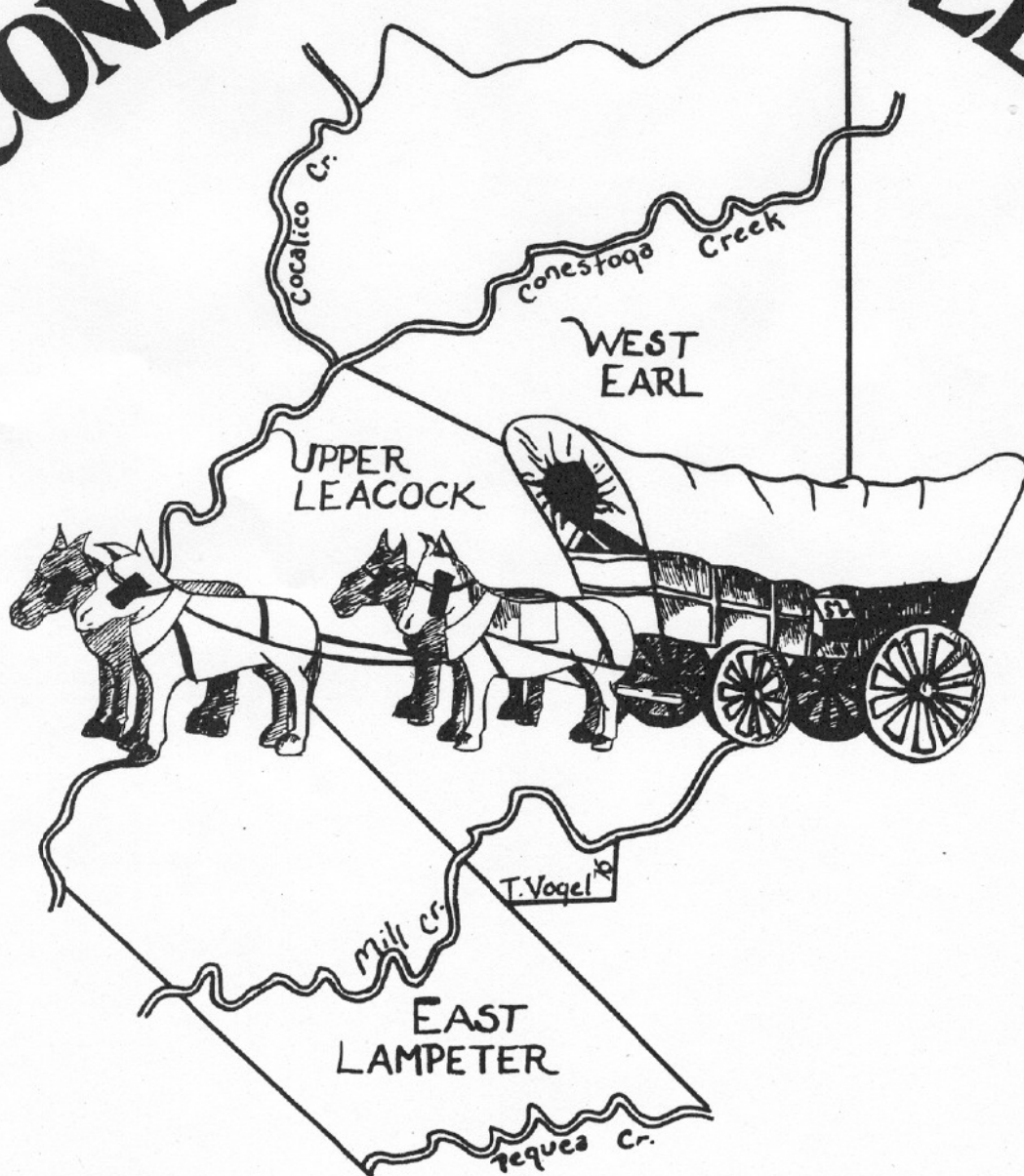


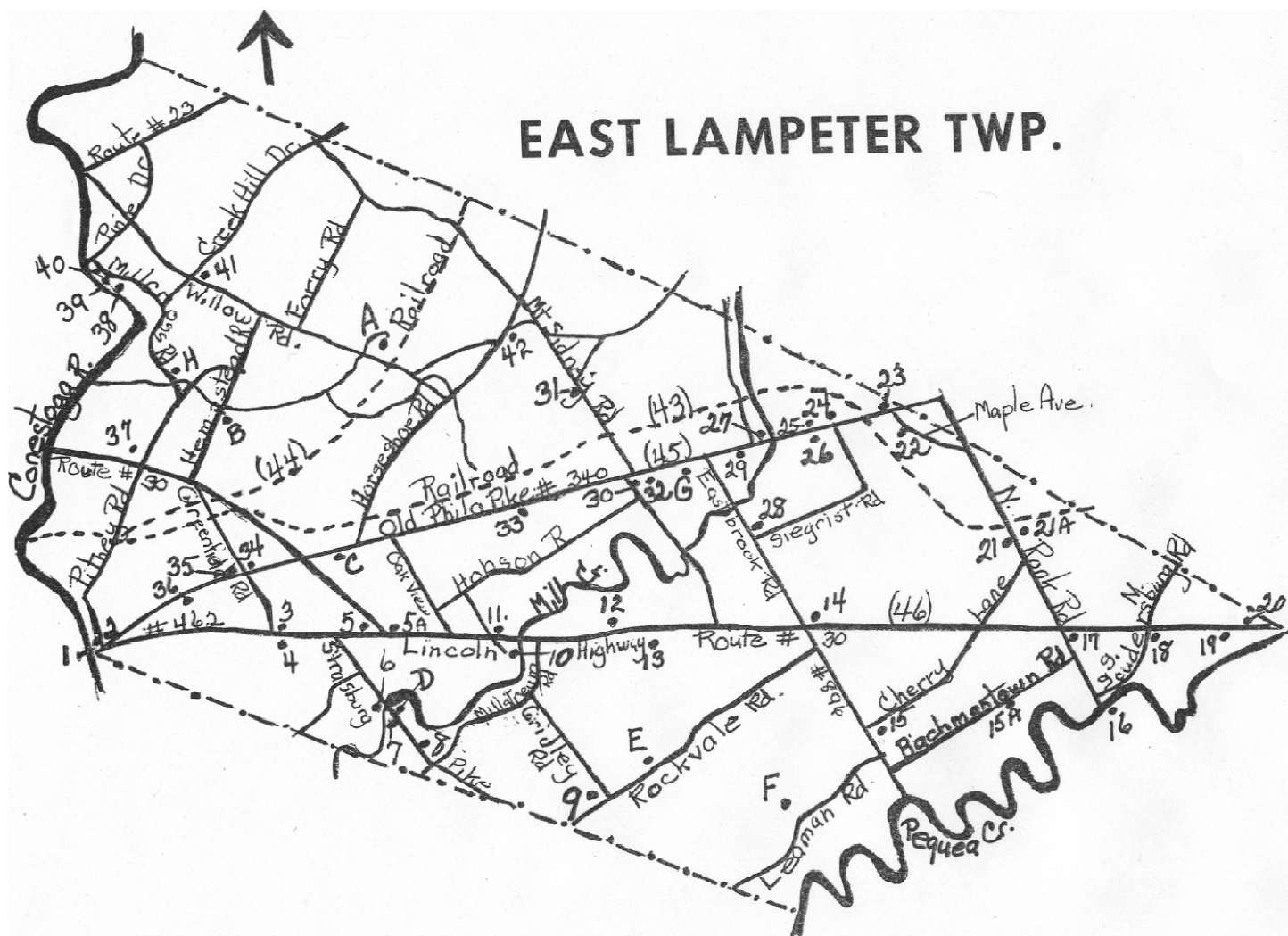
CONESTOGA VALLEY



1770 Bicentennial 1970

ACTIVITIES OF CONESTOGA VALLEY CHAPTER

This historical booklet was prepared by the Conestoga Valley Chapter of the Lancaster County Bicentennial Committee as part of our Nation's 200th birthday celebration. The Chapter was organized on May 4, 1975 through the initial efforts of the Dart Enrichment Committee and later a Steering Committee was selected *to* represent eleven service clubs, eighteen churches, nine fire companies and fire company auxiliaries and the three townships comprising the Conestoga Valley area. The group was chartered as a Chapter of the Lancaster County Bicentennial Committee.



Lampeter was one of the townships formed when Lancaster County was organized at the Postlethwaite Tavern in 1729. The township was named for a town in Wales. if one checks an up-to-date map of Wales, the town Lampeter can be found today.

The types of transportation and communication in early 1800's were not adequate to administer the government properly to such a large area. For this reason Lampeter, like Earl, and Leacock Townships, was divided into smaller districts. In 1841 East and West Lampeter Townships were formed.

Much later in the 1950's, the quality of education and schools needed to prepare the students to cope with modern times could not in most cases be financially supported by one township. So, for educational purposes only, the townships again united. In some cases the same two that separated became one again. In our situation, a part of four original townships made up Conestoga Valley. Originally, West Earl obtained a small part of Cocalico Township.

Although we know our Conestoga Valley is drained by the Susquehanna River, we also know that locally it is drained mostly by the Conestoga River. This is true except for a small part of East Lampeter that is drained by the Pequea Creek. Since most of it is in the Conestoga Valley, that name was chosen.

(1) Witmer Bridge at Bridgeport

In 1787 the state of Pennsylvania passed an act for establishing and building a bridge across the Conestoga on the road from Lancaster to Philadelphia. Abram Witmer was authorized to build (erect) this bridge from which he and his heirs should receive the toll. Thus it was called Witmer Bridge. It served the public for 125 years.

(2) The Lincoln Highway

The Lincoln Highway was the first turnpike in the United States. There *were* three toll gates in East Lampeter on this highway - one on the north side of the highway was dismantled (torn down) when Clarks built Dutch Wonderland, another was in Soudersburg, and a third is still standing at Bridgeport, the last house on the north side of the bridge. It is owned by Mr. Bookman.

(3 and 4) Mellinger Church and Cemetery

The Mellinger Mennonite congregation was organized before the first building was erected in 1767. In 1855 a limestone addition was built which is now used as a missionary home. In 1883 the first building was torn down and another erected in 1884. In 1914 this was replaced by the present building which for the most part retains its original appearance although renovated several times.

Mellinger Cemetery is officially dated 1776.

{5 and 5A) Greenland School

Greenland School is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Loyal Good who operate a fruit and vegetable stand on the site. It was one of the one-room schools closed in 1937.

The first Greenland School stood at site 5A.

(6) An old Hotel owned by John Echternach stood at this site in 1864.

(7) Bonholtzer's Mill

Bonholtzer's Mill, as it is known today, is owned by Richard Bonholtzer. The original mill was constructed on the other side of the Strasburg Pike at a place known as Fertility. Here was located one of the four East Lampeter *post offices as* far back as 1864. The other three were at Greenland, Soudersburg along Route #30 and Enterprise (now Bird-in-Hand). The mill, no longer operated, was first owned by Abram Binkley then by Henry Groff, Isaac B. Groff, Jacob Mowrer, and finally John Bonholtzer (Richard's father).

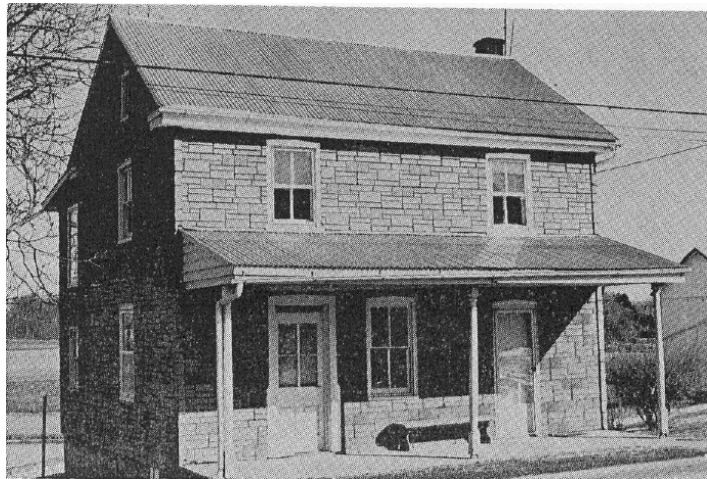
One of East Lampeter's covered bridges was also located here.



Bonholtzer Mill on Strasburg Pike.

(8) Toll Gate

The Toll House was located here when the Strasburg Pike was a turnpike. The building is now owned and occupied by Joseph Walton.



Toll House on Strasburg Pike

(9) Pleasant View School

In 1937 the 1-room schools of East Lampeter Township were consolidated at Smoketown. #9 was Pleasant View now owned and occupied by the Roth family.

(10) Lancaster Mennonite High School

In 1942 the Lancaster Conference Mennonites bought this property and began operating a high school here in September of that year.

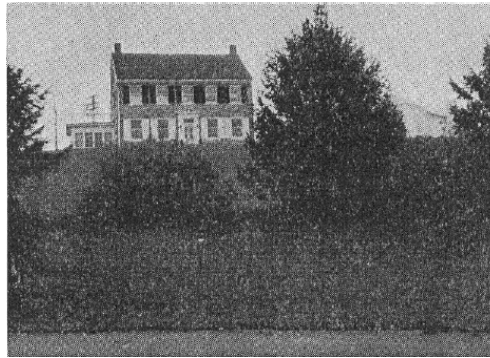
It was originally part of the Jacob Buckwalter property whose family operated a mill there for eighty years. The old mill building stood until recently when it was torn down to make way for LMHS expansion. Benjamin Eshleman bought the mill in 1842. From 1907 until 1922 it was the location of Yates Episcopal School for Boys. Between 1922 and its acquisition by the Mennonites it was used by the State Police, for a short time, as a private Boys' School, and as a private home.

(11) Greenland Hotel

At the corner of Harvest Road and Route 30 stands the old Greenland Hotel built in 1853. For a time it was the voting place for East Lampeter. It is now privately owned.

(12 and 13) Running Pump Inn

This is the original site of the Running Pump Inn built in 1799. This old Buckwalter stone building (#13) stands on the property of Joe Myer's Restaurant. The original owner of the property on which the inn was located was Joseph Buckwalter, a Palatine, who received a patent in 1723 for a tract of land lying on Mill Creek south of the William Evans estate.



Old Running Pump Inn on Route 30

Joe Myers paid *one* dollar (1.00) for the lovely old inn when Mr. Clark built Dutch Wonderland. It cost him close to \$50,000 to have it moved to its present site. The moving occurred at the end of February and the beginning of March 1963. Traffic on Route 30 had to be rerouted during the relocation.

(14) Old Hotel

An old hotel, now a dwelling, was east of Wertz's fruit and vegetable stand. In 1864 it was owned by John Geiger.

(15) Pequea School

This is the site of the Pequea School (one-room) no longer used after 1937 and now torn down.

(15A) A cemetery which dated back to before the Revolutionary War is located here.

(16) Millbridge Museum

Millbridge Museum, formerly an old grist mill, is not in East Lampeter but just across the Pequea Creek in Strasburg Township. A covered bridge, still standing, connects the two townships at this point.

(17) Fairview School

Fairview School was not closed in 1937 but was used as a public school attended chiefly by Amish children. Mrs. Anna Denlinger taught here for many years. The school was maintained by the township until 1975 when in that summer it was bought by the Amish at a cost of \$23,600 for their own private school.

{18} Soudersburg School.

Soudersburg one-room school was closed in 1937. Elam Smoker bought the property from East Lampeter Township and finally sold it to the present owner H. Carrozza.

(19) Soudersburg Methodist Episcopal Church

The Soudersburg Methodist Episcopal Church building is on a part of the tract of land owned by Philip and Leah Ferree and sold by Joel Ferree to Jahn Souders in 1789. The first church was built in 1802 and rebuilt in 1873. The church was on the same circuit as the Bird-in-Hand Methodist. It was later closed and some of the members attended the Bird-in-Hand church

{20} St. John's United Brethren Church

The first St. John's United Brethren Church was a little frame building at the south **side** of Route 30 just east of the Soudersburg Run. This congregation was organized in 1843 and the building was erected in 1846. In 1877 they relocated to the present site and finally in 1968 it united *with* the Methodist Church and became St. John's United Methodist Church.

{21} The Ranks One-room School House

The Ranks one-room school was closed in 1937. It is now owned and used as a residence by Mr. and Mrs. John Buckwalter.

(21A) Off the main street in Ranks is a farrier's (blacksmith) shop now being operated by R. J. Charles. Salina Stoltzfus, now 103 years old, says as long as she can remember there has been a blacksmith shop in Ronks.

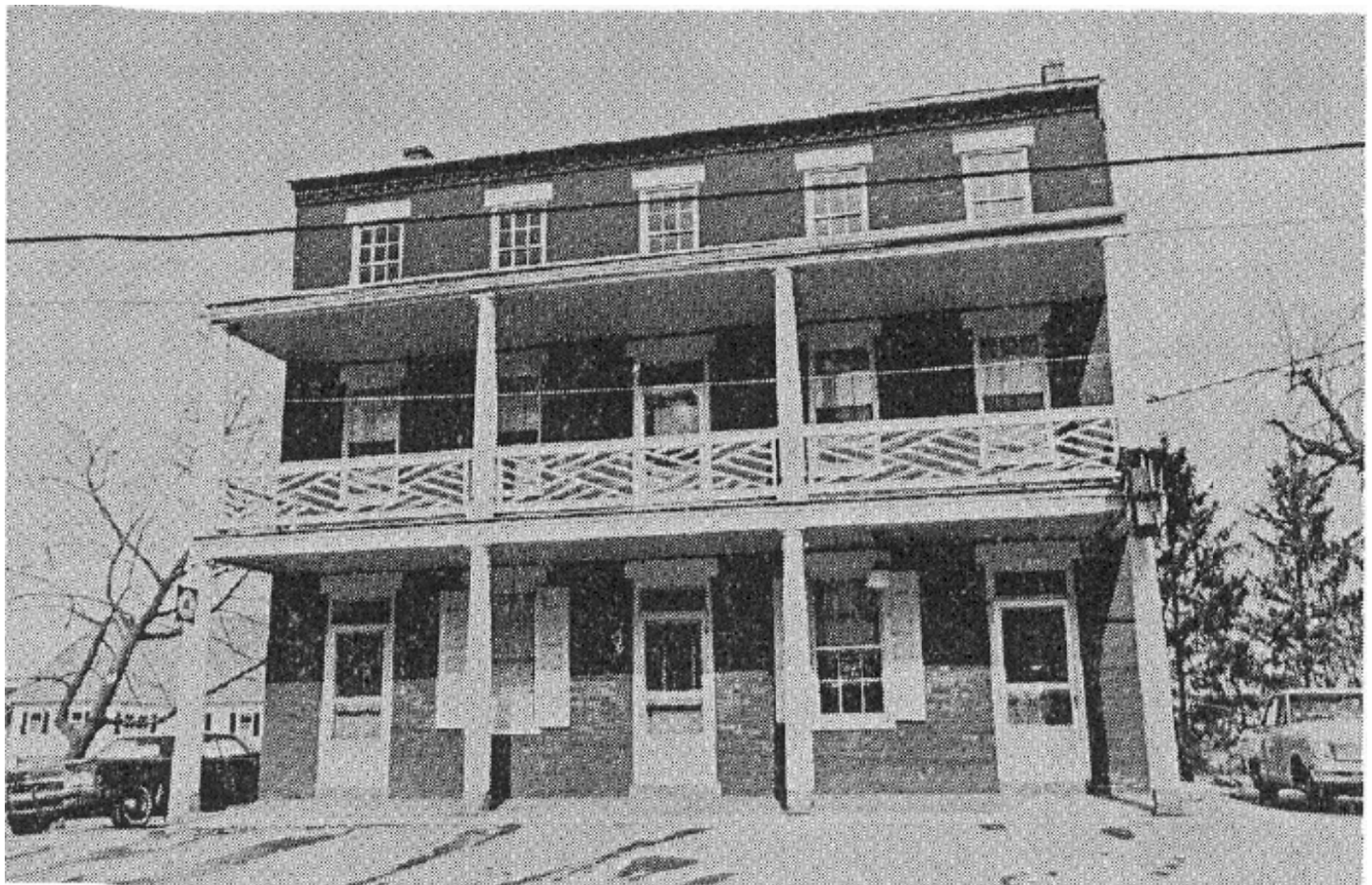
Other Smithy shops in East Lampeter were in Witmer, Bridgeport owned by Mr. Hoar, Smoketown, and Bird-in-Hand. Frank Paes operated one in the Strasburg Pike at fertility and later moved it to what is now Alma Bonholtzer's home, farther south on the Strasburg Pike.

(22) The Bird-in-Hand One-room School

The Bird-in-Hand one-room school closed in 1937 and is now owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Yunginger.

(23) The Bird-in-Hand Hotel

The Bird-in-Hand Hotel is now owned and operated by **Mrs.** Bitzer who with her husband moved there in 1938. The first building was erected in 1734. Levi Rhoades built the present structure in 1864. The original hotel building was the headquarters for the first surveyors of the "Old Road" (now Route 340) in 1734.

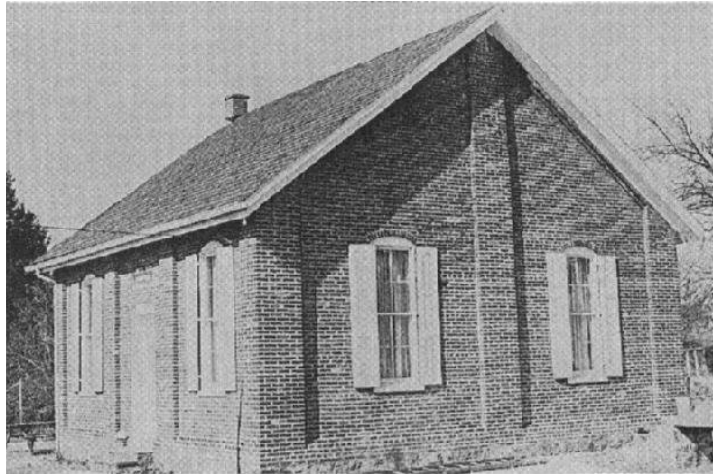


Bitzer's Hotel in Bird In-Hand

(24) Bird-in-Hand Quaker Church

Located here is Bird-in-Hand Quaker Church and Academy back of it. The Quakers were organized as early as 1732 in *the area*, but it wasn't until 1749 that their first meeting house was built. In 1889 the present building was erected outside the old building, and when it was finished, the old building was dismantled. Today it is used as a Scout house.

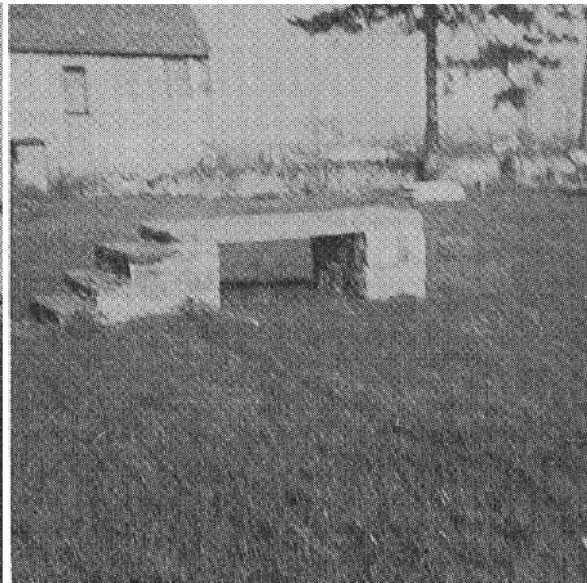
The Academy back of **it is** being restored by Eber Reese, its present owner.



Bird-in-Hand Quaker Church



Academy back of Quaker Church



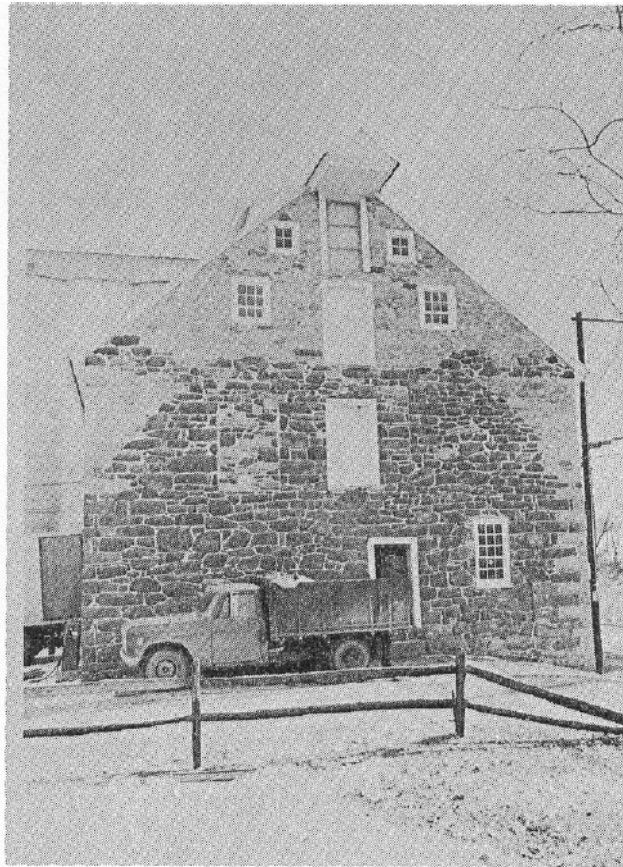
Upping stool

Bird-in-Hand United Methodist Church

Bird-in-Hand United Methodist Church was founded in 1840. The first building was what is now a house directly across the highway from the present church building.

(27) Nolt's Mill

Nolt's Mill was built in 1770 by James and Deborah Gibbons. This is *the* only mill still operating in East Lampeter. Previous owners were the Bushong and the Spence families. The bridge here replaced a covered bridge.



Nolt's Mill in Smoketown on Route 340

- (28) This is an old private cemetery of the Groff and Siegrist families. It dates back to before the Revolution.
- (29) An original Lancaster and Philadelphia milestone is still standing opposite Pietsch's electrical store along Route 340.



Philadelphia to Lancaster milestone on Route 340.

(30 and 31) Schools

In 1834 a bill was passed that provided that not only pauper children should be educated at public expense but all children of Pennsylvania.

By June 1868 East Lampeter had ten schools with both *male and* female teachers. The school tax was 2.5 mills and in a year the district spent \$3200.50 on schools.

On the school board in 1868 were Samuel Curtis, Daniel Herr, Christ Kendig, Isaac Heller, and David Landis.

In 1907 there was a 2-room building standing at #30. That year in that building it was decided to start a high school in East Lampeter. The freshman class was in the same room with grades 7 and 8 with one teacher, James G. March. *The* next school year, 1908-09, there would now be that first class and the 1908 freshman. There were too many students for that room so the high school students *were* moved to *Witmer* in what was Adam Miller's store room of his furniture and cabinet shop. Jonathan King has a cabinet shop there today.

In 1909 the first class was graduated with two years of high school work, but that year the school board decided to make it a three-year high school. The graduates of the 1909 class were allowed to go another year but did not graduate again. Really this should be called the 1909 and 1910 class. Members of that first class were Jacob B. Lefever, Lloyd Laushey, Elsie Aument, Mabel Steffy, and Anna M. Landis, from whom this information was received, and is the only one now living. The principal when the first class graduated was H. Day Gise who had succeeded **H. E.** Fenstermacher after Institute week. Mr. Fenstermacher went to Lancaster City where he taught until he retired.

In 1910 a 4-room, 2-story building at Smoketown replaced the old 2-room building erected in 1868. On the school board in 1910 were Martin Brenner, Jacob Meck, William Eckman, Adam Landis, Oscar Kendig, and Harvey Heller.

In August of 1910 the high school students moved to the two upper rooms while grades 1-8 were in the two lower rooms.

East Lampeter High School was located here until the fall of 1927. The following is the list of classes with their

respective teachers:

1910-Alpheus *Becker* (*no* graduation) 1911-Alpheus Becker
1912-G. Reed Alexander
1913-G. Reed Alexander
1914-G. Reed Alexander
1915-G. Reed Alexander (Mr. Alexander served in World War I after
which he was appointed Assistant County
Superintendent for Superintendent Fleisher.) 1916-John Wimer
1917-Virgil Hosinger
1918-Virgil Hosinger (*no* class graduated)
1919-Carolyn Wiker Virgil Hosinger 1920-Carolyn Wiker Virgil
Hosinger 1921-Carolyn Wiker Lloyd Kline 1922-Carolyn Wiker
Charles Uibel 1923-Carolyn Wiker Charles Uibel 1924-Carolyn
Wiker Harold Hess 1925-Carolyn Wiker Melvin Brubaker 1926-
Carolyn Wiker Melvin Brubaker 1927-Carolyn Wiker David Weber



Boys (L. to R.) Jacob R. Lefever, Frank Herr, Enos buckwalter, William Whiteside, Lloyd Laushey. (Front Row) Stanly Brenner, Roy Aument. Teacher; H. Day Gise. Girls (L. to R.) Ellen Sheaffer, Esther Groff, Anna M. Landis, Marian B. Whitmer, Mary Knerr, Elizibeth Laushey, Elsie Aument, Mabel Steffy.

High School students at Adam Miller's Furniture Shop in it

(32) Smoketown Elementary School

The Smoketown Elementary School was built in 1937, the year the one-room schools were consolidated in that building.

The school board members were Harvey Heller, Walter Smith, John Rohrer, John Foose, and Harry Overly.

(33) East Lampeter High School

The East Lampeter High School was located here from 1928 until 1958 when it joined with Upper Leacock and West Earl to make the present Conestoga Valley. When it had moved to site #32, it became a four year high school

The principals in that building were Charles Ressel, Aaron Breidenstine, Galen Kilhefner, Harry K. Gerlach, Henry Walker (1/2 year), and J. Elias Fritz until it became part of Conestoga Valley when he became the first supervising principal of the district.

The building is now Witmer Heights Elementary School.

(34) Locust Grove School

This is the site of Locust Grove, a one-room school which was sold to the Mennonites after East Lampeter no longer used it. Finally, it was bought by High Welding and demolished.

(35) This is the site of an Old Philadelphia Pike Toll Gate.

(36) Historic Plaque

Here is a plaque commemorating Lafayette's visit to the area. He reviewed the local battalion and cavalry troops

which assembled here as guard of honor to escort him to Lancaster on July 27, 1824. A marker was placed here in 1934.

(37) Oak Grove School

The Oak Grove School building was closed in 1937 and is now owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Menno Stoner. It was built in 1893, later than the other one-room schools, to relieve the crowded conditions at Locust Grove.

(38) Paddock Inn Paddock Inn on the east side of the Conestoga Creek was the old Eden foundar

(39) The red brick building between the mill and the inn was a pattern shop and is now an apartment building owned by Mary Diptold.

{40} The old grist mill here, (no longer in use) is presently owned by Joe Kruger and his mother Mary. Two of the former operators were George Ehrhart and the Umble family. A covered bridge was recently torn down here.

(41) Conestoga School

Conestoga School, with the other one-room schools, was closed in 1937. It is now owned and occupied by a famous artist and his son, C. L. Newswanger.

(42) Horseshoe Road School

Jay Kreider now owns and occupies the Horseshoe Road one-room school which was closed in 1937.

(43) Pennsylvania Railroad

The Pennsylvania Railroad was finished between Columbia and Philadelphia in 1834 and in 1852 it was completed between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Before that time it is said that 3000 wagoners were moving daily between these two cities.

(44) Downingtown and Lancaster Railroad

The Downingtown and Lancaster Railroad was built in East Lampeter about 1888 but was taken over by the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1903. At first it carried both passengers and{45) Old Philadelphia Pike

Construction of the Old Philadelphia Pike began in 1733 and was completed from Lancaster to Philadelphia in 1741.

(46) Lincoln Highway

The Lincoln Highway construction was going on from 1792 through 1794. It was operated as a turnpike until 1917 when it became a state road.

In the early 1900's a trolley road followed the highway in East Lampeter until Jan. 1935 when it *was replaced* by *bus*.

Old Houses

Many of the old farm houses in East Lampeter were built between 1800 and 1860. Parts of some were built **in** the 1700's and later additions were made with the date stones in the 1800's. Some we know to have been built in the 1700's. They are lettered on the map as they are listed here.

- A. Part of John Kreider's house on Willow Road was built in 1754.
- B. The Miles Landis property, now on the Greenfield Industrial Park, was built in 1763. It is going to be restored by High Realty.
- C. The fourth house from the bypass (#k30) on 340 going east was for many years in the Landis family. It was built in 1773. Land to the north and south of it was originally Landis property. *There were many* Landises in that area.

- D, Part of the stone house owned by A. Jerry Landis at what was known as Fertility on the Strasburg Pike was built in 1767. It was at one time the Isaac Groff home.
- E. Dwight Brubaker's home on Rockvale Road was built in 1801, almost in the 1700's.
- F. On Leaman Road is an old stone and frame house owned by Levi Fisher. Mary Landis, wife of former owner, Edward Landis, lived there fifty-four years. She said there is a log in the barn dated 1739. The first part of the house was built of solid walnut logs which made it difficult to install electricity.
- G. The old house across from the post office in Smoketown on Route 340 has been recently renovated by its owner, Richard C. von Hess. He stated that the western end of it was built in 1798.
- H. The Robert Glass property on Millcross Rd. dates back to 1769.