

# Martin Shreiner: From Clocks to Fire Engines

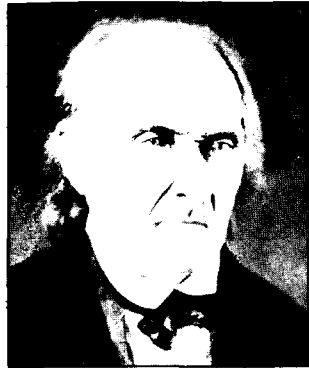
by Stacy B. C. Wood, Jr.

Although not the earliest of the Lancaster Borough clockmakers, Martin Shreiner, Sr. (1767-1866) (figure 1), is arguably the best known of the lot due to his prolific production during the forty years he worked in that trade.<sup>1</sup>

Martin, baptized Johann Martin, was one of at least six children born to Johann Philip and Eva Catharine nee Boltz.<sup>2</sup> His father, a son of Hans Adam and Anna Margareta Shreiner, had been born in the ancestral village of Gommersheim in the Palatinate (Rheinland Pfalz), some five miles east of Neustadt and nine miles west of Speyer where the family is believed to have settled as early as 1578.<sup>3</sup>

Hans Adam had brought his family to America on the *Winter Galley*, landing in Philadelphia on September 5, 1738.<sup>4</sup> They had settled in Manheim Township, Lancaster County,<sup>5</sup> erecting the building shown in figure 2. There he was both a farmer and a blacksmith.<sup>6</sup> He died in 1744/45 and was buried in the old Moravian cemetery that was located, until its removal, on the southeast corner of West Chestnut and North Prince Streets in Lancaster Borough.<sup>7</sup>

Johann Philip married Eva Catharine Boltz of Lebanon Township (now, County) in 1746. He purchased property on the west side of the first block of North Queen Street in Lancaster Borough in 1760.<sup>8</sup> It was here that Johann Martin was born.



*Fig. 1. Martin Shreiner (Sr.) in his 97th year. (Courtesy of The Watch and Clock Museum)*



**Fig. 2.** The circa 1739 Shreiner homestead in Manheim Township, Lancaster County, Pa. The building was demolished in the early part of this century. (Courtesy of Charles H. Hagerty)

The following article concerns Martin and his sons and descendants who followed him in the clockmaking/jewelry trade.

#### 6 MARTIN

Martin (baptized Johann Martin) Shreiner was born on January 22, 1769, the last of three sons. The home he grew up in was just north of Lancaster Borough's famous Grape Hotel. The building was eventually torn down and replaced by the C. Emlen Urban-designed Lancaster Trust building around 1920. His father, Philip, was listed in the 1779 and 1782 tax lists as "Tavern."<sup>9</sup> His connection, if any, with the Grape Hotel, is unknown.

Martin was apprenticed to Lancaster Borough clockmaker John Eberman (1749-1835) and he assisted his master in fabricating the tower clock for the County's second courthouse.<sup>10</sup> Although an ad heralding the opening of his own shop has not been discovered, on July 27, 1791 he placed an ad in the Lancaster German language newspaper, the *Lancaster Neue Zeitung* (figure 3), indicating that he had enlarged his establishment next door to Adam Reigart's store. In the ad he stated that he continued "to manufacture all kinds of house clocks, of the newest style and

### Martin Schreiner, Uhrmacher.

Neben des Herrn Adam Reigarts Stuch in der Stadt Lancaster, bittet um Erlaubniß seinen Freunden und dem Publicum für die Ermunterung die er seit dem Anfang seines Geschäftes gesunden, seinen Dank abzuschicken; welches ihn in Stand gesetzt hat, dasselbe noch ausgebreiteten Plan und auf solche Bedingungen anzutreiben, welche allgemeine Genehmigung zu sichern wird.

Befagter Schreiner fährt fort, alle Sorten von Hausuhren auf die neueste mode zu verfertigen, er giebt sie um den billigsten Preis; er machet auch bekant das er zweierlei Sorten Hausuhren machet, wie man sie gern hat, auf die Deutsche oder auf die Englische Art, die Deutsche Art; genante Drathene Trieb, die werden um 15s. und neun pens wohlfeiler verfertigt, als wie die andern, und garantiirt solche Hausuhren für zehn Jahr.

Es befinden sich aber Verächter solcher Uhren, aber glaubt ihnen nicht, dann ein jeder Mensch hat sein Verächter, ein gutes Werk machet ein guter Meister, er hat sich auch fergekommen, daß er vorzüglich die Taschenuhren reparirt, und steht das sie ein Jahr gehen, wan sie nicht durch Zufall verbrochen werden.

**Fig. 3.** Martin Shreiner ad published in the *Lancaster Zeitung*, 27 Jul. 1791. (Courtesy Lancaster County Historical Society)

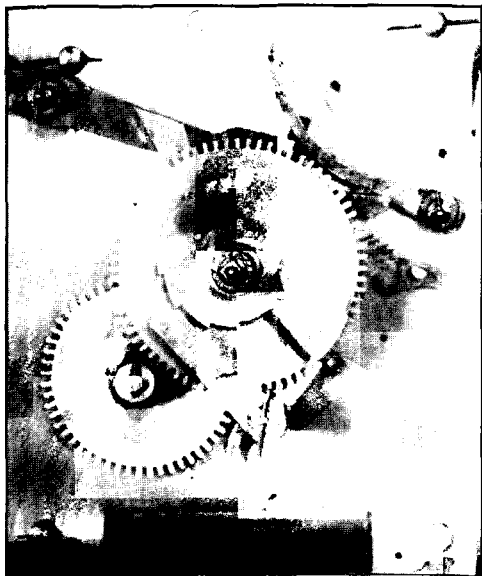
at the lowest prices." He also offered to repair watches. This particular location, 38 1/2 North Queen Street, was next door to the house in which he was born at 38 North Queen.

Numerous sources, including descendants, state that Martin made a total of 317 clock movements. An undated newspaper clipping from an unidentified newspaper states that number 317, which was a clock playing "a number of German tunes," was the last clock made and that it was completed in his 83rd year (circa 1850). Further, it was reported in the article that the clock had been given to his son Philip and exhibited in the 1854 Lancaster County fair held in Columbia. Although this author has heard two reports of clocks with numbers in the 400 number range, he has not encountered any clock with a number higher than 317 after fifteen years of search. During this period information about 112 of the clocks was recorded. If numbers higher than 317 had been used, examples certainly would be expected to have surfaced during that period.

Some of the movements have dates inscribed on them that may indicate the year of manufacture: No. 5 has "Oct 1789" within its bell; No. 16 has a card stating that



*Fig. 4. Typical Martin Shreiner (Sr.) 8-day clock movement having sweep calendar and seconds hands. Note flanged wheel above center arbor that drives both the moon wheel (not shown) and the sharp toothed calendar wheel. (Private collection)*



*Fig. 5. Typical Martin Shreiner (Sr.) 30-hour, single weight/ endless chain, clock movement (No. 16). (Courtesy S. S. Salisbury NAWCC #27152)*

it was made in 1791; No. 38 has "Nov 27, 1794" within the bell; No. 180 has 1815 within its G. Ainsworth (English) bell; No. 247 has a card stating it was made in 1818; and No. 298 has "Oct 16 1827" within its bell.

Of the movements examined, all have brass plates with brass wheels mounted on steel arbors. More often than not, a trapezoidal piece has been removed from the bottom edge of both front and back plates to provide movement "feet." The front plates of some movements (e.g., Nos. 251, 253, and 271) are stamped "Wm. Vale - Lichfield" which is believed to be an English supplier of the brass plates.

The anchor-recoil escapement is the norm, although a few (e.g., Nos. 146 and 314) utilize the deadbeat escapement. All examples have English-style locking of the

strike train, as would be expected of an apprentice of John Eberman who used this method. At least two movements (Nos. 65 and 247) employ the so-called bar or "Liverpool" locking also found on one of Eberman's movements. Grooved winding barrels with tailed ratchet clicks (pawls) are the rule on 8-day movements, while full ratchet wheels and tailed clicks are common on 30-hour movements. Although the common pendulum crutch is normally used, some (e.g., Nos. 247 and 258) use a pin crutch.

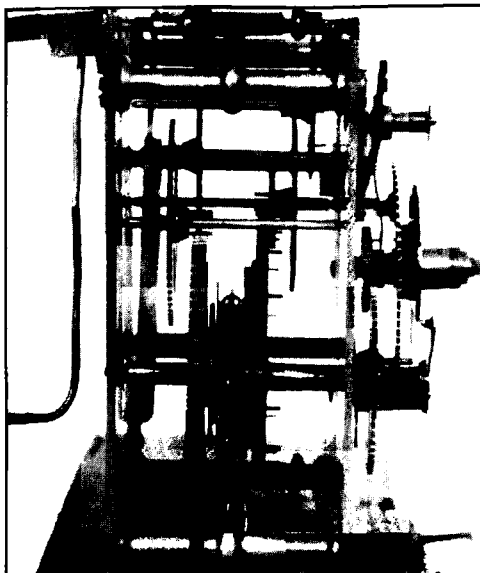
Ninety-three of the 112 movements examined (83%) are 8-day running and 74% of them have the long or sweep seconds hand from the center. Both sweep seconds and sweep calendar hands are used on 61%. The sweep calendar hand and moon wheel are usually activated by a single flanged gear mounted on the front of the movement. At least one 30-hour movement has a sweep seconds hand (No. 22). This author knows of five 8-day musical movements (Nos. 74, 201, 202, 250 and 317) (the above quoted undated newspaper clipping says there were only four). Four of these are pinned with seven tunes, while No. 317 is reported to have five tunes. One movement (No. 205) has been identified as also striking the half hour, while another (No. 36), having only two weights, is a quarter-hour and hour striking clock. No solely quarter-hour chiming movements have been reported to date.

Nineteen 30-hour movements have been recorded, one of which (No. 22) has faux winding arbors mounted on the dial false (i.e., mounting) plate to simulate an 8-day movement.

German (lantern or wire) pinions were found on movements Numbers 5 (an 8-day), 6, 12, 16, 22 and 233 (all 30-hour). The ad that he placed in the *Neue Zeitung* on July 27, 1791 stated that of the two styles of movements he made, "English or German," the latter with its lantern pinions sold for 15 shillings 9 pence less and still carried his *ten-year* guarantee! It is possible that many of his early movements used lantern pinions. One dwarf (miniature) tall case clock has been examined. It carries the number 213 1/2 on its Osborne/Birmingham dial and uses a full size movement.

The movements examined were all finely made and a majority have gracefully curving rack hooks. Thirty-hour movements normally use the single weight/endsless chain power source. At least three examples (Nos. 229, 239 and 251) have an iron pendulum bob faced with an embossed brass front depicting a man on horseback with the phrase "A DON COSSACK" below. This type of pendulum has also been noted by the author on clocks by three other Lancaster County clockmakers (George Eby, at work 1825-1850; Joseph Eberman, at work 1808-1850; John Kunkle, at work 1813-1826), and one Philadelphia clockmaker (James Hansell, at work 1816-1850). An 8-day movement example is shown as figure 4 and a 30-hour as figures 5 and 6.

Dials used are by various manufacturers, including the Englishmen Osborne and Wilson of Birmingham (co-inventors of the "white" or painted dial), and Foster, possibly of Foster & Dugmore. American manufacturers noted are Nolen & Curtis of Boston, and Spencer Nolen of Philadelphia. One dial (No. 14) is marked Ashwin. Martin Shreiner's "signature" on the dials of his clocks is considered by many (including this author) to be one of the most beautiful of all such signatures (figure 7). Based upon examination of a dozen or so Martin Shreiner dials, a prominent dial restorer has expressed his opinion that the signatures are extremely permanent due to their thickness and volume



*Fig. 6. Time train (left) side of Martin Shreiner (Sr.) 30-hour clock movement No. 16. Note open ended "lantern" pinions. (Courtesy of S. S. Salisbury NAWCC #27152)*



*Fig. 7. Typical Martin Shreiner (Sr.) dial "signature" used after he dropped the "c" from his last name circa 1795. (Private collection)*

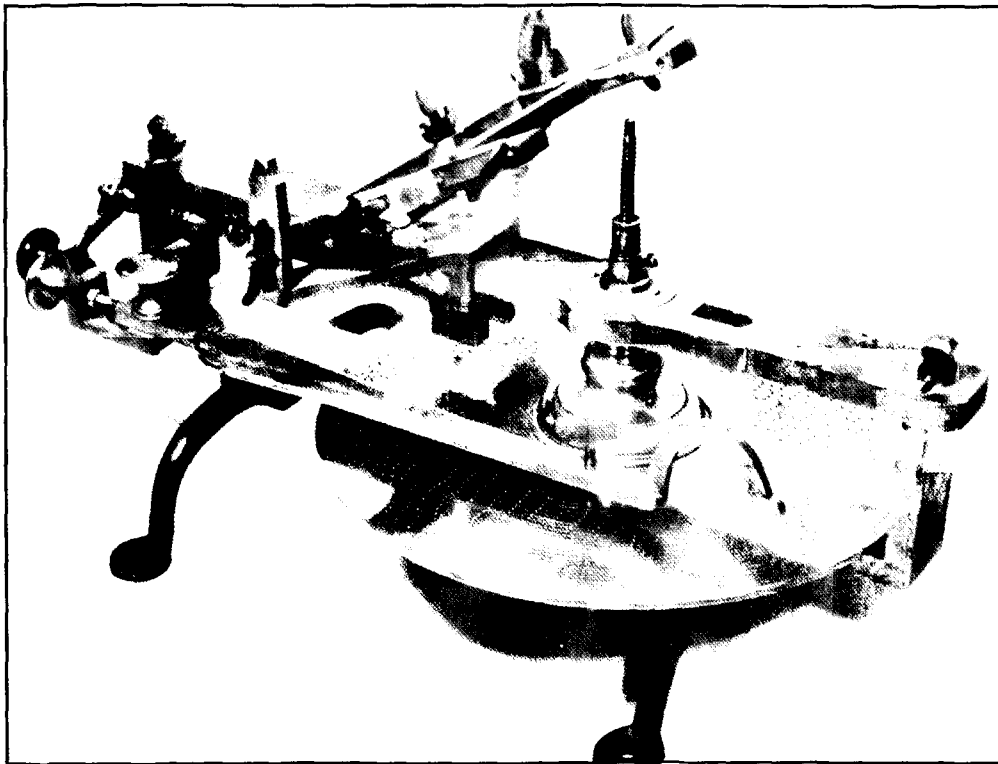
and were individually applied.<sup>11</sup> A family tradition suggests that Martin's wife Maria applied them. It is worth noting that the earliest, at least through No. 16, have the last name spelled in the German fashion, "Schreiner."

It should be mentioned that some brass movement weight driven shelf clocks have been encountered with labels stating that they were made and sold by Martin Shreiner. All examples examined by the author were found to be Connecticut mass produced clocks that Shreiner sold after pasting his own label over that of the original manufacturer.

In his will, Shreiner left his tools to his son Martin.<sup>12</sup> At least one of the tools, his clock wheel cutting engine, still survives. It came into the possession of the late brothers Samuel K. and William L. Fraser, clockmakers of Lincoln, Lancaster County, grandsons of clockmaker William Fraser (1801-1877).<sup>13</sup> For a time it was misidentified as having been the engine of Ephrata clockmaker Jacob Gorgas (1728-1798).<sup>14</sup> It has been seen as part of at least two exhibitions in Lancaster County during the past twenty years. It is now in a private collection and is shown as figure 8. A surviving small work bench has also been identified. No shop records have surfaced so far.

In the days of hand crafted clock movements, cases for the clock movements were normally obtained by the purchaser from a cabinetmaker, perhaps the same cabinetmaker who made much of the other furniture for that person's home. Many of the cases housing Shreiner's movements are said to have been produced by Alexander Danner, whose shop was on the east side of North Queen Street, above Walnut Street.<sup>15</sup> Clock No. 298 (with its bell having the date 1827 inked within it) is stamped "A. DANNER" on its

*Fig. 8. Martin Shreiner (Sr.) wheel cutting engine. The wheel blank is bolted down on the vertical spindle. A circular cutting blade is mounted between the yoke of the cutter frame and hand driven. The proper number of teeth to be cut will be found listed on one of the many concentric circles of the index plate. The index pin of the index arm is placed in one of the holes of the selected circle. After each cut of the wheel is made, the pin is lifted clear and the index plate turned to the next hole. (Courtesy Edward E. Lafond, Jr.)*

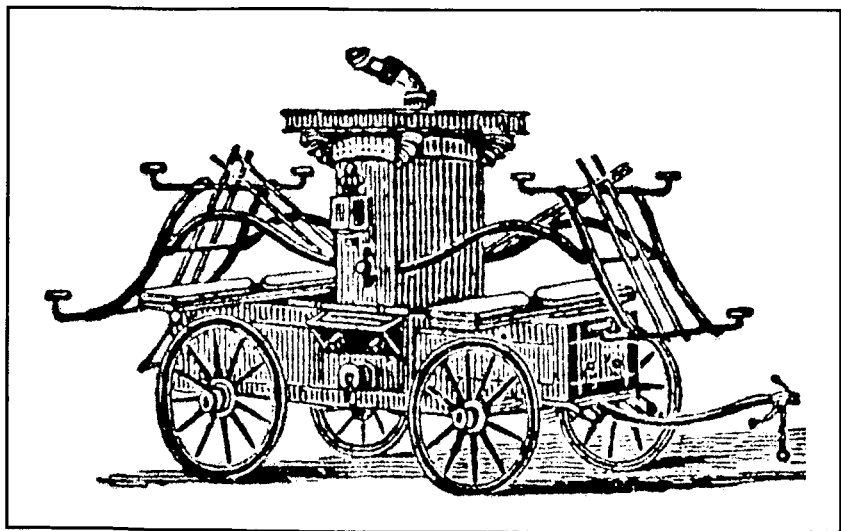


Federal style case. It is highly unlikely that Danner made many cases for Martin Shreiner senior, because the Lancaster City tax records do not show him prior to 1826. The records for 1827-28 are missing but he does appear as a freeman in 1829. City directories list him as a cabinetmaker, with his last listing in the 1869-70 County Directory.<sup>16</sup>

Because Shreiner was at work during the years 1789-1829, one expects to find his early movements in Lancaster Chippendale walnut cases, often with their bracket feet, fluted trunk and base quarter columns, carved rosettes and, sometimes (e.g., No. 34) with relief carving in the tympanum of the bonnet. With the early 19th century cases one encounters the Lancaster Federal style cherry (sometimes mahogany) case with their French feet, chamfered trunk

and base corners, figured veneers, crossbanded borders, perhaps inlays, and scroll top roundel terminations. Flattop cases are also encountered, one of the latest being No. 217.

In 1829 he turned his clockmaking business over to two of his sons, Johann Martin and Johann Philip<sup>17</sup> and shifted his attention to the construction of fire engines and related appliances, backed by "The Friends of Home Manufacturers," who hoped to plant the seeds for a new industry in the city.<sup>18</sup> These engines (see figure 9) were hand pumpers, had a large tub for water, and were pulled by hand to the site of the fire. In the October 15, 1830 *Lancaster Journal* Lancastrians were invited to attend the demonstration of a new engine the next day. At least five engines were completed. One was made for Lititz (known as the "Assistance"<sup>19</sup>), another for the Lancaster City's Sun Fire Co. in 1830, the cost of which was not to exceed eight hundred dollars.<sup>20</sup> It had engravings by Jacob Eichholtz.<sup>21</sup> When delivered in December of that year, the fire company minutes stated that it "upon fair trial, fully answered the expectation of the company as to beauty and excellence of workmanship and power of throwing water."<sup>22</sup> Another engine was made for the Borough of Columbia in 1840.<sup>23</sup> This engine was described as having brass ornaments and other machinery executed by Shreiner himself, carving by A. Danner, woodwork by Casper Cook, and painting by Armstrong.<sup>24</sup> Engines



*Fig. 9. Double-decked pumper fire engine similar to one made by Martin Shreiner (Sr.) for Lancaster City's Sun Fire Company. Water was supplied from a pump or hydrant and 20 men were required to efficiently operate the pump handles.*



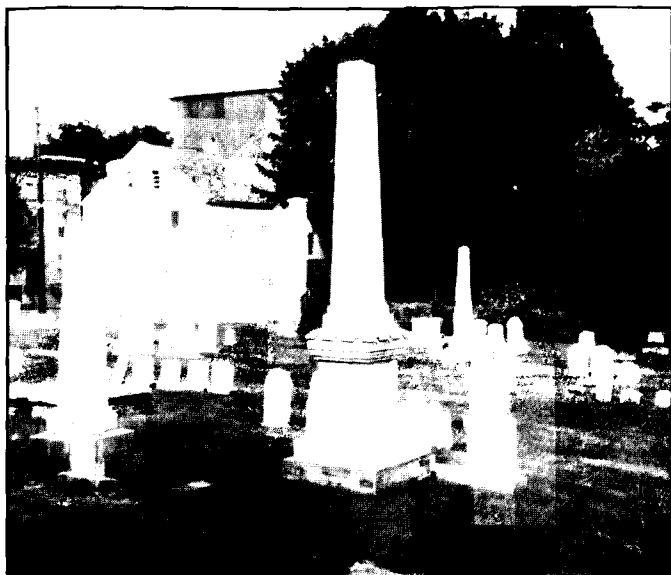
were also made for Lebanon, Middletown and Lancaster City's American Fire Co.<sup>25</sup> For the latter Shreiner was to be paid \$1,100 of which he, himself, contributed \$40 toward the project.<sup>26</sup> At its first trial, it was said to force water 200 feet up to the ball on the steeple of the Trinity Lutheran Church in the City.<sup>27</sup> Shreiner also designed a number of appliances for fire fighting, among them a new type of play pipe.<sup>28</sup> He also redesigned engines of other makers, in one instance to lighten the load that had to be pulled by hand.<sup>29</sup>

It is recorded that Shreiner had shown a concern for those who suffered disaster by fire as early as 1811. In March of that year Lancaster suffered its worst fire to date. Almost half of the buildings in the second square of the west side of North Queen Street were destroyed. Among them were the home and book store of the editor of the Lancaster *Intelligencer* newspaper, William Dickson. Shreiner made part of his own house available to Dickson for use by his family and bookstore.<sup>30</sup> On October 19, 1825 Lancaster suffered fire damage again in what became known as "The Great Fire of 1825." The fire started in a stable and spread, also destroying two houses and a barn on West King Street. Mayor Nathaniel Lightner appointed Shreiner to a committee to determine what might be done to create a better and more efficient organization of firemen and citizens in the event of future fires and to adopt measures to provide sufficient water to fight them.<sup>31</sup>

Martin kept his hand in other mechanical constructions. The August 6, 1832 Lancaster *Journal* carried an invitation to attend a demonstration of his "Tellurian and Lunarium" that apparently was an orrery, for he describes it as showing the motions of the Sun, Mercury, Venus, Earth and the Moon as well as the eclipses "since our Earth and Moon commenced their celestial journies (sic)." The whereabouts of this item is unknown to the author.

Shreiner was one of the first street regulators of the city.<sup>32</sup> He was elected on the Anti-Masonic ticket as a director of the County's poor, an active and influential member of city councils, a promoter of the Zion Lutheran Church on Vine Street, and in 1832 he was one of the committee instrumental in bringing the Columbia and Philadelphia railway through the City.<sup>33</sup> The same year (1829) that he turned his business over to his sons, as a charter member he signed the constitution of the Mechanics' Society of the City and County of Lancaster.<sup>34</sup>

An examination of the index of Lancaster Deeds reveals that Shreiner owned many parcels of land. A large and fragmented map, believed to have been made in 1850, identifying each city lot by its owner, shows three properties owned by Shreiner. One is the west side of North Queen seven lots down from Orange, next door to the then Michaels' Hotel. The hotel is bounded on the south by Grant (now removed). This was the place of his birth. The 1798 Federal "Glass" tax describes the house as being two story brick, 28' x 38", with eleven windows of twenty-four panes, three windows of fifteen panes, and one window of twelve panes. There was also a 12' x 17' brick two story kitchen. Across



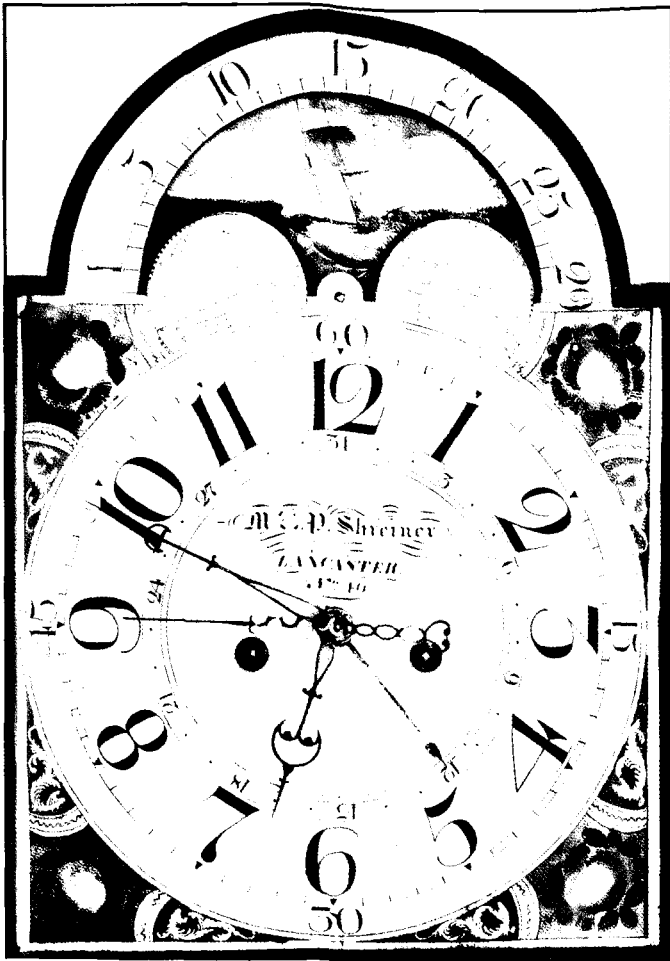
*Fig. 10. Shreiner's Cemetery at the south east corner of West Chestnut and Mulberry Streets, circa 1990. (Photo by the author)*

Grant Street was the jewelry shop of Zahm & Jackson, where four of his grandsons would develop their business acumen under the eye of their uncle Michael Zahm. Another property is also on the west side of Queen above Orange and five lots down from Chestnut. The third is two lots east of Mulberry on the north side of Chestnut, immediately across from Shreiner's Cemetery. A house in Marietta that he

had built as a pottery, would be willed to his son George.<sup>35</sup>

He founded Shreiner's (also known as Concord) Cemetery in 1836 (figure 10) as a burial ground open to all (except those who had committed suicide), regardless of race, which was a new concept at that time. The cemetery is embraced by West Chestnut on the north, North Mulberry on the west, and West Marion on the south. After years of neglect, it has recently been restored by the new Shreiner-Concord Cemetery Foundation. As to be expected, the cemetery became Shreiner's final resting place, and that of many members of his extended family (see Vol. 97, No. 1). It is also here that Thaddeus Stevens, known as the "Father of the Reconstruction Act," was buried in 1868.

Martin and his wife, Elizabeth Zorn, were parents of five sons and four daughters. Their descendants are enumerated in (see Vol. 97, No. 1), "A Genealogy of Martin Shreiner, Clockmaker, and His Descendants." At his death in his 98th year, the inventory of his estate<sup>36</sup> placed his assets at \$23,772.95 and included one clock valued at \$3 and a "workbench, vice, anvil, axe, saw and sundries in cellar" valued at \$10. It is interesting to note that he willed a house organ to his son Philip.<sup>37</sup> His obituary<sup>38</sup> stated that he was then the oldest citizen of the City. After reviewing his accomplishments, it closed with "He lived to a Patriarchal age, and has gone to the grave with the respect, esteem and veneration of this entire community. He lived and



*Fig. 11. Typical M. & P. Shreiner dial signature. (Private collection)*

died an honest man, the most appropriate epitaph one could wish to have inscribed on his tombstone. Lay the old patriarch in his own beautiful resting place, which when living he loved and cared for tenderly, and may the weeping willow over his chosen grave sigh a requiem to his departed life.”

6.7 MARTIN, JR.

Martin (baptized Johann Martin) Shreiner, Jr., was the eldest of the Shreiner sons to survive infancy. He was

born in 1803 in the family house at 38 North Queen Street. What little is known of this clockmaker is revealed in his lengthy obituary.<sup>39</sup> It states that he was educated in the City of Lancaster and learned his trade from his father.

Shreiner married Maria Zahm, a daughter of Godfried Zahm, by whom he had nine children. Two of his sons, jewelers and clockmakers Henry Michael and Benjamin Zahm, survived him.

His obituary described him as being of a quiet and gentle manner, well informed, but took no part in religious, or political matters. He belonged to no secret or other societies, “attended to his own affairs without intermeddling with the affairs of others,” was charitable and accumulated a very considerable amount of property.<sup>40</sup> He suffered from pulmonary consumption for most of

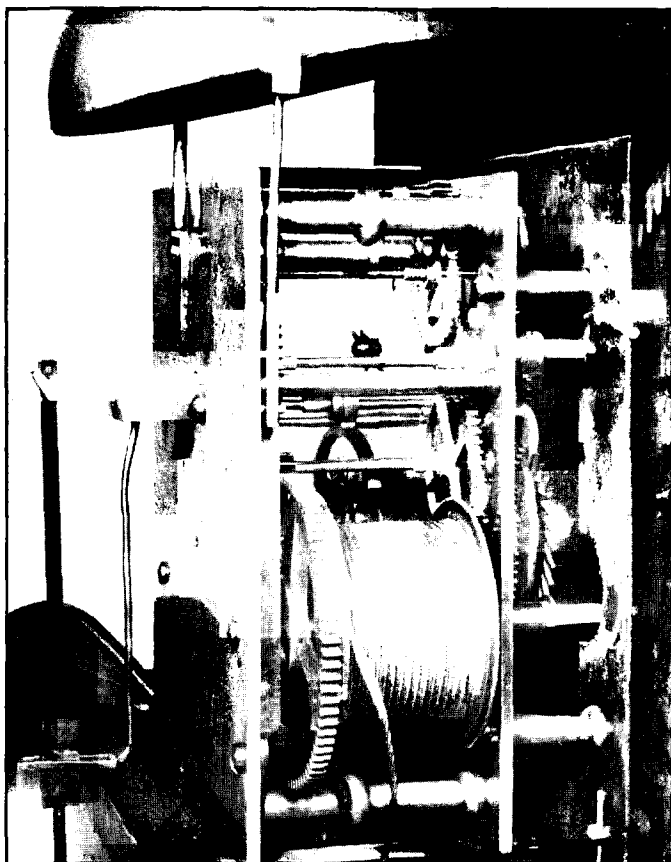
the last forty years of his life and he died in 1879 following a paralyzing stroke suffered the previous December.

Maria Zahm Shreiner, according to her husband's obituary, kept a trimming shop in the old family homestead on North Queen Street.

As mentioned above, Martin and his brother Philip had worked together after assuming their father's clockmaking business in 1829. As had their father before them, they numbered their clocks. This author knows of five examples, all having 8-day time and strike movements, the highest number being 53, the earliest being 38. Dials were marked "M. & P. Shreiner/Lancaster" (figure 11). Many of the movements may have been placed in cases made by their neighbor Alexander Danner. Four of the five cases examined have torus molding at the top of the trunk section just below the cove molding that supports the bonnet. The front of the base of No. 53 has "sleigh front" moldings that terminate in the feet.

The partnership lasted until 1838. It is not presently known if Martin continued to produce clocks on his own. An indication that he had done so would be the discovery of clocks carrying the name Martin Shreiner on dials that are of a later period in the evolution of both the white (painted) dial and, barring a "marriage," the cases.

The examples of movements produced during the partnership examined by



*Fig. 12. Typical M. & P. Shreiner 8-day movement (No. 40) with sweep calendar and seconds hands. (Private collection)*

the author are, as expected, similar to those of their father: rack and snail striking with gathering pallet and rack pin locking, grooved drums, closed crutch, and sweep second and sweep calendar hand, and the moon wheel activated by a flanged wheel. Some (e.g., No. 47) have tailed ratchet wheel clicks and the trapezoidal sections removed from the bottom edges of the movement plates to provide "feet" while some (e.g., No. 40) do not. No. 47 utilizes a dead-beat escapement while No. 40 has the more common anchor recoil escapement. Figure 12 is a typical example.

A quaint advertisement placed by Martin in J. H. Bryson's *Lancaster Directory* for 1843 is shown as figure 13. Note that the address of his shop was 26 North Queen Street. In the city directories of 1857-1860<sup>41, 42</sup> he was listed at 23 North Queen, in 1866-67 at 21 North Queen,<sup>43</sup> in 1869-70 at 20 1/2 North Queen.<sup>44</sup> In 1885, his widow deeded a house and lot at 6 East James Street to her granddaughter, Sallie Shreiner (a daughter of Charles F.).<sup>45</sup> The deed mentions that the lot was bounded on the west by another of her properties that contained a two story brick house. Neither a likeness of Martin junior nor any of his shop records have been located.

#### 6.7.1 CHARLES F.

The first born (1831) of Martin junior's eight children, Charles entered the jewelry and watchmaking business of his uncle, Michael Zahm (Zahm & Jackson).<sup>46</sup> Eventually he and his younger brother Henry Michael became co-owners of the business.<sup>47</sup> He married Ellen (Eleanor) Cox of New Jersey. City directories show them residing at 14 North Prince Street<sup>48</sup> and further show that he was the treasurer of the Columbia Encampment, Knights Templar Number 9.<sup>49</sup> They had nine children. Charles F. died in 1865 and is buried in his grandfather Shreiner's cemetery.

#### 6.7.2 HENRY MICHAEL

Henry Michael was the second born of Martin and Maria Zahm Shreiner. He was born in 1832. From the *Biographical Annals of Lancaster County* we find that he entered the jewelry and watchmaking establishment of his uncle, Michael Zahm (Zahm & Jackson), at 30 North Queen Street, as an apprentice; progressed to journeyman, later became co-owner with his older brother Charles F., eventually became sole owner, and remained there for well over fifty-five years.<sup>50</sup>

For a time, he became the owner of the first clock made by his

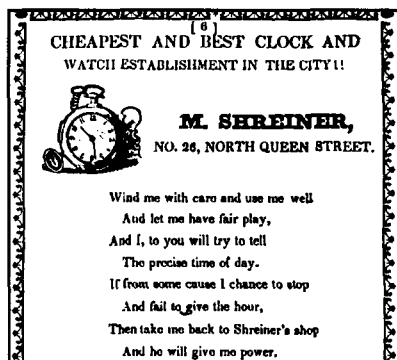


Fig. 13. Martin Shreiner (Jr.) ad published in J. H. Bryson's *Lancaster Directory for 1843*.

grandfather Martin Shreiner, Sr.<sup>51</sup> The clock, an eight-day tall clock, is still “in the family,” now the possession of one of Henry Michael’s great-granddaughters.

In 1854 he married Mary Dorwart Stauter and had two sons and two daughters. For a number of years they resided at 48 North Prince Street.<sup>52</sup> In 1917 he was living in retirement at 241 West Chestnut Street.<sup>53</sup> He died in 1919.

#### 6.7.4 BENJAMIN ZAHM

The fourth of Martin junior’s children, Benjamin Zahm was born in 1838. After a short-lived partnership in Columbia with Edward Spering,<sup>54</sup> he returned to Lancaster City. He then worked for the firm of Zahm & Jackson, at least into 1869, while residing at East Chestnut near Water Street.<sup>55</sup> The city directory of 1873-74 is the first surviving directory to indicate that he had gone into business with his brother Henry Michael as “Shreiner & Bro.” and was residing at 34 North Prince Street in the city.<sup>56</sup> The 1879-80 directory is the first to reflect the end of the partnership and his opening of a musical instrument shop at 36 North Queen Street while living at 34 North Prince Street.<sup>57</sup> He also taught music and played the organ for both the Trinity Lutheran and Moravian churches.<sup>58</sup>

Benjamin served as the recording secretary of the Patriotic Order of Sons of America, an organization devoted to the perpetuation of a public school system free from sectarian or religious influence, limited immigration, a republican form of government, and the training of youth in patriotism.<sup>59</sup> Although the organization was largely made up of veterans of the 77th Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers, Shreiner had not performed military service.<sup>60</sup>

#### 6.7.6 JOHN F.

John, born in 1846, was the fourth son to enter the jewelry trade. The county directory for 1869-70 records him as being with Zahm & Jackson and living at home.<sup>61</sup> His career was short, death coming at the age of twenty-three.

#### 6.8 PHILIP

Philip (baptized Johann Philip) (figure 14) was the last born of Martin and Maria Shreiner’s children. He was born in 1808 in the family home at 38 North Queen Street in the then Borough of Lancaster. He was the second son to be named for the paternal grandfather. The first child, born in 1790, and who died in infancy, had been given that name.

In 1834 he married Rebecca Trissler (figure 15) of Lancaster in St. Andrew’s Epis-



*Fig. 14. (Johann) Philip Shreiner (1808-1877).*

*(Courtesy Charles H. Hagerty)*



Fig. 15. Rebecca (nee Trissler) Shreiner (1806-1878), wife of Philip Shreiner. (Courtesy Charles H. Hagerty)

copal Church in Philadelphia.<sup>62</sup> They had six children. One daughter, Mary, married Hiram Young, editor of the York (Penna.) *Dispatch*.

Philip, like his father before him, became a skilled clockmaker and he undoubtedly learned the trade from his father. The author has examined a tall clock bearing the dial "signature" of his father, and numbered 298, that carries the inscription "October 27, 1827, Lancaster, Philip Schreiner N 6" within its bell. He worked with his brother Martin from 1829 until 1838.<sup>63</sup> A description of movements made during that partnership is to be found in the section dealing with his older brother Martin. In 1838 he moved his

family to Fairview, York County<sup>64</sup> where apparently he farmed.<sup>65</sup> He owned "Shreiner's Island" in the Susquehanna River until his death.<sup>66</sup> By 1843 they had relocated to New Cumberland, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, where he established himself as a jeweler.<sup>67</sup> In 1845 he resettled the family in Lancaster County's Columbia Borough.<sup>68</sup> In 1847 he ran an ad in the *Columbia Spy* stating that he had moved his shop to the Walnut and Front block between Barr's and Black's Hotel.<sup>69</sup> A decade later an ad in the *Spy* lists him at the same location and selling clocks "of every description together with a thousand and one other articles."<sup>70</sup> The Lancaster Directory of 1859-60 lists the business as P. Shreiner & Son at 1 Shreiner's Row, Front above Walnut.<sup>71</sup> The 1869-70 County Directory states that he was retired and living at 13 North Front Street.<sup>72</sup> One deed filed at the County courthouse describes a plot of ground 26' 6" by 86' deep on the northwest corner of Walnut and Commerce Streets in Columbia having a two story brick dwelling, bounded on the north by another lot shared and co-owned with a Hugh North.<sup>73</sup> It is doubtful that he produced any clocks of his own after leaving Lancaster in 1838.

On 3 August 1835, Philip Shreiner was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the City Guards attached to the Lancaster City Battalion of Volunteers of the Militia.<sup>74</sup> No evidence has been found indicating that he served during the Civil War three decades later.

With his father, Philip Shreiner was one of the first engineers of Lancaster City's American Fire Engine and Hose Co.<sup>75</sup> In 1857 he was elected to the Borough of Columbia's first school board.<sup>76</sup> He was a Master Mason in Lodge No. 286 of the Free Masons of Columbia, becoming a Master in 1863.<sup>77</sup>

Philip was baptized a Lutheran, married in the Episcopal Church,<sup>78</sup> became a Universalist and his death at age sixty-nine was reported in the *Christian Leader* published in Utica, New York.<sup>79</sup> An unidentified newspaper obituary stated: "A deep thinker and a man of fixed convictions, he was respected by all for his gentle, earnest and kindly nature."<sup>80</sup>

#### 6.8.2 EDWARD MARTIN

Edward, the first born son of Philip and Rebecca, entered this world on 24 July 1837.

A letter<sup>81</sup> from him dated July 4, 1862 assures his parents that he is safe at a camp on the James River in Virginia. On December 16, 1862, his father wrote to Colonel J. W. Fisher, 5th Regiment, Pennsylvania Reserves, asking for permission to visit his son who lay "dangerously if not mortally wounded," near Fredericksburg, Virginia.<sup>82</sup> Philip's family bible states that Edward Martin Shreiner, 2nd Sergeant of Co. K, Fifth Regiment of Penna. Volunteers, who fought in the second battle of Bull Run, South Mountain, Antietam, and the Peninsular War of 1862 (viz., Mechanicsville, Gainsville, Charles City, Cross Roads, Malvern Hill and Harrison's Landing), was mortally wounded at Fredericksburg, taken prisoner, and conveyed to Libby Prison in Richmond, where he died on December 18, 1862, and was buried in an unknown grave, aged 25 years, 5 months, 25 days.<sup>83</sup> He is remembered by a memorial in his grandfather Shreiner's cemetery in Lancaster.

The Federal census of the Borough of Columbia for 1860 lists him as living at home and having the trade of watchmaker.<sup>84</sup> The author believes that Edward was the "& Son" in his father's business in 1859 due to the fact that his younger brother Charles Philip, although also listed as a watchmaker in the 1860 census, was only sixteen years old at the time.

#### 6.8.4 CHARLES PHILIP

Charles Philip (figure 16) was the fourth of six children born to Philip and Rebecca Trissler Shreiner. He was born in New Cumberland, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, on October, 15, 1843, and when he was two years old the family relocated to Columbia Borough, Lancaster County.<sup>85</sup> As a boy he received a "good common-school education" and worked as a clerk in his father's jewelry store between 1861 and 1875.<sup>86</sup>

He purchased the plant of the Norristown (Pa.) *Independent* and was engaged in its publication for the next two years.<sup>87</sup> Upon the death of his father, he returned to Columbia and in June 1877 ran an ad in the *Spy* that he would continue the jewelry business at the old shop at 13 North Front Street.<sup>88</sup> In 1880 he became an associate editor of the *York Dispatch*, where





*Fig. 16. Charles Philip Shreiner (1843-1917). (Courtesy Charles H. Hagerty)*

duty and drill, and finally to Berkeley County, West Virginia, for guard duty along the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad until the expiration of its term of service and subsequent mustering out on 4 November 1864.<sup>93</sup>



*Fig. 17. Sallie L. (nee Kinzer) Shreiner (1839-1900), wife of Charles Philip Shreiner. (Courtesy Charles H. Hagerty)*

his sister Mary's husband, Hiram Young, was editor.<sup>89</sup> In 1902 he was elected to his first of at least five terms as clerk of the City of York.<sup>90</sup>

In September 1862, Charles enlisted in the 2nd Regiment of the Pennsylvania Militia as a private. It was sent to Chambersburg, then across the border to Hagerstown, Maryland, then on to Greencastle, Pennsylvania, where it was moved by train to Harrisburg for mustering out on 25 September after only two weeks service!<sup>91</sup> In July 1864, Charles was recruited into the 195th Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers as a private. He was assigned to Co. E and promoted to corporal.<sup>92</sup> The regiment was one of those recruited to serve for one hundred days, saw duty initially in Baltimore, then Monocacy Junction, Maryland, for guard

duty and drill, and finally to Berkeley County, West Virginia, for guard duty along the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad until the expiration of its term of service and subsequent mustering out on 4 November 1864.<sup>93</sup>

In 1865 he married Sallie K. Kinser

(figure 17) of Kinser's Station, Lancaster County. They had three children.

Charles was a Heptasoph.<sup>94</sup> He was active in his church. Initially, while living in Columbia, he was probably a member of the Evangelical English Lutheran Church on 2nd Street. In 1881, a group of the congregation severed ties with that church and founded St. John's Lutheran Church.<sup>95</sup> The Sunday school was the first concern of the break away group and the seventy children initially met in Charles Shreiner's home on Locust Street.<sup>96</sup> In subsequent weeks different sites were used until the new church was completed the following year. Sallie served as an assistant in the school.<sup>97</sup> After moving to York, he became an elder of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church,

and he was described as being “of the strictest probity of character, administering his office with that painstaking care more frequently observed in the old days than at present,” a valued worker in the ranks of the Republican party, and held in universal esteem.<sup>98</sup> He died suddenly on Easter Sunday, April 8, 1917, while teaching his Sunday school class a lesson of resurrection at St. Matthew’s, and was buried in York’s Prospect Hill Cemetery.<sup>99</sup>

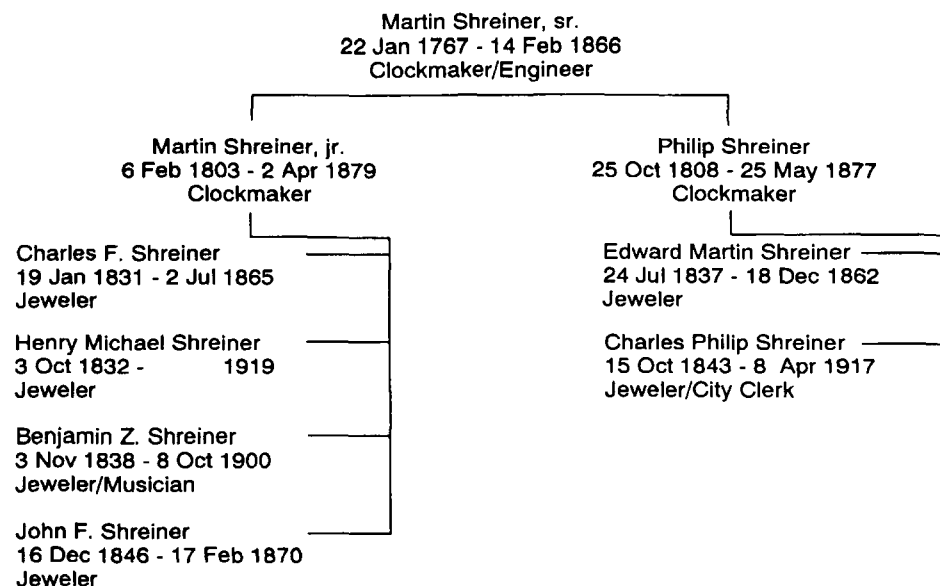
### Summary:

Once again, like the Hoff and Eberman families that preceded it, we find in the Shreiner family a mini-dynasty of Lancaster Borough/City clockmakers/watchmakers/jewelers.

Martin Shreiner, Sr., had learned his trade from John Eberman, who, this author believes, had been apprenticed to the County’s first clockmaker, Rudy Stoner, and had finished his apprenticeship with George Hoff. Shreiner not only trained two of his three sons in clockmaking, but he also trained Godfried M. Zahm (1817-1895), one of Lancaster County’s last clockmakers to actually hand craft clock movements. This clockmaking “line of descent” covers nearly 165 years, more than the entire span of the hand crafting of tall case clocks in Lancaster County.

Stoner and the Eberman and Hoff families that followed (a total of ten known makers of clock movements) are estimated to have produced nearly

*Fig. 18 Clockmakers/Jewelers Shreiner Lineage.*



1200 tall clocks, which is probably 85 percent of the total production of all of the County's 140 or so clockmakers between 1750 and 1850. Only the Gorgas, Eby and Breneisen families of Ephrata, Lititz, and Adamstown, respectively, north of the Lancaster Borough/City, produced any appreciable, though smaller, number of clocks. Similar to the Eberman family, this was a large family of jewelers: there were nine of the Shreiner family in the trade (Figure 18), although only three are known to have actually produced tall case clocks.

Martin Shreiner, Sr., as his Master had done before him, participated in, and played an important role in, a number of Borough/City affairs. But his name lives on through the more than three hundred tall case clocks that carry that beautiful "signature" on their dials. His earliest clock movement is already two-hundred and five years old and should still be ticking and striking the hours and carrying his name forward into a seemingly endless number of centuries long after the lettering on his cemetery obelisk has yielded to the elements and nature. What could be a more fitting memorial to arguably Lancaster's best known clockmaker?

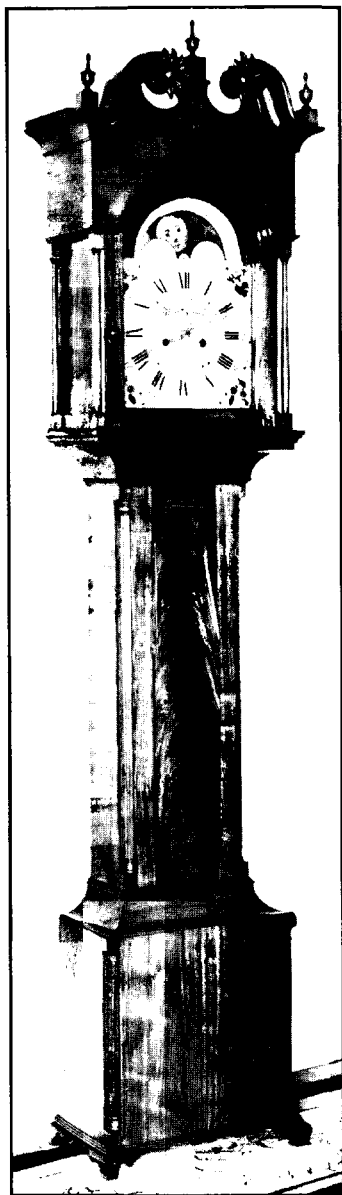
## Genealogical Note

A comprehensive Shreiner family genealogy will appear in Vol. 97, No. 1 of the *Journal*.

## About The Author

Stacy Wood is a research specialist with a primary interest in genealogy and horology. He is also a certified clockmaker. He was the first Administrator and Museum Director/Curator of the National Association of Watch & Clock Collectors in Columbia, Pa. He is a member of the board of trustees of the Lancaster County Historical Society and serves on various committees of the Society. He claims descent from the Eberman family of Lancaster through Maria Philippina Eberman Dehuff.

This is the fourth of his articles about Lancaster Borough/City clockmakers to be published in the *Journal*. The first article dealt with the County's first known clockmaker, Rudolph Stoner. Succeeding articles covered the Hoff and the Eberman families. He also co-authored an article about the tower clock production of John Eberman. In addition, he contributed an article about the Lancaster gunsmiths, the Gumpf family. His book, *Clockmakers of Lancaster County and Their Clocks 1750-1850* with photography by Stephen E. Kramer III and a section on Lancaster County clock cases by John J. Snyder, Jr., was published in 1977 by Van Nostrand Reinhold Co. of New York. He co-authored the book *Arms Makers of Lancaster County Pa.* with James B. Whisker in 1991.



*Fig. 19. Lancaster Chippendale walnut tall case, cabinetmaker unknown, housing Martin Shreiner (Sr.) 8-day movement No. 75 circa 1795. The case is typical of Lancaster cases of that period. (Private collection)*



*Fig. 20. Lancaster late Federal tall case of cherry with mahogany veneers, housing M. & P. Shreiner 8-day movement No. 40. All other examples of cases housing M. & P. Shreiner works examined by the author, however, have a band of torus molding at the top of the trunk immediately before the start of the cavetto molding and the bottom of the bonnet has no overlapping edge. (Private collection)*

## Endnotes

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2. Vital statistic citations appear in Vol. 97, No. 1.

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4. Rupp, I. Daniel, *A Collection of Upwards of 30,000 Names of German, Swiss, Dutch, French and Other Immigrants in Pennsylvania from 1727 to 1776*. (2nd ed. rpt.; Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1965), p. 114.

5. "Deed of Sale from Heirs of Hans Adam Shreyner release to his son Philip, 10 Mar. 1752," (recorded 19 Jun. 1752), Lancaster County, Pa., Deed Book C, p. 388-392, Lancaster County (Pa.) Courthouse archives.

6. "Will of Hans Adam Shreiner, 17 Feb. 1744," Lancaster Co., Pa.. Will Book A, Vol 1, p. 94-95, Lancaster Co. Courthouse archives.

7. "Burial Records - Moravian Church 1744-1821 (unpublished)," p. 1. Collection of Lancaster County (Pa.) Historical Society.

8. "Deed of Sale from John Wister & wife et al to Philip Schreiner dated 6 Aug. 1760," (recorded 9 Jul. 1777), Lancaster County, Pa., Deed Book R, p. 389-390, Lancaster County Courthouse archives.

9. "Tax Assessors' Records, Lancaster Borough (Pa.)," Collection of Lancaster County (Pa.) Historical Society.

10. Harris, Alex., *Biographical History of Lancaster County* (Lancaster: Elias Barr & Co., 1872), p. 531.

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12. "Will of Martin Shreiner, 2 May 1855," Lancaster Co., Pa., Will Book Y, Vol. 1, p. 474-497.

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15. Magee, "Grandfathers' Clocks," p. 69.

16. Barnes & Pearsol *Directory of Lancaster County*, 1869-70, p. 37.

17. Harris, *Biographical History*, p. 531.

18. Collins, Donald L., *Our Volunteer Firemen 1736-1882* (Ephrata, Pa.: Science Press, 1988), p. 60.

19. Rupp, I. Daniel, *History of Lancaster County* (rpt., Spartanburg, S.C.:

The Reprint Co., 1984), p. 329.

20. Harris, *Biographical History*, p. 532.

21. Collins, *Our Volunteer Firemen*, p. 61.

22. Harris, *Biographical History*, p. 532.

23. Lancaster (Pa.) *Intelligencer & Journal*, 11 Feb. 1840; Collection of Lancaster Co. Historical Society.

24. *Ibid.*

25. Obituary of Martin Shreiner, Jr., published in the Lancaster (Pa.) *Weekly Intelligencer*, 2 Apr. 1879; Collection of Lancaster Co. Historical Society.

26. Collins, Donald L., *Fire Fighting in Olde Lancaster* (New Holland, Pa.: Creative Communications Group, 1976), p. 26.

27. Harris, *Biographical History*, p. 532.

28. Collins, *Our Volunteer Firemen*, p. 60.

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32. Harris, *Biographical History*, p. 531.

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36. "Inventory of the goods and chattels, rights and credits which were of Martin Shreiner, late of the City of Lancaster, deceased," appraised 26 Feb. 1866. Archives of the Lancaster County Historical Society.

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41. Boyd, Wm. H., *Lancaster County Business Directory*, 1857, p. 96.

42. Boyd, Wm. H., *Lancaster County Business Directory*, 1859-60, p. 153.

43. Lant, M.W., *Directory of Lancaster City*, 1866-67, p. 87.

44. Barnes & Pearsol *Directory of Lancaster County*, 1869-70, p. 82.

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49. *Ibid.*, p. 348.

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51. *Ibid.*

52. Lant, *Directory*, 1866-67, p. 87.

53. Magee, "Grandfathers' Clocks," p. 69.

54. Obituary of Benjamin Z. Shreiner, published in the Lancaster (Pa.) *Intelligencer*, 10 Oct. 1900.

55. Webb & Fitzgerald, *Directory of the City of Lancaster*, 1868-69, p. 104.

56. Barnes, John H., *Directory of Lancaster City*, 1873-74, p. 100.

57. Leonard, A.C., *Business and Professional Men of Lancaster, Pa.*, 1879-80, p. 9.

58. Obituary of Benjamin Zahm Shreiner.

59. *Papers Read Before the Lancaster County Historical Society*, Vol. LVIII, No. 2, 1954, p. 37.

60. *Ibid.*

61. Barnes & Pearsol, *Directory of Lancaster County*, 1869-70, page 82.

62. Certificate of marriage dated 17 Apr. 1834, signed by G.T. Bledsell, rector, St. Andrews Church, Philadelphia, Pa.; collection of Charles H. Hagerty.

63. "Tax Assessors' Records, Lancaster City 1838."

64. *Ibid.*

65. Obituary of Philip Shreiner, unidentified newspaper and date, in collection of Charles H. Hagerty.

66. *Ibid.*

67. *History of York County, Pennsylvania*, Vol II (Chicago: J.H. Beers & Co.; 1907), p. 432.

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69. *Columbia (Pa.) Spy*, 17 Jul. 1847.

70. *Columbia (Pa.) Spy*, 18 Apr. 1857.

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72. Barnes & Pearsol, *Directory of Lancaster County* 1869-70, p. 117.

73. "Deed of Sale from Philip Shreiner to Charles Grove dated 1 Oct. 1866," Deed Bk M, Vol 9, p. 547 (recorded 8 Oct. 1866), Lancaster County Courthouse archives.

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80. Obituary of Philip Shreiner.

81. Letter from Martin Shreiner to parents dated 4 July 1862; collection of Charles H. Hagerty.

82. Letter from Philip Shreiner to Col. J.W. Fisher dated 4 July 1862; collection of Charles H. Hagerty.

83. Philip Shreiner Bible; collection of Charles H. Hagerty.

84. 1860 U.S. Census of 1860, Borough of Columbia, Lancaster County, Pa.; p. 148, Line 38.

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86. *Ibid.*

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90. *Ibid.*

91. Ellis & Evans, *History of Lancaster County*, p. 189-190.

92. *Ibid.*, p. 166.

93. *Ibid.*, p. 162.

94. *History of York Co.*, p. 432, The Improved Order of Heptasophs was a society that enjoyed some popularity during the early 1900's. Lancaster had a George Ross Conclave, #870, that met in the old GAR Hall at 42 1/2 North Queen Street.

95. Ellis & Evans, *History of Lancaster Co.*, p. 557.

96. *Ibid.*, p. 560.

97. *Ibid.*

98. *History of York Co.*, p. 433.

99. Philip Shreiner Bible.