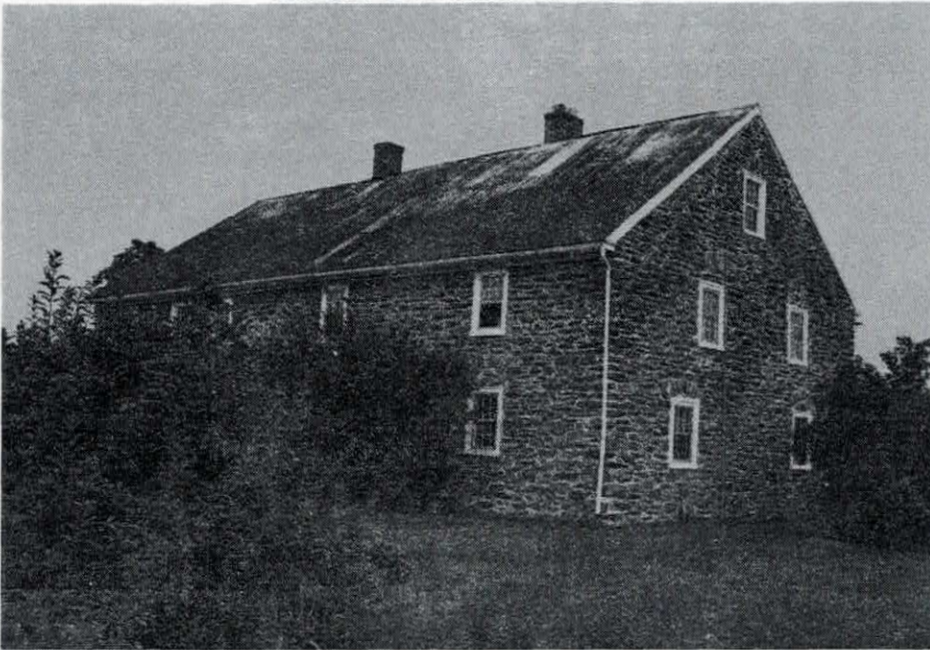


SURVEY HIGHLIGHT



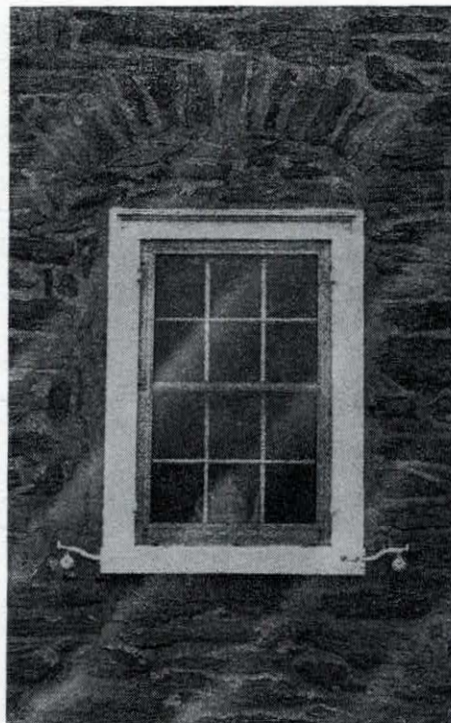
Manor Township — The Musser House and Hospital near Creswell

The on-going survey of Lancaster County has recently focused on data-collection and research in Manor Township. One of the county's largest townships, Manor possesses a great wealth of architectural resources from different periods, ranging from stone barns to late Victorian frame tobacco sheds to eighteenth century Germanic-type houses. Indeed, the sheer quantity of significant structures in Manor Township was both unexpected and rewarding.

A building of great importance recorded in the Survey for Manor Township is the Musser House and Hospital, near Creswell. The house stands on land purchased by John Musser of Lancaster Township in 1744. Sometime between 1744 and 1752, the older or western section of the stone house was built by John Musser for his son Jacob, who had recently married Maria Hershey. Jacob Musser's son, Dr. Benjamin Musser (1749-1820) was a physician then noted throughout the county; he was also the ancestor of many of today's Musser families in Lancaster and adjacent counties. About 1800-1805, the house was enlarged by a stone addition to the east. This addition served as combined hospital and office. It is likely that the roofline was completely raised to its present consistent height about 1815-1820.

As a result of both its structural evolution and its complex functions during the ownership by Dr. Benjamin Musser, this may be regarded as one of the most unusual Germanic type stone houses surviving in Lancaster County. The design

and interior floor plan of the structure constitute a telling instance of a balance between tradition and innovation. For example, on the west gable end, the original, steep, Germanic-form roofline may be discerned in the masonry beneath the present, Federal period roofline. Moreover, the use of part of the building as a hospital in the early nineteenth century demonstrates adaptation to social changes within the framework of a tradition-oriented lifestyle. Although there were earlier public hospitals in Lancaster County, this was probably the county's first hospital under private ownership.



The article to the left and the following Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey of the Musser Home and Hospital were found at the Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County.

<https://hptrust.org/>

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION Box 1026
PA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION Harrisburg, PA 17120

7. Local survey organization
Historic Preservation Trust
of Lancaster County

8. property owners name and address

9. tax parcel number / other number

LH #23

HPT #32

11. status (other surveys, lists etc.)

10.

U.T.M. zone

easting

northing

usgs
sheet:

12. classification
site () structure () object ()
building ()
in N.R. district yes () no ()

13. date(s) (how determined)
c.1744-52, c. 1800-05

14. period

15. style, design or folk type

Germanic

19. original use
house/hospital

20. present use
house

16. architect or engineer

17. contractor or builder

18. primary building mat./construction

stone

21. condition
good

22. integrity
good

23. site plan with north arrow

24. photo notation

#27/10A

Rebecca A. Shiffer

25. file/location

HPT of LC

26. brief description (note unusual features, integrity)

2 1/2 stories, 8 bays on first floor, 6 bays on second

gable roof covered with extruded metal

2 central chimneys

6 over 6 sash in simple wooden frames

house was built in two stages

western 4 bays first(first floor)

eastern 4 bays added to serve as hospital

entrances in second, fourth and sixth bays from west

set in plain reveals

another entrance on second floor

jack arch stone lintels above first floor windows in

western end and all windows in western gable end

remains of beams where porch was removed on eastern end

(continue on back if necessary)

27. history, significance and/or background

This large house of local brown-colored stone was built in two major stages. The older part stands on land purchased by John Musser (Hans Mosser) of Lancaster Township in 1744. This land was then unimproved; when John Musser devised the "plantation" to his eldest son Jacob in a will written in 1752, a high valuation on the property indicated the addition of buildings. Within this span between 1744 and 1752, it is most likely that the older section of the

(continued)

(continue on back if necessary)

28. sources of information

Deed B-147, Lancaster County Courthouse.(1744).

Manor Township Tax Lists, Lancaster County Historical Society.

(continued)

(continue on back if necessary)

29. prepared by:

Rebecca A. Shiffer

John J. Snyder, Jr.

30. date

6/82

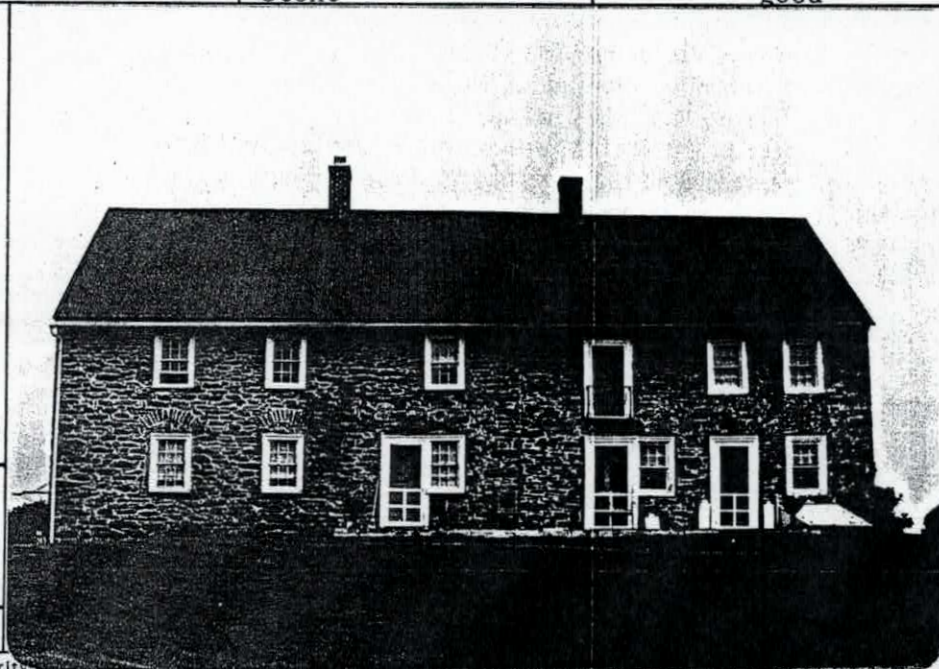
revision(s)

1. County
LANCASTER
5. present name
Musser House and Hospital

2. municipality
MANOR TOWNSHIP
6. other name (historic name if any)
Same

3. street address or specific location
87 Highville Road
south of Breneman Road

4. survey code
071-35-23



27. History: (continued)

house was erected in 1747 for the marriage of Jacob Musser (died 1755) to Maria Hershey. In his will written in 1754, this Jacob Musser described the interior plan of this older section of the house. The property, after subdivision, became the property of Jacob and Maria Musser's son, Dr. Benjamin Musser (1749-1820). The 1798 Direct Tax indicates that the house still stood in its original site at that time. Great increases in the tax valuations on the property between 1800 and 1805 support the conclusion that the eastern wing - extended residence for Dr. Musser, plus 18 children, office, and part hospital - was built about this time. Finally, as witnessed by clear lines in the masonry of the west gable end, the roofline of the older section was raised to match that of the addition. This probably took place between 1815, and 1820, to judge from the documentary evidence of the 1815 Direct Tax and Dr. Benjamin Musser's will, written in 1820.

Allowing for relatively minor changes, the floor plan of both sections is relatively intact. Most of the interior woodwork in both sections is restrained, but good quality work of the c. 1800 period. One upstairs room of the c. 1800-1805 section retains the original polychromatic paint treatment on its woodwork. Another notable feature of this section is a walnut, built-in, hanging corner cupboard. (A fine wall cupboard, of walnut, from the 1740's period, was sold from the house to a Musser descendant in 1970.)

Significance: This is one of the largest, and most complex Germanic type stone houses in Lancaster County. Although there is no evidence of the presence, at any time, of datestones, the house is one of the best documented Germanic-type residences in the County. Further, the use of part of the building as a hospital indicates a degree of flexibility and adaptation to changes within the framework of a traditional, Germanic type lifestyle. Indeed, this was probably the first private hospital of any type in Lancaster County.

Recommendation: Essentially, the house should be preserved in the present state. For the interior, several removed or altered partitions might be restored. Both walk-in or cooking fireplaces could be restored to a more accurate original appearance.

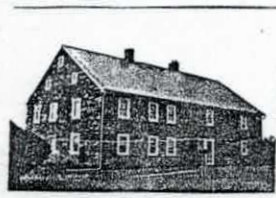
28. Sources of Information: (continued)

Will for John Musser (1752), Jacob Musser (1756), and Dr. Benjamin Musser (1821), Lancaster County Courthouse.

Edgar A. Musser, MS Musser Genealogy at the Lancaster County Historical Society.

Edgar A. Musser, "Early Lancaster County Mennonite Mussers," Mennonite Research Journal, April 1976, vol. XVII, no. 2.

John Snyder's private files on Musser family.



EVALUATION

EVALUATOR(S)

11. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

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