

THE LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES OF THE MARTIN CHARTIER
TRACT, TOGETHER WITH THE SITE OF THE ORIGINAL
RESIDENCE OF MARTIN CHARTIER.

By D. F. Magee, Esq.

The part assigned me is to locate on the ground, partly in Manor Township and a small part in Washington Borough, (originally Charleston) the early home of Martin Chartier, which land was filed upon by him about in 1710-11, and immediately built upon in a small way at or about the same date. After his death in about 1718, the title was taken in the name of his son, Peter Chartier, but soon thereafter Peter's claim to same was assigned to Richard Hill, Isaac Morris, James Logan and Thomas Griffith, who in turn conveyed to Stephen Atkinson, and Stephen Atkinson and wife took the original Patent to it in June 27th, 1727. They immediately sold about half of it to his brother, Matthew Atkinson, who in turn sold and conveyed his half to Edward Smout soon thereafter.

This carried the title and possession of the land up to 1735. All of which will appear from the following deeds and transfers made and the recitals therein.

Record Book B. B. page 161. Recorder's office, Lancaster.

Record Book A. A. page 502. Recorder's office, Lancaster.

Record Book A. A. page 505. Recorder's office, Lancaster.

Patent Book A., Vol. 16, page 138. Recorded in Harrisburg, Patent Rolls.

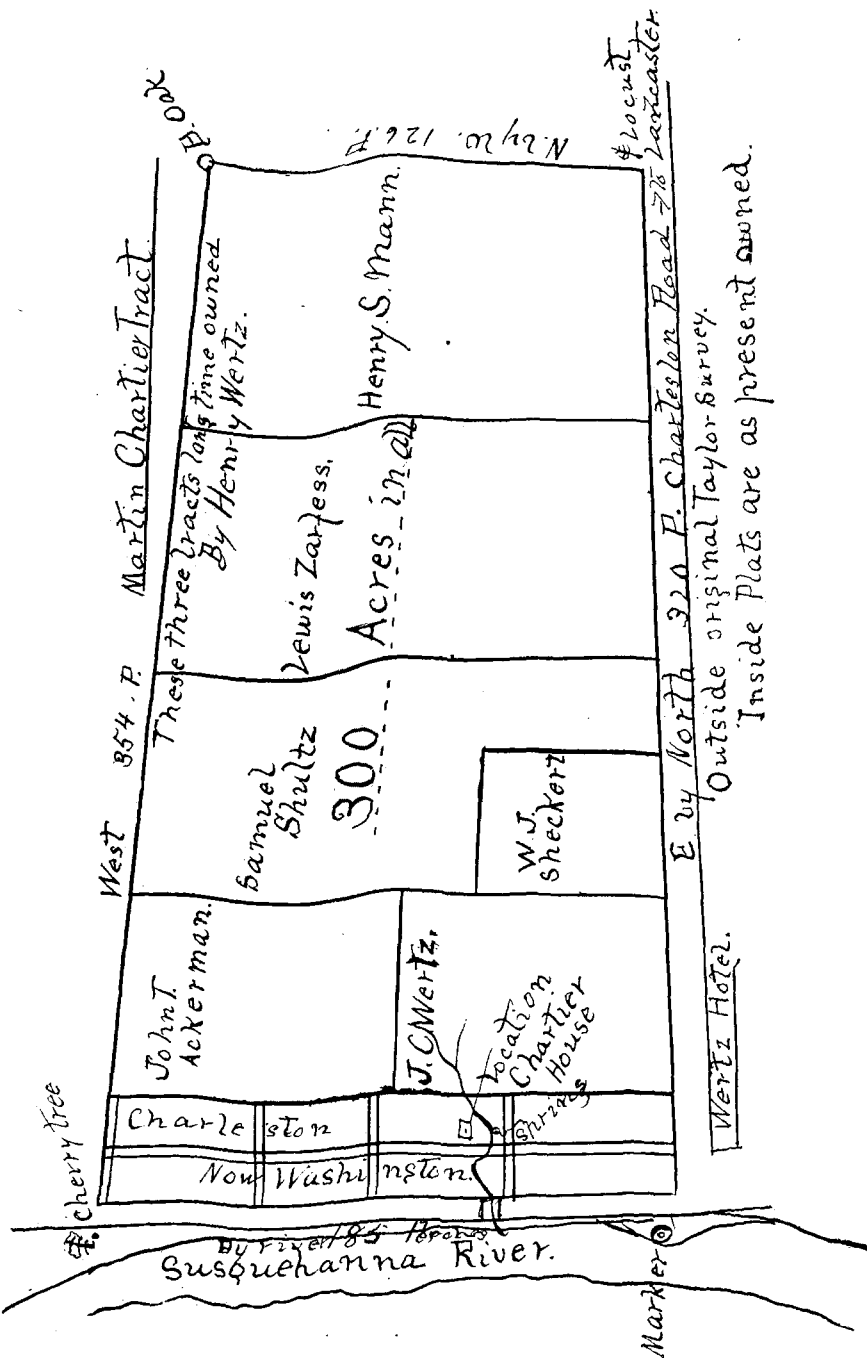
Later the West half of it was conveyed to Joseph Staman by Edward Smout and wife, Elizabeth, May 1, 1751, in which deed it was described for the first time as being in Hempfield Township. Later John Staman, a son of Joseph, patented a tract of land immediately south of his western end of the Chartier tract, which was located in the Conestoga Manor, which had been surveyed to the Proprietaries. Record Deed Book A. A. page 511.

The description of the Chartier tract as surveyed by Isaac Taylor originally, and as carried through the several transfers and conveyances as above recited; the same courses being followed after the tract was cut in two by the Atkinsons, was as follows:

BEGINNING at a **Locust tree** by the banks of the Susquehanna River, thence East by North three hundred and twenty perches to a marked hickory; thence North by West 126 Perches to a Black Oak; thence West three hundred and fifty-four Perches to B. O. by the banks of the Susquehanna River; and thence down the said River one hundred and eighty-five Perches to the place of **BEGINNING**. **CONTAINING** Three hundred acres and the usual allowances of six per cent. in the hundred for roads &c.

This **LOCUST TREE** by the Banks of the Susquehanna River in all surveys thereafter became a "land mark" that was firmly clung to not only for the lands cornering on it but likewise in the establishment of the "Manor" as the following Order will show: which was issued by the land Commissioners to Isaac Taylor the Surveyor.

"These are to authorize and require thee without delay to survey or cause to be surveyed all that Tract of land lying between the Susquehanna River and Conestoga Creek, from the mouth of the said Conestoga as far up the River as the land already surveyed and granted to **Peter Chartier**, and then by a line running from the said river to Conestoga Creek, all of which tract of land is for the use and behoof of William Penn, Esq., Proprietary and Governor



Outline draft of the original Chartier Tract as surveyed by Isaac Taylor in 1717, as also designating approximately only the present owners of the land with their farms. The exact boundaries of these are not claimed to be correct, but only show correctly the names of the owners with the approximate sizes of their farms, etc.

in Chief of the said Province; his heirs and assigns forever. Given under our hands, dated March 1, 1717."

Thus this fixes beyond question that the Locust tree by the bank of the Susquehanna was the N. W. Corner of the Manor and the S. W. Corner of the Chartier Tract. Our problem then was to locate on the ground the exact point where that Locust tree stood.

In the survey made of said Manor which contained 16000 acres of land, Taylor gives the distance from the mouth of Conestoga Creek up the Susquehanna River as twenty-four hundred perches; which, if we could measure as Taylor measured it should take us to the "Locust Tree": but by what line did Taylor measure? Around the big curve of the River bank or did he come directly over Turkey Hill, which would make his 2400 perches reach much farther.

To that all essential question no answer is at hand now.

Therefore in order to locate that Locust tree, we much search elsewhere.

The answer was found in the recorded deed for what has been long known as **Staman's Mill property**, which deed is recorded in Record Book A. A. page 511, and the tract was patented June 27, 1743, and the land described as follows:

BEGINNING at a Locust, a Corner of said Manor on the East Bank of the Susquehanna River: (The famous Chartier Locust) and extending thence by Edward Smouts other lands, East by North two hundred and nineteen perches, to a marked hickory, thence by James Pattersons lands South by East eighty-four perches to a Black Oak by a run of water called **Mill Creek**, thence down the same by its several courses and distances two hundred and seventy-four perches to the mouth thereof; thence up the river Susquehanna eighty perches to the place of Beginning.

Containing one hundred and thirteen acres in all.

The James Patterson lands referred to above is shown in Third Series, Vol. IV, page 11, to be located immediately south of the south line of the Chartier tract, hence this Staman Mill tract was bounded by naturally established lines on four sides, to wit.: The Susquehanna river on the west, the Patterson tract on the East, the Chartier line on the North and Mill Creek on the South. Consequently the Locust tree stood just eighty perches up the river bank from the mouth of Mill Creek in a straight line. That mouth could not change in these hundreds of years for it flows to day into the river through rock bound hills on both sides.

Jerry Trout, our Surveyor and Engineer, took the courses and chained the distance from the mouth of the creek in a straight line eighty perches up the river front via water street. And there setting his compass and making the corrections for variation since 1735 he sighted eastward and it came out exactly upon the line of the Charleston Road where it enters the village at the eastern edge, whence it extends in general course as shown by his corrected bearings six miles inland to beyond the present Manor camp meeting grounds.

Therefore the "Locust tree stood just 195-feet down the river from where the monument now stands, said point being now marked by a fixed stone. Chaining the line from this point up the Washington Borough and Columbia pike, Mr. Trout found that the one hundred and eighty-five perches ended at a small cherry tree, which is located at exactly the north boundary of the Borough, which in the early days was the town limits of "Charleston." This again tallies with the Ellis-Evans history which states at page 634, that "Charleston was laid out on the land north of the Charleston road on the east end of what had been the Chartier Tract."

In one of Taylors Maps or Charts found at page 11 of Third Series of Vol. IV, Archives, he marks the location of the "Martine Shurtee" home or house as located in the curve of the little spring run stream, just north of The Marker erected today some 539 feet, which mark when scaled on Taylors map places the house due east about 100 feet of the intersection of Market

and Manor streets, on a very prettily rounded knoll which makes it very eligible as a location, and likewise brings it about one hundred yards northward of what was once a good spring, which spring is likewise referred to in Ellis-Evans at page 654. In speaking of the old town of Charleston which was laid out in 1810 he says:

"He sold lots June 11, 1810, to Jacob Hebecker, Distiller, and Joseph Habecker, pump maker, one acre and eight perches each in lots which came to the river. **There was a spring of water in the corner of this tract.**"

This was no doubt the Chartier spring and naturally the question arises, did not Jacob Habecker the distiller use it for his distillery, for the distilling business as then carried on required good, clear, spring water.

Another matter that should be stated in this connection is this:

Some years ago while making excavation for a building the men came upon the decomposed skeleton of a man evidently long buried, and in the grave was found a steel helmet evidently the property of the man with whom it had been buried, of French make and design of about the period of 1700, also some other trinkets that were still preserved showing that the body there buried had been a French soldier. As Chartier was a Frenchman and as most all Frenchmen of that period who reached manhood were of necessity soldiers of the army; the conclusion seems inevitable that this was the burial place of Martin Chartier; the grave being near his reputed residence and quite close to the present home of Hershey Frey on the Chartier tract.

The location of this grave should be, and no doubt will be, marked by some permanent marker.

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