

LETTER OF WILLIAM F. WORNER TO THE PRESIDENT OF
THE LANCASTER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Lancaster, Pa., August 5th, 1927.

Mr. Adolf C. Darmstaetter, President,
Chamber of Commerce,
Lancaster, Pa.

My Dear Mr. Darmstaetter:

I have read, with much interest, the pamphlet issued by the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce, entitled, "Seeing America's Garden Spot, Lancaster: the Red Rose City of Pennsylvania." While I heartily commend the Chamber of Commerce for its praise-worthy efforts to acquaint tourists with points of interest in Lancaster city and county, I deeply regret that the pamphlet contains many statements that are not in accordance with facts.

For example, on page 5, it is stated that Rebecca Gratz, the original of Rebecca, in Sir Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe", is buried in the old Jewish Cemetery on East Liberty Street, Lancaster. There is absolutely no truth in this statement. Rebecca Gratz is buried in an old Jewish Cemetery, in Spruce Street, east of Ninth, Philadelphia, where her tomb still stands; nor was she a friend of Scott. Her character was brought to the attention of Sir Walter by Washington Irving.

This mis-statement also appears on pages 15 and 16.

On page 3, it is stated that President Buchanan "returned to his home [Wheatland] following his term as President of the United States and practised law at the Lancaster bar."

James Buchanan was admitted to the bar, in Lancaster, November 17th, 1812, and practiced law here until he entered upon his political career. After the 4th of March, 1861, the close of his Presidential term, he retired to Wheatland—not to "practice law" but to enjoy the tranquil life of a country gentleman.

On page 3, it is stated that Thaddeus Stevens was buried in Shreiner's Cemetery, "because of the fact that its gates **alone** stood open to receive the remains of both the white and colored races."

This statement does not seem altogether fair, in view of the fact that negroes are buried in old St. James's Episcopal churchyard; and no discrimination was ever made, so far as I have been able to ascertain, against burying negro members of this ancient parish in its graveyard.

On page 4, it is stated that St. James's Church was founded in 1744. It would, perhaps, be better to state that the parish was organized in that year. The present church building, which is the second structure to occupy this site, was erected 1818-20.

The statement on page 4, relative to Trinity Lutheran Church, is entirely incorrect. The present church building was erected 1761-66. The steeple was added 1785-94. **Thomas Wharton, Jr.**, not **George Wharton**, is buried in the church. Also please note that his correct title was President of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania. He is often referred to as the first Governor of Pennsylvania under the Constitution of 1776.

Thomas Mifflin was the first Governor of Pennsylvania under the Constitution of 1790. This latter statement is important and should be added to your statement in the pamphlet.

Referring to the George Ross monument, on page 4, it would be better to state that this marks the site of the country home of George Ross. He

had two homes in Lancaster. His town house stood on the site of the present court house, at North Duke and East King Streets; and his country home was on Ross Street, where the monument marks the site.

Referring to Witmer's bridge, on page 4, it might be well to state that this bridge was erected 1799-1800. On page 5, in referring to Fulton Opera House, it would be better to state that in the work yard of the old jail on this site, a number of Indians were massacred by the Paxtang boys in December, 1763.

Also please note that Lancaster was the state capital of Pennsylvania from 1799 to 1812. The second court house that stood in Penn Square was taken down in 1852, and not in 1853, as is stated on page 5.

There is absolutely no truth in the statement, on page 5, that Major Andre tutored Robert Fulton. This statement would be better omitted entirely as there is no foundation for it. According to authentic history, Andre was **hanged**, not shot, at Tappan, New York.

On page 7, it is stated that Lancaster has one of the oldest drug stores—established in 1771. You are, doubtless, referring to Heinitsh's drug store. If so, it was founded in 1780 and not in 1771.

In the paragraph on General Hand's Home, page 10, it might be well to state that President George Washington drank tea in this house on July 4th, 1791, when he came to Lancaster and helped to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

On page 10, it is stated that Robert Fulton was the inventor of the steam boat. I doubt whether we can prove that. William Henry, Rumsey and Fitch experimented with steam navigation. Henry is said to have made a model. Fitch is claimed as the real inventor of the steam boat. Rumsey is said to have had a boat that was propelled by steam. To be absolutely correct we should, perhaps, define Robert Fulton as the first man who made a **commercial success of the steam boat**.

On page 11, it is stated that Bibles were taken from the Monastery at Ephrata and used by Washington at Valley Forge and Brandywine for gun wadding. This statement is incorrect. His soldiers seized, according to Sachse, hymn and prayer books and all the copies on hand of a ponderous religious work called the "Martyrs' Mirror."

On page 11, it is stated that "General Sutter, discoverer of gold in California, is buried at Lititz." This statement is not quite correct. Sutter did not discover the gold. It was discovered by a man named Marshall, on a ranch owned by General Sutter.

On page 11, reference is made to "Baron Stiegel". This man was not a Baron. He came to America, made a fortune here, which he lost, and died in poverty. This information also appears on pages 13, 15, 16.

In connection with Donegal Church, page 12, it may be well to state that this church was organized prior to 1721.

On page 14, it is stated that Peter Grubb made a lease with the Conewago Indians at Cornwall. This is not correct. I think you will find that he received a deed for this property, which he purchased from a man named Allen.

On page 23, it is stated that the treaty of the Six Nations was signed in Lancaster in 1774. This is incorrect, as it was signed in 1744. Also note that the treaty was not made between William Penn and the Six Nations, for the best of reasons—William Penn died in 1718.

On page 25, it is stated that George Ross was the friend and companion of Franklin. I question whether this statement is true.

On page 26, it is stated that a religious settlement was made in Caernarvon

Township by the Welsh dissenters. I do not know where you get this information. It cannot be true. Caernarvon Township was settled by the Welsh but they were adherents of the Church of England. Members of the Church of England are not dissenters, as that name is applied to those not in harmony or sympathy with the doctrines of the Church of England.

On page 26, it is stated that in Warwick Township was established at Lititz, the first girls' school in America. This is not true. There is a girls' school at Bethlehem which is older than the one at Lititz.

If you should issue another edition of this pamphlet, it might be well to correct these statements. You have presented much valuable information. There is, of course, a great deal more that might properly be given.

If you should determine to issue another edition, it might be well to confer with the officers of the Lancaster County Historical Society, who would be pretty too glad to assist you in preparing a pamphlet or other literature for distribution to tourists and others.

Very truly yours,

WILLIAM FREDERIC WORNER.

LETTER OF A. C. DARMSTAETTER TO WILLIAM F. WORNER

Lancaster, Pa., August 6th, 1927.

Mr. William F. Worner, Librarian,
Lancaster County Historical Society,
Lancaster, Pa.

Dear Mr. Worner:

Thank you very much indeed for your very kind letter received in this morning's mail. It is quite a satisfaction to know that fellow citizens are interested to help put Lancaster across in the proper manner.

We are quite aware that mistakes have crept into our booklet. We realize the first edition of any such pamphlet always has the same faults. We tried to gather all the information we could from sources supposed to be reliable. Some of it has been copyrighted and in print for many years, while we used it for verbatim, it too, contained many mistakes.

Our attention had already been called to several that you have enumerated, while there are others which we had not yet discovered. There will be another edition run and in it all these mistakes will be corrected.

We want to thank you for offering your service, together with that of the Lancaster County Historical Society, and we shall be pleased to avail ourselves of that opportunity.

Again thanking you most kindly, I am,

Yours very truly,

A. C. DARMSTAETTER.

President.

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