & perhaps hunters after game has opened it and dispersed the stone further round than they were originally.

In the vale below and on the edge of the stream are yet found many of the axes, pieces of stone pots, arrow heads & knives which were used by the hardy and unfortunate race. I found at this time some of their arrow points, a piece of a stone pot (soap stone) and bought of a boy just then found one of their axes.

About a mile and half or two miles above Columbia rises terrific in air the hideous rocks of Chickasalonga a little below the creek of that name,²³ the base when

the river is at its usual height is about twenty feet from the edge of the water and its said the rocks inclines over. One of them as I am informed by a person who was at the measurement is two hundred & eighty four feet high the other three hundred & four or five feet. I was not at the bottom but from the top it appears a stupendous mass of rocks, great fragments of which lay at the foot torn away probably by some convulsion in time past; from them you have a very extensive view of this great stream up and down; up and to your right is Donegall township,²⁴ a beautiful country and appears to be level for a considerable extent beyond which you see May town²⁵ distant about eight miles; the view to the left is bounded by the hills along the river, opposite is a continuation of the range of mountains; it appears as if the level country above had been once a great lake, that the waters accumulating pressed with irresistible weight against it rent it asunder, scooped out the vast channel for its future bed and rushed into the Chesapeak. On the other side is one spot higher considerably than the other called the "Crown" from which its said is the grandest prospect in all the country.

There are about forty dwelling houses in the town built of frame, stone & brick, the brick is very pale. The house at the Ferry seems to be well kept by a decent man (Frederick Stump)²⁶ its nearly new, of brick, large and roomy and stands pleasantly. The town has not a good aspect; their fences are ordinary and it appears as if they were extreme careless in respect to planting trees, either for shade or use. The inhabitants seem to me from appearances to be indolent; there are great quantities of lumber brought there for sale. Excellent white pine logs boards of the same and pitch pine, scantling and white pine shingles, from which a great extent of the neighboring country is supplied. There is some appearance of marble on the shore, lime is I believe generally thro' the country, tho' the hills near the river are not I think composed of it.

About ten miles above Harrisburg, which is thirty three miles from Lancaster, there is stone coal distant from the river about a mile and an half; John Muser²⁷ of Lancaster has been and is engaged in digging there. I saw a quantity of it in Lancaster which upon trial by Col Moser²⁸ is said not to be good for his purpose (smith's business) tho' its expected when they dig deeper it will probably be much better.

There is no place in Columbia appropriated for religious worship nor preparation that I hear of for building one, the few "friends" who reside there go occasionally to Lancaster.

NOTES

¹ John Pearson wrote the following letter above the signature, "An Observer," and over the motto, "In Peace, provide fit Arms against a War," to the editors of **The Intelligencer, & Weekly Advertiser** in Lancaster on December 23, 1800, and it was published on the following day:

I have observed, with some concern, that there are few Pumps in the streets of Lancaster; and conceive it would be difficult to have sufficient access to those back, in thickly-built parts of the Town, in case of fire; and am informed, that, in some seasons, many of the wells in the Town are dry, or nearly so.

The Town, for aught I know, who am a Stranger, may have been fortunate, hitherto, in respect of injuries done by fire: But what hath happened in other places, may happen here; and the Inhabitants regret, too late, their inattention; when they view their fine populous Town in ashes; which could probably have been saved at a moderate expense.

I therefore suggest, to the Inhabitants, the propriety of availing themselves of the small Run which passes through the Town; and of constructing on it two or more Reservoirs, of a capacity sufficient to contain such a quantity of water, as may be likely to be wanted in times of the most urgent necessity.

I suppose they ought to be arched over with brick or stone, and so constructed that the water could all be discharged in a short time; which would be necessary at least once a week, or oftener, in warm weather; and should always be let out in the morning. It ought not to be in the power of any one to let out the water, except those particularly appointed for that purpose; for reasons too obvious to mention.

² Lancaster was laid out in 1730 for Andrew Hamilton (1676-1741) who was at that time the Speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly. The "townstead" grew rapidly and became a borough on May 1, 1742. By 1800, Lancaster was described in Philadelphia as "the greatest inland town in the United States, situated in a very rich, improved and populous country." See Claypoole's *American Daily Advertiser*, May 21, 1799; M. Luther Heisey, "How Lancaster Grew, and What People Thought of It," *Lancaster County Historical Society Papers* (LCHSP) XLV (1941), 87-104; and Franklin Ellis and Samuel Evans, *History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia, 1883), 360-361. Incidentally, the reference above is not to the Andrew Hamilton who was Lieutenant-governor of Pennsylvania from 1701 until his death in 1703.

³ The court house was constructed between 1784 and 1787. It cost 5909 lbs. 3/10d and was used until 1852; after which the present Lancaster County Court House was built. See Ellis and Evans, 204-207.

⁴ The two angular streets are now called Church Street and Howard Avenue in the order of their distance from the square. They run in a southwesternly direction between East King Street and South Queen Street. See the *Map of Greater Lancaster, Pennsylvania* which was printed by the Intelligencer Printing Company (Lancaster, 1955).

⁵ The standard history of Lancaster County stated incorrectly that the "enclosed wooden stairway, leading to the second story, was built outside the south wall of the court-house." See Ellis and Evans, 206.

⁶ The steeple der Heiligen Dreieinigkeits Kirche was begun in 1785 and completed in 1794. The tower and spire together reach a height of 195 feet. This magnificent piece of architecture was incorporated into the present church structure which was built between 1761 and 1766. See the appropriate log books of the Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity, Lancaster.

⁷ Robert Coleman (1748-1825) was an ironmaster and the owner of large tracts of land in Lancaster County, including ten thousand acres which surrounded Elizabeth Furnace in Elizabeth Township. "Two miles east from the furnace was an abundance of limestone" which lay in the Conewago Hills, roughly 14 miles from Lancaster. This is the approximate area to which John Pearson referred, and it is now called Furnace Hills. See Ellis and Evans, 302-304, and Reading Howell, *A Map of the State of Pennsylvania* (1792).

⁸ Patrick Brydone (1743-1818) of Berwickshire in Scotland was a publicist. He toured Sicily and Malta in 1770 and published an account of his travels which was enthusiastically received in the United Kingdom and on the Continent. Sicily especially was little known to travellers of that time, and two editions of his book were even published in the United States in 1792 and 1798. See the *Dictionary of National Biography* and Charles Evans, *American Bibliography, 1639-1800*. Patrick Brydone, *A Tour through Sicily and Malta, in a Series of Letters to William Beckford, Esq., of Somerly in Suffolk* (London, 1773).

⁹ "An Act to provide for the erection of houses for the employment and support of the poor, in the counties of Chester and Lancaster" was signed by Thomas Mifflin on February 27, 1798. It named nine men in each county who were to hear applications and fix the location of the buildings to be erected. Edward Hand, Thomas Boude, George Musser, James Morrison, John Funk, Peter Ellmaker, Frederick Seeger, George Illig and Zachariah Moore were selected for Lancaster County and authorized to make their choice by December 1, 1798. See Alexander James Dallas

(comp.) **Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania** (Philadelphia and Lancaster, 1792-1801), IV, 199-204. Eighty-nine acres and four perches of land were chosen and purchased from Matthias Slough and his wife for 3129 pounds 17/6d. See **Record Book III, E**, 299-304. (in the office of the recorder of deeds, Lancaster). In the fall of 1798, six "Directors of the Poor, and of the House of employment of the county of Lancaster" were chosen at the general election. Construction began in 1799, and George Musser, James Morrison, William Webb, Frederick Seeger, Mathias Young, and George Illig were responsible for the completion of the Poor House in the fall of 1800. See Henry A. Showalter, "Brief Outline on the Care of the Poor, the Sick, and Insane of Lancaster County, Pa." LCHSP, LV (1951), 97-100.

¹⁰ Sir Benjamin Thompson (1753-1814) der Graf von Rumford, was an English authority on the nature and application of heat. In **Of Kitchen Fire-places** (London, 1799), the first part of his tenth essay, he scientifically discussed the imperfections in the kitchen fireplaces then in common use in England, the objects that he had in view to improve them, and the method to be observed in forming the plan of a kitchen. He did not advocate a single practical design in his essay but cited instead detailed and illustrated descriptions of five continental kitchens which had been constructed under his direction. In every example, however, the kettles or boilers were separately set above the fire-pits in a continuous mass of brick-work which occupied one corner or the middle of one side of the kitchen. Count Rumford felt generally that "the distribution of the parts of a kitchen must always depend so much on local circumstances that general rules can hardly be given respecting it: the principles, however, on which this distribution ought in all cases to be made—viz., convenience to the cook, cleanliness, and symmetry—are simple, and easy to be understood; and in the application of them, the architect (of any proposed kitchen) will have a good opportunity of displaying his ingenuity and showing his taste." See **The Complete Works of Count Rumford** (Boston, 1870-1875), III, 199 ff.

¹¹ Melchor Mellinger of Lampeter Township was appointed steward on September 1, 1800, and this is to whom John Pearson probably referred. See LCHSP, LV (1951), 100.

¹² "An Act to provide for the removal of the seat of government of the state of Pennsylvania" from Philadelphia to Lancaster was signed by Thomas Mifflin on April 3, 1799. See Dallas, IV, 395-396. The public offices were opened in the borough on the 8th of June, and Lancaster officially became the capital of Pennsylvania on Tuesday, November 5, 1799. See the **Lancaster Journal**, June 8, 1799 and George L. Heiges, "When Lancaster Was Pennsylvania's Capital" LCHSP, LV (1951), 1-15.

¹³ The rate of exchange was \$2.667 per pound sterling. See **The Intelligencer, & Weekly Advertiser**, November 19, 1800.

¹⁴ Moses and Myer Simon were the "weak-minded" sons of Joseph Simon (1711-1804), an Indian trader during the colonial period and a prominent Hebrew shopkeeper on the square in the borough of Lancaster from 1754 until his death. See Samuel Evans, "Sketch of Joseph Simon," LCHSP, III (1899), 165-172.

¹⁵ The Federalists held a majority of roughly 15 to 9 in the Senate during the session of 1799-1800. See the **Journal of the Senate**. Although the Federalists controlled the upper chamber, the Republicans had a majority of 42 to 36 in the House of Representatives during the same session. See the **Aurora General Advertiser**, November 1, 1799, and **Bache's Philadelphia Aurora**, October 15, 1799 (to clarify the party affiliation of Isaac Van Horne of Bucks County). In the next legislative session (1800-1801), the Republican majority stood at 55 to 23 in the House, and the margin which the Federalists held in the Senate was reduced to 13 to 11. See **The Intelligencer, & Weekly Advertiser**, October 29 and November 19, 1800.

¹⁶ Thomas M'Kean (1734-1817) of Philadelphia was a Republican. He became the governor of Pennsylvania on December 17, 1799. Thomas M'Kean was the first governor to be inaugurated in Lancaster, and he served as governor for three successive terms from 1799 until 1808. See the **Dictionary of American Biography** and LCHSP, LV (1951), 15-19.

¹⁷ Colonel Thomas Johnston (d1820) of Greencastle represented Franklin County for three consecutive terms in the Senate from 1794 until 1803. See the **Journal**

¹⁸ Samuel Postlethwaite (d1811) of Carlisle represented Cumberland County for two successive terms in the Senate from 1794 until 1801. See the **Journal of the Senate**.

¹⁹ John Woods (1761-1816) of Pittsburgh was the Speaker of the Senate for two consecutive sessions from December 4, 1799 until February 26, 1801. He represented the counties of Washington, Allegheny, and Greene for one term in the Senate from 1797 until 1801. See the **Journal of the Senate**; PMHB, XIII (1889), 10-13; and the **Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1949** (Washington, 1950), 2043.

²⁰ Thomas Hartley (1748-1800) of York was one of Pennsylvania's leading jurists. He ended his career in the House of Representatives of the United States where he served six consecutive terms from 1789 until his death on December 21, 1800. See George R. Prowell, **History of York County, Pennsylvania** (Chicago, 1907), I, 212-213 498 & 563-565. No copies of Thomas Hartley's books appear to be extant and this use of them cannot be explained. The source may well be fictitious. See Charles Evans, **American Bibliography, 1639-1800**.

²¹ Robert Barber (1692-1749) purchased a large tract of land along the eastern bank of the Susquehanna River in 1726. The lower part of his land was covered with a heavy growth of oak, walnut, and hickory. He conveyed the northern portion of one hundred acres to Susannah Wright on August 31, 1726. Upon this land her nephew, Samuel Wright, laid out the town of Columbia in 1788. The area was generally known as Wright's ferry until about 1800; Samuel's grandfather, John Wright, obtained a patent and established a ferry there in 1730. See Ellis and Evans, 538-541. Robert Barber was the first sheriff of Lancaster County, 1729-1730, and was one of the ten men who laid out the King's Road from Lancaster to Philadelphia in 1733. See PMHB, XLII (1918), 1-6.

²² Samuel Blunston (1689-1745) settled in the area in 1726 and purchased the land immediately north of Susannah Wright's estate. He married Sarah Bilton in 1718, and she died shortly after they settled on the eastern bank of the Susquehanna River. Samuel Blunston, Robert Barber, John Wright (1667-1749), and his daughter, Susannah (1697-1785), were the first freeholders to settle in the area. Samuel Blunston became the first prothonotary, clerk of courts, deputy register of wills and from time to time recorder of deeds in Lancaster County. He held this multitiered position from 1729 until his death. See Ellis and Evans, 582-585, and Samuel Wright, "Hempfield: The Beginning of Columbia," LCHSP, XVII (1913), 215-226.

²³ The present and shortened form, Chickies Creek, was also used at that time. John Heckewelder, who journeyed west in 1797, explained that Chickasalunga was corrupted from "Chickiswalungo" which meant "where the ground is full of holes bored by the crab or craw-fish." See "Heckewelder's Journal," edited by John W. Jordan, PMHB, X (1886), 126-127.

²⁴ Donegal Township was dissolved in 1828. It was one of the original townships in Lancaster County which was formed in 1729. See the **Inventory of the County Archives of Pennsylvania** (Lancaster, 1941) XXXVI (Lancaster County) 246.

²⁵ Maytown was laid out in 1760 by Jacob Downer. It is now located in East Donegal Township. See Ellis and Evans, 778-779.

²⁶ Very little is known about Frederick Stump (d1802). His importance can be best explained by the following advertisement which was included in **The Lancaster Journal** for one year from November 4, 1797 until October 27, 1798:

Frederick Stump, takes the liberty of informing his friends and the public in general, that he has purchased Wright's noted Ferry (Lancaster shore) together with that large and commodious brick Ferry-House, lately occupied by Captain Jacob Stake.

He has provided himself in the tavern-line with the best of beds, liquors, &c.—also horse feed, not only to accommodate travellers, but to keep stage-horses, and to sell out to waggoners at the lowest rate. Terms of ferriage are as follows: 5 shillings for a large waggon with four horses; smaller carriages

with a less number of horses, in proportion; and 6 pence for man and horse. As he has provided himself with the best of ferry-boats, and from his long experience in the business, in the time he occupied Anderson's ferry, he hopes to merit the attention of the public, and remove complaints of charges, as well as attendance.

²⁷ No material appears to be extant on John Musser, unless he was the one who lodged the representatives of Delaware County and two of the assemblymen from Bucks County in Lancaster during the legislative session of 1799-1800. See "Favorite Hotels and Lodgings in Lancaster in 1799," compiled by H. Frank Eshleman, LCHSP, XXVIII (1924), 6-7.

²⁸ Jeremiah Mosher (1754-1830) was born in Massachusetts. In 1780 he settled in Lancaster after retiring from active service in the Revolutionary army. He opened a blacksmith shop and was listed in the borough's assessment of 1780. See Ellis and Evans, 370. He joined the Pennsylvania Militia and rose to the rank of brigadier general. See William Frederick Worner, "Brigadier General Jeremiah Mosher — A Hero of the Revolution," LCHSP, XXXIV (1930), 265-270.

A NOTE ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTOR

James H. Mast is sometime lecturer in American history and a reader in English history at the University of Pittsburgh. He is primarily interested in the history of Pennsylvania in the eighteenth century and is the author of several articles on that period.