

# Locating Henry Pinkerton's Saddle, Harness, and Trunk Manufactory on Lancaster's Centre Square

By R. Bruce Pinkerton

This paper describes my investigation of the saddlery of Henry Pinkerton and his son, Henry, and their successors, Michael Haberbush and Edward Kreckle, on the Square at Lancaster.

The 1859-60 Lancaster County Directory listed sixty-three saddle and harness makers including seven in the City. Two were on Lancaster's Centre Square: Henry Pinkerton at the corner of West King Street (Fig. 1, site A); and E. M. Sheaffer & Son, diagonally opposite at the corner of East King (Fig. 1, site C). The number in the City peaked at twelve by 1913, but declined steadily to four by 1925-30.

Typically, these businesses sold and repaired the accoutrements needed for horse-drawn transportation, not only saddles and harnesses, but also horse collars, buggy whips, buffalo robes, travel trunks, satchels, and miscellaneous other accessories.

Henry Pinkerton (1795-1855) was born in Lancaster, the first son of John and Mary (Waggoner) Pinkerton. He worked as a saddle and harness maker his entire life, being taxed in Lancaster City as such as early as 1819. The first City Directory of 1843 tells us that his business was then located at the corner of West King Street and Centre Square.

I was interested in verifying the location of this business and in finding old photographs which showed the buildings that housed the business. Further study led me to consider two possible sites on the square, site A and site B (see Fig. 1)

Henry never owned property, he was always a tenant. After his death, in 1855, the business was continued by his eldest son, Henry, until 1860 when

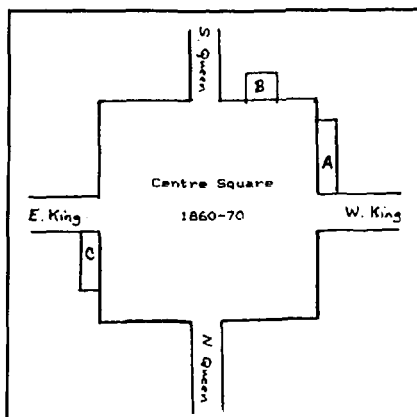


Fig. 1. Lancaster's Centre Square, 1860-70.

it was sold at sheriff sale. More about this later. However, a saddle and harness business continued at the Pinkerton location beyond 1860 in the name of Michael Haberbusch. Later pictures of the square, ca. 1869, (Figs. 2 & 3) clearly show the Haberbusch establishment at site B. This has caused some confusion because site B is not at the corner of West King and Centre Square. While some might say that is close enough, site B is actually within the square's southwest angle.

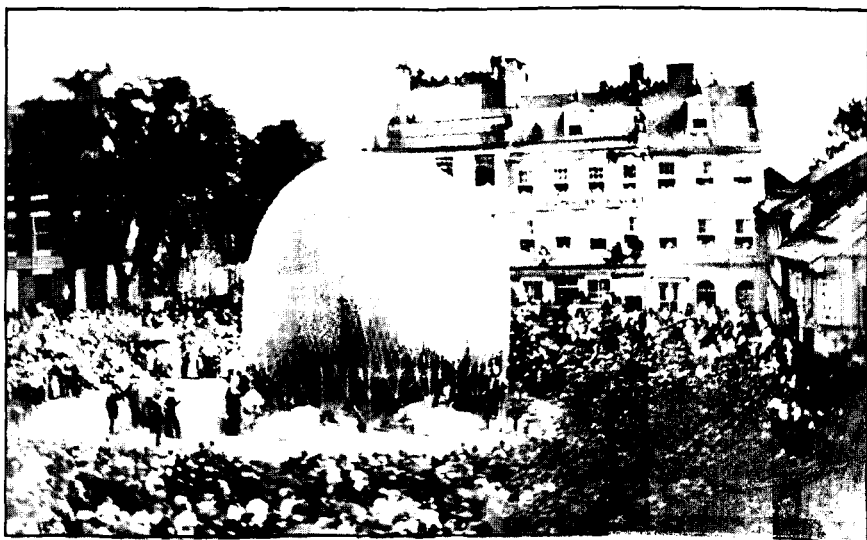


Fig. 2. John Wise prepares to go aloft from the southwestern quadrant of Lancaster's Centre Square (1869). The building with the "SADDLE HARNESS TRUNKS" sign above the second floor windows (right of the balloon) is the Haberbusch Saddlery.

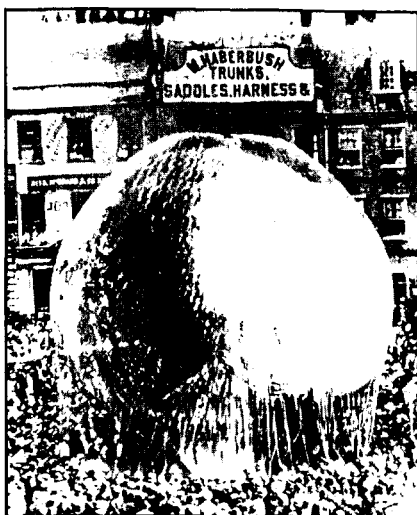


Fig. 3. This later picture shows the addition of a roof sign to Haberbush's Saddlery.

The early City Directories describe Pinkerton's business as being located at the corner of West King and Centre Square. If this is so, then we have a picture of this building in 1860 (Fig. 4) looking west from East King Street. This shows a two-story brick building with a gabled garret. In another 1860 photo (Fig. 5) looking east up West King, one can see the gable end of this corner building. This designation is in agreement with the Steinman location of the businesses on King Street in 1860 (Fig. 6).<sup>1</sup>

### Tax and Directory Listings

1843	Henry Pinkerton, Cor. West King and Centre Square
1855	Henry Pinkerton, Sr. dies May 3, buried Concord Cemetery
1859	Henry Pinkerton, West King at Centre Square, tenant; house, West Centre Square.
1860	Henry Pinkerton, Saddler, Centre Square, tenant
1861	Michael Haberbush, Saddler, Centre Square, tenant
1861	Henry Pinkerton, Clerk
1862-63	Henry Pinkerton, Centre Square, Clerk
1864	Henry Pinkerton Jr. dies May 2, buried Concord Cemetery
1864	Michael Haberbush, Saddler, West King, Centre Square
1868-69	Michael Haberbush, Saddler, SW Angle, Centre Square
1874	Michael Haberbush, No. 30 Penn Square, home same

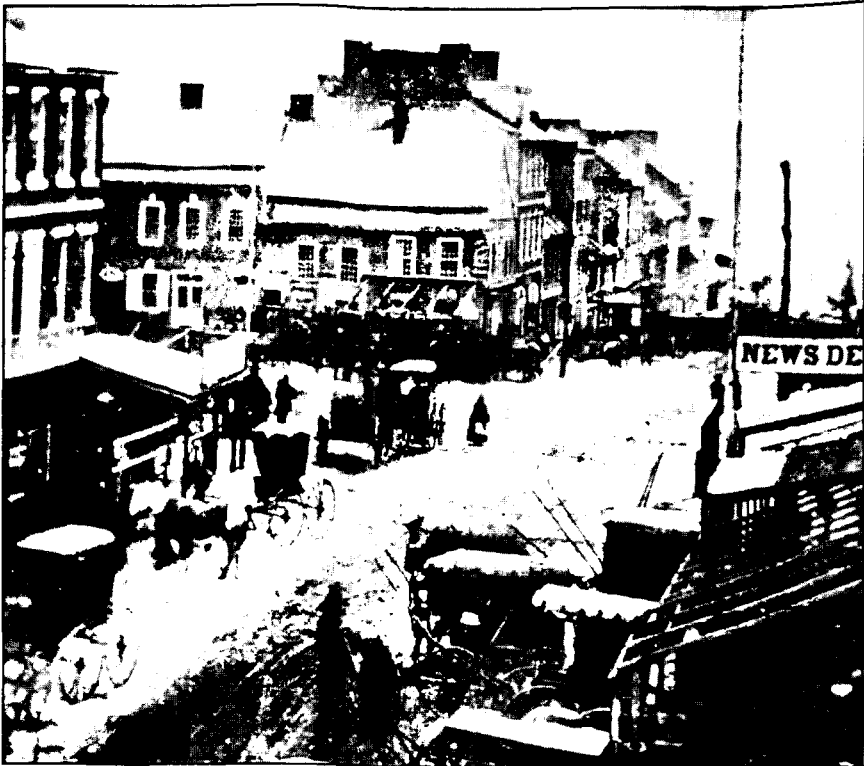


Fig. 4. Centre Square looking west from East King Street directly at Henry Pinkerton's saddle and trunk manufactory (1860). The sign on the corner of the building remains illegible.

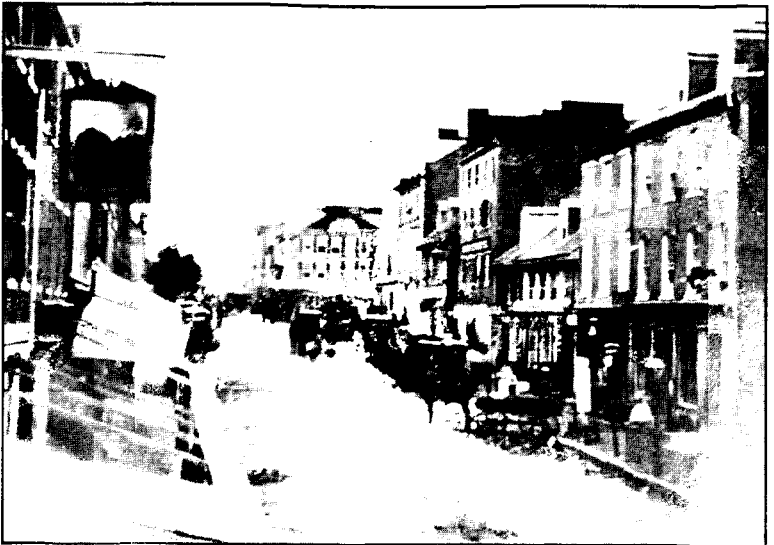


Fig. 5. West King Street looking east toward Centre Square showing the noble end of Pinkerton's building.

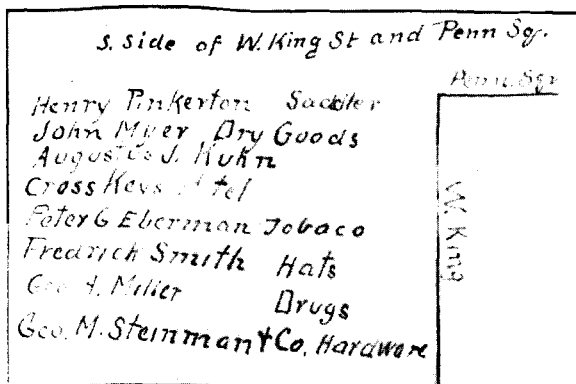


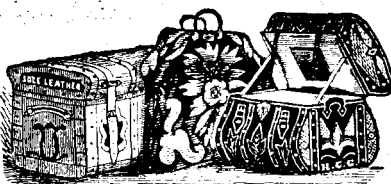
Fig. 6. The businesses on the south side of West King Street near Centre Square in 1860. (Steinman Directory)

The 1858 picture (Fig. 7) looking toward City Hall, which included the Post Office — today the Heritage Center of Lancaster County—shows a vertical saddle sign (lower left) hanging from a sidewalk awning support post at the southwestern corner of King Street.

Henry Pinkerton, Sr. had a large family. His 1850 household included Henry, age 52; his wife Hannah, 47; Ann Maria, 25; Henry Jr., 22; Mary Jane, 16; John G., 14; Lewis K., 12; Joseph M., 10; William G., 9; Emma, 7; Frank, 5; and Jane, 30, his handicapped sister. Three apprentice saddlers and a housekeeper also lived with them.<sup>2</sup>



Fig. 7. This 1858 view of City Hall shows a vertical "SADDLE" sign hanging from a sidewalk awning support at the southwest corner of King Street.



**H. PINKERTON & CO.,**  
**S. W. corner of Centre Square,**  
**LANCASTER, PA.**

Manufacturers of and Dealers in

Plain and Fancy Saddles, Bridles, Single and Double Harness of every description; Horse Gears, Collars, Hames, Wagon Whips of all kinds; Driving and Riding Whips, Buffalo Robes, Horse Covers, and Fly-nets.

Solid sole leather and common Trunks of our own manufacture, and of every quality and price; Velvet Tapestry and Enamelled Travelling Bags and Valises,

And all articles in our line, constantly on hand or made to order, of the best quality and at the lowest prices.

**Fig. 8. Henry Pinkerton's ad. (Boyd's Lancaster County Business Directory, 1859-60)**

When Henry Sr. died in 1855 he willed the business to his son Henry on a 50% partnership basis, so that 50% of the profits would be used to support several of his young children until they reached the age of twenty-one.<sup>3</sup> However, by 1860, Henry Jr., who had become a widower himself in 1858 with young children of his own, began to suffer from bad health and apparently let the business go downhill. His brother, William, through a series of court petitions and rejoinders accused him of poor management, having run up much debt and uncollected receipts, and generally not living up to the conditions set forth in his father's will.<sup>4</sup> The business was levied against and sold at sheriff sale on September 11, 1860.

Michael Haberbush became the new saddler at that location according to the tax/directory records, and Henry Pinkerton, Jr. became his clerk until he died of "consumption" in 1864 at the age of thirty-eight. Deed records show that Haberbush purchased site B on April 1, 1865, from Isaac Hiester.<sup>5</sup>

My conclusions are that the Pinkerton business was indeed at the very corner of West King Street and Centre Square, and that in 1860, Michael Haberbush took it over, continued it there until 1865 when he purchased the property at site B, later known as No. 30 Penn Square, and moved the business there, probably knowing that the Locher-McGrann Building was soon to be built at his original location. Haberbush operated his saddle business at No. 30 Penn Square until 1894, when it was taken over by Edward Kreckle, who had been a saddler elsewhere in the city since 1860. Kreckle continued it there until 1916. From then until 1925-27 it was a florist shop, "The Rosary". Then that location and the buildings on either side were razed and replaced by the Conestoga National Bank.

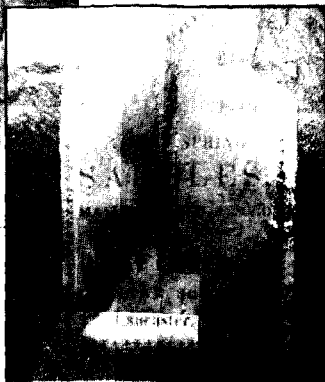
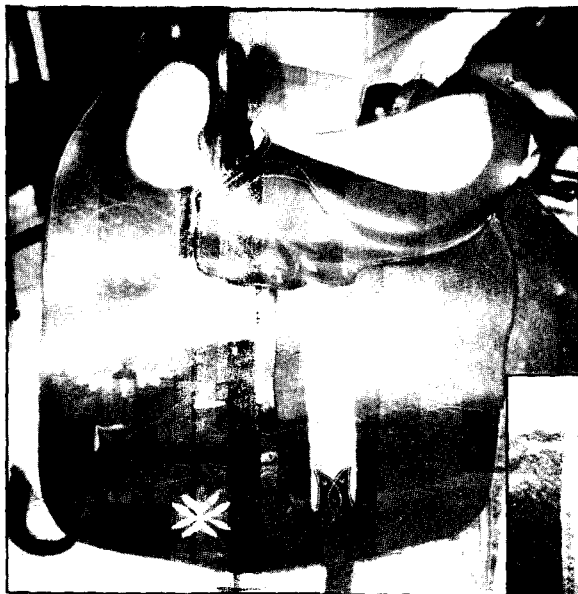


Fig. 9. Paint-decorated sidesaddle made at Henry Pinkerton's saddlery (ca. 1820-40) and (right) the original Pinkerton label found underneath one of the horns of this saddle.

## Epilogue

In 1991 the author was contacted by an antiques dealer who had acquired a sidesaddle made at Henry Pinkerton's saddlery circa 1820-40. It was in remarkably good condition with paint-decorated side skirts and with the original Pinkerton label underneath one of the horns (Fig. 9). The price was quoted at \$4500.

## Endnotes

1. Steinman Directory in the Steinman Collection of Old Lancaster Photographs at the Lancaster County Historical Society.
2. 1850 Census of Pennsylvania, Lancaster City, NE Ward, microfilm roll #788, p. 604, dwelling #33.
3. Lancaster County Will Book Y, Vol. 1, pp. 879-80.
4. Lancaster County Orphans' Court Records, 1860-61.
5. Lancaster County Deed Book I, Vol. 9, p. 322.

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