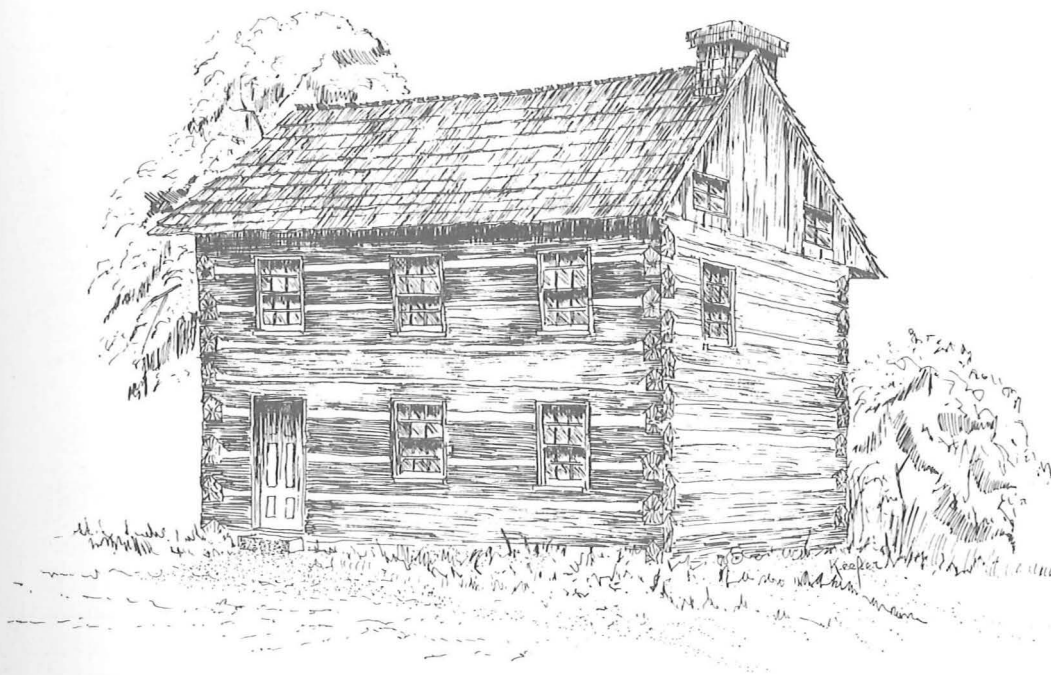


Cumberland County History



Frankeberger Tavern, Mechanicsburg

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The publications committee invites the submission of articles or notes dealing with all aspects of the history of Cumberland County. Articles may investigate new areas of research or may reflect past scholarship. Manuscripts should be submitted in two copies and should conform to the University of Chicago *Manual of Style*, 13th ed. Footnotes should be double-spaced and okaced at the end of the manuscripts typed and double-spaced to the Publications Chair, 21 N. Pitt Street, Carlisle, PA 17013.

Membership and Subscription

Cumberland County History is published semi-annually. All members of the Cumberland County Historical Society receive a copy of the journal as part of regular membership. The regular membership fee is \$15.00 annually. Members receive other benefits, including a quarterly newsletter, special invitations to programs and exhibits, and the satisfaction of joining with others to preserve county history. Correspondence regarding membership should be addressed to the Executive Director, Cumberland County Historical Society, 21 N. Pitt Street, Carlisle, PA 17013.

Cumberland County History



Volume I, Issue I
Summer 1984

published by the
Cumberland County Historical Society
and Hamilton Library Association
21 N. Pitt Street
Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013

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Message from the Publications Committee

This first issue of *Cumberland County History* inaugurates a new era in publishing for the Cumberland County Historical Society and the Hamilton Library Association. Publications, which have been a mainstay of the society's programming for more than a century, are an activity of great interest to the membership. Since its founding in 1874 the society has printed and made available several hundred individual titles. In addition, during the past decade the society reprinted all three of its county histories and the 1872 Cumberland County Atlas as well. Except for the planned reprint of the 1858 map of Cumberland County, from the actual surveys of H. F. Bridgens, all of the standard reference works now have been made available. For these efforts the society has received one national award from the American Association of State and Local History and is recognized as a leader in this field by its sister societies in the Pennsylvania Federation of Historical Societies.

The society is now ten years into its second century. And, although we are indebted to those who paved the way and who set high standards for us to follow, the time is right to do more than publish an occasional twenty-to-forty page booklet or monograph. During the past two years, ever since Robert Grant Crist first pressed the publications committee to make a commitment in this direction, we have carefully considered the advantages and disadvantages of publishing a journal. Except for a little more effort on the part of the committee and the need to recruit an editor, we soon realized that the advantages clearly outweighed the disadvantages.

The recommendation to the society's Board of Directors was based on the fact that among our society's important aims is the promotion of a wider interest in local history. A journal is seen as one way to reach a larger historically minded audience in Cumberland County. For one thing, it would regularize publication: exclusive dependence for occasional publications on papers delivered at the society's formal meetings had become at best precarious; further, these booklets or pamphlets, like third class mail, tended to go unnoticed and unfiled in library and other collections. For another, a journal would permit coverage of a greater variety of aspects of the county's history and culture and use of varying approaches, such as articles, short features on genealogy and the society's collections, reports of county-wide society activities, notes and documents, and book review essays, together with valuable or entertaining items that have not necessarily been the topics of delivered papers. Still another function of a journal would be to help move the society into the distinguished company of the societies in Lancaster, Norristown, Reading, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, which for many decades have produced informative and widely read journals of

continuing notice and value to historians and researchers. Publication of a journal, in sum, is a mark of the growing maturity of the Society, which has recently completed a successful endowment campaign. In terms of feasibility, it was concluded that the Society could publish a journal as contemplated for approximately the same cost as the occasional papers published in the past.

The articles in this issue primarily focus on the one hundred-year period between 1750 and 1850. To be sure, in future issues we plan not only to cover the history and culture of the county in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries but also to include features on the society's collections and on our sister societies in the county. In order to make this journal a success we need especially to hear from our readers regarding their interests.

Finally, we acknowledge our appreciation here to several persons who helped to insure that issue 1 of Volume I of *Cumberland County History* was published. Jennifer Esler, Executive Director, Cumberland County Historical Society, assisted me in the role of putting this issue together. Col. John B. B. Trussell, society member and Chief, Division of History, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, kindly agreed to serve as the first general editor. Special thanks are due to H. Leslie Bishop, Bishop Paper Company, Camp Hill, Pa., and Plank's Suburban Press, Camp Hill, Pa., for having underwritten the cost of issue number one.

March 17, 1984

Roland M. Baumann

Mechanicsburg's Frankeberger Tavern

A Search for Confirmation

William C. Davis

Towns often start in strange ways, following paths not first expected by their planners. The farther we are removed from those founding days, furthermore, the more difficult it becomes to reconstruct just how a town began. After the passage of a century or more, most tangible vestiges of the early days are gone and we are left with only the old myths and oral traditions. So it is with Mechanicsburg. Almost.

Some things we have always known. This modest Cumberland County trading and manufacturing village, situated on the old Trindle Road midway between Harrisburg and Carlisle, was incorporated in 1828 and named, we are told, for the "Village of Mechanics" there located. Of its earlier history little has been known other than a few names of founding fathers, some Indian legends, and stories of earlier names for the place like "Dry Town" and "Stoufferstown." Of physical remains of those early days there is only the old 1825 Union Church on East Main Street.

That is as much as was certain. Yet legend and physical remains have always combined on another site in Mechanicsburg, a partnership that, if correct, would take us back to the very founding of the village itself, to the very first citizen of what would become the town, and to the home in which he dwelled.

For as long as anyone can remember, there has stood at 217 East Main Street a moderately sized building, partly log, partly frame, with a large brick addition at the rear. It has served a number of purposes in our own time--apartments, private dwelling, boutique, carpentry shop. But along with it there has always gone the oral tradition that this was the "hotel" built by George Frankeberger in or around 1801, the first structure erected in what is now Mechanicsburg.¹

Local lore is often surprisingly correct. Yet it is also just as often mistaken, and only careful research into the surviving documentary records offers any real chance of separating fact from fiction.

The legend is easily confirmed. Prior to 1800, all of what is now the village of Mechanicsburg was the property of Leonard Fisher. It was mostly wooded then, and research has not established whether Fisher himself lived on any of the property that later became the town. What is certain is that on December 2, 1800, he sold twenty-one acres and three perches of his property to George Frankeberger.

It was a plot bisected by the Trindle Road--now Main Street--and including a "cross road."² That crossroad was then known as Meeting House Street, because it ran out to the Silver Spring Church. Today it is Walnut Street. Some time later Frankeberger (note there was no second "n" in the name, as legend has it) bought another twenty-eight acres and fifty perches from Fisher on April 3, 1804. This adjoined his first purchase and extended it westward toward present-day Market Street.³ Thus we know that George Frankeberger did own land here. Indeed, he owned most of the eastern half of the future town.

But did he operate a "hotel" here? Happily, Cumberland County in those days required all keepers of taverns and public houses to apply for a license and pay a fee. Just as happily, those old records survive, and thus we find that George Frankeberger made application before the June 1801 session of the Cumberland County Court of Common Pleas. To the court he attested:

That your petitioner has accomadated [sic] himself with a convenient house, and other necessary things for keeping a house of Entertainment, on the public road, commonly called Trunnel's road, about ten miles from the borough of Carlisle. That the said road is deserted, owing merely to the circumstances of the inconvenience attending Travellers, for want of Taverns.⁴

The same records show that Frankeberger applied for and received his tavern license every year thereafter until 1809.⁵ Then, on June 19, 1810, he sold all of his property to Jacob Stair and left the vicinity, though not the county.⁶

And so we know that George Frankeberger did, indeed, own and operate a tavern in the future Mechanicsburg from 1801 until, presumably, 1810 when he left. That much of the legend is correct.

And we also know that Frankeberger had his share of troubles with his patrons, as did any tavern keeper in those days of tight money and easy escape from debt. Certainly Frankeberger had problems with one guest, Robert Lowchild, who ran up a fair bill and then took off without paying it. Frankeberger had to advertise in the Carlisle press, warning Lowchild to come back and pay his debt or the clothes he had left behind would be sold.⁷ Business was tough, then as now.

But what about that little building at 217 East Main Street? Nothing in the documentary record specifically links it with Frankeberger or his tavern. Further, though the property would change hands many times in the next century, not all of the deeds were properly recorded in the county seat. This may not mean much, since very few deeds of the time made any specific reference to buildings, much less to their construction or past history. And the early tax records for those days rarely mention any buildings at all. So, in order to determine if this building had been built by Frankeberger and used

as his tavern, we are forced to rely largely upon our imagination in drawing the maximum possible information from what scanty resources survive.

There is a promising start in Frankeberger's first license application. He states that his house is "on the public road, commonly called Trunnel's road." That is today's Main Street. Further, since Frankeberger applied for a license in June 1801, his house must have been on that first tract bought from Fisher in 1800. He did not buy the second tract until three years later. This substantially narrows the possible sites for the tavern to a stretch of contemporary East Main Street bounded by Walnut on the east, and extending just beyond Race Street on the west. The little house at 217 stands right in the middle of this. So far, so good.

But was this building standing in 1801-1810? Physical examination of the structure easily confirms that the lower two floors of the front portion are of log construction, and of a style compatible with buildings erected in rural parts of the county at that time. But it might have been built as late as 1820, when a few log houses were still going up in Mechanicsburg. What is necessary, then, is to establish whether there were any other early buildings on this stretch of Main Street. If so, they would be equal candidates for the Frankeberger Tavern. If there were no others, then this must be the place.

There is an old cliché about it being an ill wind that blows no man good, and there is some truth in it. Often the misfortune of one provides an unexpected boon to another, and so it is now. It is all a part of the boom and bust story of the building of young America.

When Frankeberger sold out to Jacob Stair, there was still no real town as such, only his tavern--wherever that was--and a couple of tenant houses and the "Cumberland Wagon" tavern operated by Henry Stouffer near the intersection of Main and Market Streets today. That same year, 1810, Joseph Jones would open his "Sign of the Mermaid" tavern at the west end of the street, where the National Hotel has stood for so many years.

Yet there was no "town." John Goswiler intended to change that. On April 14, 1812, he bought from Stair all of the old Frankeberger property.⁸ At first he did nothing with it, but then in 1816 Goswiler began selling a series of large lots that he laid out on either side of East Main. He set aside one lot for a school, established a brick yard at the corner of East Main and Race, and was clearly ready to begin the work of town building and, incidentally, of making a handsome profit from the sale of his lots and the business his brickyard would get from new house building.

But it failed to work. By 1820 Goswiler was already in trouble. Many of his lots sat unsold. Purchasers of the others failed to pay for them, and no one was buying brick. Only one brick structure went up and, ironically, that was a tavern. While no record of the sale survives, it is clear that by April 1816 Goswiler had sold to Joel Henry a 1½ acre lot which encompassed the present site of 217 East Main. There Henry built a two-story house "known by the Name of the Brick Tavern."⁹ In 1818, when Christian Miller operated

the place for Henry, he advertised it as "The Sign of the Sorrel Horse," promising to offer good "Liquors, Eatables, &c" to those who might call.¹⁰

Unfortunately for Goswiler, Henry's business did not flourish. Whether he operated the tavern himself or leased it out to others, the return was never great enough for Joel Henry to pay Goswiler either for the land itself or for the brick that built the house. By 1822 Henry still owed Goswiler \$4,056.¹¹ Most of his buyers still owed Goswiler money, and now he could not pay his debts either. As a result, by 1825 all of his property had been seized by the sheriff and sold at public sale to satisfy Goswiler's creditors.

It could have been worse for Goswiler. He was allowed to keep one small lot for himself, and before the sheriff's sales he did manage to turn over much of his property to his father-in-law, Martin Rupp, who assumed and paid the outstanding debts, thus saving some of the inheritance of Goswiler's children and Rupp's grandchildren.

There were others, however, not to be so fortunate from this disaster. Goswiler's dream of starting a town here failed, and with him most of those who bought land from him also had to forfeit their lots at sheriff's sale. Mechanicsburg would really start to grow at the other end of Main Street, someone else's dream coming true in the wake of Goswiler's misfortune.

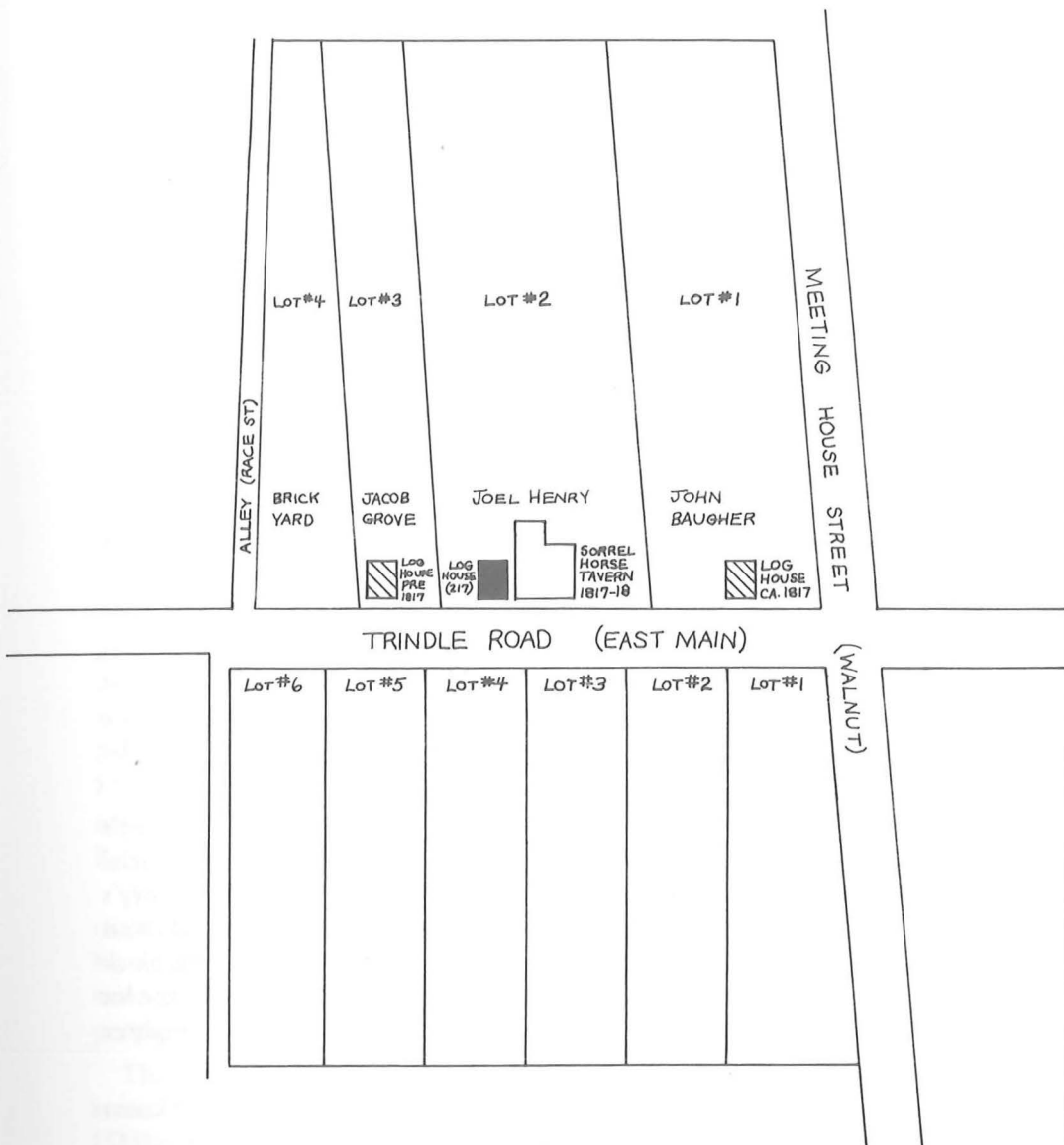
But the castastrophe that struck John Goswiler and many of his associates provided a welcome byproduct. Reticent as regular deeds of sale were in those days about a property, sheriff's sale records were wonderfully specific, detailing not only the number of buildings and sometimes their construction, but also outbuildings, and even wells and orchards. Here is a wealth of information indeed.

Every single Goswiler lot on the south side of East Main, on that stretch between Walnut and Race, was seized, and not one of them is described as containing structures of any kind.¹² Certainly, then, the Frankeberger Tavern building had not been on that side of the street or it would show up in one of the sheriff's descriptions. That leaves the north side.

There were only four lots on that north side. Goswiler's brickyard sat at the intersection of Race and Main Streets. Immediately next to it on the east was the lot of Jacob Grove. East of him lay Henry's lot, and beside Henry was a lot owned by John Baugher, bordering Walnut. One of these lots had to be the site of the original Frankeberger Tavern.

No structure was built on the brickyard lot in those early days. This is evident from the fact that, as late as 1823, by which time houses were being listed on the tax rolls, no structure of any kind appears on the tax list.¹³

But there was a house at the other end of the block, the Baugher property. Goswiler had sold most of this lot to Charles Godfrey on April 6, 1816, excepting only a small piece of it next to Henry's lot. This piece was sold to John Bobbs.¹⁴ Bobbs sold it to John Baugher, who shortly thereafter acquired Godfrey's part of the lot, as well. The 1817 tax rates show that



Shown here is that part of George Frankeberger's 1800 purchase which fronted both sides of the Tridle Road, as it appeared in 1824. The John Gosweiler lots are outlined and numbered as he sold them starting in 1816. As late as 1823, there were no buildings on the south side lots, and only four on the north--John Baugher's 1817 house, Jacob Grove's house dating from 1817 or earlier, the log building still standing at today's 217 East Main, and the Sorrel Horse Tavern, built 1817. The presumed Frankeberger Tavern is shown precisely where it sits today. The placement of the other buildings on their lots is conjectural, since no physical remains of them exist today. (Map drawn by Jennifer L. Warner)

there was a house on it.¹⁵ Then in 1821 it was seized from him and sold at sheriff's sale to Stephen Fulk.¹⁶

Here then is a house standing in the right vicinity that might be Frankeberger's. But in the Carlisle *American Volunteer* for August 26, 1819, we find that Baugher is advertising his house for sale, trying to raise money to pay his debts and prevent its seizure, no doubt. And he describes it as "A two story Log House" that "is nearly new."¹⁷ Obviously, the house must have been built between Baugher's purchase of the land in 1816 and its first appearance in the tax list in 1817. In any case, since the Frankeberger building would be eighteen years old by this time, it would hardly be described as "nearly new." Clearly this is not the site.

This leaves just two remaining lots, one of which had to contain the original tavern site, and most likely the tavern itself. One of them is the lot sold to Jacob Grove on April 6, 1816.¹⁸ One year later, in the 1817 tax survey, Grove's property is shown including a house.¹⁹ Either he built it in 1816-17, or else it was already there when he bought the property. Unfortunately, the tax lists for 1814 when Goswiler owned the land, and for 1811 when Stair owned it, do not include information about any buildings. Consequently, we know only that there was a house on this site as early as 1817. The lot was seized from Grove and sold at sheriff's sale November 30, 1830, and had at that time a two story log house.²⁰ This site, then, must be considered a possibility, and this two-story log house could possibly have been the Frankeberger Tavern.

What remains is Joe Henry's land, by far the largest of all of Goswiler's original lots, at 1½ acres. As already mentioned, Henry had his financial problems as well as Goswiler. The latter signed over the notes of Henry's that he held to his father-in-law, Martin Rupp, and by 1824 Rupp could wait no more for payment. On May 12, 1824, Henry's property went on the block at public auction, and it was Rupp himself who bought it. When sold, the lot contained "a two story brick House & stable & smith shop & slaughter House."²¹

The brick house is, of course, the Sorrel Horse Tavern, which we know from later maps sat next to and immediately east of the log house at 217 East Main. The stable would have been somewhere to the rear in what was a very big lot, about 750 feet deep. It seems unlikely that the slaughter house would have been right next to the Sorrel Horse, so it, too, was probably somewhere in the rear of the lot. The "smith shop," however, would illogically be located right on the street, since Henry's tavern, like Frankeberger's before it, was intended to cater largely to the wagoners who traveled the road to Carlisle. Almost certainly, that smith shop is the same building standing today at 217. And there is one thing further that is worth pointing out. The building of log houses in the Mechanicsburg area ceased almost completely after 1820, as people turned to brick and frame construction. Consequently, this log house that still stands today was almost

certainly erected prior to 1820. There is no reason that it could not have been converted from a tavern into a smithy.

Here, then, is the result of our searches. We know that George Frankeberger built and operated a tavern from 1801 to 1810. We know that it had to be located on East Main Street, between Race and Walnut. We know that as late as the early 1820's there were no houses of any kind on the south side of that stretch of Main, so the tavern had to be on the north side. And we know that there were only two lots on that side which had structures on them as early as 1817. (Of course, there is always the remote possibility that the Frankeberger building was burned, torn down, or moved elsewhere sometime between 1810 and 1817, in which case all of this reasoning would be moot. But no evidence has been found to suggest any such fate for the building.)

Which of the lots held the tavern? Which of the two log buildings--the one Grove had in 1817, or the one that stands today on the old Joel Henry property--was or is the Frankeberger Tavern?

We are left now only with logic. It is evident from the other deeds of sale of Goswiler's lots that Henry's lot was the very first one sold. It is also evident that Henry bought the property intending to use it for a tavern, since he built the Sorrel Horse there within a year or less of the purchase. Would it not make sense, then, that Henry would buy a lot that already had a building on it, and that one itself a former tavern? Consider, too, that the Henry log house stood closer to the Trindle-Meeting House Street intersection than the house on the Jacob Grove lot, and was thereby better located to attract crossroads traffic.

And finally there is always the long standing and persistent local oral tradition that this log house at 217 East Main is the Frankeberger Tavern. By itself, such legend is little more than that--legend. But combined with the now documented fact that the tavern did stand on this lot, or on the property next door, the tradition assumes much more authority.

There it is, then. We still have not found any record which specifically states that the building at 217 is one and the same as the Frankeberger. Likely, given the nature of the records of the time, we never will. But this is in the nature of history itself. Historians search as closely as they can, study their findings from many perspectives, and then reconstruct the past in the most logical and orderly fashion that the data allow. The result of all that process here is, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, the conclusion that the little log house that still stands is, in fact, the tavern built 183 years ago by George Frankeberger.

As such, it stands for a lot. It is, almost beyond question, the first building ever erected in what is now downtown Mechanicsburg. It represents Frankeberger's belief that the town might begin here around him. He was disappointed, as was John Goswiler, disastrously, in the 1820's. The town began elsewhere, and only later spread to East Main. But realized or not, the

house yet stands for all the men who dreamed, and won or lost. As such, it is a priceless treasure for all the community.

And today that whole community dreams--dreams that the old Frankeberger Tavern can be restored once more, saved from decay and returned to its 1801 appearance, there to stand as a symbol and a reminder of a time when a nation of dreamers was building not just Mechanicsburg, but a young America.

¹For a general statement of the tradition about the Frankeberger Tavern, see Norman D. Keefer, *A History of Mechanicsburg and the Surrounding Area* (Mechanicsburg, 1976), 19-20.

²Deed Book 1-P, Cumberland County Courthouse, Carlisle, Pa., 302.

³Deed Book 1-Q, 136.

⁴George Frankeberger License Application, 1801, Records of the Court of Quarter Sessions, Cumberland County, in the Cumberland County Historical Society, Carlisle.

⁵George Frankeberger License Applications, 1802, 1803, 1804, 1805, 1808, 1809.

⁶Deed Book 1-V, 545.

⁷*Weekly Gazette*, (Carlisle), December 7, 1804.

⁸Deed Book 1-II, 300.

⁹Christian Miller License Application, 1818.

¹⁰*American Volunteer*, (Carlisle), May 7, 1818.

¹¹Appearance Docket #8, November 1822 Term, Entry #321, Records of the Court of Quarter Sessions, Cumberland County Court House, Carlisle.

¹²Record of the several sheriff's sales appear in Appearance Dockets #7-10.

¹³1823 Triennial Tax Rates for Cumberland County, in the Cumberland County Historical Society, Carlisle. Listed under Mechanicsburg.

¹⁴Deed Book 1-FF, 539.

¹⁵1817 and 1820 Triennial Tax Rates. 1817 is listed under East Pennsborough Township; 1820 is listed under Mechanicsburg within the East Pennsborough listings.

¹⁶Appearance Docket #7, April 1821 Term, Entry #178.

¹⁷*American Volunteer*, (Carlisle), August 26, 1819.

¹⁸Deed Book I-LL, 404.

¹⁹1817 Triennial Tax Rates.

²⁰Appearance Docket #14, August 1830 Term, Entry # not noted.

²¹Appearance Docket #9, April 1824 Term, Entry #675.

Dunbar's March

William A. Hunter

Considering the time and the place, the first army seen in Cumberland County was of quite respectable size. Made up entirely of British regulars, it comprised two foot regiments, a detachment of artillery, and three independent (or unregimented) companies. With these units at less than full strength, the whole force numbered about twelve thousand.

The army appeared here at an opportune time. In the wake of General Edward Braddock's defeat, near the present Pittsburgh, on July 9, 1755, Pennsylvania was apprehensive of an invasion by the victorious French and their Indian allies; and the Provincial government, under Quaker influence, was ill prepared to oppose such an attack. Cumberland County, in particular, lay directly in the path of the threatened invasion. Unfortunately, the British army that made so timely an appearance here was Braddock's army, and it was marching in the wrong direction.

From the start, Pennsylvania had made no military contribution, either of troops or of munitions, to Braddock's expedition. In its unwillingness to make such a contribution, the Assembly had at first argued that it could not be proved that the new French forts lay within Pennsylvania's boundaries. Braddock's two regiments, the 44th and the 48th, brought from Ireland, had disembarked at Alexandria, Virginia, and then marched to western Maryland, where Fort Cumberland (the present city of Cumberland, Maryland) became the base for the expedition. The three independent companies (two from New York, one from South Carolina) had been sent there earlier; and there, too, the provincial soldiers of Virginia and Maryland and a few Indians and some volunteers from Pennsylvania joined Braddock's army.

Pennsylvania had agreed, however, to make a contribution in the form of provisions to feed Braddock's soldiers; and, faithful to this promise, had undertaken the two-fold task of collecting stores into the Cumberland Valley and of opening a road westward from the Valley so that the provisions could be delivered.

Edward Shippen of Lancaster, the founder and owner of Shippensburg, took a particular interest in the shipment of supplies. He made the practical suggestion that cattle for the expedition be collected at the Penns' Manor of Lowther in eastern Cumberland County; Tobias Hendricks, caretaker for the Manor, could look after them, and they could be grazed on the Penns' own pastures. More generously, Shippen offered his own buildings for storing supplies at Shippensburg. Charles Swaine was put in charge there, until the supplies could be moved on to a fortified magazine at McDowell's Mill (the present Markes, Franklin County, southeast of Fort Loudon).

The new road, running west from McDowell's Mill, was opened by workmen under the supervision of James Burd, Shippen's son-in-law, who lived at Shippensburg. It ran by way of the Sugar Cabbins (now Fort Littleton) west to Raystown (present Bedford), and then veered somewhat southward to join the line of Braddock's march. The workmen on this road were guarded by a company of Virginia troops under Captain Peter Hogg; so, though the road is referred to usually as Burd's Road, it was sometimes called Hogg's Road.

Braddock, meanwhile, pushed toward Fort Duquesne, advancing slowly over rough country. To avoid still further delay, he built no further forts or bases on the way and divided his army, pushing ahead with the main force while Col. Thomas Dunbar (of the 48th Regiment) followed with the slower supply train.

With the news of Braddock's defeat, on July 9, all proceedings in the campaign of course stopped. Dunbar heard the news the same day, from fugitives; and following the General's death on July 13, he commanded on the retreat to Fort Cumberland, where he arrived on July 21. Governor Morris of Pennsylvania, in Cumberland County to oversee the removal of the supply depot from Shippensburg to McDowell's Mill, heard the news on July 15; he marked the site for a fort at Carlisle, "in the middle of this town," ordered another built at Shippensburg, and hurried back to Philadelphia. James Burd, on the summit of the Allegheny Mountain, heard the news two days later, on July 17, but was still able to get to Fort Cumberland, with Captain Hogg, a day or two ahead of Colonel Dunbar.

Returning home to Shippensburg on July 24, Burd reported that Dunbar had decided to take the British troops into winter quarters; Burd had then offered to open a road from Fort Cumberland to Raystown (Bedford), but Dunbar had said he would march to the mouth of Conococheague, and asked Burd to meet him there. Charles Swaine also wrote from Shippensburg, reporting progress on the fort Governor Morris had ordered built, adding that Dunbar was expected to arrive there in twelve days (about August 6), and urging the Governor to have some of the British troops stationed at that place.

In appraising the subsequent actions of Colonel Dunbar and his troops, one should keep in mind the awkward problem of military command created by General Braddock's death. Braddock had been not only in command of the expedition against Fort Duquesne, but also the British commander-in-chief in America; so all decisions relating to the expedition could be made on the spot, without need to refer them to higher authority. With his death (and that of Colonel Sir Peter Halkett of the 44th Regiment) immediate command of the expedition had passed to Colonel Dunbar; the responsibilities of the commander-in-chief, however, passed temporarily to General William Shirley, who was then in the field in upstate New York. It had taken six days for the news of Braddock's defeat to come to Carlisle.

From here, important messages could travel faster, but additional days would be needed to deliver them to Shirley. And it was not a simple matter of letters exchanged between Dunbar and Shirley; Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia and Governor Morris of Pennsylvania wrote to both these officers, and so did other men, both in and out of government. In following the course of Dunbar's march, I shall spare you from this tangle of correspondence by reporting letters, for the most part, only as they were received by Dunbar.

Overshadowed by the disastrous defeat that preceded it, Dunbar's march has been given little attention by general historians, and if I have not found a single published account of it, this is not surprising. Even in the writings of that day, few documents mention it. A soldier's diary, discovered two hundred years after the event and published in 1959, covers the first seven days of the march, from Fort Cumberland into northern Virginia. From there, the general route of the march can be traced by a few of Dunbar's letters printed more than a hundred years ago in the *Pennsylvania Colonial Records*. There is little else but a few newspaper notices and two or three unpublished letters. For us, such interest as the march has lies not in general historical importance but in its relation to local places and events.



Dunbar, who had got to Fort Cumberland on July 21, left there with the British regulars on August 2. There had been rumors of his leaving earlier. In Annapolis, Maryland, it was reported on July 31 that he was to have marched two days before, for Raystown. Several days before this, Governor Dinwiddie had written Dunbar, urging him to undertake a second attack on Fort Duquesne, "to retrieve the Dishon'r done to the British Arms," and promising him "at least 400 Men" from Virginia. Dunbar acknowledged this letter on August 1, but marched the next day, leaving the Virginia and Maryland companies of Braddock's army to garrison Fort Cumberland. To Dinwiddie's great annoyance, he took with him not only the two regiments of regulars but also the three independent companies which, as Dinwiddie complained, had been sent to defend that part of the frontier before General Braddock took command.

In five days the army marched an estimated sixty-five miles to "the Widow Beringer's," near Winchester, Virginia. Seen on the map, this seems a strange way to march toward Philadelphia, which was Dunbar's professed destination. However, there was then no satisfactory road from Fort Cumberland through Maryland; so, from Fort Cumberland to the mouth of the Conococheague, Dunbar retraced the route that, circuitous as it appears, Braddock's regiments had taken on their original march from Alexandria.

At Beringer's, the army halted from August 6 to 8. The soldier diarist, who has been mentioned, took advantage of the day's layover and went to see the bright lights:

...I went to Winchester to see that City, it being four miles from our Camp. The City is very Smalle and have only been in Building 15 years. It Consists of 4 Cross Streets and for its defence it have 4 Pieces of Cannon of twelve Poundars Placed in the Center of the town, it beeing a bove a hundred miles from any town. In going to this Town I saw the most Turkey Bustards I ever saw in any one place in all my travels, there beeing so many one might have Shot six or Eight at one Shot.

Do defeated armies attract buzzards?

Here also Dunbar received a letter from Governor Morris, written a week earlier (two days before the army left Fort Cumberland), asking him to post part of his force "at or near the place called McDowell's Mill, at the Town of Shippensburg and the Town of Carlisle, which are in a very plentiful part of this Province, and where the Troops may be well supply'd." Dunbar thereupon assembled his staff, who agreed in the opinion "that the Governor's request...should be complied with." Reporting this decision, in a letter dated August 7, Dunbar wrote the Governor of his hope to "have the pleasure of meeting you at Shippensburg, where I hope to be about the 17th Instant, and as we pass leave a good Guard at McDowell's Mill."

It is not clear why Colonel Dunbar expected Governor Morris (and the Provincial Secretary, Richard Peters) to meet him at Shippensburg, where Dunbar arrived, as he had predicted, by August 17. On the 8th the army had marched nineteen miles down the Shenanoah valley to John Evans', about half-way to the Potomac. Here, unfortunately, the soldier's diary breaks off, and the daily progress of the army from this point can be only partially reconstructed; and we cannot even guess why the army seems to have taken a week to cover about 35 miles from Evans' to McDowell's Mill.

On August 15, apparently, and possibly at McDowell's Mill, Colonel Dundar received General Shirley's orders, dated August 6, to march the two regiments by way of Philadelphia to Albany, leaving only recruiting officers in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey as he passed through. It was Shirley's understanding that Dunbar had left the three independent companies at Fort Cumberland. By the time Dunbar received these orders,

Shirley, having heard from Governor Dinwiddie, had countermanded them, and authorized Dunbar to post troops on the frontier, but these later orders did not arrive until several days later. So, when Dunbar wrote to Governor Morris from Shippensburg on August 17, he had dropped the plan to garrison McDowell's Mill, Shippensburg, and Carlisle, though he still expected the Governor to meet him two days later, presumably at Carlisle.

(In 1758 the Rev. Thomas Barton, journeying west to join General Forbes' army, arrived at Shippensburg on the evening of July 20 and found there some Highland soldiers "incamp'd on a low Piece of Ground on the East Side of the Town, call'd Dunbar's Encampment.")

James Burd had met Dunbar at Shippensburg, and from that place accompanied him to the Susquehanna. At Shippensburg Dunbar had heard of adverse criticism of his conduct, not on the present march but on the retreat to Fort Cumberland after Braddock's death. An unnamed "Gentleman in the Army," undoubtedly with Dunbar's approval, defended him in a long letter to Philadelphia, where, some days later, it was published in Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette*.

Other reminders of the misfortune on the Ohio showed up at Shippensburg, in the guise of four Indians -- three women and a man --, some of those who, after the French victory, had settled at George Croghan's place at Aughwick (present Shirleysburg); some frontiersmen brought them to Dunbar, who, probably not knowing what else to do with them, took them along with him. Two more Indians, a man and a boy, joined him later -- possibly at Carlisle -- and on the following day, at the Susquehanna, he delivered them all to one of their chiefs, the Belt of Wampum, who identified them as friends and relatives.

Dunbar and his army were at Carlisle on August 19. The Governor did not meet him there, of course, and we have no record of what he did while there. He probably crossed the Susquehanna the next day, and on August 21 he was at Pine Ford on Swatara Creek, at the present Middletown. By this date he had General Shirley's orders of August 12. Having by that date received Governor Dinwiddie's proposal for a new attack on Fort Duquesne, Shirley now ordered Dunbar to make that attempt with provincial support; failing this, he was to dispose his troops "to cover the Frontiers of the Provinces, particularly at the Towns of Shippensburg and Carlisle, and at or near a place called McDowell's Mill, where the New Road to the Allegheny Mountains begin in Pennsylvania."

Even for a more decisive and sanguine officer, such orders came late. Dunbar duly consulted his officers and from Pine Ford sent Shirley their opinion that an attempt on Fort Duquesne was impractical.

It was not merely impractical: at such a time, to such an army, the proposal was unrealistic and ridiculous. General Shirley should not be criticized too severely: he had not seen the army, and he could not have

known where, on its route of march, his orders would reach it. The orders came too late; whether anything might have been done while Dunbar's men were still on the frontier, there literally could be no turning back now.

The army rested at Lancaster. On August 24 James Burd, back home at Shippensburg, wrote his father-in-law, Edward Shippen, that "I went over Susquahanna with Coll. Dunbar & the Troops"; and Shippen, replying from Lancaster four days later, wrote that "Col^l Dunbar lodged with us two nights; they encamp't last night [August 27] at wooly bergen who keeps the white horse 25 miles on this side of Philad^a." The stop at Lancaster is also referred to in the petitions Peter Schaur and John Brubacker later submitted to the Assembly, requesting payment for the damage done their meadows by the horses and cattle belonging to the army.

Writing from the White Horse Tavern, on August 27, Dunbar advised Governor Morris that he expected to reach Philadelphia on "Friday or Saturday next." John F. Watson, the Philadelphia annalist, says that Dunbar was nicknamed "the Tardy"; but in matters like this he could be prompt enough: The army arrived on Friday, August 29, and went into camp on Society Hill (near Pine and Second streets).

It remained there for a month, from August 29 to October 1; and its accomplishments during that time are adequately reported in Benjamin Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette*, in the issue for Thursday, September 25:

...on Monday Evening, the Gentlemen of the Army, daily expecting Orders to march, made a grand Entertainment and a Ball for the Ladies and Gentlemen of the City, at the State-House; where every thing was conducted with the greatest Decorum and Elegance.

Yesterday there was a general Review of the two Regiments and the Independent Companies, now encamp'd near this City. One of the Field Pieces was discharged ten Times in less than a Minute.

Though the long march did not end at Philadelphia -- there remained one hundred miles to New York, and one hundred fifty more to Albany --, there is nothing left to be said. Born of defeat, the march had progressed through inconsequence to obscurity--and from a bloody rout to decorous ball. Dunbar had not rallied the army after its defeat, he had not mounted a second campaign against the enemy, he had not set garrisons on the frontier. His failure to do these things may be blamed partly on the division of command, with the confused and delayed exchange of letters that it entailed; but it must also be blamed on the condition, the morale, of the army itself. No one who saw these troops on their march complained of their failure to undertake anything further. Writing to the Proprietaries on October 23, Governor Morris passed over Dunbar's military failures and criticized him only for taking the three independent companies with him on the march.

If Colonel Dunbar and his army were disappointing to the Province as a whole, they must have been especially so to Cumberland County. Twelve hundred men could not have marched the length of the Cumberland Valley, along the frontier from the Potomac to the Susquehanna, without making a strong, if mixed, impression. What wavering hopes and apprehension their approach stimulated, what disillusion their appearance brought, we can only imagine. To the growing concern that followed their departure, James Burd referred briefly when writing from Shippensburg to his father-in-law: "the People here seem very uneasy since the Departure of the troops I Can't tell what it will turn to."

Fifteen days after Dunbar's army left Philadelphia, hostile Indians made their first attack on the Pennsylvania settlements, at Penns Creek, near the present Selinsgrove; and a month after his departure they attacked the borders of the present Franklin County. No British detachments had been stationed there, and Colonel Dunbar and his men were safe at Albany.

“The Rage of Opposing Government”:

The Stump Affair of 1768*

Linda A. Ries

A 1768 Cumberland County incident created political dissension in the Pennsylvania Assembly, promoted bickering between provincial authorities over legal procedures, nearly caused an Indian war, and left frontier residents in shock. A backcountry settler, Frederick Stump, and his accomplice, John Ironcutter, murdered ten Indians in cold blood. The principals were captured but dramatically released from the county jail at Carlisle by a cheering mob, never to be heard from again. For months afterward, repercussions were felt from Carlisle to London.

Despite the Stump Affair's impact on Pennsylvania's colonial history, scholars have given it cursory treatment. Many early Cumberland County histories simply describe the event as an interesting local incident. Conway Wing's 1879 *History of Cumberland County* and Warner and Beers' 1886 *History of Cumberland and Adams Counties* devote about one page to it. Recent essays by scholars have relegated the Stump Affair to a significance behind more notorious Pennsylvania frontier vigilantism, the 1763 Conestoga Massacre and the 1765 Sideling Hill Affair. Only when superficially supporting a larger topical theme, or as a convenient vehicle to discuss colonial Pennsylvania's political or legal processes, is it even mentioned.¹ As a result, facts and details concerning the case have become obscured. Scholarly treatments of certain aspects suffer from confusion, neglect, and in some cases, falsification.² Most often ignored has been the identification of Stump, Ironcutter, and the men who rescued them from jail. The story needs to be correctly told and explained so that it can be accorded a proper niche in county and regional history.

I

The legislation creating Cumberland County in 1750 defined it as including everything west of the Susquehanna River and north of Maryland, excepting York County. The Cumberland County of 1768 was a huge, sparsely populated territory. Residents of this sprawling wilderness were primarily of Scotch-Irish and German stock. Geographically, much of Cumberland was in Pennsylvania's ridge and valley province, making communication, travel, and government administration slow and difficult. Government of this vast expanse emanated from the county seat, Carlisle. This growing town, located in the center of the Great Valley which stretched west and south into Virginia, was a frequent stopping place for soldiers, Indians, traders, and settlers. Neither the frontier nor civilization,

Carlisle was in that geocultural locale referred to by Easterners as the back-country, combining newly cleared lands and permanent farmsteads.³

Beyond Carlisle, to the north and west, lay the frontier, containing ruder, temporary structures and uncleared lands. The recent French and Indian War and Pontiac's "Rebellion" had ravaged the county's frontier populace. Residents with relatives killed or property destroyed by Indians were living with bitter memories. Apart from war, independent incidents of violence between frontiersmen and Indians frequently occurred. Most infamous of these was the Conestoga Massacre of 1763 in Lancaster County. Christianized Indian men, women, and children at Conestoga were slaughtered by men from Paxton Township who claimed they were supplying their brethren on the frontier with information to aid Pontiac's followers. The "Paxton Boys" could not be caught or tried, for they simply vanished into the wilderness. They reappeared briefly a few months later to petition their grievances against the government, but the issue was never resolved.⁴

Another well-known incident was the Sideling Hill Affair of 1765. It began when James Smith and other Conococheague Valley settlers of Cumberland County feared that Philadelphia merchants traded guns to Indians at Fort Pitt in return for pelts. Because the Six Nations had not yet signed the treaty ending Pontiac's War, frontiersmen considered these merchants to be aiding the enemy. Smith and his friends blackened their faces, dressed as Indians, and attacked loaded pack trains heading west. The Black Boys 'inspected' carriages for weapons, permitting other merchandise to go on. They even besieged and ousted the royal garrison at Fort Loudoun. Their illegal activities did not cease until the treaty was signed.⁵

One less thrilling Cumberland County incident is worth mentioning. In 1760, Doctor John, a Delaware Indian, and his family were murdered near Carlisle, supposedly due to an insulting remark against whites made by John as he drank at a local tavern. The guilty were never caught.⁶

The Pennsylvania government's ineffectiveness in dealing with such miscreants was due to the topography as well as the residents themselves. In the unsettled, uncharted frontier, it was easy to hide. If criminals could be captured, sympathetic juries of their fellow residents often acquitted them. "It is a fact," declared Thomas Gage, commander of royal forces in the colonies, "that all of the People of the Frontiers from Pennsylvania to Virginia inclusive, openly avow, that they will never find a Man guilty of Murther for Killing an Indian."⁷

It was in this environment in January 1768 that William Blyth heard of the murder of some friendly Indians in his neighborhood. Blyth, a lieutenant of Provincial forces during the French and Indian War, was a resident of Penn Township (now Snyder County), living near the junction of the Susquehanna's north and west branches. On January 12, he and friends traveled to the house of George Gabriel at the mouth of the Big

Mahoney, or John Penn's, Creek (Selinsgrove). Gabriel operated a grist mill, whose location on the Susquehanna River made it a favorite community gathering spot. There they listened as Frederick Stump told how and why he had killed ten Indians in the previous two days. Blyth's later deposition before provincial authorities provides the only detailed account of the crimes.⁸

Stump lived with his indentured servant, John Ironcutter, at the mouth of Middle Creek, just above its confluence with Penn's Creek, not far from Gabriel's Mill. Some Indians, White Mingo (Seneca), Cornelius and John Campbell (Mohican), and Jonas Griffy (Stockbridge), visited Stump while alone at his cabin January 10. Two of them were accompanied by their wives. Considered friendly by local residents, White Mingo, otherwise known as John Cook, came from near Diahoga, an Indian town on the north branch of the Susquehanna. He was a leader of some renown. According to Stump, they arrived at his house drunk and demanded rum. Fearing "that they intended to do him some Mischief," he waited until they fell into a drunken sleep, then killed all six. He dragged their bodies to the frozen Susquehanna, broke the ice, and pushed them in. To avoid retaliation by other Indians, Stump, with Ironcutter, proceeded the next day about fourteen miles up Middle Creek (Middleburg). They found two cabins inhabited by the wife of one of the murdered men, two girls, and a female infant. Stump killed three of them and Ironcutter one. William Blyth later told Edward Shippen of Lancaster that Ironcutter "assisted by order of his Master."⁹ Leaving the bodies inside the cabins, the two men burned the structures. A stream near the massacre site, not far from the present Snyder County Courthouse, was often afterward referred to as Stump's Run.¹⁰

Blyth sent four men up Middle Creek. They found the charred cabin logs, among which rested blackened human bones, verifying the grisly story. A month later, the Cumberland County Coroner and a magistrate held an inquest on the remains of an Indian found floating in the Susquehanna in Allen Township (near New Cumberland). Presuming the body to be one of Stump's victims, they surmised how he died: "He was struck, it appears to Us, two or three times with the Pole End of a Tomahawk on his forehead, which broke his skull. There was also a large Scalp taken off his head, which took both his ears."¹¹ William Blyth immediately travelled to Philadelphia, and on January 19 swore his deposition before Governor John Penn and his Provincial Council, detailing Stump's account and the corroborative evidence which had been found.

Only a few contemporary documents hint at identifying Frederick Stump and explaining his behavior. One, the proclamation for his capture a few weeks after the murders, provides a physical description: "about thirty-three years old, 5'8", black hair," and "thin-visaged" with "small black eyes with a Down-cast Look." It also states he was from Heidelberg Township, Lancaster County and spoke "the German language well, and the English but indifferently."¹²

Many contemporaries were already acquainted with this man due to an incident two years earlier. In the summer of 1766, Stump had been a squatter near Fort Augusta (Sunbury). All land around the fort at that time belonged to the Six Nations. When local Indians complained of this encroachment, Colonel Tench Francis, commanding at Augusta, confronted Stump. Stump asserted he had the governor's permission to own the land and had even paid John Penn £100 for it. His claim was not only untrue, but illegal. One provision of the Crown's Proclamation of 1763 was that no subject could settle or purchase land from Indians without the King's consent. William Penn's original land policies also stipulated that settlers in his colony could not buy land directly from Indians. Governor Penn had never agreed to such a bargain with Stump, and fervently denied it in a letter to his uncle Thomas Penn, the colony's proprietor, in London. Incredulous at Stump's audacity, he wrote, "He had made the Indians believe I had taken money of him for the land."¹³ Penn quickly issued a proclamation stating he never accepted money from Stump "or any other ill-disposed persons" and ordered all squatters off Indian lands.¹⁴ Colonel Francis had soldiers burn the squatter's cabin and corn crop, a common practice when evicting illegal landholders. This could not have endeared the government of Pennsylvania to Frederick Stump. Two years later, John Penn would write Thomas that "this is the same person...Col. Francis had driven from a Settlement he made at Shamokin some time ago. He is acknowledged to be one of the greatest Villians in the Country."¹⁵

Very little can be deduced about the life of Frederick Stump before this incident. Tax records and deeds offer little help because of the commonness of his name. Several Frederick Stumps were then living between Berks, Cumberland, and Lancaster Counties. The proclamation for his capture stated he was from Heidelberg Township, Lancaster County (though one wonders why it did not state Penn Township, Cumberland County, where his cabin was at the time of the crimes. A Frederick Stump is listed on a 1768 tax assessment for Penn Township as owning five acres and one Negro).¹⁶ Local historian Ezra G. Crumbine placed him as the first son of Christian Stump of Heidelberg Township. This same Frederick Stump is also credited by Grumbine with founding the town of Stumpstown in Bethel Township, Lancaster (now Fredericksburg, Lebanon) County in 1761. A dissenter to this is William Henry Egle, who, in his 1883 *History of Dauphin and Lebanon Counties*, vehemently denied any relation between the killer and Stumpstown's founder. But he provided no justification and the tone of his writing sounds as if he were making excuses rather than reporting historical fact.¹⁷

According to deeds at the Lancaster County Courthouse, a Frederick Stump of Heidelberg Township purchased the land which became Stumpstown in 1761. He received a license to operate a tavern there in 1762. He sold eight plots for land in Stumpstown until 1765, when entries in the deed index referring to him end abruptly.¹⁸ The last deed, in May

1766, states his land in Heidelberg Township was seized by the Sheriff and sold at auction. In the deed, the Sheriff interestingly mentions "Frederick Stump, late of my county, yeoman, otherwise called Frederick Stump of the town of Heidelberg."¹⁹ Reasons are not given for his departure, but the date of May 1766 is two months before the squatter's appearance at Fort Augusta.

Grumbine suggested that Stump incurred excessive debts and skipped town to escape his creditors.²⁰ This may be true, for one 1761 deed is for land given by Stump as collateral for a debt owed to one Mathias Bush of Philadelphia. In the Sheriff's sale of Stump's land in 1766, Mathias Bush was the purchaser. Whatever the reasons, this Stump probably did not quit the area under happy circumstances.

Less can be said about John Ironcutter. The proclamation for Stump's capture also lists Ironcutter, describing him as about nineteen years old, 5'6", newly arrived from Germany, and speaking very little English. He was a "thick clumsy fellow, round-shouldered." By 1768, he had somehow become Stump's servant, replacing the Negro on the Penn Township tax list.

Considering Stump's motive, historians have claimed that he was "obviously frightened" of White Mingo and his entourage, and killed out of self-defense or revenge.²¹ This explanation, while convenient, is not satisfactory. Most patently erroneous is a story offered in 1938 by George Dunkelberger in *The Story of Snyder County*. He relates with great detail how Frederick Stump, a pioneer, left his wife, Anna, and their children while he went off to fight in the French and Indian War. Returning, he found them all slaughtered. This planted his hatred for Indians and he therefore used the opportunity in 1768 for revenge. An earlier version of this tale is also offered by Ezra Grumbine.²² Proof of this event has yet to be found. Though some of the Lancaster deeds for Stumpstown mention a woman, Ann, as wife to Frederick Stump, all other contemporary documents are silent on his having children, his family being killed, or his participation in the war.

These historians most likely took their cue from Frederick Stump himself--according to Blyth's deposition, Stump said he became "fearful they intended to do him some Mischief." But probably few contemporaries believed this an adequate reason to provoke ten deaths that included women and children. "Stump must have made the Indians dead drunk," figured Governor Penn, "otherwise he could not have done the business alone, as any one of the men were an equal match for him had they been sober."²³ Col. John Armstrong also stated after their capture that "I take to be false" Stump and Ironcutter's story.²⁴ In addition, Stump had scalped at least one of his victims, pointing to malicious slaughter rather than self-defense.

The manner in which Stump's victims died and the number killed implies an almost psychopathic hatred of Indians. Part of the motive may have been

that he shared the racist attitude common among frontiersmen. Beyond obvious differences of lifestyle, religion, and language, many Europeans held a supremacist view about a culture they deemed almost subhuman. But cultural differences alone cannot explain why Frederick Stump committed ten murders, an extreme reaction in any society. His reason is lost to history, and is probably moot, for it was the act of murder rather than its provocation which was the catalyst for the events that followed.

II

Stump's crime shocked the colony. Upon hearing William Blyth's deposition, provincial authorities in Philadelphia knew that, without immediate and firm action, Stump's act might cause the Six Nations to take to the warpath. Relationships with the Six Nations were already troubled. The 1765 Peace Treaty ending Pontiac's War was already threatened from recent white intrusions on Indian lands in Pennsylvania. Frontiersmen in late 1767 had made settlements at Redstone Creek on the Monongahela River and surveyed Indian lands near the Great Island on the Susquehanna River without permission from the tribes or the Pennsylvania government.²⁵ Also, the Six Nations were at war with the Cherokee to the south, creating problems for whites trading with various tribes. Additionally, the Six Nations continually complained that the Pennsylvania government had done nothing to compensate them for the 1763 Conestoga Massacre. The entire situation was so tense that Sir William Johnson, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Northern Colonies, reported that "Upon the Whole I see nothing but a general tendency to a Rupture which I am at a loss how to prevent."²⁶ Governor John Penn and his Council were deliberating action on these developments and discussing a possible new land purchase from the Six Nations when William Blyth arrived with his gloomy news.

This new situation demanded special care to "give them [the Six Nations] full satisfaction at all times for all wrongs done to the Indians, and to preserve the Faith and Friendship subsisting between us and them inviolable." Pennsylvania's Provincial Council, therefore, advised Governor John Penn to initiate measures for Frederick Stump's speedy capture. Penn immediately notified General Thomas Gage and Sir William Johnson, explaining the situation and warning them to prepare for war. He specifically asked Johnson to inform the Six Nations' leaders in "the best and most favourable manner in his Power, so as to prevent their taking immediate Resentment...and to assure them of the firm and sincere purposes of this Government." Penn then sent letters to the sheriffs of Cumberland, York, Berks, and Lancaster Counties, telling them to guard their borders for Stump and Ironcutter. If captured, they were to be sent to Philadelphia to be examined by one of the supreme court justices. The council also advised the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, William Allen, to issue a warrant for the arrest of Stump and Ironcutter. Allen's warrant

called for apprehension of the criminals, and for the county sheriff to immediately take them to him or any of the other justices of Oyer and Terminer. The request in Allen's warrant and Penn's orders to transport the prisoners to Philadelphia would later cause much difficulty.

While the council was in session, a Delaware Indian from the Great Island on the West Branch of the Susquehanna, Billy Champion, happened to be in Philadelphia. The council summoned him and asked that he deliver a message to Newoleeka, the leader there. They stressed to Champion that the deed was entirely the work of one man and had no support from the Pennsylvania government. Giving him a new set of clothing as a gesture of good faith, they sent him on his way. The governor later sent a similar message to the Indian town of Wighaloosin (Wyalusing), asking Indians there to pass the information on to Diahoga, the home of White Mingo. Finally, John Penn issued a proclamation describing Stump and Ironcutter, offering £200 reward for Stump's capture, and authorizing detention of Ironcutter as a possible accomplice. Publication of the proclamation was delayed one week to give the county sheriffs a better opportunity for capture. Secrecy was essential to prevent any sympathetic backwoodsmen from hearing the news and shielding the criminals.²⁷

But on the frontier, news of the killings spread, and so did fear of war. "I am extremely sorry to inform you that an Indian war seems inevitable and it is drawn upon us by the Villany and wickedness of our own people," wrote John to Thomas Penn. William Blyth had also told the governor that many people had deserted their farms on the upper Susquehanna, "as this affair has thrown them into a very great consternation."²⁸ The newspaper *Pennsylvania Journal* helped increase apprehension by printing a letter supposedly from a frontier inhabitant. It stated that just prior to the murders, Indians along the Juniata River had declared "it would be best for the inhabitants thereabouts to fly that country, unless they chose to be scalped."²⁹ After the killings, fear of Indian retaliation ran so high that some whites near Fort Augusta prevented a hunting party of Tuscaroras from returning to their home in New York with the information. Sir William Johnson observed that this detention might have opposite the desired effect on the Six Nations, for it would merely "increase their resentment." The Tuscaroras were released only when official announcement of the crime reached the Six Nations through Johnson shortly thereafter.³⁰

That Stump had scalped one of his victims added to the Six Nations leaders' anger after receiving Johnson's letter. Scalping was seriously regarded as an act of contempt by both Indians and whites. An Indian agent at Fort Pitt, Alexander McKee, reported Indians there as saying "the English are certainly determined to make war on us, or otherwise they would not scalp our people--the Scalping those Indians is worse than murdering."³¹

Before the governor's proclamation and letters or the chief justice's warrant could reach Cumberland County, however, Stump and Ironcutter were captured. On his own initiative, William Patterson, a Tyrone Township (Cumberland County) resident living near the Juniata River, organized a posse. A former militia captain during the French and Indian War, he paid about twenty local farmers out of his own pocket.³² At least some of the backcountry residents did not sympathize with Stump and Ironcutter, for they no doubt realized the best way to prevent a war was to capture them as soon as possible. The group rode to Gabriel's Mill on January 21, where the criminals were still holed up. The men circled the building and Patterson employed a ruse, declaring that they had come to kill the Indians at the Great Island, the nearest large settlement, and invited the two Germans to join them. Believing this ploy, Stump and Ironcutter emerged from the building, only to be bound and chained. The prisoners were taken to the county jail at Carlisle, and Patterson sent a message to the Great Island, telling Indians there of the capture in hopes of calming them. He sent a similar note to John Penn and eventually received the £200 reward.³³

Stump and Ironcutter arrived at the jail on Saturday, January 23. Earlier that same day, the official proclamation, warrant, and sheriff's letter had arrived at Carlisle. In compliance with the governor's orders, John Holmes, the county sheriff, prepared to take the prisoners to Philadelphia. As the county court was then in session, all magistrates were present. A few of them questioned the legality of sending Stump and Ironcutter to Philadelphia. Though the official documents stated that Stump was only to be examined in Philadelphia, the justices and other interested citizens feared he would also be tried, thereby violating their civil liberties. Colonial Americans strongly felt all crimes should be tried in the county of their origin by a jury of peers, an idea inherited from British common law. This concern was made known to the senior magistrate, Col. John Armstrong. Armstrong had a reputation as an Indian fighter, held several public offices, including land surveyor for the Penn Family, Chief Justice of Oyer and Terminer, and others, and commanded much respect in the backcountry and elsewhere. The lawyers urged Armstrong to examine the prisoners himself and keep them in jail.

The rumor that Stump and Ironcutter would be transferred to Philadelphia was spreading rapidly. The Colonel knew that frontiersmen were quite capable of taking matters into their own hands, as had the Black Boys and others. A rescue was a real prospect, most likely while Sheriff Holmes escorted the prisoners on the road to Philadelphia. Swift action on the part of authorities was crucial. At this time, though, the frozen Susquehanna melted and began to flood, making fording impossible. Feeling that Holmes would be most vulnerable to a rescue attempt while waiting on the banks of the river, Armstrong judged it safer to keep the

prisoners in Carlisle until the waters receded. Despite Sheriff Holmes' protests that he had orders from a superior authority, Armstrong examined Stump and Ironcutter himself and had them committed to jail. Two other officials, John Miller and William Lyons, Armstrong's son-in-law, also signed the commitment. The Colonel then summoned all other justices to Carlisle Wednesday, January 27, to discuss the matter. The following day he sent a letter to John Penn, giving reasons for the delay and adding:

...an Alarm is raised in the minds of many, touching their Priviledges in this and in any future case, which they alledged would be infringed by this Measure...that these Men would not be remanded for Tryal to the County where the Fact was committed, but the Whole Process carried through at Philadelphia.³⁴

While the justices were in council on January 27, a threatening note was thrown on Armstrong's porch, and later a large party of armed men rode into Carlisle and began milling about the jail. They left only when assured by authorities that Stump and Ironcutter would not be taken to Philadelphia.³⁵

Replying swiftly and indignantly to Armstrong's letter, John Penn claimed that the prisoners were to be brought to Philadelphia merely for examination, not trial. He further wrote:

I am astonished at the impertinent insolence of those who have taken upon them to Suggest or even to suppose that the Government or Judges intended to do so illegal an Act as to Try the Prisoners in any other County or place than where the Fact was committed.

He demanded the prisoners be brought to Philadelphia at once.³⁶

Though Penn and later Chief Justice William Allen publicly denied ever intending to try Stump in Philadelphia, this probably was their desire. Frederick Stump's trial and public execution would be the very thing to stop an Indian war before it began. The Pennsylvania government most likely wished to transfer the prisoners because it was convinced that a Cumberland County jury would acquit them. A Philadelphia jury might not be so sympathetic. The government had attempted this in 1764 regarding the possible trials of the Paxton Boys. Backcountry men complained, however, adding this to their list of grievances against the government. It would "deprive British subjects of their known Privileges and contradict the well known laws of the British Nation."³⁷ No doubt the persons who complained to Armstrong remembered the government's 1764 tactic. With Stump, authorities tried to be more discreet.

William Allen explained to Thomas Penn the rationale for moving Stump. He wanted to question the criminal as to exactly where the deaths occurred, for they were quite close to the line dividing Cumberland and

Berks Counties, and therefore the area claiming jurisdiction in the case was in question:

I with the advice of the friends of the Government issued a warrant to apprehend Stump and bring him to this place, that a thorough examination might be made how the fact stood, and whether he had any accomplices, imagining that would be done with more care than by any of the County Justices and another matter presented its self that it was uncertain what County the fact was committed...The fact committed by Stump appears to be within the county of Berks but as the Divinin [*sic*] line between that county, and Cumberland had not been extended across the river Susquehannah it had before this been still reputed Cumberland.³⁸

In reality, the murders occurred a few miles within the limits of Penn Township in Cumberland County, as Allen and other officials must have known. Nicholas Scull's 1759 map of Pennsylvania, to which authorities had access, plainly shows Gabriel's mill and Middle Creek both within the borders of Cumberland.³⁹ As he no doubt knew the area, William Blyth could have helped clear the fact. The concern over county borders as a reason for examination in Philadelphia was simply a rationalization to get Stump under the control of provincial authority rather than a legitimate regard for legal procedure. "Sir William Johnson writes me that in case Stump is executed, the Indians may be induced to look upon this exact affair as it is, a private offence," wrote Thomas Penn.⁴⁰ Making an example of an Indian killer also might help quell incidental violence by frontiersmen.

But by the time Armstrong received Penn's order to send Stump and Ironcutter to Philadelphia, it was too late--the prisoners had been freed from Carlisle jail. The most detailed eyewitness account of the rescue is from James Cunningham's deposition before the Provincial Council on February 4. Cunningham was a Lancaster County farmer. A detailed second-hand account is provided in a February 16 letter to the *Pennsylvania Gazette* by the Reverend George Duffield of Carlisle's First Presbyterian Church.⁴¹ About ten A.M. on January 29, John Armstrong and Cunningham breakfasted across the street from the jail, a stone building near the town square. Seventy to eighty (Duffield states fifty to sixty) men brandishing guns and tomahawks suddenly rode into town, surrounded the prison, and demanded the release of Stump and Ironcutter. Armstrong, Sheriff Holmes, another Presbyterian minister, the Reverend John Steel, and other authorities ran to the jail entrance and pleaded with the men to leave. They used "many arguments to persuade them to desist from their Lawless undertaking, and told them, among other things that they were about to do an Act which would subject themselves and their Country to Misery."

Armstrong repeatedly tried to enter, declaring they would kill him before they released the prisoners, but the mob pulled him back. The officials were too late, for before the crowd arrived, a few of the group had gone ahead and got inside the jail. Duffield explained how in his version:

They sent in two of their number a little before the body, who, going into the room of the jail, called for a dram, and got it. The jailor discovering some arms on them, immediately ran to the door and shut it, but was met by three more, who bolted in armed, seized him; carried him to a different room, set a guard on him and threatened him severely, if he should stir...then they constrained a girl to get them the keys, lighted a candle, went down to the dungeon (tho' without crow bar, axe, or any such instruments) opened the door and brought out the prisoners.

When Stump and Ironcutter appeared at the entrance, a great cheer went up. Sheriff Holmes tried to grab Stump, but was pushed away. After having found a blacksmith and forced him to remove the prisoners' chains, the group rode off toward Sherman's Valley, northwest of Carlisle over North Mountain. Before leaving, they gave their reasons for the rescue: that Stump would be taken to Philadelphia for trial, and "that a number of White Men have been killed by the Indians since the Peace [1765 Treaty of Pontiac's War] and the Indians have not been brought to Justice." They promised to return the prisoners only if assured by John Penn or William Allen that they would be tried in Cumberland County. Reverend Steel was told to meet them at the farm of one John Davis, two miles north of town, to discuss terms. Steel, Sheriff Holmes, Colonel Armstrong, and William Lyons immediately rode to Davis', but no one was there. The following Monday, John Holmes organized a posse. They and "several Magistrates and most of the Principal Inhabitants of Carlisle and the County" rode to Sherman's Valley. If this is even partially true, it must have been quite a spectacle, the most exciting thing to happen to the backcountry residents for years.

The posse spoke with some of the rescuers, who refused to reveal where Stump and Ironcutter were hiding. After hearing that the prisoners would not be tried in Philadelphia, only examined, some Sherman's Valley men were willing to give them up. Someone, however, erroneously mentioned that the King's troops had come for Stump and Ironcutter. The rescuers immediately changed their minds.⁴²

Upon hearing of the prisoners' escape, John Penn was livid. He thundered in a letter to Thomas Penn, "the Rage of opposing Government seizes the lawless Savages that inhabit the county of Cumberland...they do not deserve a better name, they are really greater barbarians than the Indians themselves." He doubted anything could now stop the wrath of the Six Nations.⁴³ Especially irritated with John Armstrong, he again reprimanded him in a letter for detaining the prisoners in Carlisle. He then

Cumberland County So.

The Grand Inquest for our Sovereign Lord the King for the County of Cumberland To the Honourable the Justices of the Court of Oyer and Terminer And General Gaol Delivery now sitting Do make the following Presentment vizt.

That Frederick Stump and John Ironcutter being legally committed to the custody of the Gaoler of the County of Cumberland and being secured in the Common Gaol of the said County by warrant under the Hands and Seals of John Armstrong & Robert Miller Esqrs. two Justices of his Majesty's Justice of the Peace for the County of Cumberland to answer a Charge of Murder made against them, a Number of daring and riotous persons to wit James Murry, John Murry, William Murry, and James, James Hamilton Richard Manby, Richard Swin, — Nelson, Francis Swin, Joseph Childers, James Roddy, William Adams, Thomas Hewit, John Gales, James Jirguson, Joseph M. Drusell, William Williams, John Clark, William Milgory, John Beard, Matthew Gregg, Joseph Gordon, James Vahle on the 29th day of January in the present year with sundry others to the said Inquest unknown did in the most tumultuous and riotous manner assemble and meet together at the town of Carlisle in the said County of Cumberland and most insolently and violently enter into the said Common Gaol and the said Frederick Stump and John Ironcutter out of the custody, and against the will of the said Gaoler and out of the said Common Gaol did feloniously rescue and take at large where they would be gone to the great Contempt of our said Lord the King and his wholesome Laws To the evil Example of all others in such Cases offending and against the Peace of our said Lord the King his Crown and Dignity

Carlisle the 18th May 1768

Jas. Gallbreath
Foreman

Details list of men who freed Stump and Ironcutter from jail, named at a grand inquest in May, 1768. Record Group #33 (Records of the Supreme Court, Eastern District) Court of Oyer and Terminer Papers, Cumberland County.

summoned Armstrong, Holmes, Miller, and Lyons before the Provincial Council the following May for questioning. Holmes also had sent a letter of explanation to the governor. Penn deemed Holmes innocent of any wrongdoing, as the matter had been forced out of his hands by his superior. Armstrong, Miller, and Lyons remained steadfast to their reasons of concern about the flooded Susquehanna and fear that Stump and Ironcutter might be freed along the road to Philadelphia. Armstrong added in a subsequent letter to Penn:

They [the rescuers] tell us that the government always manifest a greater concern at the killing or Death of an Indian than at the Death or killing of any of them;...that some of the Frontier People will always be exposed to suffer...and insulted by Indians, and that a number of them must receive the fatal Blow before they dare say it is War....

John Penn let the Cumberland officials go. He probably realized that Armstrong had been placed in a difficult position. The decision to retain rather than immediately send the prisoners to Philadelphia was logical, albeit disastrous. Armstrong had "acted for the best in a Case of Perplexity." But Penn severely admonished them "to be very careful, in confining yourselves within the Bounds of your Jurisdiction, and not to interfere again in Matters which belong to a Superior Authority."⁴⁴

For several months afterward, residents were uneasy. Frontiersmen harassed any government authorities found in their territory. William Patterson received an extortion message threatening to give him "the Interest of his Two Hundred Pounds Reward," forcing him for his own safety to remove himself and family for a time to Philadelphia.⁴⁵ The life of George Croghan, a deputy of Sir William Johnson, was threatened on the way to an Indian conference at Fort Pitt in March 1768.⁴⁶ Later that spring, twelve Lancaster County men stopped two government couriers, searched them, and stole letters containing official information on Indian appeasement.⁴⁷ It seems settlers all over the Pennsylvania frontier at this time cowered not only in fear of Indians, but also in fear of their own kind.

Who were the Sherman's Valley men who freed the murderers from jail? At a grand inquest of the Court of Oyer and Terminer held in Carlisle the following May 17, presided over by William Allen, twenty-three were named. (William Patterson, incidentally, was one of the jurors. Governor Penn had been so pleased with his selfless act that he awarded him a special commission as a justice of the peace for Cumberland County.⁴⁸) The names of these rioters were James Murry, John Murry, William Murry, Andrew Jones, James Hamilton, Richard Shanky, Richard Irwin, _____ Neilson, Francis Irwin, Joseph Childers, James Roddy, William Adams, Thomas Hewet, John Glass, James Ferguson, Joseph McDowell, William Williams, John Clark, William McGary, John Beard, Matthew Gregg, Joseph Gordon, and James Eakles.⁴⁹

Some of these men, such as the Murrays, Adams, Irwin, Hewet and Glass, can be identified in 1763 and 1768 tax records for Toboyne Township which then encompassed the western portion of Sherman's Valley.⁵⁰ Others with these surnames appear in Perry County histories, such as Roddy, Beard, and McDowell.⁵¹ This is only twenty-three out of a crowd of seventy or eighty. The fifty or so whose identities can never be known no doubt shared Stump's attitude toward Indians, for Sherman's Valley had been the scene of many Indian raids during the previous fifteen years. Too, not all of the rioters necessarily came from Sherman's Valley. Accounts of the rescue simply say they rode off in that direction afterward. Some may possibly be found on records for townships surrounding Carlisle. One man, John Clark, was tried and found guilty by a county court jury in January 1769 of "forcible entry and detainer." Though originally charged £200, he was fined ten shillings and committed to jail until he paid. Whether this is the same John Clark listed above and his crime was entering Carlisle Jail and providing sanctuary for Stump and Ironcutter can only be guessed. The same jury also found three men, Andrew Boyd, James Davis, and Christopher VanLear, not guilty for "rescue."⁵² Without further information, however, they cannot be linked to the prisoners' release.

Some contemporaries called the men who released Stump and Ironcutter the Black Boys, and some of them may have been the same as those involved in the Sideling Hill Affair. Joseph McDowell, for example is possibly related to the William McDowell who mediated James Smith's demands at the siege of Fort Loudoun in 1765. But the rescuers of Stump and Ironcutter came from Sherman's Valley, northwest of Carlisle, while the Black Boys operated in the Conococheague Valley, southwest of Carlisle. The two valleys are relatively close, but no contemporary account of the jail release states the rioters had blackened their faces or dressed as Indians, a trademark of the Black Boys. James Smith himself had just returned from North Carolina at the time of the Stump Affair, and had he been in Pennsylvania, he probably would have abstained on principle from participating. His 1765 escapades were designed to prevent a war, not begin one. Referring to this time period, he stated in his autobiography, "I did not altogether approve of the conduct of this new club of black boys," though Smith joined his friends again for a 1769 escapade. Perhaps by this time, the term "Black Boys" had become a generic name for any group of rowdies on the Pennsylvania frontier.⁵³

Historians have tended to characterize the people of the Pennsylvania backcountry during this period as crude, uneducated, and undisciplined, huddling in their primitive cabins, squatters on the land. But some of the men listed as participants in Stump's and Ironcutter's release owned property, kept domesticated farm animals, and were taxed like any other citizen of the colony. A few had at least enough education to be able to write threatening messages to William Patterson, George Croghan, and others.

Adding to tension after Stump's and Ironcutter's rescue was suspicion that the King's troops would be summoned to keep peace. Some of the rescuers had been willing to turn in the prisoners until they heard this rumor. Several persons mention this as an unfortunate possibility. One, Edward Shippen, reported, "I make no doubt but the Measures taken by the Government on this Occasion will be vigorous, nothing less than the Appearance of regular Troops will check the Insolence of these people."⁵⁴ John Penn, in a letter to Thomas at the height of his rage after the rescue, mentions sending troops, but never discusses the idea again, probably because troops were used only in extreme cases.⁵⁵ Historian Pauline Maier has stated, "since all Englishmen shared a fear of standing armies, the deployment of troops had always to be a sensitive and carefully limited recourse."⁵⁶ As the rescue was over almost as soon as it began (it lasted ten minutes, according to Cunningham's deposition), sending troops was a solution too late to accomplish anything.

The whole situation gave Sir William Johnson trepidation as he presided over a conference of Indians in March 1768 at Johnson Hall, New York. The meeting's purpose was to bring about a treaty in the war between the Cherokee and Six Nations. Johnson was also to inform the tribes of the Crown's intent to make a new land purchase. Arrangements were, therefore, made for a new treaty conference to be held that November at Fort Stanwix, New York. The Indian leaders were not in the best of spirits. "On their Arrival, their discontent was but too visible," wrote Johnson. Successfully concluding the Cherokee Treaty, he then held a private meeting with Six Nations Chiefs and the relatives of White Mingo. He began by assuring them that the Pennsylvania government had just issued a proclamation ordering whites off the Indian lands at Redstone and the Great Island. Then he explained how the murders and rescue occurred. However, instead of emphasizing Frederick Stump's maliciousness, he suggested that White Mingo and his friends, by being drunk, had provoked their own deaths. He supported this idea by pointing out several recent incidents when drunken Indians had killed whites, these acts having gone unpunished by Six Nations leaders. The Indians at the conference could not deny the evils of rum, nor the recent deaths. Johnson gave them a present of £1200 which had been appropriated by the Pennsylvania Assembly for the purpose of consoling the relatives of White Mingo.⁵⁷

At the same time, George Croghan held a similar meeting with western tribes at Fort Pitt. He used the same logic as Johnson and also gave a present of £1300, likewise from the Pennsylvania Assembly. The rationale and lavish gifts mollified the tribes and they promised not to go to war.⁵⁸ At this news, the colony breathed a sigh of relief, and frontier incidents triggered by the Stump Affair subsided. John Penn also received assurances from Newoleeka and other Indians from the upper Susquehanna that they would not take to the warpath. He reported to Thomas Penn, "The Indians

however are satisfied whether they [Stump and Ironcutter] are brought to justice or not, which is a great point gained."⁵⁹ The Pennsylvania frontier was not relatively free of tension between Indians and whites until the Treaty of Fort Stanwix in November 1768. In this pact, the Six Nations gave up much of their Pennsylvania lands, and Indians living in the colony moved elsewhere.

III

Governor John Penn's problems relating to the Stump Affair were not yet over. His administration's inability to apprehend or punish the miscreants made an easy target for enemies. The Stump Affair became a political football as the anti-proprietary faction in the legislature used it as an example of ineffective government. Since 1764, believing that Pennsylvania would be better administered if the Penn Family were eliminated as middlemen, this faction had tried aggressively to place the colony under royal management. Complaints included the Penns' land speculation schemes. Acreage surrounding settled areas was often excluded from sale for the Penns, and the tax-exempt reserved land sold later for a higher profit. Immediately following the Conestoga Massacre, the party had also charged that the inability of the Penns to control backcountry settlers was moving the colony toward anarchy. But by 1767, the movement for royal government lagged, for its advocates supported the Stamp Act, something most Pennsylvanians, and most American colonists, did not.⁶⁰

The Stump Affair "added fresh fuel to the fire," as William Allen declared.⁶¹ It contained many of the same elements of the Conestoga Massacre: Indians were killed; settlers protected the guilty; and all miscreants escaped with impunity. Speaker of the House Joseph Galloway, a leader of the anti-proprietary party, correctly asserted that the Six Nations still complained of the unpunished deaths at Conestoga. One message written by him from the Assembly to Governor Penn soon after Stump's murders held the administration culpable:

There is a manifest failure of justice somewhere. From whence does it arise? Not from the Laws. They are adequate to the Offence. It must be either from a Debility or inexcusable neglect on the Executive part of Government to put these laws in Execution.⁶²

The message furthermore declared that, if the Paxton Boys had been punished, offenders like Stump would think twice before committing similar acts.

Benjamin Franklin, another leader of the anti-proprietary faction, was in London at the time, to urge the king's ministers to accept the Pennsylvania Assembly's petition for a change in government. In early March 1768,

Galloway sent him details of the murders and rescue with the Assembly's order to continue petitioning in light of the new developments. Franklin presented these matters to Lord Hillsborough, King George III's Secretary of State.⁶³

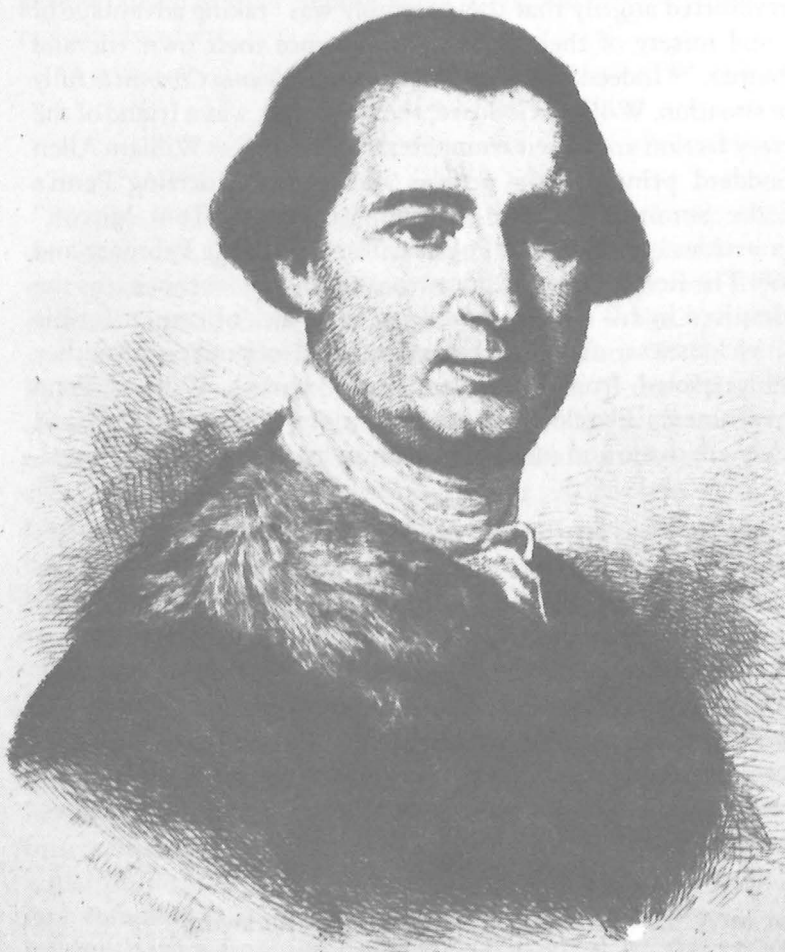
John Penn retorted angrily that the Assembly was "taking advantage of the distress and misery of their Country to advance their own vile and malicious schemes."⁶⁴ Indeed, the editor of the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* fully exploited the situation. William Goddard, the publisher, was a friend of the anti-proprietary faction and "their trumpeter of sedition," as William Allen claimed.⁶⁵ Goddard printed many articles and letters criticizing Penn's handling of the Stump Affair. An anonymous writer, "Tom Mirror," published six articles entitled "The Political Tattler" during February and March of 1768. The first article gave four reasons why a governor earns the right to be despised by his countrymen: ignorance; lack of respect for his constituents; viciousness; and "fearfulness of bold offenders." Another article brazenly quoted from John Penn's grandfather, William Penn himself: "Governments, like clocks, go from the motion men give them, and as governments are made and moved by men, so by them are they ruined, too."

Blame for the affair was also heaped on Carlisle authorities by Easterners who suspected that they were in league with and personally knew the rescuers of Stump and Ironcutter. John Armstrong received the most criticism, becoming the butt of political satirists for several months. Letters to the *Chronicle* declared Armstrong secretly sympathized with his neighbors and permitted Stump and Ironcutter to go free. One letter claimed John Penn had made a pact with the Colonel, implying that Armstrong could release the prisoners if he would serve the Penn Family's interests in land speculation schemes. In a poor attempt at hudibrastics, another wag asked:

Then why since Stump has taken wing
May not the C _____ I for him swing?⁶⁶

The accusations were not without substance. Armstrong was the Penn Family's land agent in Cumberland County, and he knew at least one of those named in the rescue, Thomas Hewet. In his capacity as a surveyor for the colony, Armstrong had drawn and signed a survey of land for Hewet along Sherman's Creek in Toboyne Township in 1766.⁶⁷ The Colonel also had a brother killed by Indians during the French and Indian War and had himself received wounds during the Battle of Kittanning. His opinion of the Red Man would not have been the most flattering. In a letter to Thomas Penn, William Allen perhaps provided the most damning story of Armstrong's involvement in the Stump Affair:

When I went the circuit in May last I dealt very freely with the inhabitants of Cumberland...telling them as they were Christians they were worse than the Indians....But [the Justices] said we are



JOHN PENN.
Colonial Governor of Pa.

A highly stylized, cursive handwritten signature of John Penn. The letters are large and interconnected, with elaborate flourishes and loops, particularly at the end of the name.

to blame for not observing the laws and not supporting authority, but it is not in our power, for we have a man at our head whose constant study is to render himself popular among the lowest of the people, and in order to effect that he counteracts all that we conceive necessary to enforce the law....⁶⁸

Thomas Penn must also have been exasperated, for he wrote to Allen, "I have received a letter from Coll. Armstrong making excuses for himself in this affair."⁶⁹

Persons who supposedly urged Armstrong to retain Stump and Ironcutter were also criticized. These included the Reverend George Duffield, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church's "New Siders" at Carlisle. The Presbyterian Church in America had split two decades earlier during a flurry of revivalism into the factions of "Old Side" and "New Side." The latter were committed to fundamentalism, but rejoined the church in 1758. The schism evidently had not entirely healed by 1768, for Duffield and his "New Side" followers were lambasted in the *Chronicle*. Duffield was especially accused of urging his congregation from his pulpit to rescue Stump and Ironcutter, and speaking to Armstrong personally about it the week the criminals were in jail. Apparently, many of the participants in the rescue were members of the "New Side" faction, something Duffield found difficult to counter. He fervently denied all accusations in a long letter appearing April 7 in the *Chronicle*, and argued that the whole affair was not a religious matter.⁷⁰

Another person in Carlisle that crucial week was attorney George Ross of Lancaster. Ross would later become Lancaster County's representative to the Pennsylvania Assembly. He supposedly was one of the loudest voices against sending Stump and Ironcutter to Philadelphia, for John Penn said that "some foolish Lawyer" told people that the prisoners would be tried in Philadelphia, and that this was an invasion of their civil liberties.⁷¹ When accused of this, Ross travelled to Philadelphia and petitioned the Assembly to clear his name. Interestingly, though, the Assembly would not record his deposition. William Allen reported to Thomas Penn:

The house, as he [Ross] was a creature of the party opposed to Government, fearing that he could not exculpate himself, would not examine into the matter, but of their own authority, ordered that part of the deposition relative to George Ross to be expunged, an act, I conceive only worthy of the authors, on what name it deserves I must leave to your judgement."⁷²

The British government might have listened to the anti-proprietary party had not events in London been more pressing. In 1768 there was great political, social, and economic unrest in the city. Coal porters started riots during that spring and summer in an attempt to convince merchants to raise their wages. Spinners and weavers were on strike for similar reasons. John Wilkes, however, aroused the greatest turmoil. Wilkes published a newspaper, the *North Briton*, in which he often placed editorials criticizing

George III. He had gained popularity as an espouser of freedom of the press and other civil liberties. In early 1768, Wilkes ran successfully for Parliament, but his enemies there had him jailed on an election technicality. This caused much rioting by his supporters, and some even offered to rescue him from jail.⁷³ Franklin reported to Galloway: "all respect to law and government seems to be lost among the common people."⁷⁴

Amidst commotion over Wilkes and other problems in the British government, Franklin found it difficult to draw attention to the Stump Affair. Lord Hillsborough refused even to consider the petition of the Pennsylvania Assembly. Franklin wrote to a friend:

I have urged over and over the Necessity of the Change we desire; but this Country itself being at present in a Situation very little better, weakens our argument that a Royal Government would be better managed and safer to live under than that of a Proprietary. Even in this Capitol, the Residence of the King is now a daily scene of lawless Riot and Confusion.⁷⁵

Thomas Penn also realized what the situation meant. He wrote to William Allen, "Complaints about rescues and irregularities...could not be made at a more unfavourable time for the applyers."⁷⁶ By September, Franklin had dropped the matter of the Stump Affair with Lord Hillsborough. The movement for royal government died later that fall, with America's overwhelming opposition to the Townshend Acts. In the face of an oppressive Crown policy, Franklin and Galloway found it difficult to convince Pennsylvanians of the good of royal government.

IV

"We had a bustling time and much party rage in the beginning of the year, yet it has terminated in a great calm, so uncertain are popular caprices," reported William Allen in late 1768 to Thomas Penn.⁷⁷ References to the Stump Affair almost entirely disappear from contemporary sources by October of that year. For a time after the rescue, authorities had hopes Stump and Ironcutter would again be captured. At the same grand inquest which named the participants in the rescue, Bills of Indictment were produced for the two men. Thomas Penn also suggested obtaining a Writ of Attainder for Stump, which would have deprived him of civil liberties, but it seems this was never pursued.⁷⁸ Legislation two years later strengthened Pennsylvania authorities' legal power over the frontier. "An act for punishing wicked and evil-disposed persons from going armed in disguise" established as a felony the offense of releasing persons from prison and interrupting due process of law. This act was probably a direct result of the 1769 activities of James Smith and his Black Boys, but it contained an interesting clause:

every offense that shall be done or committed contrary to this act shall and may be inquired of, tried and determined in any county

within this province in such manner and form as if the fact had been therein committed.⁷⁹

John Penn related to his uncle, Thomas, that after the release Frederick Stump apparently visited his father somewhere in the Tulpehocken Valley, then he and Ironcutter fled to Virginia.⁸⁰ Stump was also reportedly seen somewhere in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, in March 1768, supposedly on his way to New England.⁸¹ George Dunkelberger stated that Stump resettled in the vicinity of Woodstock, Virginia, dying sometime after the Revolution, and Ironcutter lived "a haunted existence" in Centre County, Pennsylvania, but these assertions remain unproven.⁸² The two men fade from the historical record as mysteriously as they appear.

The possibility exists that Frederick Stump, at least, might have returned to Pennsylvania, even to Heidelberg Township. But again, the commonness of his name plagues attempts at research into his life. "Frederick Stump" appears often in county and Commonwealth records spanning the decades after 1768. Among these are several Frederick Stumps in Revolutionary War records. For example, a Frederick Stump of Heidelberg (now Schaefferstown) took the Oath of Allegiance in 1777.⁸³ Another appears on a 1781-1782 active duty militia list for Captain John Moore's Company, also raised from Heidleburg Township. A "Sargent" Frederick Stump served in the fourth battalion, first company, militia, in a 1783 list from Heidelberg Township. Another received depreciation pay. Payment of £45 was given by the state for war service in 1791 to Frederick Reymon of Berks County, "administrator for the estate of Frederick Stump deceased."⁸⁴ In other records, a Stump obtained a warrant in 1789 for land in what became Dauphin County, and another fathered a bastard child in 1783 and was found guilty of fornication in Berks County in 1785.⁸⁵ Yet another died intestate in Hempfield Township, Lancaster County, in 1802.⁸⁶

Some of these, such as those in the Revolutionary War, may have been the same man. But did Frederick Stump the murderer return to Pennsylvania as these tantalizing bits of information seem to indicate? Evidence is not yet found to link the killer of 1768 with these other men. If the criminal did return, it is interesting to speculate at the sort of existence he must have led, and a commentary on the backcountry society which would permit a known killer to live in its midst.

Even with additional documentation, it will be difficult to trace the life of the man who caused death and strife on the Pennsylvania frontier. Where he went after his act is probably a moot point, for Frederick Stump had already made his contribution to Pennsylvania history. No doubt he laughed at the authorities who could not effect his capture. One wonders if his ghost laughs at the historians of today who likewise are unable to do the same.

FOOTNOTES

*A shorter version of this paper was read before the Society on February 21, 1980.

¹Conway P. Wing, *et al.*, eds., *History of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania*, 2 Vols. (Philadelphia, 1879) and *History of Cumberland and Adams Counties, Pennsylvania*, (Chicago, 1886). Some scholarly works of a topical nature mentioning the Stump Affair include: Joseph J. Kelley, Jr., *Pennsylvania, the Colonial Years, 1681-1776* (New York, 1980); Benjamin H. Newcomb, *Franklin and Galloway: a Political Partnership* (New Haven, 1972); Jack M. Sosin, *The Revolutionary Frontier, 1763-1783* (New York, 1967); Norman S. Cohen, "William Allen, Chief Justice of Pennsylvania, 1704-1780," Ph.D. Diss., Univ. of California, Berkeley, 1966; and Edward Owen Smith, Jr., "Thomas Penn, Chief Proprietor of Pennsylvania: A Study of his Public Governmental Activities from 1763-1775," Ph.D. Diss., Lehigh University, 1966. Recent articles include James Kirby Martin, "The Return of the Paxton Boys and the Historical State of the Pennsylvania Frontier, 1764-1774," *Pennsylvania History*, 38 (April 1971), 117-133 and G. S. Rowe, "The Frederick Stump Affair, 1768, and its Challenge to Legal Historians of Early Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania History*, 49 (October 1982), 259-288. The only works devoted entirely to the Stump Affair are: Edwin A. Charles, "Stump's Run Massacre," *Snyder County Historical Society Bulletin*, Vol. 1 (January 1914), 34-39; and the author's "The Rage of Opposing Government: the Stump Affair of 1768 and the Pennsylvania Frontier." unpub. M.A. Paper, Pennsylvania State University, 1979.

²For example, Martin, in "The Return of the Paxton Boys," implies that the Paxton Boys released Stump and Ironcutter, plus other inaccuracies. The most flagrant fictionalizing of the Stump Affair is to be found in George A. Dunkelberger, *The Story of Snyder County* (Snyder County Historical Society: Selinsgrove, PA, 1948).

³See Chapter 1 of Russell S. Nelson, "Backcountry Pennsylvania, 1709-1774: The Ideals of William Penn in Practice," Ph.D. Diss. Univ. of Wisconsin, 1968.

⁴See Brooke Hindle, "The March of the Paxton Boys," *The William and Mary Quarterly* (WMQ) 3rd Series, 3 (October 1946), 461-486.

⁵See Eleanor M. Webster, "Insurrection at Fort Loudon in 1765: Rebellion or Preservation of Peace?" *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, 47 (April 1964), 124-139.

⁶Wing, 64-65.

⁷Thomas Gage to Lord Shelburne, October 10, 1767, Clarence E. Carter, ed. *The Correspondence of General Thomas Gage, 1763-1775*, 2 Vols. (New Haven, 1935), 1, 152.

⁸*Colonial Records: Minutes of the Provincial Council, 1683 to 1776*, 16 Vols. (Harrisburg: State Printer, 1853), IX, 414-415, 470. Hereafter cited as CR.

⁹Edward Shippen to James Burd, January 20, 1768, Shippen Papers, Vol. 6, p. 197, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP), Philadelphia.

¹⁰Charles, "Stump's Run Massacre," 39.

¹¹CR, IX, 487-488.

¹²CR, IX, 489-490.

¹³John to Thomas Penn, Sept. 12, 1766, Penn Manuscripts, Official Correspondence, Vol. 10, p. 84, HSP.

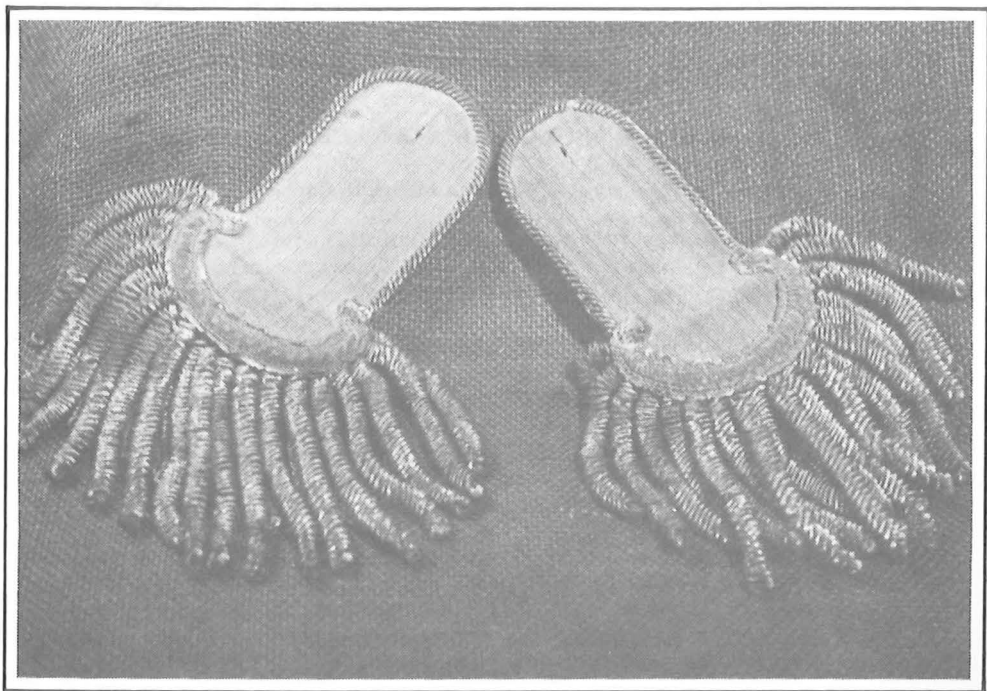
¹⁴CR, IX, 323-324.

¹⁵John to Thomas Penn, January 21, 1768, Penn MSS, Off. Corr., Vol. 10, p. 126, HSP.

- ¹⁶Cumberland County Tax Lists, 1768, Cumberland County Historical Society (CCHS), Carlisle, Pa.
- ¹⁷Ezra Grumbine, "Frederick Stump, the Founder of Fredericksburg," *Proceedings of the Lebanon County Historical Society*, Vol. 6, #9, June 1914, p. 209; William Henry Egle, *History of the Counties of Dauphin and Lebanon* (Philadelphia, 1883), 351, 563.
- ¹⁸Grantor Index, Lancaster County Deeds, Lancaster County Courthouse, Lancaster; Clerk of Courts Quarter Sessions Dockets, 1761-1763, Lancaster County Historical Society (LCHS) Lancaster.
- ¹⁹Book M, Lancaster County Deeds, pp. 115-116, *ibid*.
- ²⁰Grumbine, "Frederick Stump," 214.
- ²¹Martin, "The Return of the Paxton Boys," 120; Dunkelberger, *The Story of Snyder County*, 238; Sosin, *The Revolutionary Frontier*, 112.
- ²²Dunkelberger, *The Story of Snyder County*, pp. 228-232, Grumbine, "Frederick Stump," 213.
- ²³John to Thomas Penn, January 21, 1768, Penn MSS, Off. Corr., Vol. 10, p. 196, HSP.
- ²⁴February 29, 1768, *CR*, IX, 488.
- ²⁵*CR*, IX, 415.
- ²⁶Johnson to Gage, October 22, 1767, Clarence W. Alford and C. E. Carter, eds., *Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library*, 24 Vols., (Springfield, 1921) XVI, 94.
- ²⁷*CR*, IX, 414-430.
- ²⁸John to Thomas Penn, January 21, 1768, Penn MSS, Off. Corr., Vol. 10, p. 126, HSP.
- ²⁹*Pennsylvania Journal* (Philadelphia), February 11, 1768.
- ³⁰Johnson to Gage, February 11, 1768, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 14 Vols. (Albany: 1923-1965), VI, 101-102.
- ³¹Alexander McKee to George Croghan, February 13, 1768, *ibid*, 115.
- ³²John Blair Linn, *Annals of the Buffalo Valley, Pennsylvania, 1766-1855* (Harrisburg, 1877), 25.
- ³³*CR*, IX, 443-445.
- ³⁴*Ibid*, 430-441.
- ³⁵William Lukens to John Lukens, February 1, 1768, Manuscripts 17-16, CHHS. Letter of explanation from the Reverend George Duffield to *Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 16, 1768.
- ³⁶*CR*, IX, February 3, 1768, 446.
- ³⁷John R. Dunbar, *The Paxton Papers* (The Hague: M. Nyhoff, 1957), 99.
- ³⁸Allen to Penn, February 25, 1768, Penn MSS, Off. Corr., Vol. 10, p. 136, HSP.
- ³⁹John Penn, when describing the murders to his uncle Thomas, referred him to Scull's Map, January 21, 1768, *ibid*, 126.

- ⁴⁰Thomas to John Penn, April 11, 1768, Penn MSS, Thomas Penn Letterbooks, Vol. 9, #241, HSP.
- ⁴¹CR, IX, 450-451; *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), February 16, 1768.
- ⁴²CR, IX, 463-465.
- ⁴³March 30, 1768, Penn MSS Off. Corr., Vol. 10, p. 132, HSP.
- ⁴⁴CR, IX, 462, 511-513.
- ⁴⁵*Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), February 11, 1768; Sosin, *Revolutionary Frontier*, 83-84.
- ⁴⁶Nicholas B. Wainwright, *George Croghan, Wilderness Diplomat* (Chapel Hill, 1959), 251.
- ⁴⁷*Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), March 17, 1768.
- ⁴⁸Linn, *Annals*, 25.
- ⁴⁹Oyer and Terminer papers, 1768, Record Group 33, Records of the Supreme Court, Div. of Archives & Manuscripts (State Archives), Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg. Hereafter cited as Pennsylvania State Archives.
- ⁵⁰Cumberland County Tax Lists, 1763, 1768, CCHS.
- ⁵¹I. D. Rupp, *History and Topography of Dauphin, Cumberland, Franklin, Bedford, Adams, Perry, Somerset, Cambria and Indiana Counties* (Lancaster, 1846), 203.
- ⁵²Quarter Sessions Dockets, 1768-1769, Clerks of Courts Office, Cumberland County Courthouse, Carlisle.
- ⁵³Webster, "The Insurrection at Fort Loudon," 132; James Smith, *An Account of the Remarkable Occurrences in the Life and Travels of James Smith* (Lexington, Ky., 1799), 58; see also footnote #35.
- ⁵⁴Shippen to James Tilghman, February 2, 1768, Shippen Papers, Vol. 6, p. 196, HSP.
- ⁵⁵John to Thomas Penn, March 30, 1768, Penn MSS., Off. Corr., Vol. 10, p. 132, HSP.
- ⁵⁶Pauline Maier, "Popular Uprisings and Civil Authority in Eighteenth Century America," *WMQ*, 3rd Series, 27 (January 1970), 20.
- ⁵⁷Johnson to Penn, CR, IX, 496-506; Edmund B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, 15 Vols. (Albany: 1851-1857), Vol. 8, 41-53.
- ⁵⁸*Documents Relative*, 57-58.
- ⁵⁹June 15, 1768, Penn MSS, Off. Corr., Vol. 10, p. 158, HSP.
- ⁶⁰See Newcomb, *Franklin and Galloway*, chapt. 3.
- ⁶¹Allen to Thomas Penn, February 25, 1768, Penn MSS, Off. Corr., Vol. 10, p. 136, HSP.
- ⁶²CR, IX, 454-458.

- ⁶³Leonard Labaree, *et al.*, eds., *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, (New Haven, 1959 -), XV, 54-63.
- ⁶⁴John to Thomas Penn, February 8, 1768, Penn Mss, Off. Corr., Vol. 10, p. 130, HSP.
- ⁶⁵Allen to Thomas Penn, February 25, 1768, Penn MSS, Off. Corr., Vol. 10, p. 136, HSP.
- ⁶⁶*Pennsylvania Chronicle* (Philadelphia), February 15 and 22, March 14, 1768.
- ⁶⁷Manuscript Group #158, Kinkead-Hollenbach-Armstrong Papers, Pennsylvania State Archives.
- ⁶⁸Allen to Penn, October 12, 1768, Penn MSS, Off. Corr., Vol. 10, p. 174, HSP.
- ⁶⁹Penn to Allen, June 9, 1768, and Penn to James Tilghman, June 10, 1768, pp. 293-4, Penn MSS., Thomas Penn Letterbooks, Vol. 9, #260, HSP.
- ⁷⁰*Pennsylvania Chronicle* (Philadelphia), April 7 and 11, 1768.
- ⁷¹John to Thomas Penn, February 8, 1768, Penn MSS, Off. Corr., Vol. 10, p. 130, HSP.
- ⁷²Allen to Penn, February 25, 1768, *ibid.*, p. 136.
- ⁷³George Rude', *Wilkes and Liberty* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), chaps. 1-2.
- ⁷⁴Franklin to Galloway, May 14, 1768, *Franklin Papers*, XV, p. 127.
- ⁷⁵Franklin to John Ross, May 14, 1768, *ibid.*, p. 128.
- ⁷⁶Penn to Allen, June 9, 1768, Penn MSS., Thomas Penn Letterbooks, Vol. 9, #260, HSP.
- ⁷⁷Allen to Penn, October 12, 1768, Penn MSS, Off. Corr., Vol. 10, p. 176, HSP.
- ⁷⁸Thomas to John Penn, May 13, 1768, Penn MSS., Thomas Penn Letterbooks, Vol. 10, p. 253, HSP.
- ⁷⁹James T. Mitchell and Henry Flanders, eds., *Statutes at Large of the State of Pennsylvania from 1682-1801*, 16 vols., (Harrisburg: 1896-1911), VI, 350.
- ⁸⁰John to Thomas Penn, May 22, 1768, Penn MSS., Off. Corr., Vol. 10, p. 153, HSP; Armstrong to John Penn, February 26, 1768, *CR IX*, pp. 485-486.
- ⁸¹Joseph Shippen, Jr., to Giles Knight, March 1768, Shippen Family Papers, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.
- ⁸²Dunkelberger, *Story of Snyder County*, 232.
- ⁸³A. S. Brendle, *A Brief History of Schafferstown* (Schaefferstown, Pa., 1901), 41.
- ⁸⁴*Pennsylvania Archives* (Fifth Series), Vol. II, 757, Vol. IV, 223, Vol. VII, 156, 177 and 441; Record Group #4, Records of the Comptroller General, Pennsylvania State Archives.
- ⁸⁵Dauphin County Warrantee Book, Division of Land Records, PHMC, Harrisburg; Rowe, "The Frederick Stump Affair," p. 284; *Tulpehocken Church Records, 1730-1800, Sources and Documents of the Pennsylvania Germans* (Breinigsville, Pa., The Pennsylvania German Society, 1982), VII, 127.
- ⁸⁶Miscellaneous Family Papers, Lancaster County Historical Society, Lancaster.



Epaulets worn by Col. George McFeely. Collection of the Cumberland County Historical Society. —Photo by Jennifer Esler

Colonel George McFeely

Joseph E. Walker

George McFeely was a true "officer and gentleman." As lieutenant colonel of the 22nd Regiment of Infantry and as colonel of the 25th Regiment, he acted as second in command of the force which invaded Canada. Then, after the war was over, McFeely was designated as a "gentleman" of Carlisle by the censors and the assessors of the septennial assessment of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania.¹

George McFeely was born in 1780. His father was John McFeely, of a Scotch-Irish family in Middleton Township, on the Yellow Breeches Creek south of Carlisle. George's mother was Elizabeth Line McFeely. John was a blacksmith, a fairly prosperous man, and by 1790 he had acquired 211 acres of farmland and was listed as a farmer. He had three sons and four daughters. His youngest son, John, Junior, became a farmer and inherited the farm on the father's death in 1834. The McFeelys were members of the First Presbyterian Church at Carlisle.²

George, however, was less of a farmer and more of a soldier, politician, lawyer, educator, and realtor. He first made his mark in the militia, in which he was chosen a captain in 1807. After three years, he was made a major for a year and a lieutenant colonel for another year.³

On March 14, 1812, he was appointed lieutenant colonel of the 16th Infantry by President James Madison.⁴ This was quite an advancement for McFeely, because he was now in the United States Army at the rank he had held in the militia. Perhaps his leadership for the reelection of Madison for the second term had prompted his selection for the office. Regardless of the reasons, McFeely proved himself an able officer during the War of 1812, which began three months later. It was said of his service in the war, "he was an excellent disciplinarian, had his troops under admirable control, and was remarkable for his coolness under the enemy's fire and his patient hardihood under the severest sufferings."⁵

The army's first assignment for Colonel McFeely was to stay in Carlisle to become the Recruiting District Officer.⁶ His returns showed 621 in seven recruit lists (perhaps not a final return).⁷ There was one exception taken by the army to his receiving recruits: The Inspector General's Office wrote that, "no set of instruction declaring that 'no persons in any degree intoxicated with liquor,' or to that effect, has been issued for raising the additional army of the United States. Such an instruction would prevent half of the enlistments. The courts will decide on the laws, and have nothing to do with the instructions: For the instructions cannot make an enlistment legal or illegal."⁸

Whether or not a question was raised, in July George McFeely was

transferred from the 16th to the 22nd Infantry Regiment, with assurance of early orders to go to the Niagara Frontier.⁹ A letter from the Adjutant General at Washington on September 19, 1812 instructed McFeely to go to Niagara "with all the men of the 22nd Regiment now in Pennsylvania. It is not known how many men have been enlisted for this regiment, and I am fearful that not more than three complete companies can be moved at the time."¹⁰

McFeely started on October 5 with two hundred men and marched, as directly as possible, up the Susquehanna River as far as Williamsport. From here he was largely in the wilderness or in Indian reservations. He arrived at Niagara on November 2 and reported to General Alexander Smyth, who ordered McFeely and his men to occupy Fort Niagara at the mouth of the Niagara River.

Within a week of their arrival at the fort, on November 21, they were under fire. The British troops at Fort George, on the Canadian side of the river, opened their artillery on Fort Niagara. McFeely ordered his men to return fire, the cannonade lasting from early morning until dark. McFeely reported in his diary of this first battle, "...we had the pleasure of seeing a schooner sink and several houses in flames in the town of Newark and also at their Navy yard and in Fort George...our loss was three killed and 6 wounded. The enemy's loss we could not ascertain."¹¹

Subsequently, it was decided that a United States force would cross the Niagara River and attack the British Army on May 24, 1813. Lt. Col. Winfield Scott came to Fort Niagara to tell McFeely that he wanted the 22nd Regiment to lead the attacking force and Colonel McFeely to be second in command. Scott and McFeely crossed the river and captured the town of Newark and Fort George. McFeely reported that on May 26

...our Guns was opened on Fort George and by 9 o'clock the Block House in Fort George was in flames, and the enemy's Guns silenced...The action was close and warm for about ten minutes... when the enemy gave way and retreated in confusion....After great exertion by their officers, the light troops were got formed in line of battle on the ground where the enemies dead and wounded lay....

Scott marched on to the Fort and entered, cut down the flagstaff and took the matches out of two...magazines that would have exploded in perhaps a few seconds...the Generals' orders was to pursue the enemy. We marched in pursuit on the enemy about five miles, when orders came from the light troops to return to Fort George. We returned reluctant from the pursuit. This was in my opinion highly censureable in our Generals. We ought to have pursued the enemy night and day while they were under the panick. We could have captured all their stores and baggage that evening and the greater number of their Army...our Generals appeared to act as if Canada was conquered.¹²

During the summer of 1813 Colonel McFeely was on leave, and Colonel Hugh Brady was in charge of the 22nd Regiment. Although McFeely's illness is unspecified, he "suffered greatly during the campaign," and from August 31 to November 30, 1813, he was at Sackets Harbor, New York, to become a patient at the hospital; by December 27, he was back with his regiment, accompanying it in a rapid movement along the St. Lawrence River to join the army at Plattsburg and prepare for the campaign toward Montreal.¹³ This march was very difficult. The weather was very cold, and at times the snow was three feet deep. Nevertheless, the troops reached the army under General James Wilkinson in less than a month.

On March 30 Wilkinson's army attacked the British at La Cole Mills. The enemy held his ground and the American Army retreated. This British victory put an end to plans to attack at Montreal, and McFeely returned to Burlington, Vermont. Again condemning his generals, McFeely declared that "the place could have been easily taken had the heavy cannon been brought up."

On June 15 McFeely was promoted to colonel and was given command of the 25th Infantry, to rank from April 15, 1814. His regiment was on the Niagara Frontier, and he was to report to General Jacob Brown.¹⁴

At the time, however, McFeely was the president of a court martial, and had to stay at Plattsburg until its sessions were completed on June 23. He left the same day and returned to Niagara by the shortest route. On July 13 he reported to General Brown at Queenstown, Ontario, and joined his regiment, with which he took part in the Battle of Lundy's Lane under Winfield Scott, now a general. Colonel McFeely's account of the battle in his diary described the fight of the 25th Regiment: "For the first weeks of the siege I commanded the Batteries at Black Rock, which drove the enemy's camp off from the River out of reach of our Guns. We then continued our fire into the flank of their Batteries but without any success as they threw flank works which protected them from our shot." Although both armies withdrew, the Battle of Lundy's Lane was considered a victory for the United States.

Little occurred on the Niagara Frontier from that time until the end of the war. However, McFeely had a duty to perform as a supernumerary member of a court martial before he could return home. General James Wilkinson had been relieved of his command and ordered to stand trial for neglect of duty and drunkenness. The court sat at Utica and Troy, New York from January 3 to March 22, 1815, ultimately acquitting Wilkinson.¹⁵ McFeely remained as commander of the 25th regiment until May 17, 1815, when he returned to Carlisle. His discharge from the army was on June 15, 1815.¹⁶

As a civilian, he found several occupations which were suitable for a former colonel in the army. He opened a law office, a professional work which continued through his life.¹⁷

However, he held several public offices over the years. He was elected treasurer of Cumberland County in 1817 and continued in that position until 1825. He gave bond for security for the performance as treasurer for \$6,000 for the first time and for \$40,000 the second time.¹⁸

McFeely did not entirely divorce himself from military activities. He was a brigade inspector of the militia for several years and had an assessment list for taxes of \$250 on that job in 1823 and 1826.¹⁹ During the next decade he was chosen assistant assessor for taxes for the Borough of Carlisle in 1831 and assessor in 1840.²⁰

At the age of thirty-nine, McFeely married Margaret McKean of Carlisle, a woman eleven years younger. This marriage resulted in four sons and three daughters.²¹

An interest in real estate came shortly after George McFeely started a family. By 1823 he had purchased a house on half of a lot on East High Street. It was a two-story weatherboard building with kitchen in the rear, which for a time he rented to a tailor. In the next year he purchased a lot on South Hanover Street, just across the alley from the courthouse. On this lot were four two-story stone buildings: one was the home of the McFeelys; two were rented by other families; the other one on the corner was occupied by a tavern and McFeely's law and printing offices. At times the front rooms of these structures were used as stores.²²

George McFeely gave to the people of Carlisle "a consistent and energetic advocate...of education in all of its variety of forms." He spent more than fourteen years as a director of the Common Schools.²³

McFeely died of a heart attack on January 19, 1854. He left his entire estate to his wife during her lifetime, and then to be shared alike to his seven children. As a humorous trend, as shown in his war diary, he concluded his will to write, "Should my wife play the fool and marry again, then this will to be void and of no effect."²⁴

Footnotes

¹Triennial tax lists for 1835, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1847 and the Septennial Census Returns for 1826, Pennsylvania, Cumberland County, Middleton Township (on microfilm), at the Div. of Archives & Manuscripts (State Archives), Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC). Hereafter cited as Pennsylvania State Archives.

²*History of Cumberland and Adams County, Pennsylvania*, Beers edition (Chicago, 1886), 348; *Pennsylvania Archives* (fifth series), III, 191; v. XX, state and supply transcripts of Cumberland County, Middleton Township, for the years of 1778, 1782, and 1788; septennial census for 1793; United States Census, 1790, Pennsylvania, Cumberland County for Eastern Part of the County, p. 85; triennial tax list for 1835 for Middleton Township; "McFeely Heirs," typescript in the Cumberland County Historical Society and the Hamilton Library, Carlisle, Pa.

³George McFeely to The Adjutant General, Alexander Macomb, Recruiting District, H.Q. Carlisle, 11th July, 1812, RG 94, National Archives and Records Service (NARS), Washington, D.C.

⁴George McFeely to Honorable Wm. Eustis, 24th March, 1812, *ibid.*

⁵*History of Cumberland and Adams County*, 106.

⁶George McFeely to Colonel George Izard, n.d., RG 94, NARS. F. B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army from Its Organization...[1789-1903]* (Washington: G.P.O., 1903), 120.¹

⁷Alexander Smyth to George McFeely, July 1, 1812, NARS.

⁸Adjutant General's Office, Letter Sent, Vol. 2, March 28, 1812-July 10, 1912, NARS.

⁹*Ibid.* George McFeely to Alexander Macomb, 11th July, 1812 (copy), NARS; Samuel Duncan to Wm. Linnard, D.Q.M., Carlisle, 25th September, 1812, NARS.

¹⁰*Ibid.* Adjutant General's Office to Colonel Hugh Brady, 19th September, 1812, NARS.

¹¹George McFeely left a diary of the war. Most of the war descriptions are taken from the diary, which can be seen at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia (mms., anonymous "War of 1812," no. 814). A copy is on file at the Cumberland County Historical Society, Carlisle, Pa.

¹²At this point twenty-seven pages from May 27 to December 27 were omitted from this diary.

¹³*History of Cumberland and Adams County*, 106; Adjutant General's Office, Muster Roll of the Field and Staff Officers, 22nd Regiment of Infantry, Rolls and Return to 1821, NARS.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, Muster Rolls Field and Staff, 25th Regiment.

¹⁵*Ibid.* General Order, November, 1814, March 23, 25, 1815, General James Wilkinson, *Memories of My Own Times* (Philadelphia, 1816), III, 3.

¹⁶Heitman, *Historical Register of U.S. Army*, 124.

¹⁷Typescript in the Cumberland County Historical Society, "McFeely Family"; Tax lists, Carlisle, for the years 1818, 1831, 1834, 1838, 1842, 1843, and 1850; triennial assessment, Carlisle, 1835, all at CCHS.

¹⁸Films located at the Cumberland County Historical Society, "McFeely Record."

¹⁹Tax lists for years 1823 and 1826, CCHS.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 1831; triennial assessment of Carlisle, 1841, in CCHS.

²¹*American Volunteer* (Carlisle), April 1, 1819; "McFeely Family;" Censes of 1850, Pennsylvania, Cumberland County, Carlisle, 688 (on microfilm), Pennsylvania State Archives.

²²Triennial Assessment for 1831, 1835, 1838; Tax lists for 1820, 1823, 1829, 1841, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1850; deeds of Cumberland County, George McFeely and his wife Margaret McFeely from Charles McKenney, Index of Granters, v. 1, Book HH, 210, CCHS.

²³*American Volunteer* (Carlisle), January 26, 1854.

²⁴Wills of Cumberland County, Administration Book of 1849-1859, p. 258 (on microfilm), Pennsylvania State Archives.

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