

CITY of LANCASTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

RESEARCHING *the* HISTORY *of a* HOUSE



A Guide to Researching Older Properties in Lancaster

The City of Lancaster ♦ Lancaster, Pennsylvania

RESEARCHING *the* HISTORY of a HOUSE

Your house has a past. Don't let it remain a mystery.



Your house has a history. Someone owned it before you. Someone built it, cared for it, and made changes to it through the years. In a historic city such as Lancaster, every old building has a past. Owners of old houses are often curious to find out:

- When was the house built?
- Who lived there before?
- What is the architectural style?
- What changes have taken place to the house and neighborhood over time?

Resources for unraveling your house's past are readily at hand, often with free access. Increasingly, many historical records and documents are available to view and download online from a computer. This guide to *Researching the History of a House* will help launch your local research.

House research will typically follow two areas of focus (or a combination of these two approaches):

- The history of the structure itself, tracing its architectural style and development, or
- The history of the owners and/or occupants who have lived there over time, taking a more genealogical approach

Compiling a house history can be like putting together a jigsaw puzzle: you first have to find the various pieces then assemble them together to form a complete picture, only to discover that key pieces may be missing. Research requires patience, persistence and often a certain degree of luck. The story of the house will unfold gradually as you follow leads, crosscheck facts and documents and track down various sources. Research can be frustrating when you do not find answers to all of your questions or research appears to lead to dead ends. You may not be able to determine the exact date your house was built, who had it built, its original appearance or all the changes that have been made over the years. However, the research itself – with its twists and turns, surprises and dead ends – can be a rewarding endeavor. The sources discussed in this guide will help you root out information, learn a little more about Lancaster, and become familiar with local research institutions.

[Note: This document focuses on research pertaining only to houses or residential buildings in Lancaster. Researching a commercial, industrial or institutional building can use similar methodology.]

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LOCAL RESEARCH FACILITIES:



Lancaster History.org

Formerly known as the Lancaster County Historical Society, LancasterHistory.org is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to the heritage and history of Lancaster County that holds archival and artifact collections, operates a research library, organizes changing exhibitions and sponsors public and school educational programs and events.

For house history researchers, the library holdings are an invaluable repository of archival records, many available to view online. The organization's website has a searchable online library catalogue that includes the collections of historic photographs. Digitized newspapers and business directories can also be searched and viewed online.

The website includes an online tutorial, **House History**, under the menu heading entitled "Guides."

For nondigitized records, research can be done on-site at the organization's library, where helpful library staff members are available to provide guidance. Lancaster History.org is a private membership organization; members have free access to the library, while non-members must pay a daily user fee. Books and materials in the library are not available for loan but most documents can be photocopied for a fee (except for some materials in the Manuscripts Collection).

Useful land records that can be researched at LancasterHistory.org include:

- Microfilm copies of grantee and grantor indices for 1729-1894 and deed books dating from 1729-1894 and 1935-1958
- Index of Original Deeds (1746-1911) in the Archives
- Lancaster City Warrants, 1835-1891
- Lancaster County Direct Tax of 1815 (Archives)
- Lancaster County Mortgage Books, 1812-1848 (microfilm)
- Lancaster County Mortgage Index, 1729-1940 (microfilm)
- Lancaster City and County Directories
- Lancaster City and County Maps and Atlases

LancasterHistory.org

230 North President Avenue

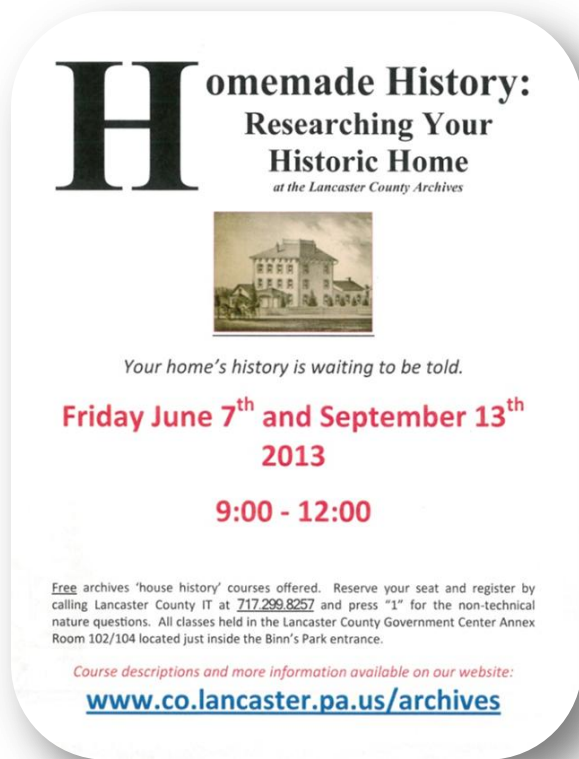
Lancaster, PA 17603-3125

Phone: (717) 392-4633


Web: www.lancasterhistory.org

Check the website or phone to confirm open hours, user fees and policies concerning photocopies and reproductions of materials.

Lancaster County Archives



Homemade History:
Researching Your
Historic Home
at the Lancaster County Archives



Your home's history is waiting to be told.

**Friday June 7th and September 13th
2013**

9:00 - 12:00

Free archives 'house history' courses offered. Reserve your seat and register by calling Lancaster County IT at 717-299-8257 and press "1" for the non-technical nature questions. All classes held in the Lancaster County Government Center Annex Room 102/104 located just inside the Binn's Park entrance.

Course descriptions and more information available on our website:
www.co.lancaster.pa.us/archives

Located in the Lancaster County Government Center, the Lancaster County Archives is a repository of records produced by various County department offices and the County Courts, and provides public access to these archival documents, including deeds, historical maps and house inventories. (Due to the fragile condition of many written documents, many records are available to researchers on microfilm, from which high-quality copies and scans can be made.)

Records may be requested from the Archives in person, by e-mail, or by U.S. mail. Check the website for an online *Archives Inventory* or index of available records.

Also available on the website is a downloadable five-page "*House History Guide*" to relevant resources available at the Archives.

The Archives staff offer free classes to the public, generally three-hour sessions, including a class entitled "*Homemade History: Researching Your Historic Home at the Lancaster County Archives.*" Check the website for a current listing of class descriptions and schedules.

Lancaster County Archives
Lancaster County Government Center
150 North Queen Street, Suite 10
Lancaster, PA 17603
Phone: (717) 299-8319
Web: www.co.lancaster.pa.us/archives

Lancaster County Recorder of Deeds

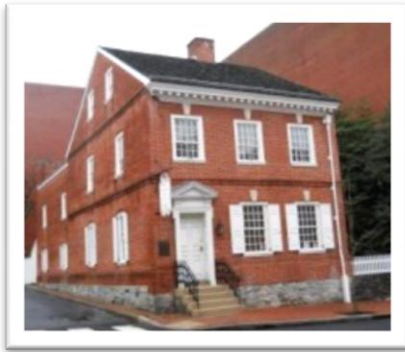
Through the website of the County's Recorder of Deeds, www.lancasterdeeds.com, digitized microfilm of deed books from 1808-1980, as well as deeds recorded from 1981 to the present, can be searched and viewed electronically. Records on microfilm can be researched in person at the Recorder of Deeds office, which is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

Lancaster County Recorder of Deeds Office
150 North Queen Street, Suite 315
Lancaster, PA 17608-1778
Phone: (717) 299-8238

Lancaster County Property Assessment

On the main website, www.co.lancaster.pa.us, pull up the menu for "Online Services / Property Search." A property can be searched by street address or by the current owner's name. There are data fields for the building's height, roofing and exterior wall materials and the number of bedrooms and bathrooms. Toward the bottom of the data page, there is a field for "Year Built." The year given may be accurate, may be a rounded-off approximation, or may be inaccurate. The actual date of construction may be earlier than the year listed, which may be based on later additions or improvements made to the property. Although not necessarily a precise date, the year listed can be another clue in your research, to be confirmed through other sources.

Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County



Founded in 1966 to “stem the rapid destruction of historic properties in Lancaster County,” the Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster

County’s mission is to preserve and protect Lancaster County’s rich historic and architectural character through education, advocacy and direct action. The Trust is a private nonprofit member-supported organization located in the historic Sehner-Ellicott-von Hess House in downtown Lancaster.

The library within the Trust’s offices contains an extensive collection of files on historic properties throughout Lancaster County. These files, complete with photos of specific properties, are the result of field surveys conducted in the late 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

The library also contains hundreds of books, periodicals and reference materials about historic architecture and related issues, including local architecture, adaptive reuse, architecture manuals and urban redevelopment.

Interested researchers should call the Trust’s office in advance to confirm times when the library and property files are available. Books and files cannot be removed from the library, but photocopies of documents are available for a fee. Library access is free for Trust members, while non-members pay a daily fee for use.

Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County
 123 North Prince Street
 Lancaster, PA 17603
 Phone: (717) 291-5861
 Web: www.hptrust.org

Office hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and by appointment on Fridays. Always phone ahead to verify hours and staff availability.

V. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

This house has evolved in three phases. The earliest section was built by Frederick Kress, who resided in the low-lying section on the site of the Stevens Elementary School. He built this house for Mr. & Mrs. David Paonessa, his third wife's parents, sometime between 1893, when the site was unimproved, and 1900, when the York papers were mentioned in an advertisement. The site was infilled a date of c. 1855. This house was one of the large tract bounded by Orange, Charlotte, and West Chestnut, then was once owned by the Millmeyer family.

After Paonessa's death and his widow's removal to another residence in the late 1860's, the house passed to a Paonessa daughter, Mrs. H.C. Surbaner. About 1911-1917's the Surbaner enlarged the house to its present overall form. Previously it had been a simple rectangular house, the two stories in height. It was probably in the 1870's that the house acquired a second floor.

In the early 1880's, the Surbaner family moved to Philadelphia and for a generation the house to its present was owned by Edward Kress, who enlarged and remodelled of Lancaster. The architect is unknown. It is reported that this remodeling cost \$40,000.00. The house survives virtually unchanged after the 1900's completion.

NOTES: Deed file owned by JEB; Lancaster City The Lists, Lancaster County Historical Society; Interview in 1975 with the late Mrs. Kress, who died in November 1976.

Recommendation: The facade should be preserved intact. The original 1907-1908 period external paint color scheme was dark hunter green with accents in a deep cream shade.

NOTE: The present iron fence at the front apparently dates c. 1880 - 1900.

VI. PHOTOGRAPHS:

**PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION
 OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 Comprehensive Historic Sites Survey Form**

1. IDENTIFICATION:
 Property Name: Toledo Hall
 Location: 416 West Chestnut Street Lancaster
 Township: Lancaster City County
 Owners Name: John J. Boyler Jr.
 Address: 416 West Chestnut Street
 Telephone Number: 717 397-0018

2. TYPE OF STRUCTURE AND APPROPRIATE ABB:
Residence - built in stages: 1893-1902; c. 1871-1874; 1897-1908

III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Exterior:
 Three story brick house of T-shaped form, with attic contained within the walls. Wall is dark in high-rises. Dark pressed bricks the common bond brickwork being set in dark, laid in common bond. The facade is divided into three bays with the entrance bay in dark, laid in common bond. The rear and western walls are of soft local brick, set in common bond. A pedimented portico with columns and turned brackets on the western bay. A pedimented portico with columns and turned brackets on the eastern bay. The first floor windows have oak and sandstone lintels and sills and segmental arches above. The second floor windows have red sandstone lintels and sills and segmental arches above. The third floor windows have red sandstone lintels and sills and segmental arches above. The roof is of dark slate. The entrance is on the west side in a long porch with all ornamental elements corresponding to the ornament of the front entry portico.

Interior:
 Most of the present interior dates from the extensive remodeling of 1907 - 1908. The floor plan, with L-shaped entry hall and three story high staircase, is unusual for this locale. All first floor flooring is oak. Two c. 1880 - 1910 elements installed in the 1907 - 1908 remodeling include a marble mantel in the living room, a fine wood Federal mantel, signed by Robert Sillars and Trice of Philadelphia, and a fine wood Federal mantel, signed by Robert Sillars and Trice of Philadelphia. Many c. 1910 lighting fixtures survive throughout the house. On the second floor, a c. 1910 lighting fixture survives throughout the house. On the second floor, a c. 1910 lighting fixture survives throughout the house. On the second floor, a c. 1910 lighting fixture survives throughout the house.

Associated Abb: None
 (if appropriate)

IV. IDENTIFICATION AND PREPARATION BY:
 Name: _____ County: _____
 Street: _____
 City: _____
 Telephone Number: _____

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION TRUST
 of Lancaster County
 11 North Duke Street
 Lancaster, PA 17602**

Architectural Evidence: Styles and Features

While archival documents are important, the building itself will also provide crucial evidence about its age. As you assemble pieces of the puzzle through recorded documents, do not neglect the most obvious source of information: the building itself. A house has a physical presence that can be analyzed and interpreted, and its architectural style can lead you to the period it was built. A basic physical examination of the house, and a brief study of architectural styles and periods, may help to place the construction date within a 10-to-30 year range, depending on the popularity or longevity of a particular style. (Likewise, if you already know the approximate date of your house, architectural guides will help you to identify its style.)

Style is a clue – but not definitive proof – as to the age of a building. There will be visual indicators of its age or time period based on its overall form, features and materials. The house’s architecture uses a language whose key elements (such as the roofline, doors and windows) reflect its historical period. A fair approximation of a building’s age can be drawn from its architectural style, based on defined phases or trends in domestic architecture. Precautions to keep in mind:

- 1.) Architectural styles were in fashion at different times in different areas. Styles were often first seen in larger cities, such as Philadelphia or Baltimore, before migrating to Lancaster.
- 2.) A house may display deceptive clues based on later additions or alterations. (For example, simple Federal houses were “Victorianized” through the addition of front porches, bracketed cornices and ornamentation such as carved window or door hoods, or replacement of multi-paned window sash.) In a city such as Lancaster, where the width of lots was limited, houses were often enlarged through the construction of rear wings or by raising the roof to add an additional story, often by changing the shape or form of the roofline.

- 3.) Builders often incorporated several features of different styles into a single house.
- 4.) Not all houses have a specific defined style.

The overwhelming majority of extant houses in Lancaster date from the nineteenth century, but that 100-year span encompasses a broad range of styles with distinctive characteristics. There will, therefore, be a clear difference between a house built in 1860 and one built just 25 years later in 1885.

The majority of houses in Lancaster are examples of *vernacular architecture* which, broadly defined, means that the building was not designed by a professional architect. It does not mean that the building is primitive or that it lacks fine craftsmanship or sophisticated detailing. It also does not necessarily mean that the house was built by the first owner. In Lancaster, most houses were constructed by carpenters or builders and represent adaptations of popular architectural styles that would have first appeared in larger U.S. and European cities.

Beyond looking generally at its style, dating a house based on its fabric or building materials requires close examination of its foundation, brickwork, roof structure, chimneys, interior framing, floorboards and interior casing and molding. Features such as windows and doors, as well as fireplaces and mantels, were subject to replacement, and establishing a paint chronology could require chemical analysis. Flooring in spaces such as living rooms, dining rooms and bedrooms may have been modernized to reflect changing tastes. (Original floorboards may still survive in attics, however.) Materials found in your house may not be original to that building, since thrifty Lancastrians would salvage and “re-purpose” materials from other buildings that might date from before or after the construction date of your own house.

Due to the complexity of the subject, making educated guesses from construction methods and materials can be difficult. You may have to rely upon a trained expert such as a preservation architect, architectural historian, a restoration contractor or other professionals who are familiar with dating physical evidence such as timber framing, plaster lath, nails, hinges and latches.

There are a number of field guides to common American architectural styles that will help guide a researcher to understand what elements make up a recognizable style. (See the Reading List at the back of this guide.)

Take a look at the section entitled “Lancaster’s Architectural Heritage” on the City of Lancaster’s website [www.cityoflancasterpa.com] for illustrated chapters on “Architectural History” and “Architectural Styles.”

An illustrated online style guide, *Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide*, can also be accessed through the website of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Bureau for Historic Preservation, with chapters addressing architectural styles, building types, construction techniques, a dictionary of architectural terms, links to other architectural websites and a bibliography. [www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/phmc_home/]

Architectural Styles in Lancaster

(Some styles are more common than others within the City of Lancaster)

Colonial or Germanic (1710-1770)

Georgian (1730-1790)

Federal (1790-1835)

Classical Revival (1840-1860)

Italianate (1850-1895)

Second Empire (1860-1895)

Queen Anne (1876-1910)

Romanesque Revival (1860-1900)

Beaux Arts (1880-1930)

Colonial Revival (1880-1955)

Tudor Revival (1890-1940)

Craftsman Bungalow (1905-1930)

Modern (1940 to present)

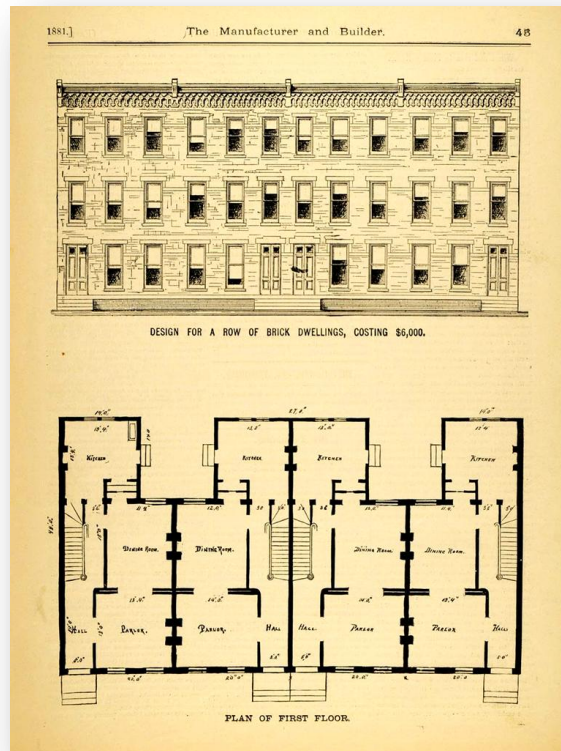
Victorian Pattern Books

The development of architecture as a profession, and its associated trades, was reflected in the publication of a wide range of literature during the nineteenth century, from “pattern books” of house designs, trade journals (geared toward builders, carpenters, woodworkers, masons, plasterers and plumbers) and “household” books and magazines that targeted a general readership. This literature, aimed at an American audience but influenced by British tastes and styles, included lavish illustrations and helped to disseminate general ideas as well as specific advice on lifestyles and aesthetics, domestic exteriors, floor plans, interior furnishings, landscape design and horticulture. As printing technology improved during the nineteenth century, and literacy rates and income grew within an emerging middle class, these books, manuals and magazines were very popular with house-proud Victorians. Many of the house designs and plans were also printed in contemporary newspapers.

Some of the major treatises from the period include Asher Benjamin, *The American Builder's Companion* (1827) and *The Architect, or Practical House Carpenter* (1830); George Pallister, *Model Homes for the People* (1876); and Charles Eastlake, *Hints on Household Taste* (1867). Many of these publications are still available in facsimile editions. While there are only a limited number of houses in Lancaster whose designs were derived directly from pattern books, a review of this literature may give researchers clues about sources or inspiration for exterior or interior features on their own homes.

Mail Order Houses

Although not seen within the older sections of Lancaster, some freestanding, early twentieth-century houses in outlying neighborhoods may derive from mail-order kits. These buildings are often referred to as Sears Kit Houses since the Sears Roebuck Company led the field in mass merchandising of house plans. An entire house could be ordered and assembled from labeled timber, or houses could be constructed by owners or builders using local materials according to catalog plans. Sears began to sell building supplies and house plans in 1895 and operated a “Modern Homes” division from 1908 until 1940, selling more than 75,000 houses nationwide during that period. While small Craftsman bungalows or cottages are most commonly identified with the mail order genre, architectural styles offered in kits included Colonial Revival, Dutch Colonial, American Foursquare and English Tudor houses as well as garages, summer cabins and outhouses.



Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

Produced by the Sanborn Map Company of Pelham, New York beginning in 1867, these large-scale maps

depicted the commercial, industrial and residential areas of cities and towns throughout the U.S. The maps were designed to help fire insurance agents determine hazards associated with a particular property, to allow insurance underwriters to establish premiums,

by showing the size, shape and construction of buildings as well as noting wall thicknesses, roofing materials and the locations of interior fire walls, windows and doors. The maps also indicate widths of streets, property boundaries and building usage as well as showing the locations of fire alarm boxes, hydrants, and water and gas mains. Sanborn maps were periodically updated and served the underwriting industry through World War II.

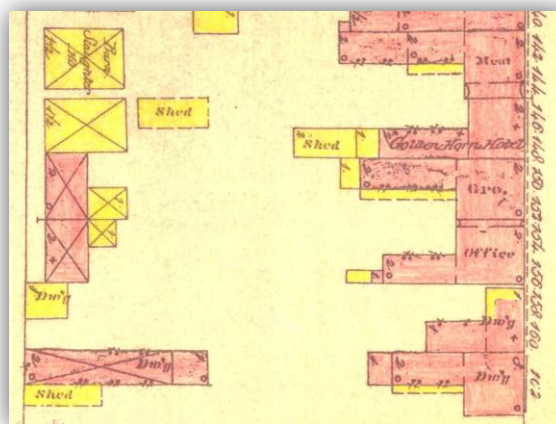
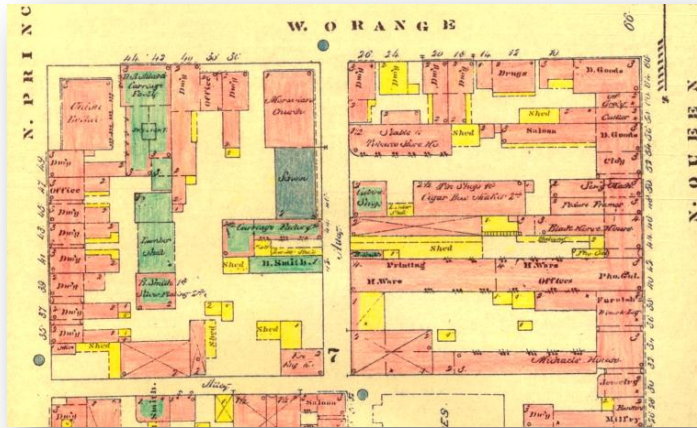
The maps use standardized color coding and symbols (explained in keys at the beginning of each map folio) to convey a wealth of information. Color codes designate construction materials (e.g. pink for brick, yellow for frame, blue for a stone or later a cement-block building, and green for fireproof construction). Buildings are labeled with abbreviations noting their function: D for dwelling or residential house, S for a store or commercial building, A for auto garage.

The library at LancasterHistory.org has bound folio copies as well as microfilm files of Sanborn maps of Lancaster from the years 1886, 1891, 1897 and 1912 (updated to 1941). Lancaster maps from 1886, 1897

and 1912 can be viewed online through the website of Penn State University Libraries – Digital Collections.

Sanborn maps can help researchers identify historic building materials, footprints and heights, as well as later alterations and additions such as the

removal or addition of porches, the construction of additional stories, and the presence of outbuildings such as barns, sheds and garages.



In Lancaster's densely built environment, houses were generally not constructed in isolation. Groups of matching rowhouses or duplexes were commonly built at the same time. These maps are valuable for tracing the development of blocks and neighborhoods over time, as undeveloped lots were built upon and wood-frame houses and outbuildings were gradually replaced by

more substantial brick structures based on the availability of building materials, evolving construction methods, increased wealth and social status, and changing tastes in residential styles. (An ordinance passed in the City of Lancaster in 1871 banned future construction of frame buildings in order to reduce fire hazards.) The maps also visually illustrate Lancaster's mixed-use neighborhoods, in which houses existed side-by-side with small factories and industrial buildings.

Historic Maps and City

Atlases

In addition to Sanborn maps, volumes of large-scale local maps and atlases were published throughout the nineteenth century. By comparing city atlases from year to year, it may be possible to locate the first appearance of your property on a map as well as tracing development of the surrounding block and wider neighborhood. Some maps also include notations on lots with the surname of the property owner.

Fortunately, locating and researching a historic property in Lancaster City is much easier than trying to pinpoint a house on an expansive rural tract of land.

The gridiron pattern of the City's streets, and the establishment of

building lots,

date from

Lancaster's colonial

founding. In

1730, the land

that would become the City

of Lancaster

was owned by

Andrew

Hamilton who

deeded 500

acres to his son,

James

Hamilton, who designed the layout of the new town of Lancaster with a uniform grid pattern of streets and rectangular property lots. Often referred to as *Hamilton lots*, these numbered parcels were 64 feet and 4 inches wide facing the street, and 245 feet deep, backing onto an alley that was 14 feet wide. There were eight lots to a block.



When someone bought a Hamilton lot, they were issued a deed that stipulated that the purchaser must, within two years of purchase, "make, erect, build and finish on each and every lot, at their own cost and charge, a sufficient dwelling house, of the dimensions of 16 feet square at least, with a good chimney of brick or stone to be laid with lime and sand." The Hamilton lots were large enough for a house, outbuildings, and a garden.

Reproductions of the following maps and atlases are available for research at the library of

LancasterHistory.org:

Joshua Scott's Map of Lancaster County (1842)

T.J. Kennedy's Map of Lancaster City (1858)

Bridgens Atlas of Lancaster County (1864)

Roe & Colby's Map of the City of Lancaster (1874)

Everts & Stewart Atlas of Lancaster County (1875)

Baist's Atlas of the City of Lancaster (1886)

Graves & Steinbarger Atlas of Surveys of the County of Lancaster (1899)

The *Everts & Stewart* atlas includes drawings of civic and commercial buildings, churches,

farmsteads and

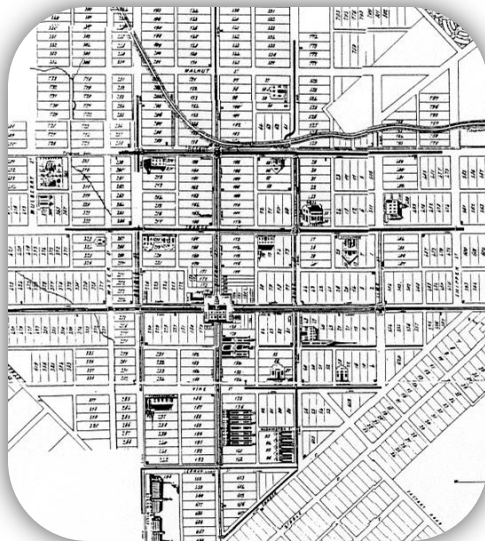
some residences in

Lancaster, dating

from a period when

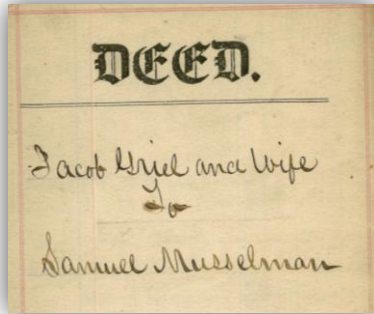
amateur photographs

were still rare.



Chain of Title through Deed Research

One of the primary research documents that will help you to trace the history of a house is the **deed**. The



dates and other information contained within the deed will provide valuable clues to piece together the history of the house and its approximate age.

The deed describes the legal transaction between the buyer (the grantee) and the seller (grantor), conveying to the buyer clear title to the property. (Early deeds were referred to as *indentures*.) By tracing all of the deeds connected with a particular property, you can establish a **chain of title** from the present day backwards -- with luck, to the first owner or the original purchaser of the building or the land it sits upon.

Deeds were generally taken to the county seat of government and recorded in a deed book – although this process was not required. Deeds may not have been recorded until many years after the transaction took place, or the transaction may never have been recorded. (Index books of unrecorded deeds are available.) There can be gaps in the recorded deeds and other irregularities, so other sources will be needed to complete the house history.

It is easiest to start this research with your own deed and title paperwork (or that of the present owner of the property) and use it to work backwards to compile a listing of all previous owners and the dates when the property was bought and sold. Keep a written log to see where there may be gaps in the chain – which you may be able to fill in later through other sources.

395

GENERAL INDEX TO DEEDS,

Ga Gb Gc Gd Ge Gf Gg Gh Gi Gj Gk Gl Gm Gn Go Gp Gq Gr Gs Gt Gu Gv Gw Gx Gy Gz

G GRANTEE

To find Name by this Table—(For steps 1st to 5th) Refer to the Index to Deeds, Vol. 1 to 100, and the Index to Deeds, Vol. 101 to 200, and the Index to Deeds, Vol. 201 to 300, and the Index to Deeds, Vol. 301 to 400, and the Index to Deeds, Vol. 401 to 500, and the Index to Deeds, Vol. 501 to 600, and the Index to Deeds, Vol. 601 to 700, and the Index to Deeds, Vol. 701 to 800, and the Index to Deeds, Vol. 801 to 900, and the Index to Deeds, Vol. 901 to 1000.

GRANTEES	GRANTORS	INDEX NUMBER	DATE OF DEED		DATE OF RECORD	LOCATION	
			Month	Year			
Dunkel' Adm	George	George Dunkel' Heire	X	9 145	Aug 13 1866	Aug 28 1866	Release
Dunkel' Adm	George	George Dunkel' Heire	X	9 224	Sep 27 1866	Oct 11 1866	Release
Dunkel' Adm	George	George Dunkel' Heire	X	9 414	Nov 16 1866	Nov 16 1866	Release
Dunkel' Adm	George	George Dunkel' Heire	V	9 618	Mar 7 1870	Mar 16 1870	Release
Dunkel' Adm	George	George Dunkel' Heire	Z	9 620	Oct 27 1870	Oct 27 1870	Agreement
Dunkel' Adm	Henry	Mary J Voorhis	A	10 685	Mar 21 1871	Apr 1 1871	Queen St Lane
Dunkel' Adm	Henry	Mary J Voorhis et ux	T	10 245	Mar 29 1870	Jun 4 1870	King St City
Dunkel' Adm	George	Samuel S Derwart et ux	B	11 547	Mar 7 1877	Sep 7 1877	Hill of Gales
Dunkel' Adm	Henry	George Dunkel' Heire	E	11 418	Nov 2 1876	Dec 9 1876	Lancaster
Dunkel' Adm	Harry	John W Crumbaugh	I	11 271	May 2 1876	May 6 1876	Union St City
Dunkel' Adm	Harry	Agatha Lump & Hus	K	11 221	Sep 4 1846	Dec 30 1876	Lancaster
Dunkel' Adm	George	F W Bates et ux	R	11 355	Aug 30 1881	Oct 28 1881	Release
Dunkel' Adm	Harry	Harry Dunkel' Heire	R	11 388	Oct 28 1881	Nov 7 1881	Release
Dunkel' Adm	George	George R Walchans' Odn	I	12 85	Jul 28 1878	Apr 1 1885	Ground Rent Frederick St City
Dunkel' Adm	Henry	Jacob M Long' Trustee	O	12 151	Dec 27 1878	Mar 31 1886	Cor N Queen & A
Dunkel' Adm	Henry	John E Richardson	O	13 443	Jan 4 1890	Apr 1 1890	Love Lane Lane
Dunkel' Adm	George M	John O Oump' Widow & Heire	W	13 232	Aug 17 1891	Aug 17 1891	6 Walnut St Lane
Dunkel' Adm	Howard J	Samuel T Parrish	B	14 377	Apr 26 1892	Apr 26 1892	Release
Dunkel' Adm	George	Harry Grab et al	I	14 376	Jul 6 1892	Jul 6 1892	Columbia
Dunkel' Adm	George Jr	Jesse C Nelson					

Grantee and Grantor index books will direct you to the specific Deed Book (with volume and page number) containing the full deed document. (The Grantor is presumably the Grantee in the previous transaction.) Names in the index books are listed somewhat alphabetically according to the first and second letters of the last name.

Key pieces of information contained in a deed that are relevant to a house history:

- 1.) Date of the deed, and the date it was recorded.
- 2.) Name of the grantor (seller) and their place of residence, and the name of the grantee (buyer) and their place of residence.
- 3.) Price paid for the property.
- 4.) Location of property (including bounding streets or alleys, or names of neighbors).
- 5.) Size of property (in acreage or footage).
- 6.) All buildings included in the transaction (often referred to as “message” or dwelling).
- 7.) References to prior deeds and owners (often with the words “Being the same premises”).

Other court records referred to in Grantee-Grantor index books include lawsuits, wills, mortgages and probate proceedings.

See the “House History” guide on Lancaster-History.org’s website for tips on decoding the outdated or legal language used on deeds and titles.

Compiling a chain of title establishes a timeline for your house's history, but also provides avenues for further research. When reading through the deeds, look for irregularities that can turn into interesting leads. For example, did a certain family own the house for a long time? Or did an owner buy and sell it in quick succession? (Rapid turnover may indicate settlement of an estate, or real estate speculation). Did a woman own the property? (Female ownership was less common, but widows, pairs of sisters, daughters of prominent residents and independent business women did own property in Lancaster.) Substantial changes in the purchase price could indicate possible additions or improvements to the house or property.

Note the description of the house in the deed (for example, whether referred to as a one-story or two-story brick dwelling) to be sure that the structure you are researching is the same one referenced in the earliest deeds. The original building on a lot may have been destroyed by fire, or demolished for replacement by another building. Property descriptions in deeds can also contain valuable tidbits of information by referencing early outbuildings that were located on Lancaster's urban lots such as barns, stables, sheds, distilleries and chicken coops.

Sources for Deed Research:

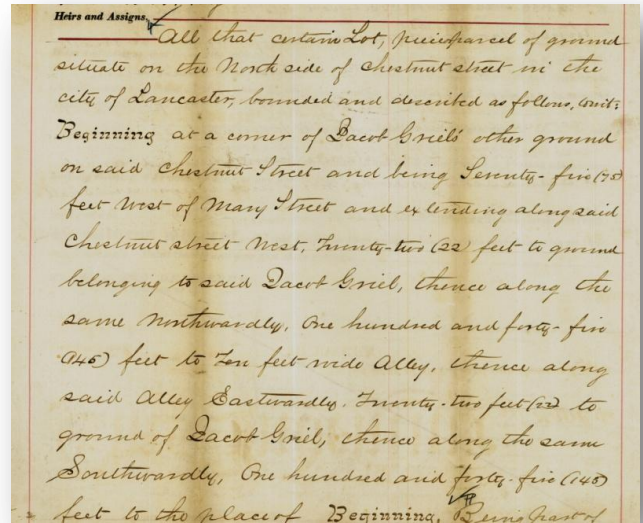
Deeds were recorded beginning on May 10, 1729 in Lancaster County. Land records are available at these local sites:

Lancaster County Archives

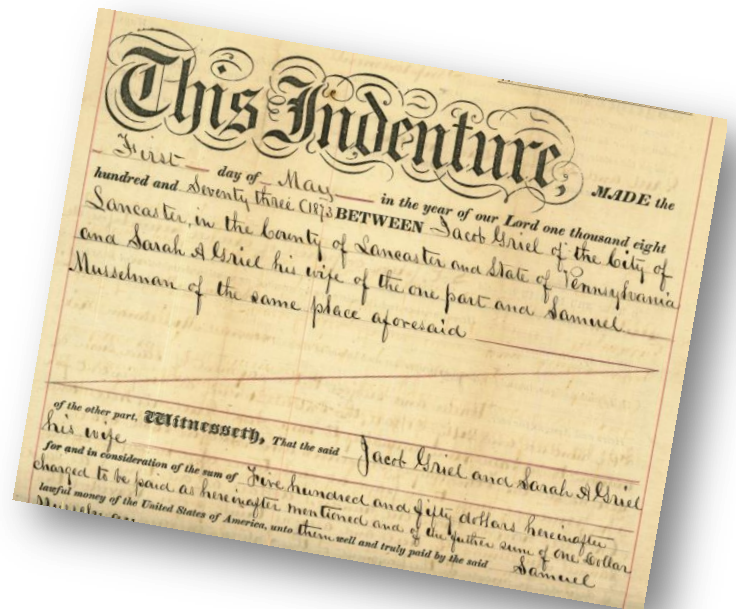
Visit the Archives office to view digitized microfilm of deeds, and deed index books dating from 1729-1980.

Lancaster County Recorder of Deeds

Visit their website to search deeds recorded from 1981 to the present or to view digitized microfilm of deed books from 1808-1980.



This 1866 deed specifies that the lot is 28 feet 6 inches fronting on East King Street and extends to a depth of 245 feet, contains a two-story brick dwelling house "covered with slate," and the grounds feature fruit trees and a grape arbor.



LancasterHistory.org

The library holds microfilm copies of grantee and grantor indices for 1729-1894 and deed books dating from 1729-1894 and 1935-1958.

Census Records

Most often used for genealogical research, census records can provide interesting information on the past occupants of your house. Census records list names, ages, race and occupations and indicate how many people were living in the house, whether they owned or rented, and the place of their birth. Some information may be contradictory or incorrect due to errors by the census-takers, and should be verified through other sources. The main federal website is www.census.gov. Fee-based services like Ancestry.com offer facsimile copies of census records. Locally, the library reading room at LancasterHistory.org offers electronic access to U.S. census records from 1790 to 1930 at public terminals. Indexes are available from 1790 to 1870, and the library holds records for a number of specialized censuses (such as the 1850 Civil War Union Veteran & Widow Special Census).

Local Tax Records

Tax records can be used to supplement the information contained in deeds and estate documents. Tax records may imply – but not definitively prove – new construction or major alterations to a property. Sometimes tax lists clearly mention a new building under a given owner's name. A sudden increase in taxable valuation of a property may indicate recent construction, but can also be the result of a reappraisal during a period of inflation (and should be weighed against general economic conditions during a respective time period). Two taxes assessed in Lancaster County offer interesting information about early buildings: the Direct Tax of 1798 and the Direct Tax of 1815. The Archives at LancasterHistory.org contains tax assessment records from 1750 to 1848.

Wills

In some cases, property passed not by deed transactions but through a will or bequest, particularly within families. The name of the person who received title to the property will be listed in the will; that recipient's name can then be checked in the Grantor-Grantee index books to resume a deed search.

The library at LancasterHistory.org holds microfilm copies of Lancaster County will books from 1729-1908, an index of wills from 1729-1947, and an index of intestate records from 1729-1850. The Lancaster County Archives holds all will records from 1730, including original wills (with signatures and seals) from 1730 to 1915, and the Bond Books recording intestate indexes from 1729.

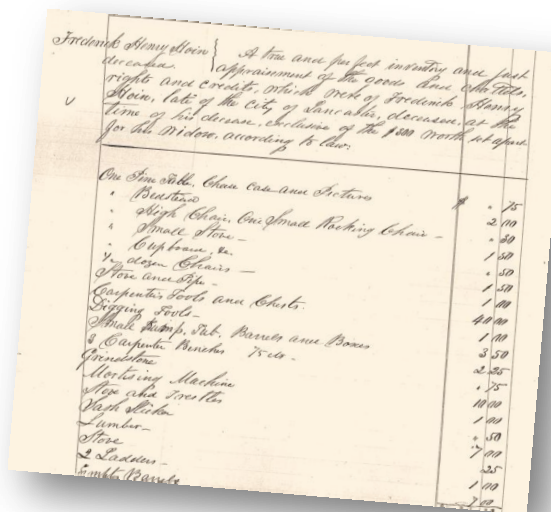
Estate Inventories

When an individual died without a will, an inventory

of the personal estate was required to be filed with the courts within 30 days (often to settle outstanding debts). By listing personal possessions and household contents, inventories can provide information about an owner's socio-economic status or occupation and the size of the household. Some inventories appear to have been compiled in a

room-by-room sequence, which may provide clues about the size and interior layout of the house. The listing of possessions offers a fascinating glimpse of household valuables, with a monetary amount assigned to each item, which can range from livestock, furniture, rugs and bed linens to items such as tools, bags of flour or oats, sleigh bells and harnesses.

The Lancaster County Archives office holds bound volumes of inventory indexes as well as the inventories themselves.



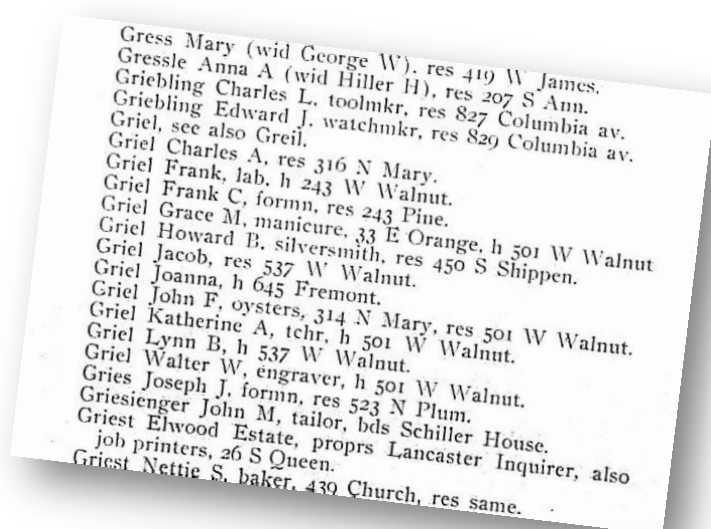
Business Directories

Forerunners of our present-day telephone books, business directories are organized by street addresses and cross-referenced by last names, both listings arranged alphabetically. These directories can be very helpful in tracing occupancy – not necessarily ownership – of a building when other records are unobtainable. While legal documents such as deeds will help you to trace the property’s owner, sources such as business directories can help to identify a house’s occupants over time – important social history within Lancaster, which has had a long history of rental properties. Although your house may be residential now, it may once have contained a store, business or small “cottage industry.”

The earliest directories do not include specific address numbers but will refer to a building as being on the “SW corner of ...”. When searching for a last name, bear in mind that misspellings and variations in spelling were common, including omitted or transposed vowels. The same surname can be listed differently from one year to the next in directories.

Like establishing a chain of title through deed research, researchers can work backwards through listings in these business directories until the property is not listed or does not appear. If the property does not appear in a 1905 directory, but is first listed in a 1907 volume, those years may provide clues to construction dates. The directories also note when a property is vacant.

Directories also include occupational information (with a place of work as well as a residential address noted). Reference to an occupation will provide clues to the possible socio-economic status of the residents and will reflect residential patterns, with nineteenth-century residents often living within blocks – or walking distance – of their place of work. Some people lived right next door to their business or shop, or their home and work place may have been one and the same address. With the growth of trolleys and automobiles in the early twentieth-century, and the development of housing in Lancaster’s outlying neighborhoods, places of work and living became farther apart.



W Franklin st intersects. 704 Samuel Geyer. 706 Philip Womert. 710 Samuel Russo. 712 Charles E. Shay. WALNUT STREET, WEST, From 300 N Queen, west to city limits, 1st, 5th and 9th wards. NORTH SIDE. Northern Market. Market st intersects. P R R Freight Station. N Prince st intersects. N Water st intersects. 201 Anthony Wacker, saloon. 203-25 Charles V Wacker & Bro, brewers. N Arch st intersects. 229 Benjamin F Johnson. 231 Benjamin F Johnson, grcr. 233 J Frank Armstrong. 235 Mrs Elizabeth M Lausch. 237 Wm E Harris. 239 Frank Zecher. 241 Daniel McLaughlin. 243 John E Fitzgerfald. 245 Miss Ella Mauch. 247 Harry W Gaul. 249 George W Everhart. 251 George M Huber. 253 George A Schupp. 255 George A Schupp, barber. 257 Star Grocery, P Buckwalter mngn. N Mulberry st intersects. 315 Mrs Sarah C Miller, confr. 317 John Hubert.	Charlotte st intersects. 401 John D Hocking, grocer. 403 Frederick P Mentzer. 405 Harvey F Huber. Charles H Hamaker. 407 Dallas B Flory. 409 G Henry Sachs. 411 Edward R Zahn. 413 Jacob W Deichler. 415 Charles W Strooble. 417 Miss Sarah Bundell. 419 Mrs Elizabeth W MacMil lan. 421 Henry Burger. Lancaster av intersects. 429 vacant. 431 Eli H Eyde. 433 Jonathan W Hetrick. 435 Miss Clara C Rauch. 437 Merman Miller. 439 Henry H Miller. 441 Wm D Zell. 445 T Clarence Dempsey. 447 James A Keemer. 449 George Hoffman. N Mary st intersects. 501 John F Griel. 503 Frank D Weigand. 505 Christian H Lintner. 507 Aaron S Grantz. 509 Dana H Graham. 511 Mrs Mary Lee. 513 Wm E Cogley. 515 Edwin M Eshleman. 517 Amos E Kline. 519 Harry E Stauffer. 521 Albert S Newcomer.
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If you note the same occupational information for surrounding properties, the data may reflect how a particular neighborhood’s demographics changed over time, or may provide insight into an economically diverse population living side-by-side. You can also trace, to some degree, the rise and fall of an individual’s fortunes in successive directories as their occupation changed, business ownership appeared or disappeared, or they moved to an address in one of the City’s fashionable new neighborhoods.

Like modern phone books, business directories also featured banner advertisements across the top and bottom of pages as well as full- and half-page ads. Builders, carpenters and other tradesmen often ran ads that sometimes featured drawings or photographs of recent projects.

On LancasterHistory.org's website, Lancaster city and county directories from 1843-1922 can be searched and viewed online. The library holdings contain original and facsimile copies of directories dating from 1843 through the present day.

B. D. ZOOK

W. C. ZOOK

B. D. ZOOK & SON

**Contractors
and Builders**

JOBGING OF ALL
KINDS
PROMPTLY
ATTENDED TO

Bell Telephone
Estimates Cheerfully
Furnished

Residence,
No. 544
N. SHIPPEN ST.
Lancaster, Pa.



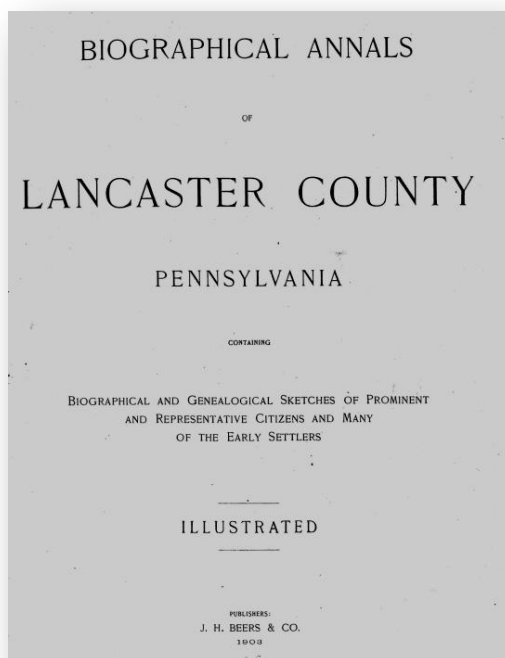
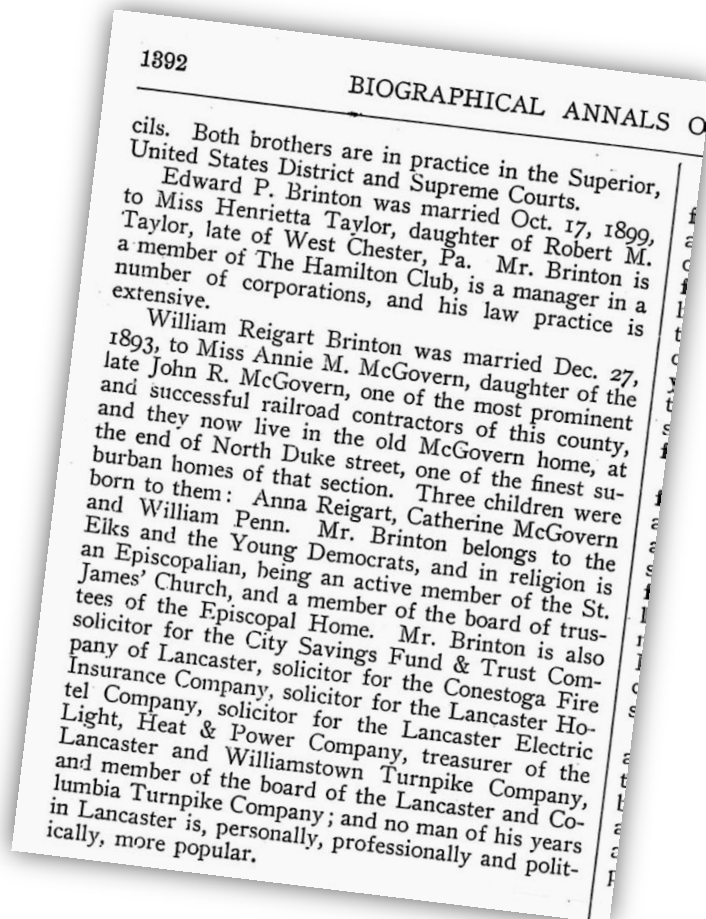
TWO RESIDENCES 317 and 319 PINE ST., LANCASTER, PA.
B. D. ZOOK & SON, CONTRACTORS

Biographical Annals

The nineteenth-century precursor to a *Who's Who* directory, biographical annals can provide contemporary information --effusively written -- on socially prominent residents, including mention of their marriage and children, business dealings, religious and political affiliations, memberships in private clubs and fraternal organizations and status in the community. These biographical blurbs often provide business and home addresses for the social elite (overwhelmingly, but not exclusively, male) with occasional descriptions of their houses.

Two volumes available in the collections of LancasterHistory.org:

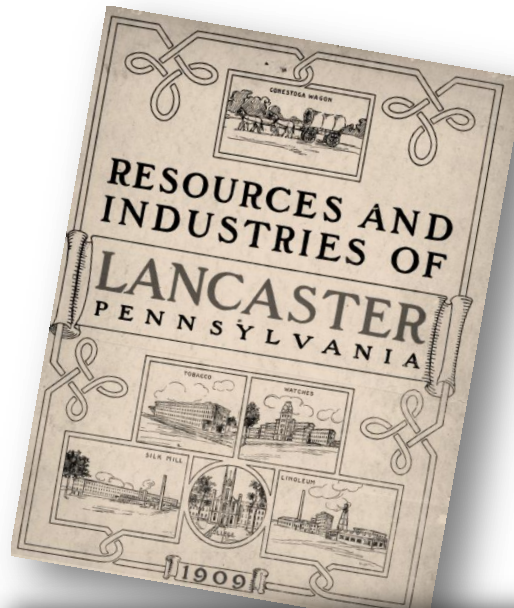
- *History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania with biographical sketches of many of its pioneers and prominent men*, by Franklin Ellis and Samuel Evans, 1883. (Commonly referred to as Ellis & Evans.)
- *Biographical annals of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*, published by J.H. Beers, 1903.



Board of Trade Publications

Published in 1887 and 1909 for the Lancaster Board of Trade, these early “chamber of commerce” publications describe civic, commercial, industrial and agricultural resources and assets in Lancaster, with financial data on trades and businesses. Both publications can be found in LancasterHistory.org’s library:


- *Resources and Industries of the City of Lancaster, Lancaster County, Pa., with some account of its historical importance* (1887). This publication is viewable as a digitized image through the online library catalogue of LancasterHistory.org.
- *The City of Lancaster, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania: Together with an introductory sketch of the County and City, embracing the commercial, industrial, educational and social life therein, with a brief glance at the work of the various departments of the municipal government.* (1909)



Like the printed Biographical Annals, the Board of Trade publications include information on prominent business leaders, with several photos of their equally prominent residences.

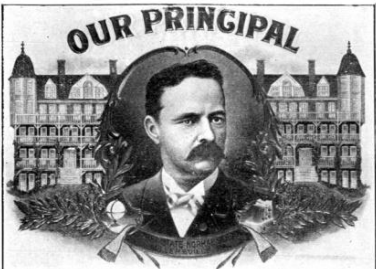


BY THE LANCASTER BOARD OF TRADE. 31




J. W. BRENNEMAN,
Leaf Tobacco,
110-112 West Walnut St.

By his enterprising industry and those correct principles of business which usually lead to success, namely, fair dealing, honest goods and conservative management, Mr. J. W. Brenneman has built up an important and prosperous trade since his establishment in business here in 1891. And later started a cigar factory at Millersville, and is now manufacturing the well known "Our Principal" 5 cent cigar. Mr. Brenneman is a packer of and dealer in leaf tobacco, carrying at all times a very large stock. His office and salesrooms are located at 110-112 West Walnut St. and he also owns a large packing house at Millersville, Pa. Mr. Brenneman was born in Lancaster county and has resided here ever since, and started in business as tobacco packer at Safe Harbor in 1892 and in 1891 moved the business to this city. He is one of our valuable realty owners and a very progressive business man and a highly esteemed citizen. He gives employment to thirty-five and forty people during the picking season. He quotes reasonable prices and terms considering the excellent quality of the product handled, and all orders are promptly filled and shipped.



LABEL OF "OUR PRINCIPAL," FIVE CENT CIGAR



HOME OF J. W. BRENNEMAN, 429 WEST WALNUT STREET

Newspapers

With key dates of ownership established through deed research, old newspapers can be searched for obituaries on past owners, articles on fires or other accidents that impacted the building, sale advertisements from when the property was first offered, notices of sheriff's sales or auctions, or articles and advertisements on the development of new tracts or subdivisions within Lancaster. Some articles contain detailed descriptions of buildings, which may help to determine the architect or designer, the local builder, other tradesmen involved in the construction such as brick masons, and the source or supplier of the building materials.

The following digitized newspapers can be searched and viewed online at LancasterHistory.org:

The Lancaster Examiner & Herald (1834-1872)

The Columbia Spy (1830-1889)

The Intelligencer Journal (1848-1871)

The New Holland Clarion (1873-1950)

The Lancaster Farmer (1869-1884)

Lancaster County Public Library

The Library System of Lancaster County has fourteen member libraries and three branches. The branch in downtown Lancaster has the following newspapers (and other titles) available to view on microfilm, from which high-quality scans can be made.

Lancaster Examiner & Herald (1838-1880)

Lancaster Daily Examiner (1872-1920)

Lancaster Journal Weekly (1796-1836)

Lancaster Intelligencer Weekly (1823-1890)

Lancaster Intelligencer Semi-Weekly (1891-1920)

Lancaster Intelligencer Daily (1864-1928)

Intelligencer Journal (1928-2009)

Lancaster Inquirer (1870-1921)

New Era Weekly (1877-1920)

New Era Semi-Weekly (1909-1919)

New Era Daily (1877-2009)

Lancaster Public Library

125 N. Duke Street

Lancaster, PA 17602

Phone: 717.394.2651

www.lancaster.lib.pa.us

Private Sale.
Will be sold at private sale, that elegant New Three
Story

**BRICK HOUSE,
AND HALF LOT OF GROUND,**
situated in North Queen street, between
Orange and Chesnut streets, Lancaster.
The house is 24 feet front, by 37 feet deep; three
stories high, with metal roof, marble basement, win-
dow heads, eills, cornish, fire walls and chimney caps
are Marble. The back building is 38 feet deep by 18
two stories high. Cellared under the whole, all com-
plete. There is a bake oven, smoke house, and rain
water cistern.
The building is completely finished, in modern style
— marble mantles, folding doors, &c.
The lot is 245 feet, with a well of never failing wa-
ter and a pump in it, and a new Stable on the foot
of the lot, fronting a 14 feet public alley.
This property is within a half square of the rail
road, and is calculated by the owner for the accom-
modation of a private family and any kind of business.
Inquire on the premises of
Feb. 26, 1835. DANIEL FAGAN.

Sheriff's Sale.
By virtue of a writ of venditioni exponas to me
directed, will be sold by public vendue, on Wednes-
day the 25th of March instant, at the public house
of Mrs. Hubley, in the city of Lancaster, at 6 o'clock
in the evening,
A Lot of Ground,
in the city of Lancaster, at the corner of King and
Ann streets, adjoining a lot of Mrs. Slaymaker, on
which is erected a two story
STONE DWELLING HOUSE,
and a two story back building, with a wood house,
carrage house, straw house, and stabling for six hor-
ses, a well, cistern and bake oven, in the yard; part
of the lot is planted with a variety of choice fruit
trees, the other part consists of a garden; the lot is
64 feet 4 inches in front and 245 deep.
N. B.—If the money is paid possession may be
had on the first of April next.
Also,—SIX LOTS OF GROUND,
adjoining each other, being each 64 feet, 4 inches in
front, and 145 feet deep to a 14 feet alley, fronting on
Orange street, bounded on the west by Plum street,
and lot of John F. Stelman, Esq. on the east, on
which is erected a large Distillery, with all the fix-
tures and apparatus, which may be put in operation
in one day, two large wells of water with pumps, the
water is well adapted to distilling, being soft and
quite clear of all minerals; the stills and worms
never require cleaning on account of the gathering of
lime, the pumps in the use of the house are of cop-
per, and all the pumping and washing is done in the
dry. The building is 35 by 25. There is also a
new hog pen about 130 feet long, and about fifty
grafted and full bearing apple trees of choice fruit on
four of the lots.
N. B.—As soon as the money is paid possession
will be given.

Mechanics Liens

Mechanics liens are court documents that refer to the right of tradesmen or "mechanics" to recover expenses for unpaid bills. The tradesman would make his claim by describing to the court what work he had done and at what expense. If a property was involved, the court document filed by the plaintiff might mention the names of other tradesmen, the type of material that was used, the cost of the material and the exact date the construction took place. LancasterHistory.org has copies of mechanics' liens for the years 1855 to 1863 in its collections.

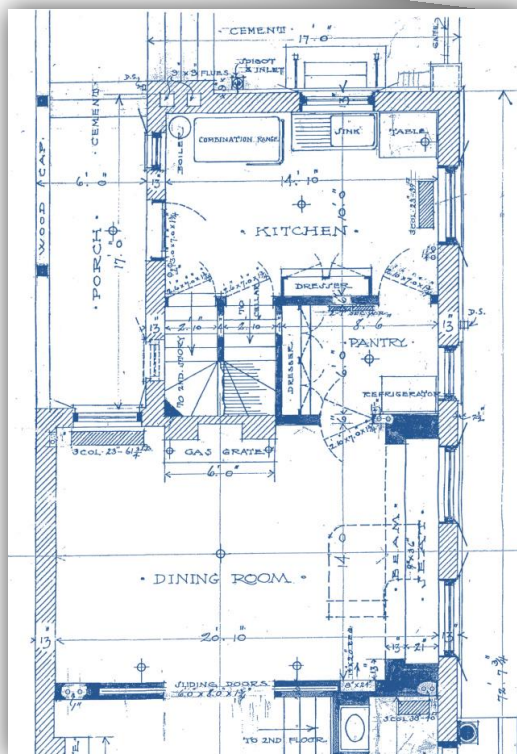
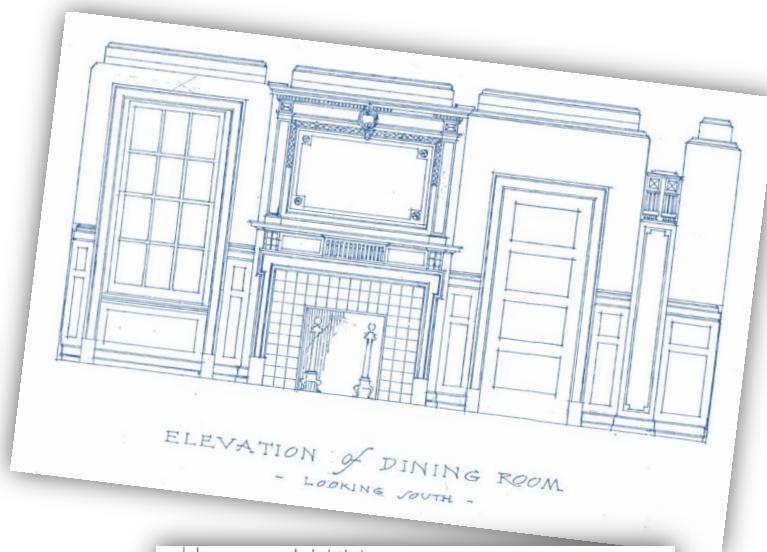
Architectural Plans or Drawings

A few lucky researchers may come across original architectural plans for houses, which will provide a wealth of information. Plans will seldom be found that predate about 1860. Presently, there is no public repository or archive for surviving drawings and records of notable architects active in Lancaster in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Assuming that you have identified the name of the architect who designed your home, your best leads for finding drawings or blueprints would include:

- Relatives of early owners of the building, who may have passed the drawings down within the family
- The archive collections of LancasterHistory.org
- Archives of local construction firms that have been in business for a long time.
- Archives of area architectural firms that may have collected copies of drawings as local artifacts.

Since many architects working in Lancaster had ties to Philadelphia, search their name and projects on the website of *Philadelphia Architects & Buildings* at www.philadelphiabuildings.com/pab. This online database can be searched by architect, building name or location.



Historic Photographs

Other than being lucky enough to come across architectural drawings or blueprints of your house (assuming that it was designed by an architect, which will not be the case for the majority of Lancaster's modest rowhouses), photographs will provide the single best source of evidence about the appearance of a house or street. Photographs can range from professional shots that appeared in publications or were done for commercial purposes, mass-produced postcards, or amateur snapshots from family albums. All of these images are valuable reflections of personal and architectural heritage. Buildings that predate the 1860s, or before photography became more prevalent, may be depicted in engravings, lithographs, drawings or paintings.

Photographs of people inside or outside a building can offer excellent documentation of your house: an original porch that was removed may be visible in the background, or original doors or window sash can be seen from the interior or exterior. Even a photo dating from 1970 can be valuable if changes were subsequently made to the property, since the house may have undergone very few alterations previously (before the advent of large home improvement stores selling generic products and modern, synthetic materials).

Previous owners, surviving relatives of previous owners, or long-time neighbors are good sources for old photographs. An early photo of a relative (or a dog or cat) seated on a porch can, for example, offer unexpected details about architectural features on the house.



The library at LancasterHistory.org has extensive holdings of local photographs of all types that range from formal studio portraits and commercial panoramic views to casual family snapshots. The database collection can be searched online, with thumbnail images provided of the photo itself. There are no guarantees that you will come across a historic photo of your house in the library. Some lucky researchers, however, may discover that a photo of their house was taken at some point, was donated to the library, and was correctly identified when the photo was catalogued. When searching for a photo on the library's database, use specific as well as broad keywords, including street names, family surnames, names of contractors and surrounding businesses, in addition to generic terms such as "rowhouse." Photos can range from a full view of the building's façade, backyard shots with the building in the background, or streetscape views of traffic, parades, or children playing in the street.



In Lancaster's historic mixed-use neighborhoods, stores were interspersed all along residential rows. Try to locate names of stores or businesses that operated along your street and search on those names, since proud shopkeepers were often photographed outside of their establishments, and a wide streetscape view may include a glimpse of your house.

Do not overlook views of the backs of houses, taken from rear alleys, which can provide details on original materials used on rear wings, the appearance of rear porches and the layout and landscaping of rear yards.

Older photos were often exterior views (with natural lighting), but house interiors may be documented through photos taken for celebrations such as birthdays, new babies and holidays (such as a Christmas tree in a parlor or a Thanksgiving meal in the dining room).



Postcards

Although postcards of Lancaster most commonly depict the commercial downtown and major civic buildings or churches, residential streetscape views can be found.



Sources for Old Photos & Postcards

- The online catalogue of the Photographs Collection at LancasterHistory.org
- The Lancaster County Postcard Club (www.playle.com/clubs/lancaster) (Free monthly meetings are held to trade and sell postcards, as well as an annual expo)
- Local sales, auctions, yard sales, antique stores and used book stores
- Online auction sites such as eBay

Historic Resource Surveys

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County (HPT) undertook a historic resource survey or inventory of properties in the City of Lancaster. HPT's offices at 123 North Prince Street in Lancaster (www.hptrust.org) maintain the survey forms from this project. The information on these two-page forms can vary from a brief physical description of the property and a small thumbnail black-and-white photograph of the building, to more detailed research notes that reference dates of deeds and transactions, background on original owners and citations for newspaper articles. The small photos can themselves be helpful if significant changes have been made to the building's façade in the past thirty years.

Access to the survey files and library is free for HPT members; there is a daily usage fee for non-members. The survey files are not available for circulation; photocopies can be obtained for a fee. Although HPT welcomes public requests for information, it is a membership organization with a small staff and limited office hours. Anyone interested in looking at the survey records should contact the HPT office in advance, by calling (717) 291-5861, to make arrangements with staff.

Completed nomination forms to the National Register of Historic Places, for both individual properties and historic districts throughout Pennsylvania, can be viewed through the website of the **Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission**, Bureau for Historic Preservation, via **CRGIS: Cultural Resources Geographic Information Systems**.

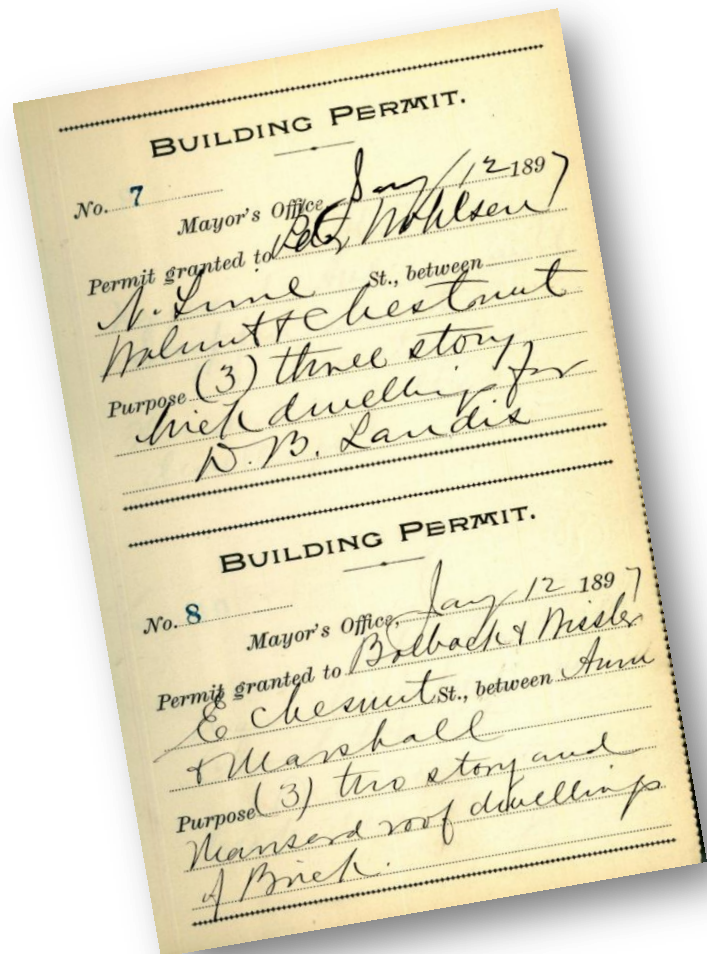
[\[www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/phmc_home/\]](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/phmc_home/)

Building Permits at Lancaster Municipal Building / City Hall:

Lancaster's Municipal Building, located at 120 North Duke Street, does not maintain a formal archive of historical records or photographs for research by the public.

The Codes Department has bound volumes of older building permits, dating from 1896 to 1922, issued for repairs and alterations to buildings as well as new construction. The permits list summary information, with the date of issuance, the person to whom the permit was issued (which might be the owner, developer or builder /contractor), the property address, the cost for the permit (not the cost of the construction or repairs) and a brief reference to the work itself. The permit books are chronological but are not indexed by either address or name, and there are gaps in the dates. They are not available to view online at this time.

Interested researchers should contact staff in the City's Codes office or Planning Bureau to make an appointment to view the permit books. Photocopies of pages are available for a fee.



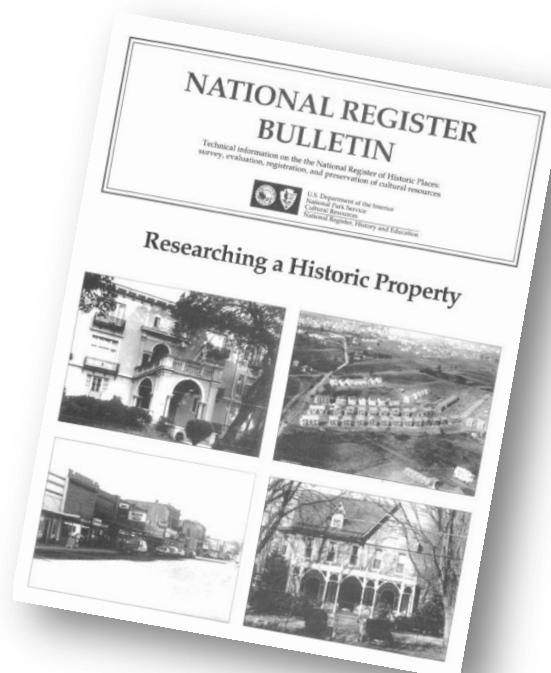
National Register of Historic Places

Researching a Historic Property:

Bulletin No. 39

While addressing the criteria and standards to nominate a property to the National Register, this downloadable 21-page publication also offers general guidance on sources and techniques for researching a building and determining its historic significance.

<http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/pdfs/nrb39.pdf>



Oral History: Ask Your Neighbors



Older residents in the neighborhood may have lived there for a lifetime and can tell you the names of previous owners or occupants of your house, or they may recall changes to the building itself. (Their “remembrances” should, however, be corroborated through other documentation.)

One of your neighbors may have already assembled a house history on their own property. If the houses along the block or row were built at the same time, their research may help to inform your own work.

Share Your Research

Don’t let your hard work go to waste. Consider donating a copy of your research to an organization such as the Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County or LancasterHistory.org for inclusion in their files. You are as much a part of your house’s history as all of the previous owners you have uncovered in your research. Let future owners know what you discovered about the building’s past, and document any changes you make to the building or grounds during your occupancy, including modern additions or modifications as well as restoration work to reinstate any part of the building’s original form or features.

Protect Your Historic Artifact

Now that you have uncovered facts about your house’s past, be mindful of its future. Someone else will own the house after you. If through the course of your research you discovered clues about the original appearance of your house, you may not feel warmly towards previous owners who removed a wrap-around porch, filled in window or door openings, installed formstone or aluminum siding on the façade, or painted interior woodwork. Be cautious about making your own modern “improvements” that may similarly rob the building of its historic integrity or quirky charm and character.

Keep a chronology or dated log (with dated before-and-after photographs) of any remodeling projects or modifications that you undertake on the house, such as removing interior walls, upgrading or relocating kitchens and bathrooms, installing new ductwork, building new sheds or garages, or making major landscaping changes to yards. What may seem insignificant to you could be valuable and significant information to a future resident, particularly as technology, building materials and modern lifestyles change rapidly.



READING LIST

Lancaster History

Ellis, Franklin and Samuel Evans. *History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.* (1883)

Klein, H.M.J. *Lancaster County, Pennsylvania: A History.* (1924)

Loose, John W.W. *The Heritage of Lancaster.* (Windsor Publications, 1978)



Lancaster & Regional Architecture

Falk, Cynthia G. *Architecture and Artifacts of the Pennsylvania Germans.* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008.)

Herman, Bernard L. *Town House: Architecture and Material Life in the Early American City, 1780-1830.* (University of North Carolina Press, 2005.)

Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County. *Our Present Past.* (1985 report on county-wide architectural surveys.)

McMurry, Sally and Nancy Van Dolsen, eds. *Architectural Landscape of the Pennsylvania Germans, 1720-1920.* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011.)

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