

1844-1994



*Our*

*Medical*

*Heritage*

1844-1994



*Our  
Medical  
Heritage*

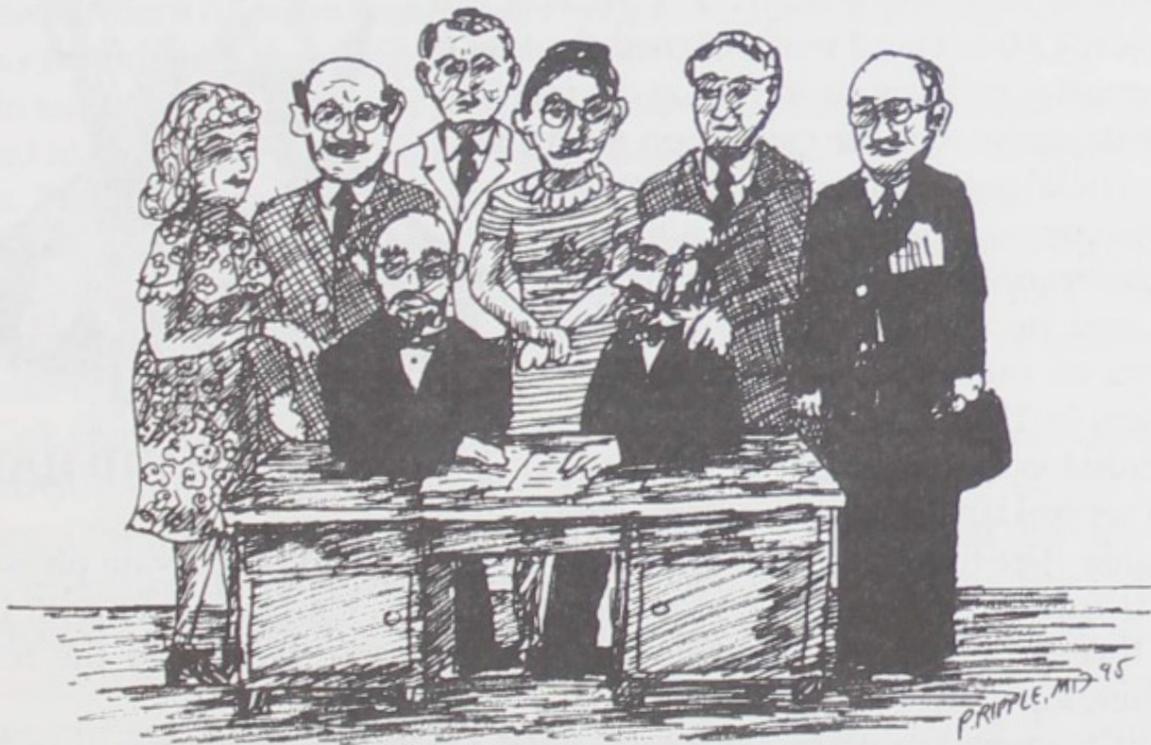


© 1995

Lancaster City & County Medical Society

## Section 3

# Prominent Physicians



## Chapter 31

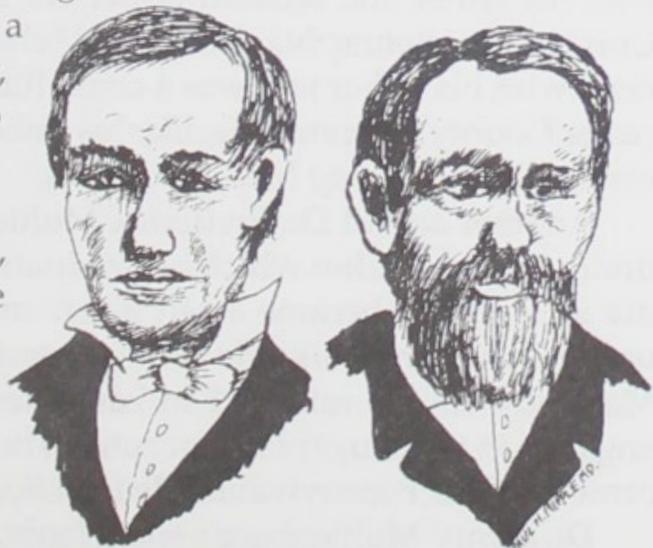
# Drs. Muhlenberg

The Muhlenberg family is best known for its relationship with the Lutheran Church and in Lancaster County with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity. The Reverend Henry Melchior Muhlenberg came to Lancaster County in 1743 and was the principal speaker at the laying of the cornerstone of this church of the Holy Trinity in 1761, and delivered the principal sermon when the church was consecrated in 1766. His son, The Reverend G. Henry Ernst Muhlenberg, was pastor of this same church for 35 years.

The youngest child of the Reverend Dr. G. Henry Ernst Muhlenberg was Frederick, born March 14, 1795. After Frederick's completion of education in private schools (there were no public schools in that day) he was placed as a student in the office of Dr. Benjamin Rush, of Philadelphia in 1812 and received his Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1814. He returned to Lancaster at the age of 19 years, and engaged in the general practice of surgery and medicine for the next fifty years caring for the needs of his fellow men. It is interesting to note the almost indistinguishable blending of spiritual and medical ministering dispensed by this great and learned man. It was said, "His kind and sympathetic words by the bedside of his patients often acted as a charm, and did as much good as the medicine he administered." He did not merely show concern for the bodily ills of those to whom he was attending; he was also solicitous to promote their higher and spiritual welfare. He comforted the dying with the promises of the Divine Word for their consolation and often, when requested, offered up prayers to God in their behalf. He was very active in the vestry of the Lutheran congregation of the Holy Trinity and was among the first to advocate the introduction of English preaching.

Frederick Muhlenberg was a member of the military company, which in 1812, went to Baltimore to volunteer their services under the captaincy of Henry Shippen. At the time of the War between the States, his aid was solicited and given in the organization of the Union League and he became its first president.

Dr. Frederick A. Muhlenberg was present at the meeting on January 14, 1844, when the Lancaster City & County Medical Society



DR. F. A. MUHLENBERG DR. H. E. MUHLENBERG

was organized, and on Feb. 14, 1844 was elected vice-president of the society. In 1934 at the 90th Anniversary meeting, Dr. Prizer presented a bill of Dr. Muhlenberg written in his handwriting, "Medical services rendered to Peter Kelly, self and family, from May, 1832 to December 31, 1853 - \$20.50," a period of over 20 years.

His interests extended into the realm of public service and he was appointed Prothonotary of Lancaster County by Governor Joseph Heister and later Register of Wills by Governor John Andrew Schulze. He served as President of the Lancaster Bank and aided in rescuing it from financial havoc, and in raising it to a high degree of usefulness and prosperity. He also interested himself in the Conestoga River and with other gentlemen promoted a series of locks to bring it into connection with the tidewater for commercial purposes. He was an active member of the Democratic Party and worked with James Buchanan to promote that organization. Dr. Muhlenberg remained a steadfast friend of James Buchanan until, as President of the United States, James favored the LeCompton Constitution in the Kansas struggle, and failed to oppose with the necessary vigor the efforts of the secessionists to dismember our country. Some of Dr. Muhlenberg's forefathers had been engaged in the initial rebellion from England, and he had heard about the glorious Union being secured at great sacrifice. Without hesitation he united with the war party to preserve the Constitution and the government.

In the field of education, he aided in the promotion of the Lancaster County Academy. After the introduction of the public school system, which he had advanced, the Academy became a part of Franklin College. Dr. H. M. J. Klein said at an address commemorating the 100th anniversary of the LC&CMS that "it was Dr. Frederick Augustus Muhlenberg who made possible the Union of Franklin and Marshall Colleges."

Dr. Frederick Muhlenberg was twice married, and at his death in 1867 left 14 children. Among these was Henry E. Muhlenberg, who read medicine with his father and studied under Dr. Benjamin Rush and graduated from University of Pennsylvania Medical School in 1838. After graduation he practiced with his father and was a consulting and visiting physician to the Lancaster County Hospital. He, like his father, was a charter member of the Lancaster City & County Medical Society.

Another son of Dr. Frederick Muhlenberg, Benjamin, studied medicine under his father after which he graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1845 and became a physician and served as a surgeon in the Army under President Polk. He was present at the taking of Vera Cruz in the Mexican War. He returned to Lancaster and practiced until 1851 when he engaged in the drug (pharmaceutical) business. Benjamin was one of the first censors of the Pennsylvania Medical Society.

Dr. Henry Muhlenberg's son, Henry, Jr., studied medicine with his father and received his medical degree from the Medical Department of the Univer-

sity of Pennsylvania in 1871. He was a surgeon in the Marine Hospital Service serving in the hospitals of Boston, New York and Philadelphia. Dr. Muhlenberg began his private practice of medicine in Lancaster in 1877 and was a surgeon to the Lancaster County Hospital. In 1881 he moved his office next door to the Stevens House on South Prince Street. From 1899 through 1902, he was the Mayor of Lancaster City. Henry, Jr. served on the Examining Board of Pensions during the term of President Chester Arthur and a part of President Grover Cleveland's administration.

He was the first physician in Lancaster County to administer antitoxin in the treatment of diphtheria. He stood at the head of his profession in Lancaster City, numbering many of the best and oldest families as his clients. He was medical director of St. Joseph Hospital from 1899-1907.