

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LOCAL HISTORY

OF

# CARLISLE, PA.,

BY THE LATE

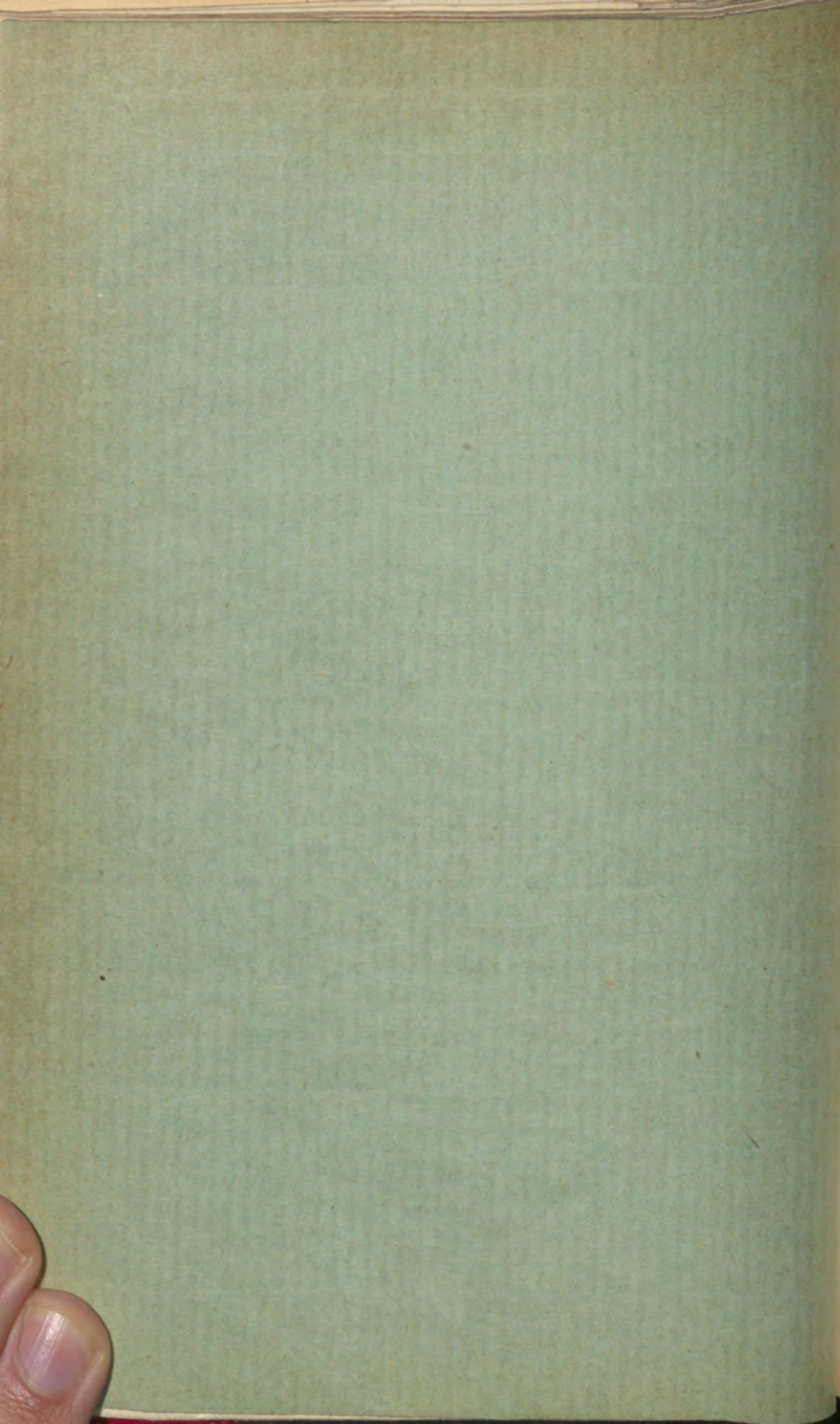
Rev. JOSEPH A. MURRAY, D. D.

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- I.—Old Court Houses of Carlisle, Pa.
- II.—Molly Pitcher (Molly McCauley).
- III.—Old Market Houses of Carlisle, Pa.
- IV.—Andre and Despard in Carlisle, Pa., with note by Prof. Charles F. Himes.
- V.—Old Jails of Carlisle, Pa,
- VI.—Old Wells of Carlisle, Pa., with notes by Prof. Charles F. Himes.

CARLISLE, PA.  
1902.



### III.

## LOCAL HISTORY.

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### First Public Buildings In Carlisle.

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### THE MARKET HOUSES.

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BY THE LATE REV. J. A. MURRAY, D. D.

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At first like other towns in their incipient state, the people of Carlisle, may have largely depended on their own yards and gardens and out-lots for the supply of their wants with occasional visits by meatdealers and country people. Every family raised something both for summer and winter consumption, and "killing time," or "butchering time," as it was generally called, which occurred late in the Fall, after the corn and potatoes had all been housed, was always a season of great plenty, when many a well-fed steer and hog had to yield its life, and its flesh was prepared for future use. Almost every housekeeper put up a winter supply of beef or pork or both, in addition to fruit and vegetables. But as the place increased in size and population the need of a mar-

2

ket house became more and more apparent, where butchers and others could bring their meat and produce regularly, and where purchasers could be easily supplied.

Nevertheless the practice of fattening and curing meat for future use continued to prevail, though there is very considerably less of it done now than in former years.

According to the remembered statement of our aged father, who lived here at the time, the first market-house was a long frame building, with plank flooring, at the centre square, and on that section of the square where was "the deep quarry." It was standing during the Revolutionary war; and like the Court-House, was used to meet the exigencies of the times. In addition to the supply of beef, sent from here to the Army, many hogs were slaughtered here for the same purpose, salted and packed on the floor of this frame building, and thence removed in wagons for the use of our troops. These hogs were killed and cleaned near the corner of Hanover and South streets. Stock of this kind, as well as beef was easily raised in our valley by thrifty and patriotic settlers; the valley also furnished many of the first men, both officers and pri-

vates, for the American army; and it was here that the Deputy Commissary General, Col. Ephraim Blaine, (as well as Col. Jno. Davis,) had his home. Hence the supplies, not only of beef, but of pork, and the building in question was used for its temporary storage, to be hauled away wherever needed. Col. Blaine had to furnish large quantities both of flour and meat, and, when necessary, it is said that he risked his personal fortune to meet the heavy and pressing demands of our needy soldiery. Others, too, were equally patriotic, according to their means, and it is also said that Major Alexander Parker "furnished two teams, at his own expense, when the army was at the White Plains."

The "old Market house," however, which we very distinctly remember, and which was really the first substantial building of the kind, was erected just at the beginning of the present century, or about 1802, on the south side of Main street, between Hanover street and Nick Urick's tavern, sign of the Golden Lamb, or along the north side of the southeastern section of the public square. According to the usual plan of such buildings at that early time,

it was covered, but open all around; the roof was high, resting on wall-plates supported by brick columns, within, but extending over both sides, and terminating on wooden columns; between the former columns were the stalls for meat, and between the latter were attached benches, on which were various things exposed for sale and underneath poultry. The ends were weather-boarded, somewhat ornamentally, as far down as the eaves, and the interior was open as far up as the comb of the roof. It was paved with brick, well ventilated, but cold in winter. The butchers occupied the inside stalls, and the country folks the outside benches or curbstones. Among the former were "Jimmy Noble"—as he was generally called—"Jim Hoffer," "Sam Gould," "Koser," "Shearer," &c, among the latter were men and women, including old "Sam Moss," the colored charcoal burner and vendor from near the South mountain, who have long since disappeared from the scenes of earth\*. The chief personage was Mr. James Noble, who lived on the south side of Main street and midway between West and Pitt streets, where Judge Herman now resides, and his slaughter house was about halfway down

the lot,—adjoining it was the bullock pen, and underneath the blood hole, which furnished manure for his fields†.

In front of his stall in the market-house he had a long iron rod suspended from a joist or collar-beam and hooked at the lower end on this hook was hung a pair of large scales, and, when the market

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\*Mr. Hoffer was a young man of genial spirit, pleasant and obliging; and he carried on the business largely where he lived in that low, little house on the north side of Pomfret street, midway between Pitt and West streets, and last occupied by the late James Lamberton and his sister "Easter."

†In the Carlisle Herald for Aug. 12, 1814, there is a communication in the form of a dialogue complaining of "the putrid exhalations of beef's blood proceeding from a slaughter house just behind that new stone house," on West Main street. The Herald was then published by Alexander & Phillips. The latter lived in the stone house now occupied by the Lamberton sisters, and the printing office was a frame building in the rear of it. The communication refers to Mr. Noble's establishment, on the opposite side of the street and doubtless in the summer season the breezes from the south were not of the most agreeable character! The stone house then called "new," is the same that is there now, excepting that some years ago it received a brick front and has been in other respects very much improved. There was also a well of water between the slaughter house and street, but somewhat on the old Dunbar lot, and this must be under or near the rear of Mr. Saxton's residence.

6

was over and the scales removed, the rod would be turned aside and the crooked end attached to one of the highest hooks on the stall; and often would the boys, returning from school and going into the market-house, there stop, loosen that rod, and have a swing from the meat-block, and sometimes at the risk of tearing both their clothes and their flesh against the stall hooks. Here, too, were the memorable tables of old Mrs. Moudy, Mrs. McNattin or McNaughten and Mammy Crofty, well covered with ginger bread and baby-cakes and lady fingers and mosey sugar in little scallop-edged patty pans and twisted sticks of yellow taffy—the latter bearing a name familiar to the youngsters of that day. These old ladies—requiescant in pace—were among the institutions of Carlisle. There they sat summer and winter, knitting, sewing, smoking and chatting, ever eager and ready to sell to man or child; and when the weather was decidedly cold old Mrs. Moudy had a little pot of burning charcoal over which she placed and warmed her feet, and we boyishly wondered that she did not smoke her shriveled person or fire her homely dress. —Folks were then apparently more hardy than now,



and could bear well and bravely no little of frost and cold. Dr. Smith in his history of Old Redstone—the name of the first Presbytery in Western Pennsylvania—states that the attempt to introduce fire in meeting-houses was attended in some instances with greater commotion than was the very risky attempt to displace Rouse's Psalmody by the metrical composition of Dr. Watts, and even "some physicians" were greatly opposed to the introduction of stoves into churches. But to return. On special occasions, such as Review or Muster or 4th of July, Davy James—who had one leg shorter than the other, and could move up and down as well as forward—was also here, or wherever the military and crowd went, with his table and something a thousand-fold more injurious than water. In the summer, and that it might be nice and cool, Mammy Crofty used to keep her mead or beer in a tub of water under the end of her table, and she would smilingly and expertly decanter it into a tumbler to any buyer—though we were never one of them, but only an occasional on-looker. We now see in fancy, what we then saw in reality, the bags of chestnuts that were there

8

offered for sale on election day, at a fip-penny-bit, or the small Spanish coin that formerly passed among us for 6¼ cents, a quart—though but few boys could then command so much, and what is now so little money. And we have there seen on Militia Day, the redoubtable Stilt-house Rangers go through their somewhat ludicrous exercises under that prince of Auctioneers, who was also a tender hearted constable and a skilled cooper, Captain Dicky Miles. How open, too, would the boys—especially in wet weather, when homeward bound from school, near Foulk's corner or at the old college, tarry a while at the market house to play Tickly-over ball, Loo-loo, Shinny, Marbles, Hop-Scotch, Tag, Pussy-wants-a-corner, Leap-the-frog, or Hammer and Block—and sometimes there would be a rough-and-tumble encounter, without however any apparent detriment to either party.

S In the open space south of the market-house, and east of the memorable pump, stood the platform scales for weighing hay, etc. in a frame building. The same scales had previously belonged to Mr. Logue, and we recollect when they stood on North street, south side, west of Hanover, near to

where is now Thudium's tavern; but they were afterwards purchased by the borough, and removed to the place here mentioned.

The old market-house was very substantially built, and stood through many years; but early on Friday morning, the 22nd of April, 1836, a violent storm of wind blew it down. It was considered a happy circumstance that the disaster did not occur at a time when the loss of life might have been very serious; as it was, no person was near it—though Banty Jim, the old colored shoe black, said he passed through it a short time before it fell, and in a serio-comic spirit some were disposed to charge him with returning at that very early hour from a raid on some chicken house.\* Soon afterwards temporary structures were put up along the south side of the south-west section of the public square, near to where the present Court House stands, and used until the new market-house was erected; which was constructed after the plan of the old one, not quite so high or wide, but much longer, ceiled and plastered, and extended entirely along the east and south sides of the south-east quarter of the public square, with the Market Master's office at

south-eastern, corner, and immediately out-side of the pavement at that corner stood the platform scales.

In subsequent years permanent benches were erected in the space of ground included in the angle on the north and west sides. This market-house was used as such till 1878, when the present large and handsome building was erected, at a cost of about \$24,000. The original amount in the contract was \$18,000, but afterwards alterations and additions were made that cost about \$6,000 more—so Capt. Brindle informed us, and he superintended the erection of it. During the erection a temporary building was put on the east side of Hanover street, between Main street and the front of St. John's Church, and stalls and benches were put up on the Court House section of the square and along the adjacent pavements.

In regard to the precise location and form of the last two old market-houses, we have here stated that which is reliably true—known to ourself and others, personally—and we will not admit the possibility of being mistaken.

J. A. MURRAY,  
Carlisle, 1881.

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\*There is a brief notice of the destruction

of the old market house in the AMERICAN VOLUNTEER, for Thursday, April 28, 1836, as follows, viz: "On Friday morning last, a little after five o'clock, a squall of wind levelled our spacious and heretofore supposed substantial market house to the ground. This occurrence, of course, has put our butchers, market folks, &c., &c., to considerable inconvenience for the present; but temporary markets and stalls are now being established for their benefit, until a new building shall be erected, which is now in contemplation by the Borough authorities, and which we trust will be speedily put under way."

