

Lancaster's Bid for the National Capital.

The following interesting document explains itself. It was found a short time ago among the papers of John Hubley, Esq., who was a prominent member of the Lancaster Bar before and after the Revolutionary war, and one of the best known citizens of Lancaster.

The paper is valuable in that it gives the most detailed account of Lancaster city and the industries as they existed 110 years ago that is extant. All in all, it is a document of much historical interest.

The present owner of this interesting document is George Steinman, Esq., President of the Lancaster County Historical Society.

It was read at the May meeting of the Lancaster County Historical Society:

Lancaster, March 17, 1789.

Gentlemen:

The Corporation of this Borough have been instructed by the Inhabitants thereof, and the Adjoining Townships, to address you. The New Constitution, to which we anxiously look upon as the means of establishing the Empire of America on the most sure and solid basis, is ere now in Motion, and one of the Objects of Congress will be to fix on a permanent Place of Residence, where their exclusive Jurisdiction can be conveniently and Safely exercised, should the general Interests of the Union point out an Inland Central situation as preferable to that of a Seaport for the future Residence of that Honorable Body, we humbly presume

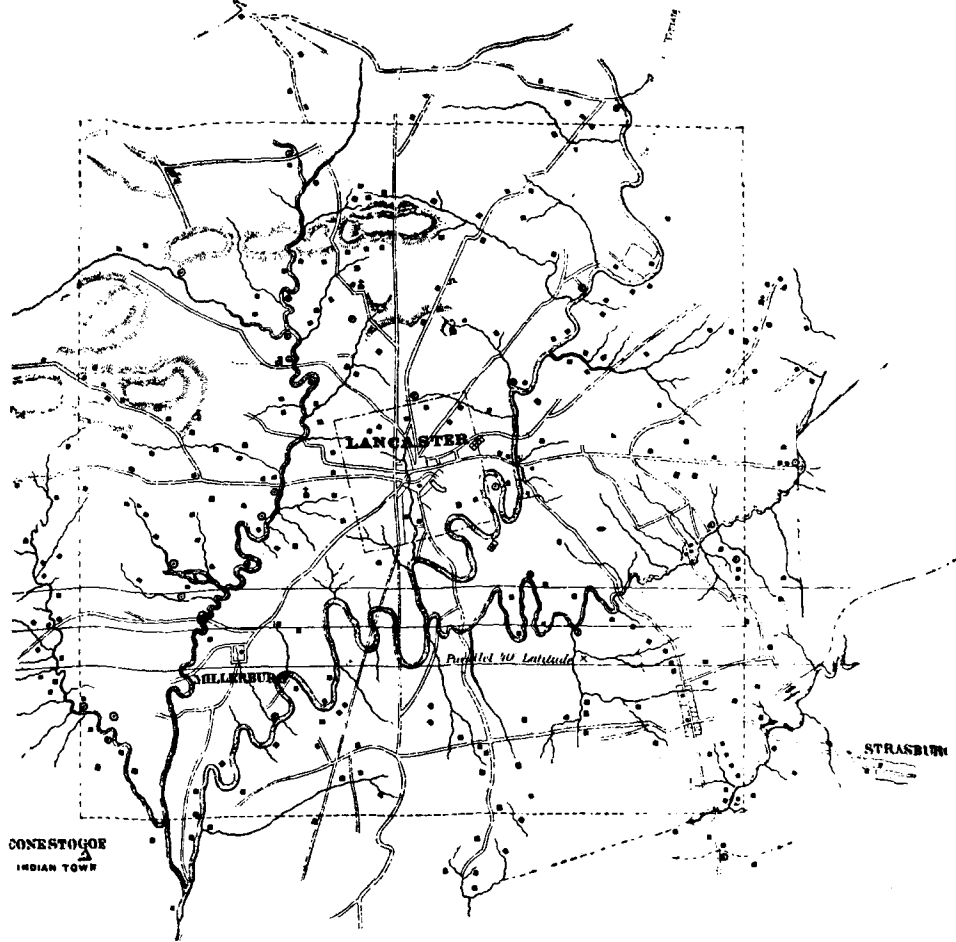
to offer ourselves as Candidates for that distinguished Honor. We feel ourselves more emboldened to enter into the Lists, as we find this Borough has been lately put in nomination by the Honorable Congress under the former Consideration, and we suffer ourselves to be flattered that the reason which then subsisted for such a Choice exists more strongly at the present moment. As an Inland Town we do not perceive ourselves inferior to any within the Dominion of the United States; our Lands are remarkably fertile and in a high state of cultivation; our country is possessed of every convenience for Water Works, as will Appear by the Draft herewith sent, and peculiarly healthy—our water is good; every Necessary material for Building is to be had in the greatest Quantity desired, and at the most reasonable rates, and we venture to Assert that there is not a part of the United States which can boast within the Compass of ten Miles the same Number of Waggon and good Teams with ourselves. We are sensible that Dealing in Generals will have no effect with dispassionate and temperate Minds. We venture, therefore, to descend into more minute Recapitulation, and pledge ourselves to you for the Truth and Correctness of the following Statement, which has been made upon the most thorough Examination and in the Carefullest Manner in our Power, without Exaggeration.

The Borough of Lancaster is a Square encompassing a Portion of Ground of one Mile in Length from the Center (the Court House) by the main Streets, which intersects it at right angles. We have five public buildings, including an elegant Court House, 58 feet by 48 feet. In the second Story thereof is a very handsome Room, 44 Feet by 32 Feet in the Clear, and two convenient Adjoining rooms, each being 22 Feet by 16 Feet in the Clear. There

are seven Places of Public Worship, besides a temporary Synagogue, belonging to the respective Societies of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Reformer Church of Heidelberg, Moravians, Quakers and Catholics. Within the Compass of the Borough an Enumeration of the Dwelling-Houses was actually taken in 1786, and the number then built was 678, which since that period has considerably increased. Many of the Houses are large, elegant and commodious, and would, in our Idea, accommodate Congress and their Suite at this period without inconvenience. Boarding and lodgings are to be had at very easy Rates. According to the best Computation we can make there are within this Borough about 4,200 Souls. A number of great roads pass through this place. We are thorough-fare to the 4 Cardinal Points of the Compass. Labor is to be had at the rate of 2s per day.

The Current Prices of Provisions are: Wheat, 5s 6d; Rye, 3; Indian Corn, 2s 6d; Oats, 1s 6d per bushel. Best hay, £3 per ton. Pork and Stall Fed Beef from 25 to 30s per Ct.; Veal, 3d, and Mutton 3½d per lb. All kinds of Poultry are in great abundance and reasonable. Shad, Rock and Salmon are plentifully supplied to Us from the Susquehannah in their Seasons. The Prices of Fire-Wood the last Season has been for Hickory Wood, 12s 6d, and Oak 8s 6d per Cord. Within the Distance of 9 by 30 miles from this Place we have 6 Furnaces, 7 Forges, 2 Slitting Mills, and 2 Rolling Mills for the Manufacture of Iron. Within a Compass of 10 Miles Square, we have 18 Merchant Mills; 16 Saw Mills, 1 Fulling Mill, 4 Oil Mills, 5 Hemp Mills, 2 Boring and Grinding Mills for Gun Barrels and 8 Tan Yards. There are a great Number of convenient Scites for Water Works still unoccupied.

Within the Borough are the following Manufacturers and Artisans, viz.:



"A ten mile square, Lancaster Court House being in the centre, and some parts beyond it, actually surveyed in 1786 and 1787 by me, William Reichenbach, in a manner as engineers use to take up special maps of counties, by compass and watch."

The original map, of which the above is a reduced fac-simile, is now in the collections of the Linnaean Society of this county.

14 Hatters, 36 Shoemakers, 4 Tanners, 17 Sadlers, 25 Taylors, 22 Butchers, 25 Weavers, 3 Stocking Weavers, 25 Black-Smiths and White Smiths, 6 Wheel Wrights, 21 Bricklayers and Masons, 12 Bakers, 30 Carpenters, 11 Coopers, 6 Plaisterers, 6 Clock and Watch Makers, 6 Tobacconists, 4 Dyers, 7 Gunsmiths, 5 Rope Makers, 4 Tin-Men, 2 Brass Founders, 3 Skin-Dressers, 1 Brush-Maker, 7 Turners, 7 Nailers, 5 Silver Smiths, 3 Potters and 3 Copper-Smiths, besides their respective Journey-Men and Apprentices. There are also 3 Breweries, 3 Brick-Yards, 2 Printing-Presses and 40 Houses of Public entertainment within the Borough,

The materials for Building, such as Stone, Lime, Sand, Clay proper for Brick Timber, Boards, &c., are to be had in the greatest Abundance at the most reasonable Rates. We would instance as one Particular that the best Pine Boards from the Susquehannah are delivered here at 5s 6d per hundred feet.

Our Centrical Situation will be best determined by the consideration of the following Distances, which pursue the Courses of the Roads now occupied, but may be shortened, and which we consider as accurately taken, viz.:

	Miles.
From Lancaster to Philadelphia	...66
to Wilmington	.....50
to Newport	.....47
to Head of Elk	.....45
to North East	.....42
to Rock Run	.....38
to Mouth of Susquehannah	.....42
to Baltimore by McCall's Ferry	.....60
to Trenton by Swedis Ford	.....90
Caryell's Ferry on Delaware	.....87
to Reading	.....31
to Easton	.....83

From Lancaster to Wright's Ferry	
on Susquehannah.	10
to Harris' do.	36
to Anderson's do.	13
to McCall's do.	16
to Peach Bottom do.	22
to Nolan's Ferry on	
Potowmack	93
to Harper's do.	110

We have presumed, Gentlemen, to make the foregoing Statement and Address it to You. The general National Interests of America at large will, we are persuaded, be fully considered, when the important Point of the future permanent Residence of Congress is agitated and determined on by that Honorable Body. We have reason to think that William Hamilton, Esquire, who is entitled to the Rents, Charges and unoccupied parts of this Borough, would cheerfully meet every Wish of Congress, so far as his Property is concerned. Permit us only to add that our Citizens are federal and strongly attached to the new System of Government.

We have the Honor to be with every Sentiment of respect, Gentlemen, your most faithfull and obedient Humble Servts., In behalf of the Corporation and Citizens.

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