

# *John Musser's Plantation in Southeast Lancaster*

By Edgar A. Musser

*I*t was a pleasant, sunny springtime Sunday afternoon and a good day for a leisurely walk. Starting at the corner of King and Church Streets, I strolled southwesterly along the entire length of Church Street, down to Queen Street, passing some of Lancaster's very old houses on the way. Upon reaching Queen Street I proceeded southwardly to Strawberry Street, then southeastwardly along Strawberry to its end; where the bridge leading into Lancaster County Park crosses the Conestoga River. I crossed the bridge and followed the Conestoga upstream past Hand's Ford, Rock Ford Mansion and Williamson Park to the South Duke Street bridge. There I crossed back over the river to the site of "Humesville" and the "Old Factory," then on upstream to the pumping station across the river from Sunnyside. From there I followed a path northwesterly through the old Rocky Springs trolley right-of-way to South Marshall Street, then back to the starting point by the streets that provided the most direct route. The distance covered was nearly four miles.

I had just walked along the entire perimeter of what was at one time "John Musser's Plantation;" a 300-acre tract of land granted him by the sons of William Penn, back in the year 1737.

Nearly 20 years earlier, on March 10, 1718, the Proprietaries of Pennsylvania, John, Thomas and Richard Penn, sons and heirs of William Penn, through their Commissioners of Property, executed a Warrant for this same 300-acre tract of land, granting it to Theodorus Eby, a German Mennonite of Swiss ancestry. This was the year of William Penn's death; he died July 30, 1718, in England.

Theodorus Eby, along with Henry Funk, Jacob Kreider, the Herr brothers, Martin Kendig, Hans Brubaker, Jacob Hostetter, and others, was a part of the early-1700 Mennonite influx into Lancaster County. They were granted land within a 14,000-acre expanse in the eastern and south-central part of Conestoga Township,<sup>1</sup> the name by which a large part of the area, which in 1729 became Lancaster County, was then known.

The Warrant issued to Theodorus Eby was worded thus:

WARRANT FOR 300 ACRES OF LAND REQUESTED

by Theodorus Eby

Pensilvania SS

By the Commissioners of Property

At the Request of Theodorus Ebej, late of Germany but now of this Province, that We would Grant him to take up among the new Surveys at Conestogo, the quantity of Three hundred Acres of land for which he agrees to pay to the Proprietaries use, Thirty Pound Money of Pensilvania for the whole, and the Yearly Quitrent of one Shilling Sterling for each hundred acres. These are to Authorize and Require thee to Survey, or cause to be Surveyed, unto the said Theodorus Eby, at or near the place aforesaid according to the Method of Townships appointed, the said Quantity of Three hundred acres of Land that has not been already Surveyed nor appropriated, nor is Sealed by the Indians & make Returns thereof into the Secretary's Office, 'which Survey in case the said Theodorus fulfil the above agreement within Three Months after the Date hereof shall be Valid, otherwise the Same is to be Void as if it had never been made, nor this Warrant ever granted. Given under our Hands and Seal of ye Province at Philadelphia, ye 10 day of ye 3 Mo<sup>th</sup> AD 1718. To Jacob Taylor, Surveyor Gen'l.

Richard Hill  
Isaac Norris  
James Logan

In accordance with the provisions of the warrant, a survey of the tract was made May 30, 1718, and submitted to the Surveyor General in required form:

"Pursuant to a Warrant from the Prop'ers Comm'd, Dated the 10th of May A D 1718, I have caused to be Surveyed the 30th day of May 1718, a Certain Tract of Land situate on Conestoga Creek, in the County of Chester, containing Three Hundred Acres with the allowance of Six per Cent unto Toris Ebys, bounded according to ye above Draught."<sup>2</sup>

Theodorus "Dorus" Eby, according to all evidence, never occupied the land and failed to pay for it, thus invalidating the warrant in its entirety "as though it had never been made."<sup>3</sup> It appears that Eby may have intended to build a dam across the Conestoga and erect a grist mill. Finding such a project on the rather large stream beyond his capability, he settled on another piece of land, along Mill Creek. There he erected a mill on the site of the famous Dutch Mill, called successively Eby's Mill, Rhein's Mill and finally Hoover's Mill<sup>4</sup>

Theodorus Eby died intestate in 1727 and was survived by eight children, who, by deed of February 20, 1734 "did grant bargain and sell all and every their Right, Title and Interest of in and to the above described three hundred acres of Land unto Hans Moser, of the County of Lancaster."

Actually, the Eby heirs could not legally sell the land since the father never owned it; they merely released all claim, right and title to it.

Hans Moser then requested of the Proprietaries that they grant him a patent for the 300-acre tract. The request was granted, and the substance of the patent of November 16, 1737 is recorded as follows:

NOW at the Instance and Request of the said Hans Moser that we would be pleased to grant him a confirmation of the said three hundred acres of Land, according to the Situation Lines and Bounds aforesaid.

KNOW YE that for and in Consideration of the Sum of thirty Pounds lawful Money of Pensilvania, to our Use now paid by the said Hans Moser, the Receipt whereof is hereby Acknowledged.

WE HAVE granted unto the said Hans Moser and his Heirs, the said Three hundred Acres of Land as the same are now Set Forth & Bounded, with all Mines, Minerals, Quarrys, Meadows, Marshes, Swamps, Cripples, Woods, Under Woods, Timber and Trees, Water Courses, Liberties, Commodities, Hereditaments and Appurtenances whatsoever belonging and lying within the Bounds and Limits aforesaid; three full and clear fifth parts of all Royal Mines, free from all Deductions and Reprisals for Digging and Refining, and also free Leave, Right and Liberty to and for the said Hans Moser, his Heirs and Assigns, to Hawk, Hunt, Fish and Fowl in and upon the hereby granted Land and Premises . . . to the only Use and Behoof of the said Hans Moser, his Heirs and Assigns forever.

TO BE HOLDEN of Us our Heirs and Successors Proprietarys of Pensilvania As of our Manner (Manor) of Conestogoe in the County of Lancaster afs. in Fee and common Soceage by fealty only in Lieu of all other Services,

YIELDING & PAYING therefore yearly to Us Our Heirs and Successors at the Town of Lancaster, in the said County, at or Upon the first Day of March in every Year from the first Day of March last past, one Shilling Sterling for every Hundred Acres of the same or Value thereof in Coyn Current, according as the Exchange shall then be between our said Province and the City of London, to Such Person or Persons as Shall from Time to Time be Appointed to receive the same,

AND in the case of Non Payment thereof within Ninety Days Next after the same shall become due, that then it shall and may be lawful for Us our Heirs and Successors, upon the hereby granted Land Premises to Re enter, and the same to hold and Possess Until the said Quit Rent and all Arrears thereof, together with the Charges Accrueing by Means of such Non Payment and Re entry aforesaid by fully paid and Discharged.

IN WITNESS whereof the said Thomas Penn, by Virtue of the Power and Authority to him granted by the said John and Richard Penn, and of his own Right, hath caused the Great Seal of the said Province to be hereunto Affixed, at Philadelphia, this Sixteenth Day of November, in the Year of our Lord one thousand Seven Hundred and thirty seven, the Eleventh Year of the Reign of King George the Second over Great Britain & the twentieth Year of our Government.<sup>5</sup>

The entire 300-acre tract was at that time a dense wilderness, abounding in nearly every native species of the now-precious hardwoods — oak, hickory, ash, beech, maple, walnut and others. Deer and smaller wild life, their numbers still determined by Nature's law of balances, roamed the unspoiled forest; great varieties of birds flitted among the trees, and the clear waters of the Conestoga harbored an abundance of many kinds of fish.

In William Penn's earliest days in America, the tract formed a tiny part of the great wilderness that lay beyond the settlement of Philadelphia. In 1683 it became a part of Chester County. When it was surveyed in 1718, it was considered part of Conestoga Manor, in Conestoga Township, Chester County. A little later we find reference in deeds to land in the same locality, as being situated in Strasburg Township, e.g., the adjoining Henry Funk land, which encompassed much of the eastern half of today's Lancaster City area. In Hans Moser's time all of his land was legally in Lancaster Township, and maintained that status until after the beginning of the American Revolution. Soon after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, all of the then 270-acre plantation, except 30 acres at the lower end, was absorbed into the borough of Lancaster.

*T*he village of Lancaster, founded only a few years earlier (1730), was little more than a settlement situated in a clearing in the woods. From the village square (now Penn Square) one could almost throw a stone to the outskirts in any direction. The present Church Street marks part of the dividing line, in those days, between the village of Lancaster and the township of Lancaster, and there was still a strip of virgin woodland between the two.

It is not easy to visualize in our time, that until 1744 only one house and one family occupied the tract of land that now constitutes about 70% of the land area of Lancaster's Seventh Ward, plus 30 acres in Lancaster Township.

As the years passed, Hans Moser became known around the community as John Musser—sometimes Mosser. For this reason we shall refer to him solely as John Musser from this point onward. The name had its origin in an old German-language word "Moos," which meant a marshy meadow. It is still used in some German dialects. Today, in both the German and English languages, the word is "Moor." The original spelling was "Mooser," meaning one who lived in such a place and somehow earned a living there. In time one of the O's was dropped and it became "Moser." Still later some of the Mosers added another "s" and it became "Mosser," from which evolved the present "Musser."<sup>6</sup>

John and his brothers, Jost (Joseph) and Christian, were Mennonites, who had come to America as part of a group of seventy male Palatines, some of whom brought along their families. They sailed from Rotterdam, Holland, on the British ship "Molley," captained by John Hodgson, and docked at Philadelphia September 30, 1727.<sup>7</sup>

That John, Jost and Christian were brothers is a family tradition. Also,

their names appear together in the old family Bible of Henry Musser, of West Hempfield Township, which suggests that they may have been relatives of that family. There is other circumstantial evidence in various court records,<sup>8</sup> involving the choice of witnesses, executors, administrators, guardians, etc., which leads one to believe that all of the early Mennonite Mussers of Lancaster, Lampeter, Leacock and Conestoga Townships, as well as those of Brecknock, Hempfield and Strasburg Townships, were related and stem from a 17th Century common ancestor in Switzerland, believed to have lived in Canton Berne.<sup>9</sup> Then, too, Amos Milton Musser, of Salt Lake City, Utah, a descendant of Peter Musser, of Strasburg Township, who arrived in America in 1747, baptized by proxy Dr. Benjamin Musser and Dr. Martin Musser, Sr., descendants of John Musser who came over in 1727, and identified them as "distant relatives."<sup>10</sup>

The small sandstone quarry started by John Musser, was turned into a commercial enterprise in later years by his grandson, John Musser, and from this quarry, in 1784, came the sand used in the construction of the second Lancaster County Courthouse in Penn Square.<sup>11</sup> One hundred and fifty years later it was still in operation and known as "Betz' Sand Quarry" still remembered by some of our older citizens. Today the grounds along the north side of the George Washington Elementary School, and a housing development across the street, both in the 500-block of South Ann Street, mark the site of the extensive old quarry.

The tools available for quarrying stone in a backwoods area, such as Lancaster County in 1738, were small and of almost primitive simplicity in design. Not many of the tools used by tradesmen and farmers were brought in over the Great Conestoga Road and the Provincial Road; most of them were made by the local blacksmiths. Many early farm folks had to get along with whatever they had been able to bring in on horseback and their own shoulders.

Records in the Lancaster County Courthouse and at the Lancaster County Historical Society, have not disclosed where John Musser lived prior to 1737. At the time he took possession of his 300-acre "plantation," his family consisted of his wife, Veronica, and two sons, Jacob and Peter. Two more sons, John and Henry, were born later; there were no daughters. Whether there were children who died while very young, we do not know.

When he selected a site whereon to build his house, he chose the top of a knoll near an outcropping of sandstone. There no ground water would seep through his walls, since the terrain sloped downward from the house in every direction.

Today the northernmost of the apartments in the Franklin Terrace Housing Development, the one located at the southeast corner of Franklin and Chesapeake Streets, marks the site of the house John Musser built. It stood there about 225 years, and was demolished during the early 1960s, at which time nobody was aware of its historical significance.



*House built by John Musser c.1737; the oldest house in Lancaster City at the time of its demolition in the early 1960s. Stood near the southwest corner of the present Chesapeake and Franklin Streets. Drawing by James A. Ruof.*

Stones from the deposit of sandstone, light reddish-brown in color, were chosen for the construction of the walls, not alone because of their proximity, but mainly because it was easier to quarry sandstone than limestone. Less than twenty years earlier, in 1719, four and one-half miles to the south-southeast, an outcropping of sandstone also prompted the decision to build the house commonly known as the “Hans Herr House” in the location chosen.

John Musser also followed the general practice of farm people in locating his house as near the center of his land as practicable, so that the distance from the house and barn to the outermost parts would not be excessively long. The excellent pen and ink drawing of this house, reconstructed from an old newspaper photograph by Lancaster artist, James A. Ruof, depicts its 18th Century appearance.

Within its walls were seven rooms; also an attic and a cellar. Three of the rooms were on the first floor, with an 18 ft. by 9 ft. room on the south side, known as a “Kuche” (kitchen) among the Germans. It was also a sort of general, all-purpose room, where members of the family spent their odd hours. In the typically Germanic-type floor plan, this was the room that would have contained the centrally-located, walk-in fireplace, used for cooking and to provide warmth

in winter. On the north side were two smaller rooms, the front one commonly known as the "Besuchstube," where company was received and entertained. Among the English-speaking people such a room was the "parlour." The rear room would have been known as a "Kammer," a small room probably used for a variety of purposes. Most likely, it contained a bed and an overnight guest could be accommodated there. A stairway, which started in the rear of the house, led directly to four bedrooms on the second floor; another stairway led to the attic.<sup>12</sup> The sturdily constructed little house, with 20 ft. by 20 ft. outside dimensions, probably was quite cozy during the cold days of winter.

In many respects, the John Musser house resembled the better-known Herr House near the present Willow Street. (This house, which bears a 1719 date stone, is variously called the Hans Herr House or the Christian Herr House.) Both houses utilized the same basic type of floor plan based on Swiss and Germanic phototypes, and both had the same high-pitched roof which contained two stories. Houses of this type are now a great rarity, but many more existed in Lancaster County in the 18th Century.

A bank barn, part sandstone and part timber, stood about 150 feet north-east of the house; Chesapeake Street now cuts through the site<sup>13</sup> Between it and the river, where the Lamparter's lived in later years, there was some meadowland where the Musser cattle grazed.

The forest area to the west of the house was the first to be cleared for cultivation. By the mid-1740s more than 20 acres had been planted in grain alone.<sup>14</sup> This was in the area bounded, approximately, by the present South Franklin Street on the east; Schuylkill Street on the south; Ann Street on the west, and Chesapeake Street on the north. It must be remembered that the entire tract was without a single street or public road in those days; on all sides one could still see nature preserved in its pristine state.

The cleared area was well suited for agriculture in that the degree of fall in the terrain was slight. It remained strictly agricultural for about 170 years, until 1909, when the construction of the Drexel Terrace baseball field marked the beginning of a change. The field was located near South Marshall and Schuylkill Streets.<sup>15</sup> A few years later, in 1915, the original Seventh Ward Boys Baseball League field was laid out in another part of the same area—at the southeast corner of Ann and Old Rockland Streets.

Some parts of this tract are still devoted to truck gardening, and a somewhat rural atmosphere still prevails. There is no density of houses and the streets remind one of village roads, with no curbing along the sides. During World War I,

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*"John Musser's Plantation" outlined on a 1950 map of Lancaster, showing the route of the Lancaster-Rohrer's Sawmill Road in 1815 (heavy black line). 1. The John Musser House. 2. The Musser Family Cemetery. 3. The Henry Musser House. 4. Adamstown, laid out in 1744. 5. John Musser Jr's. Mussertown, laid out in 1760. 6. Henry Musser's Musser-town, laid out in 1762.*





when the area was still undeveloped and the soil still rich, it was possible to parcel out a large number of "Victory Garden" plots to the residents of the southeastern part of the city for cultivation.<sup>16</sup>

As noted earlier, John Musser's land was considered a part of Lancaster Township until 1775. The earliest township records in existence are from the year 1750. At that time he paid twelve pounds annual tax to the King of England, and four pounds to the County of Lancaster. He owned seven horses, eight horned cattle, six sheep and one bound servant.<sup>14</sup> Besides the vegetables he grew in his garden, his crops included wheat, hemp, flax, oats, rye and barley. His wife, "Frony" spun all the cloth needed by the household from the home-produced flax, hemp and wool.

The lower part of the 300-acre tract, the part which lay within the loop of the river, was kept a wooded area into the early 1800s. So was some of the land to the northeast, part of it even within the memories of Lancaster's older generation. A portion of the woodland along the old Rocky Springs Park trolley line is an example. Some of the Musser woodland on the hilly terrain along the river is still in its original state, except that the valuable hardwoods were removed over the years. There was more than enough timber of the land to keep Jacob Miller's water-powered sawmill, located along the Conestoga just below the present South Duke Street bridge, operating from about 1807 to 1820.

There was no bridge that led over the river from the Musser tract, in fact, there were no bridges crossing the Conestoga in all the surrounding area in 1737 – and for many years thereafter. There was still no bridge connecting Lancaster and Lampeter Townships at that point as late as 1812. There were places where the river was forded during the late 1700s and early 1800s, such as "Okely's Ford" (where the bridge at the end of South Duke Street now stands), and "Hand's Ford" (formerly "Rock Ford"), near where the City Line crosses the Conestoga).

The only road in the area was a farm lane which the Musser family used to travel from their home into the town; today that road is known as Rockland Street. The narrow outlet where it enters Vine Street, near Duke, has been there since 1744, and probably longer. It became and remained the main artery of traffic through southeast Lancaster for more than a century. Until 1872, South Duke Street beyond Church Street was an insignificant 14-foot alley. A story could be written on the unique history of Rockland Street alone, so much happened there.

At the time of the treaty made between the Colonies of Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania, and the Six Nations of Indians, in the Lancaster County Courthouse in Penn Square, in 1744, the Indians apparently camped along the edge of John Musser's land, and barked some of the walnut trees in his woods. Since they used the bark to make cabins he did not oppose them, but later sent a petition to the Pennsylvania Assembly for redress to the extent of six pounds.<sup>17</sup>

Witham Marshe, in his diary, recorded the arrival of the Indians on June 21, 1744. They came into the town during the day, while he was having dinner with some of the Virginia and Maryland Commissioners. There were 232 of them, including the Deputies of the Six Nations and their followers. Several of the squaws, or wives, with their small children arrived on horseback. They brought their firearms, bows and arrows and tomahawks, and a large crowd of local citizens followed them. They marched in very good order with Canassateego, one of the Onondago chiefs, at their head.

Conrad Weiser, who served as interpreter, conducted them to "some vacant lots in the back of the town," where some boards and poles had been placed. With these and boughs of trees from the woods, the Indians made wigwams, or cabins, in which they resided during the treaty conferences. They would not stay in the houses of white people.

They placed their cabins according to the rank of each nation as determined by their Grand Council. The Onondagoes Nation was placed at the right and the others arranged according to their several dignities. Canassateego and Tachanuntie, the Black Prince, were foremost among the chiefs. Most of the Indians were poorly dressed; wore ragged old coats and only a few wore shirts—black with dirt. After they had rested for awhile they began to paint themselves with a variety of colors of paint, which gave them a frightening appearance. Some rubbed bear grease on their faces, on top of which they put white paint.

At five o'clock in the afternoon, the chiefs accompanied Mr. Weiser to the courthouse to meet the Governor and the Commissioners.

That evening, notwithstanding the intense heat, some of the younger men lit a fire, about which 30 to 40 of them formed a circle and danced one of their lighter war dances. They hopped about the fire in frantic fashion, letting out wild shrieks and shouts while three of the elderly Indians beat drums in time with the dance,<sup>18</sup> undoubtedly shattering the tranquility that normally prevailed on John Musser's Plantation.

Even in the earliest days after John Musser's arrival on the Lancaster scene, he must have had visions of what eventually would become of his land, most of which lay within the established limits into which Lancaster would expand in future years. Was he aware that neither he, nor his descendants, could retain ownership of all of this extensive tract of land for a long time? Either the Mussers would eventually offer to sell, or others would bargain to buy some of the plantation.

Who made the first move we do not know, but on September 7, 1744, John and Veronica "Frony" Musser, for the sum of 190 pounds, sold to Dr. Adam Simon Kuhn, of the Borough of Lancaster, 15 acres of their land. The piece of ground they sold was bounded on the northeast by the Provincial Road

(King Street); on the northwest by land of James Hamilton (along present Church Street); on the southwest by land of John Musser (along present Rockland Street), and on the southeast by land also of John Musser (along present Locust Street).<sup>19</sup>

A member of the Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity, Dr. Adam Simon Kuhn, a German immigrant, became one of Lancaster's outstanding early citizens. He was burgess of the town from 1750 to 1756. His three sons also became medical doctors.

Dr. Kuhn drew up a plan for what today would be called a "housing development," and laid out his tract in streets and building lots, each of the lots to be 64 feet wide.<sup>20</sup> The first street was named *Church Street* – rather odd since there was no church located there. The next street was named *Middle Street*; it would run through the middle of the projected settlement. Neither the present *Locust Street*, nor *John Street*,<sup>21</sup> were included in Dr. Kuhn's plan. The width of each street would be 35 feet; approximately 20 feet for vehicular traffic and the rest for a street-level walkway on each side. There were no curbs or pavements in those days.

The Church Street lots were designated to be 64 by 207 feet in dimension; the Middle Street (now Howard Avenue) lots, 64 by 225 feet. Two 14-foot-wide cross alleys also were included: *First Alley*, which later became Freiburg Alley, then Freiburg Street, and eventually (in 1919) Pershing Avenue; and *Second Alley*, which later became "Strawberry Alley," then "Stony Alley," and eventually a continuation of South Lime Street.

Adam Simon Kuhn disposed of most of his lots by conducting a lottery; the prize offered was a free lot. Of the 46 lots he laid out in the Fall of 1744, he disposed of 32 in that manner before the end of the year. The cost to a winner was the price of the lottery ticket plus the legal fee for a Deed. However, he was also assessed a yearly ground rent of seven shillings to be paid to Dr. Kuhn, or his heirs and assigns, forever. Someone walking past these lots today can still identify the location of their original boundary lines, since 26 military length steps (30") are about equal to the distance from one dividing line to the next – 64 feet.

The person to whom a lot was granted was required by the deed he received to erect, within two years, a house at least 16 feet square with a substantial chimney of brick or stone. Non-compliance gave the grantor the right of repossession. Nearly all of the early Adamstown houses were one-and-one-half story dwellings, constructed of logs, of which only two have survived to the present day. Both have been restored by members of the Lancaster County Historical Society. One of them is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, dwelling in Lancaster City, known as No. 143 Howard Avenue. It was completely restored in 1971 by Patrick and Marlene Hynes. The other log house, known as Nos. 113–115 Howard Avenue, apparently was built in 1785, was completely re-

stored by Mrs. Vivian S. Gerstell in 1970. Many other very old houses are still standing in historically rich Adamstown.<sup>22</sup>

The citizens of the Lancaster community informally gave the little settlement its name, as over the years they referred to it as "Adam's town." Other villages, or settlements, also came into existence around the perimeter of early Lancaster, such as Grofftown (1738), Mussertown (1760) and Bethelstown (1763).

On December 14, 1744, John and Veronica Musser sold to Rev. Richard Locke and John Foulks, an acre of ground immediately southwest of Adamstown.<sup>23</sup> The site is the south corner of Church and old Rockland Streets. The deed made allowance for a 25-foot wide cross street, to be named Ermyne (German) Street, which would be laid out between the lower end of Adamstown and Locke-Foulke piece of ground. Later this street became part of Rockland Street.

*J*ohn Musser died in April of 1752, after having lived on his plantation 14 years. He was buried in the little family graveyard, located on high ground about 600 feet southwest of the house.<sup>24</sup> Old city maps show the location to have been on the east side of the present Marshall Street, where it intersects Schuylkill Street. Assuming the location is shown correctly on the maps, it appears to have been situated at the northeast corner of the present intersection, where there is still an open field. Part of it may have extended into the area now covered by Schuylkill Street, it is difficult to define its location with complete accuracy. Since John's wife, Veronica, is not mentioned in his will, it may be assumed that she preceded him in death, and most likely was the first member of the family to be buried there.

In olden days family cemeteries were usually located in an elevated area on the farm, and, if practical, within sight of the family dwelling. The practice enhanced the continued nearness of the departed loved ones, and in that respect was preferable to burial in a remote corner.

The following anecdote presents an incidental sidelight to the story: Mr. M. Luther Keays, former sexton of Trinity Lutheran Church, Lancaster, who was born July 6, 1900, lived at 614 South Duke Street during his early years. While still a boy he helped build the Drexel Terrace baseball diamond. The whole of Drexel Terrace (the area east of Ann Street below the Washington School) and the surrounding open fields were his playground during his boyhood days. George Lamparter's glue factory was nearby and Luther Keays became acquainted with him. In those days no license was needed to drive a car and Keays knew how to drive when he was only 15 years old. Mr. Lamparter, who was then 76 years old, allowed him to be his chauffeur when he wanted to go downtown to attend to business matters.

Luther Keays knew about the old cemetery and where it was located:

part of the old hedge that surrounded it was still there. One day his youthful curiosity caught up with him and he asked Mr. Lamparter about what ever became of the bodies of the people who were buried there; were they still there under the ground, not far from the right field foul line of the baseball diamond?

Mr. Lamparter said he knew about that. Some of the bodies, those with gravestones to identify their location, were exhumed and transferred to Woodward Hill Cemetery.<sup>25</sup> Since nobody knew the exact location of the remaining bodies, they were left undisturbed.

*F*rom 1844 to 1858, Emanuel C. Reigart, son of Susanna Musser Reigart, and great-grandson of pioneer John Musser, owned the land on which the family cemetery was located. His uncle and aunt, Adam Reigart, Jr. and wife Mary, had purchased the tract from John Hambright in 1801.<sup>26</sup> It seems almost certain that the remains of the bodies were moved at or about the time great-grandson Emanuel C. Reigart sold the 65 acres of land to Samuel Miller in 1858. Reigart was the last of the Mussers to own the land and the family burial ground was about to become the property of a "stranger." The story of the little cemetery could have come to George Lamparter directly from Emanuel C. Reigart, since 30 years of their respective lifespans ran parallel.

Among those still buried there, it appears, are the elder John Musser, his wife Veronica, his son Peter, and Peter's son Henry. Those moved to Woodward Hill were: the elder John's son Henry, and Henry's first wife, Ann Neff Musser; another son, John, Jr.: a grandson, John: and Henry Funk who was married to the elder John's niece.

In his will, which he signed March 14, 1752, John Musser devised his estate to his four sons, to be shared equally.<sup>27</sup>

To his eldest son, Jacob, he had already given a deed to his 167-acre tract of land in Manor Township.<sup>28</sup>

As to the other three sons, he directed that they "draw tickets" for his 121-acre tract in Hempfield Township. By drawing the right ticket, John, Jr. became the owner of the land.<sup>29</sup>

The remaining two sons, Peter and Henry, divided the 284 acres that remained of their father's 300-acre plantation between them. Responsibility for equality of division lay in the hands of the executors of their father's will: son Jacob Musser and friend Jacob Hostetter.

Peter Musser received the northeastern half of the land and Henry the southwestern. Since Henry (1740-1808) was still underage, Christian Baughman was appointed his guardian. Peter (c. 1730-1759), apparently because of his seniority, inherited his father's house and took over the operation of the entire farm.

John Musser also directed in his will that his personal property be divided

equally among his sons. Following is the inventory of the goods and chattels of John Musser, as appraised by the subscribers on April 24, 1752, and as written by the translator, Abraham Myer:

INVENTORY of all the Goods & Chattles of John Musser Late Deceased.  
 Praised from the Subscribers the 24th day of April 1752

	£.	s.	d.
First the Mans Wearing aperlall	6	0	0.
to Horses Mares & Coulds at	68	0	0
to Horned Cattles at	26	0	0
to Sheep at	5	0	0
to Shwines at	3	10	0
to 2 Waggon at	13	0	0
to Plowes & Harrow at	2	5	0
to a Wind Mill at	1	10	0
to a Halfe Waggon at	1	0	0
to Chains at	1	10	0
to 100 Bushells of Weat at	20	0	0
to a Cutten Box & Hand Screw at	2	0	0
to Iron Dools at	1	10	0
to Horse Gears & 2 Sattles at	5	10	0
to old Iron at	0	10	0
to 500 Pounds of Hemp at	7	10	0
to a Cloth press at	3	0	0
to Beds & bed States at	15	0	0
to Sisses at	1	10	0
to Bed Cloth at	5	0	0
to Table Cloths & Dowels at	1	6	0
to Wull at	0	12	0
to 6 Bushells of Salt at	0	18	0
to 2 Stills and Hogshheads at	20	0	0
to a Barrel of Licquar at	3	0	0
to Sider & Hoop Wears at	3	10	0
to 110 Jarts of Hemp Cloth at	11	0	0
to 36 Yards of Dowl Cloth at	2	14	0
to 10 yards of Linen at	1	10	0
to Wull Cloth & Bedik at	1	15	0
to Bags at	4	0	0
to 100 Bushells of outs at	7	10	0
	247	0	0

(End of Page 1 of inventory.)

Continuation of John Musser Inventory:

	£.	s.	d.
to 20 Bushells of Rye at	247	0	0
to 9 Bushells of Flax Seet at	1	10	0
to Bork at	2	0	0
to a flower Chist at	2	0	0
to Iron Pots, Pannes & Kettles at	1	0	0
to Pewtter Wears at	3	10	0
to a house Clok at	3	7	0
to Bibles & other Bookes at	7	0	0
to Winder Grains in field at	8	16	0
	20	0	0

to outs in field at	5	0	0
to Barly & flax in field at	5	0	0
to 3 Cuparts at	2	0	0
to Money Cash	276	4	0
to Bonds Notes & Book Debts	44	15	8
to Table and Chears at	1	0	0
	630	2	8

Praised (*appraised*) by the Subscribers

Jost Musser

Wolley Road

A True Copia from the original translated by  
Abra: Myer

John J. Snyder, Jr., of Lancaster, Pa., a direct descendant of pioneer John Musser through his eldest son, Jacob, has this to say about the inventory:

. . . many of the items on the inventory are typical of those which would have been owned by a prosperous farmer and landowner of Germanic lineage in Lancaster County before 1760. With my Winterthur background in my own education, I have been particularly interested how this inventory reflects on the manner of furnishings of the house of which Mr. Ruof drew the view. Once one removes the large amounts of agricultural implements, livestock, crops, tools, cash and money due from inventory, it is remarkable how little moveable household furniture there is listed. This is explained in part by the fact that the strong Germanic tradition, even among persons of some means, was of a sparsely furnished interior. Moreover, much of the furniture in the traditional Germanic interior, like benches and some storage space, was built in as of the room. Moreover, by the time the first John Musser died in 1752, it is likely that his wife was already dead, and thus one finds no reels, spinning wheels, cradles, or other items of a distinctly feminine nature. The "Cloth press" listed at £3-0-0 was a type of wardrobe now called a *kas* or *schränk*: such pieces have brought extraordinary prices at Lancaster County sales in recent years. Most important is the "House Clok" appraised at £7-0-0. This would have been some sort of very early type of tall case or grandfather clock. The ownership of such an item at this early date was most unusual, and was a definite sign of wealth. If this clock just might survive today, it would be very important as an antique. The works of a clock predating 1752 may have been brought from the Old World. The total value of books at £8-16-0 indicates a level of literacy far above the ordinary for the time and place. The last entry of tables and chairs would have been arranged in typical Germanic manner against the built-in benches in the corner of a room.

John Musser's inventory totaled £630-2-8. This figure does not include the value of the plantation in Lancaster Township, with improvements, on which he lived and died, nor the value of his Hempfield and Manor Township lands, with improvements. If one estimates the value of all these lands and improvements according to values of the 1750's, it appears that the total wealth of the first John Musser shortly before his death, in 1752, was probably between £2500 and £3000. In other words, of all the first-generation Germans and Swiss in Lancaster County at the time, he must have been one of the richest. In way of comparison, it should be noted that when Christian Herr of the noted 1719 house died in 1749, his inventory, which also did not include land or improvements, totaled only £352-15-0. So, for his time and place, John Musser I was very prosperous.

After Peter Musser took over the management of the plantation, he continued the gradual clearing of the forest land in order to gain more acreage for

agriculture. In 1758 he paid taxes on 250 acres of land, 70 of which had been cleared, showing that more than two-thirds of the plantation was still forest.

Peter Musser became ill and died in late December, 1759. He was laid to rest beside his father and mother in the little family cemetery. He had dictated his will when he realized the end of his days on earth was at hand, and from it the following is excerpted:

I give and bequeath unto my beloved Wife Anna, the Third of all my Moveables as the law directs, and I also give and bequeath unto her all and Singular This my Plandation and all the Moveables to her Durring her widowhood.

I will that my said wife Anna Shall raise up my Three Children out of my Plandation in the fear of God, Till they come to the age of Twenty one year. And if my Said Wife Should mary again and her husband should dye, Then it is my will That my said Wife Anna Shall have full Power to Come in My Possion and house with the Third Incom of my Plandation, for and Durring her widowhood.

It is my Will That No Timber Shall be Sold of This my Land, not any Land by Cleared, Nor any Timber by spoiled both wath Nessessary for fencing and Fireing.

I give and Divoise unto my Two Sons All This my Land and Plandation whereon I Now Liveth, That is to say unto my son John Mosser, & Henry Mosser their Heirs and assigns Forever, to be divided among Them as Equally and Convinent as Can be done, and also to be apraised by Two Endeverant Men of judgement, at or befor They Come of Their age.

It is my will That all my Estate Real and Personall Shall be Equally Devided Between all my Children as John Mosser, Henry Mosser and Anna Mosser in Shear and Share alike.

And lastly I Nominate make and appoint my beloved frind Peter Mosser and Benjeman Hershy Junior, Executors To This my Last will and Testament.

. . . in Case if one of The Said Two Sons Should die before his Age. Then it is my will That my Daughter Anna Should have and hold the Decedent his part of Land to her her Heirs and assigns forever. . .<sup>30</sup> (The will was written in German: the wording and spelling is that of the translator.)

Mr. Snyder observes that Peter Musser, as evidenced by the inventory of his estate, "Was not at all as rich at the time of his death, in 1759, as had been his father, but then one must account for the division of the father's estate, plus the fact that Peter was very young when he died (about age 29). Most likely, some items like the clock and the clothes press were the same items which had belonged to John Musser I when he died in 1752. The reference to the "Philadelphia Waggon" appraised at £20-0-0 indicated that we now call a Conestoga wagon; these wagons were originally designed by James Logan, of Philadelphia, for his trade with the inland, and hence their name."

Anna Musser took over the management of the entire plantation, until her late husband's younger brother Henry came of age, in 1761. From then until 1774, at which time her son John reached the age of 21, she conducted the operation of her half of the plantation. There is a family tradition that Anna was related to the Hershey's. This "sister-in-law" relationship came about when her husband's brother, Jacob, married Maria Hershey.



The second substantial parcel of land to be separated from the original 300-acre tract, was the 14 1/3 acres sold by Jacob Hostetter, surviving executor of John Musser's estate, to John Musser, Jr. (1738–1802) on April 8, 1760. It was part of the land youngest son Henry (1740–1808) had inherited, but since he was still a minor, Hostetter sold it for him. It was not until January 5, 1762, that the now-married Henry and his wife Ann, signed a formal release of the land to John.

The land was described in the deed, parenthetical insertions not included, as follows: Beginning at a post in a line of land of James Hamilton, Esq. (at the corner of present Church and Rockland Streets); thence extending by the same 43 degrees west (along line of present Church Street), 80½ perches to a stone in a line of lands of Samuel Bethel (at a point west of Queen Street); thence south, 47 degrees east (along line of present Strawberry Street), 28½ perches to a stone; thence north, 43 degrees east (along line of present Locust Street), 80½ perches to a stone; thence north, 47 degrees west (along line of present Rockland Street), 28½ perches to the place of beginning, containing 14 acres and 53 perches.<sup>3 1</sup>

John Musser, Jr. immediately laid out a pattern of streets almost identical with that of Adamstown. He extended Church and Middle Streets (the latter now called Howard Avenue) down to Samuel Bethel's land, where Strawberry Street now marks the southwestern boundary of Mussertown. He included one cross-street and two cross-alleys in the layout. The street was named Broad Street, later changed to Rockland Street; it divided Adamstown from Musser-town. Next, going down the hill, was a 14-foot wide alley which became known as "Diamond Alley;" in 1872 it became South Duke Street (extended). Still farther down was "Pearl Alley," which in 1875 became South Christian Street (extended). Strawberry Street was not on the Mussertown plan; it was opened about 1800 on the adjoining land of William Hamilton. Also, there was no Locust Street on the plan.

The lots he laid out and granted to applicants (18 along the southeast side of Church Street, 3 along the east side of South Queen Street, and 21 along the southeast side of Middle Street) were almost identical in size with those in Adam's Town. Most lots measured 62 feet, 6 inches in front, and 207 feet in depth. The usual ground rent was 13 shillings. The first deeds were executed May 1, 1760, and that was the beginning of "Musser Town."

As was stipulated in the earlier Hamilton and Kuhn deeds, the John Musser deeds also required that a house, at least 16 feet square with a substantial fireplace of brick or stone, be erected on the said lot within two years, or the lot could be repossessed by the grantor.

Several of the Mussertown houses that probably were started back in 1760 are still standing, among them the stone house at 519–521 Church Street, built on a lot granted to George Eberly in 1760 and now in process of restoration; the log house at 429 Church Street, still in good condition; and the log

house at 515 Howard Avenue, built on a lot granted to Patrick Agnew in 1760 and scheduled for restoration.

Most of the Mussertown lots were granted to persons of German nationality or descent, whereas in Adamstown only about half had German names. Many of the Adamstown lots were acquired by affluent, or near affluent, citizens of "downtown" Lancaster. They erected houses, as required, which they then rented to others; they seldom lived there themselves.

The main streets in Mussertown, as in Adamstown, were 35 feet wide, that is, it was 35 feet from one houseline to the other across the street. Years later, when outlined sidewalks became fashionable, the actual street width became 20 feet.

There was little change in appearances along Church and Middle Streets during the remaining years of the 18th Century. Many small, 1½-story houses outlined the narrow streets; some of log construction, others of brick. John Pearson, who visited the town of Lancaster in 1801, left us a description of Adamstown and Mussertown as it appeared to him 175 years ago. "In one of the southern angular streets I counted 54 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 angular direction there were about 37 houses of the same kind and generally fronting in like manner, without a single two-story house among them."

*F*rom 1765 to 1769, John Musser, Jr. operated a brewery, known as the "Brew House," at the southeast corner of Christian and Mifflin Streets. The business failed, and, in addition to the loss of the brewery, he lost all of his investments in Mussertown.<sup>3 2</sup> In 1787, in this building which earlier had been John Musser's brewery, Franklin College, the forerunner of Franklin and Marshall College, conducted its first classes. John Musser was a member of the first board of trustees.<sup>3 3</sup>

Two years later (1762) younger brother Henry, impressed with John's Mussertown venture, decided to expand the little settlement into his own land. Now 22 years of age, he owned more land than he needed to support a family through agriculture, and therefore decided to lay out more streets and building lots in continuation of his brother's plan.

The present Locust Street was kept as an alley back in 1762, but in time acquired the descriptive name of "Lovers' Lane." At 207-foot intervals, he laid out additional streets parallel to the original Mussertown streets. The first was North Street (the northernmost of Henry's streets); then came Low Street (it was lower than North Street at the upper end); next was High Street (it was higher than Low Street in some places), then came South Street (it was the farthest south). He also extended his brother's cross-alleys and made them part

of his plan. Broad Street (now Rockland Street but then only a farm lane) already ran southeastwardly to and beyond his home, located where Ann and Chesapeake Streets now cross.

His 62½-foot wide lots (more than 100 of them) fronted on both and northwest and southeast sides of North Street, and on the southeast sides of Low, High and South Streets. Today North Street still retains its name; Low Street has become Chester (1888); High Street was renamed Green (1871), and South Street later became Woodward Street. It has not been common knowledge that the part of Mussertown developed by Henry Musser, came into existence 13 years prior to the beginning of the American Revolution.

Unlike the stipulation in the Adam Simon Kuhn deeds (Adamstown), and the John Musser deeds (original Mussertown), that a building be erected within two years, no such requirement was included in Henry Musser's deeds, but it was stipulated that a fence of posts and pales, with the pales at least five feet high, be erected within one year. Houses were built along both sides of North Street, but most of the lots along Low, High and South Streets were turned into garden plots by their owners. It appears that sauerkraut was made from cabbage grown in the Southeast Ward, long before the "Cabbage Hill" days of Southwest Ward.

The division of the John Musser tract between his son, Henry, and the heirs of deceased son, Peter, took place in 1761 when Henry reached the age of twenty-one. Peter, the older brother, had inherited his father's house, which at that time was the only one on the entire estate. Obviously, Henry had to build a house for himself and his recent bride, the former Ann Neff. Build a house he did, a beautiful limestone mansion, still standing in undiminished sturdiness and identified today as No. 548 South Ann Street. It has no datestone, but the year of its completion apparently was 1763.<sup>3 4</sup>

Henry's bank barn stood about 30 yards west of his house, close to where Chesapeake Street now passes.<sup>3 5</sup> South Ann Street (that section between the George Washington School and Duke Street) cuts through the site of his orchard. South Duke Street (that section between Susquehanna and Delaware Streets) today bisects his grain fields, which in the 1700's included much of the present Riverview Cemetery tract.

The site of Henry Musser's limestone quarry, from which the stones for his house apparently were taken, is at the northwest corner of Chesapeake and Strawberry Streets, adjacent to the Woodward Hill Cemetery; part of which was laid out on former Musser land. From his quarry, in 1785, he supplied stones for the repair of the County Jail walls (Prince and King Streets), for which he was paid 8 pounds and 13 shillings.<sup>3 6</sup> It has been interesting to note that the stones in the Henry Musser house, those in the old "Oyster House," 519-521 Church Street; in St. Mary's old stone church on Vine Street, and some of the old jail wall along Water Street (now part of the Fulton Theatre), are so strikingly similar in general appearance, sand content, color, layering and porosity, one is

led to believe all probably came from the same quarry. With the exception of most of the jail, all of these buildings were erected in the beginning of the 1760 decade, and the identical rectangular form of the stones, arranged in straight courses, also suggests the same stone masons. Samples taken from the quarry recently definitely match the stones in the buildings mentioned.



*House built by Henry Musser in 1761-63; still standing at the corner of Ann and Chesapeake Streets.*

Henry lived in the house he built until 1795, at which time he sold it and 135 acres of land to Alexander Scott, of Hempfield Township.<sup>3 8</sup> Henry, in turn, purchased Scott's former Hempfield farm, where he lived until the end of his days (1808). Following Alexander Scott, who became a Pennsylvania State Representative and a State Senator, the owners of the house built by Henry Musser were: John Hambright (1797-1801); Adam Reigart, Jr. and Mary Reigart (1801-1844); Emanuel C. Reigart (1844-1858); Samuel Miller (1858-1864); James Evans (1864). John J. and Robert A. Evans (1864-1905), William Denlinger (1905-1933); George T. Hambright (1933-1949), and Samuel Sinopoli (1949-1970).<sup>3 9</sup> Since 1970 it has served as the Lancaster headquarters of TEEN

HAVEN, a guidance and recreational center conducted in a Christian atmosphere for young people of the community.

The 170 acres of land inherited by Henry Musser gradually diminished over the years as parcels were sold here and there, until today only a single acre of ground surrounds the old house. The adjacent land, willed to his brother Peter, was similarly subdivided over the years. It began in 1776, when substantial pieces of land along the southeast side of Locust Street (between the present Plum Street and Pershing Avenue), were sold to Adam Britzius, Gottlieb Lauman, George Luttmann, Matthew Snyder, and George Elgar. At the turn of the century even larger parcels were sold to George Pinkerton and Melchior Rudisill, along Locust Street between the present Pershing Avenue and Rockland Street. In the course of some years, a "brewery town" developed in the upper part of these tracts, with at least seven breweries located there (not all at the same time), mostly along Locust Street.

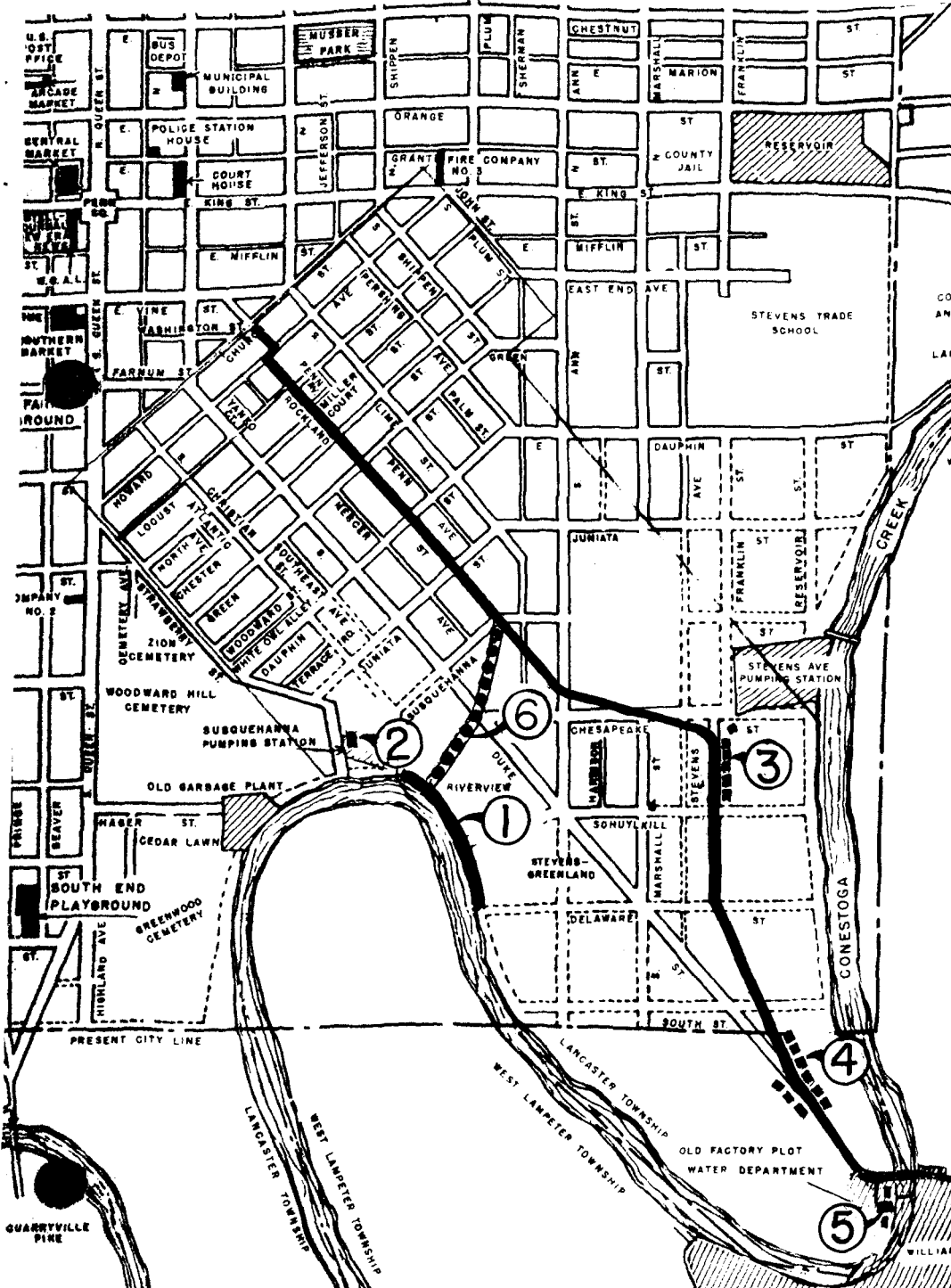
Returning to Peter Musser, who died in December, 1759, his half of the plantation was operated by his widow, Anna, after his death; the two surviving children, Anna and John, would share the estate upon reaching their majority.<sup>40</sup> Anna sold her share to her brother March 20, 1776 for 700 pounds;<sup>41</sup> John sold the house and the 130 acres of land to his creditors, one of them his uncle Henry, February 5, 1788.<sup>42</sup> They, in turn, sold the premises to John Okely, May 24, 1788. John Okely, Jr. sold the property to Jacob Miller, April 29, 1807. In 1818 James Humes became the owner, and from him it descended to his son, Dr. Samuel Humes. In 1861, Dr. Henry Carpenter purchased the house and parcel of land on which it stood, now reduced to only 12 acres. Dr. Carpenter's administrators sold it to Walter Boardman, in 1888; Boardman to Sarah Carpenter, in 1889; Sarah Carpenter to Lorenz Lamparter, in 1915; Lamparter to William E. Morton, in 1932; Morton to Elizabeth Lamparter, in 1932, and Elizabeth and Harry Lamparter to the Lancaster Housing Authority, in 1964.<sup>43</sup> The site of the John Musser house is now marked by the northernmost building of the Franklin Terrace Housing Development, at the corner of Chesapeake and Franklin Streets.

Earlier in the course of our story it was mentioned that there were no public roads on John Musser's land; nor was there a bridge leading across the river. Changes came in the course of time, as they always do, and during the late 1700s "Okely's Ford," located where the South Duke Street bridge now crosses the Conestoga, began to receive mention.

The first public road in the area came into existence at about the same time. It led from Rohrer's Sawmill, located a short distance downstream from

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*"Old Factory Road" in 1830 (heavy black line). 1. Reigart's Landing (Head of Conestoga Navigation). 2. Reigart's Landing Hotel, built c.1826. 3. Jacob Miller's Row, built 1811. 4. "Humesville." built 1812. 5. The Old Cotton Factory. 6. Reigart's Lane (Landing Street).*





where Gypsy Hill Road crosses Mill Creek, to the southeast town limits of Lancaster.<sup>44</sup> In 1801, this road was connected with the road at the Musser family cemetery (now the 600 and 700 blocks of South Marshall Street), thereby closing a missing link. It now became the road which ran all the way from "Lancaster to Rohrer's Mill." Part of the original road can still be seen behind and below the Stevens-Greenland Cemetery, on South Duke Street.

A stone bridge was erected at the site of "Okely's Ford" in 1812-1813, and another road, known as "Factory Road," was constructed at that time. It acquired its name from the 4½-story stone cotton factory, built in 1812 by Jacob Miller and Company,<sup>45</sup> along with a dye house, wash house, calendering house, singeing house, weaving shop, blacksmith shop, a massive 2½-story stone house in which 35 workers could be lodged (originally intended to be a tavern) and about a dozen 1½-story houses, which became known as "Humesville," named after James Humes, one of the owners of the factory. Jacob Miller had built a sawmill, with a dam and millrace, on the site about 1807. The factory housed Lancaster's first cork works from 1860 to 1870, the latter year it was destroyed by fire. To tell the whole story of the "Old Factory" would be far beyond the scope of this sketch.

"Factory Road" linked the factory with another little settlement of about a dozen 1½-story stone houses, located along what is now the 600-block of South Franklin Street. Built in 1811 (with several still standing) they, too, housed families with members employed at the factory. Over the years these houses became known as "Carpenter's Row," "Lamparter's Row," "Beggar's Row" and "Little Italy."

A few years later, in 1820, an Irishman, Hugh Loan, built a tavern along Factory Road. He prospered, and his establishment became the social center of the little community.<sup>46</sup> The town of Lancaster was "far away," especially so at nighttime, or for that matter at any time the journey had to be made on foot. The old tavern building is still standing, and now is the James D. Wiker residence, No. 768 South Franklin Street.

Factory Road also had a "missing link," which was completed sometime after 1824, and connected it with the Lancaster-Rohrer's Mill Road at the point where Marshall Street now meets Chesapeake Street. Once completed, its course was from the bridge at the factory to Vine Street at a point east of Duke Street. It gained prominence as a thoroughfare when it became the first section of the

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*The land inside this loop of the Conestoga was the lower end of John Musser's "plantation." The "Old Factory" and the adjoining mansion and barn are clearly distinguishable. It appears that the artist added a few houses and several persons in an effort to give more life to the scene. The Old Factory Road and the earlier Lancaster-Rohrer's Mill Road are distinctly outlined by rows of trees. There was no extension of South Duke Street in the area shown, in 1833. The depiction of part of Lancaster City along the horizon seems to show that part along East King Street between Shippen and Broad Streets. Painted in 1833 by Jacob Eichholtz. Photo courtesy of Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia.*



“Lampeter Road,” and subsequently the “Strasburg Road.”

In 1861 it became part of the Conestoga and Big Spring Valley Turnpike, which began at Vine and Rockland Streets, followed the same road (which by this time had become the “Old Factory Road”) to the bridge over the Conestoga; continued on to Eshleman Mill Road, and to the branch road of the Willow Street Turnpike Company at Long Lane, in Big Spring Valley.<sup>48</sup> Old-timers can remember the attendant’s house at the first tollgate out of Lancaster, located where Franklin and Schuylkill Streets now meet.

Formed in 1820 and chartered in 1825, the Conestoga and Slackwater Navigation Company built nine dams and locks on the Conestoga River to make the stream navigable between Lancaster and the Susquehanna, at Safe Harbor, a distance of 18 miles. From there the boats, some 75 feet long, continued on to Baltimore and Philadelphia, carrying the products of Lancaster farms and industries to those cities, and bringing back coal, lumber and manufactured goods.

The president of the company was a well-known Lancaster citizen, Adam Reigart, Jr., who at the time occupied the house and 90 acres of land that formerly were Henry Musser’s. Along that part of his land which bordered on the Conestoga, Reigart and his company built wharves, or docks, which became identified as “Reigart’s Landing,” or, “The Head of the Conestoga Navigation.” Today, standing on the bridge that leads into Lancaster County Park from Chesapeake Street, one can see the site of Reigart’s Landing stretching upstream a distance of nearly three city blocks along the left side of the stream. The packet boats, arks and rafts were hauled up and down the stream by teams of mules walking along a towpath on the left bank.

Although the dams and locks were used many years, the enterprise suffered financial reverses, and finally, about 1850, succumbed to the competition of the railroad. There had been times when more than a dozen boats, filled with cargo, arrived at the docks in a single day.<sup>49</sup> It had been an exciting adventure, but today the area along the Conestoga that once had been filled with sheds and houses, is completely abandoned.

The last of the houses at Reigart’s Landing were demolished in 1974; the large hotel and its stables were torn down about 1950 and 1940, respectively. The only visual reminder of the “Landing” that remains today is a section of “Reigart’s Lane,” called Creek Lane. It was also known as “Landing Street,” a steep road on which teams of horses pulled freight wagons from the docks up to the Strasburg Road, at a point where Rockland and Susquehanna Streets now cross, and on into the town.

These were typical of the business projects that tempted the entrepreneurs of the early 19th Century; sometimes resulting in success, other times in failure – and they took place on “John Musser’s Plantation.”

The old hotel near Reigart’s Landing was known as “The Inn at the Sign of the Ark.” The annual license was granted under that name.

Since we have been observing the Bi-Centennial of the beginning of the American Revolution, it must not be overlooked that two John Mussers who have been a part of this story, served as privates in the Lancaster County Militia during the war: John Musser (1738-1802) and John Musser (1753-1828). Anna Musser's husband, John Brubaker (1753-1803), also was a private in the Militia.<sup>50</sup>

In conclusion, the author wishes to acknowledge, gratefully, the permission granted by Messrs. John J. Snyder, Jr., Clyde L. Groff and Philip E. Bedient, to use material from their personal files.

## *Appendix I*

John Musser (c.1704-1752) married Veronica "Fronny" \_\_\_\_\_. Beyond our awareness that she was a dutiful wife and mother, and departed this life before her husband, little is known about her.

The eldest son of John and Veronica, Jacob Musser (c.1728-1755), inherited his father's 167-acre tract of land in Manor Township.<sup>51</sup> He married Maria Hershey, daughter of Christian and Barbara Hershey. Their children were: John Musser (1748-1804); Benjamin Musser (1749-1820); Anna Musser Wanner (1751-); Jacob Musser (1753-1784), and Maria Musser, who died in infancy.

Their second son, Peter (c.1730-1759), inherited half of his father's Lancaster Township estate.<sup>52</sup> Her married Anna \_\_\_\_\_. Their children were: Anna Musser Brubaker (c.1750-1817); John Musser (1753-1828), and Henry Musser, who died during his minority.

Their third son, John (1738-1802), inherited his father's 110½-acre tract of land in Hempfield Township.<sup>53</sup> His first wife was Margaret Hambright (c. 1740- ), and their children were: Elizabeth "Betsy" Musser \_\_\_\_\_ (1764 - ); Frances "Fanny" Musser Witmer (1766- ), and Mary "Polly" Musser Wells (1768-1848). His second wife was Sarah Funk (1756-1839), and their children were: Juliana P. Musser Doddridge (1778- ); Sophia Musser Doddridge (1780- ); Harriet Musser Glenn (1782- ); Christiana Musser I (1784-1784); Christiana II (1785-1786); infant son (1787-1787); Henry Ross Musser (1789- ); Sarah Louise Musser Williamson (1791-1849); Adeline Musser Tate (1796- ); John Abraham Musser (1798-1859), and Theodosia Musser (1799-1799).

Their fourth and last son (there were no daughters), Henry (1740-1808) inherited the one half of his father's Lancaster Township estate.<sup>54</sup> His first wife was Ann Neff (1744-1784), and their children were: John Musser (c.1764-1827); Susanna Musser Reigart (1769-1848), and Barbara Musser Landis ( - ). His second wife was Mary Kreider (1756-1826), and they had a son, Henry (c.1793- ).

## References and Notes

- 1 Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society, Vol. 1, Page 97.
- 2 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Bureau of Land Records, Harrisburg, Pa.
- 3 Deed Book GG-391, Recorder of Deeds Office, Lancaster, Pa.
- 4 "The Manor of Conestoga," by Martin Brackbill, Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society, Vol. 42, Page 39.
- 5 Patent Book A-8-314, Bureau of Land Records, Harrisburg, Pa.
- 6 Henry Musser, of West Hempfield Township, old family Bible.
- 7 "Pennsylvania German Pioneers," by Strassburger-Hinke, Vol. 1, Page 12. Jost Moser, 37th on the list, and Christane (Christian) Moser, 38th, both were recorded "sick." Hanse Moser was 42nd on the list.
- 8 They crossed family lines to serve one another in positions of trust; as witnesses in the making of wills, the execution of deeds and as executors of estates.
- 9 Papers of Joseph W. Moser, of Washington, D.C., formerly of Monace (Europe).
- 10 Files of Dr. Norman Edgar Wright, Brigham Young University.
- 11 Minutes of meetings of Lancaster County Commissioners, 1784.
- 12 Data furnished by Mrs. Norman B. Lefever, a senior citizen, who lived in the neighborhood all of her life and visited the house on several occasions.
- 13 1850 Map of Lancaster City.
- 14 Early tax records, on file at the Lancaster County Historical Society.
- 15 Luther Keays; he helped build it when a boy.
- 16 The writers recollections; he worked in his father's "Victory Garden" and carried water from the running spring below the Musser house. In early years a stone springhouse stood over the spring.
- 17 Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society, Vol. 27, Page 29.
- 18 Egle's Notes and Queries, Witham Marshe's Journal, Series 3, Vol. 1, Page 279.
- 19 Deed Book U-679, Recorder of Deeds Office, Lancaster, Pa.
- 20 Chart: Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society, Vol. 46, Page 55.
- 21 Before it became John Street it was known as "Montgomery's Lane," which led to Lawyer William Montgomery's farm, located about two blocks southeast of Adamstown.
- 22 Other interesting old houses in Adamstown are: 111 and 217-219 Church Street; 19, 51-53, 125, 139-141, 130, 132, 143 and 147-149 Howard Avenue.
- 23 Deed Book B-288, Recorder of Deeds Office, Lancaster, Pa.
- 24 1850 Map of Lancaster City, Lancaster County Historical Society.
- 25 The Musser graves are in the Reigart plot in Woodward Hill Cemetery.
- 26 Deed Books K-3-474 and Z-14-789, Recorder of Deeds Office, Lancaster, Pa.
- 27 Will Book Y-2-126, Register of Wills Office, Lancaster, Pa.
- 28 Deed Book U-493, Recorder of Deeds Office, Lancaster, Pa.
- 29 Deed Book M-22, Recorder of Deeds Office, Lancaster, Pa.
- 30 Will Book B-1-270, Register of Wills Office, Lancaster, Pa.
- 31 Deed Book L-182, Recorder of Deeds Office, Lancaster, Pa.
- 32 Deeds Books L-169, L-171, K-205, M-183 and P-515, Recorder of Deeds Office, Lancaster, Pa.
- 33 Rupp's History of Lancaster County, Page 428.
- 34 Lancaster Township Tax Records, Lancaster County Historical Society.
- 35 1850 Map of Lancaster City, Lancaster County Historical Society.

36 County Commissioners Minutes for 1785.

37 The old St. Mary's Church was dismantled in 1881, but since the stones were used to build the foundation of the present convent and school, many of them are still visible for comparison.

38 Deed Book XX-63, Recorder of Deeds Office, Lancaster, Pa.

39 Records of research by Vivian S. Gerstell, Lancaster County Historical Society.

40 Peter Musser's Will, 1759, in the Register's Office, Lancaster, Pa.

41 Deed Book R-151, Lancaster County Courthouse.

42 Deed Book GG-400, Lancaster County Courthouse.

43 Deed Books W-3-516, GG-396 and B-5-330; Mortgage Book 25, page 481;  
Deed Books A-13-11, H-13-157, X-24-537 and Y-30-449.

44 At the juncture of the "Old Factory Road" and South Duke Street.

45 Deed Book 4-448, Lancaster County Courthouse.

46 Deed Book Q-6-194, Lancaster County Courthouse.

47 Map of Lancaster City, 1824.

48 Source has become separated from data quoted.

49 Ellis and Evans History of Lancaster County, page 318.

50 Pennsylvania Society Sons of American Revolution History, 1955.

51 Deed Book U-493, Lancaster County Courthouse.

52 Deed Book GG-393, Lancaster County Courthouse.

53 Deed Books M-22 and M-341, Lancaster County Courthouse.

54 Deed Book GG-393, Lancaster County Courthouse.

