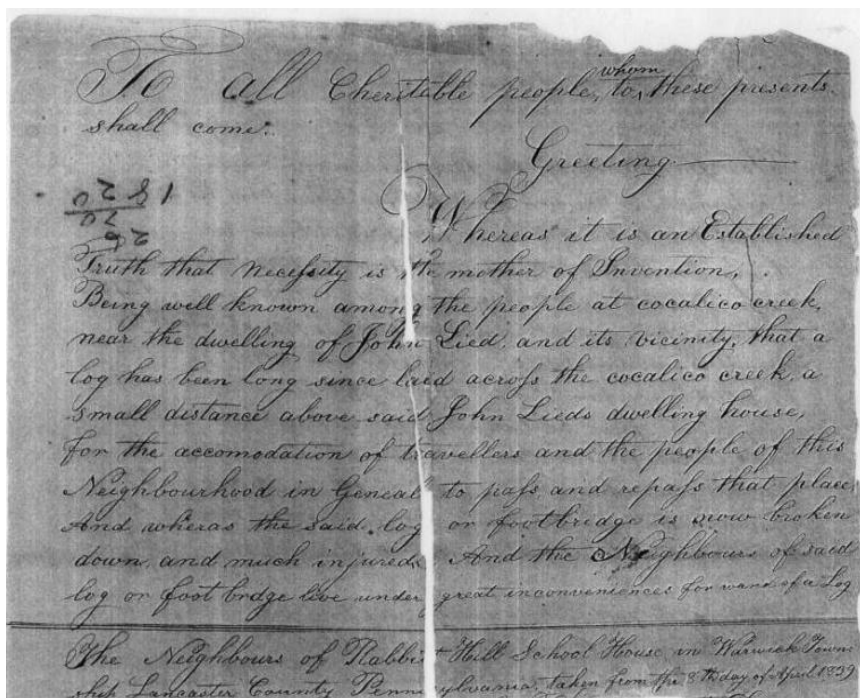


Bits and Pieces of Odds and Ends

BIT 1: In Ellis and Evans' "1883 History of Lancaster County" a reference was found to a Rabbit Hill School house existing in 1848. The location was given as "one eighth of a mile north of Main Street in Myers' Wood, south of a small cemetery." The Rabbit Hill school was noted as being discontinued before 1858. Early schools were built by subscription. Tuition was paid by the parents and after 1809, those who were too poor to pay were put on the poor list and the county paid their tuition. After the school laws of 1828, 1834, and 1836 the establishment of school districts became general, but Warwick did not accept the District System until 1843. The school house names listed as being in Warwick Township at that time were Warwick, Kissel Hill, Rabbit Hill, Filles, and Lexington. Locations are not given.

The small cemetery used for the location of the Rabbit Hill school is described in "Grave Undertakings, Warwick Township, Volume 2" as being restored by the Amos B. Oberholtzer Family in 1973. In the enclosure there is a red-sandstone marker on which is carved the date 1850. There is also a modern stone that explains that this burial site is on the land that Samuel and Christina Oberholtzer settled as a farm and that they died about 1850.



It is known by the writer that Philip Kraatz taught at a school in the Rothsville area in the early 1830's thru at least 1839. Copies were made of some of his papers that survived over 150 years. They are the treasured possession of the kind person who permitted a Lititz Public Library staff member to make copies. The earliest are attendance records

for school terms that were held in the Fall of 1833 and Spring of 1834. The earliest has written in the left upper corner: "School commenced on the 7 day of October 1833 at Bentzes school house by Philip Kraatz, Tea." (teacher) A record of each child attending the school from October 7 thru December 31 is kept on a sheet on which the teacher first had to draw the lines. The first day, October 7, there were six children in attendance and that kept increasing until on Dec. 31 there were 35 children. In the square for each date there is

a number written: 0 to 3 in half increments. There are also notations for those who needed paper and ink, or a primer for .06 ¼ cents, or a German abc Book for 12 ½ cents. Paid is marked beside very few names. There is the same type of sheet for January 1 thru March 21, 1834. It appears that some of the children attended both terms, but there are names that no longer appear and new names, too. The sheet for 1834 contains 40 names.

Paper was a precious commodity in those times, and some other sheets of which copies were made appeared to be rough drafts before a finished copy was written. Written July 29, 1836 is a letter “From an Apprentice to his Father, Cocalico Township, Lancaster County, Pa.” And at the bottom of that same sheet is what the father wrote in return. On the reverse side of that sheet is a list of students numbered 1 – 25. There are no dates, but again the paper was hand ruled and in each block there are from 1 to 5 slash marks. Possibly attendance information, because where there is no slash mark there is a dot to fill the space, and a half a slash is used also.

The next sheet starts: The County of Lancaster to Philip Kraatz, Sr. For the Tuition of the Poor children viz – Returned in Warwick Township and taken from the 20th day of August 1838 to the 11th day of June 1839 inclusive viz—. There are ten children listed and the days they attended. The total of days for the children comes to 613 days at 2 ½ cents – \$15.20. Below that is a listing for each child as to what supplies were required by each. Most of that part of the sheet is missing, but a spelling book was 12 ½ cents and a Testament was 31 cents.

On the reverse of the Poor Sheet is a copy of a letter that Philip Kraatz wrote. “To All Charitable people to whom these presents shall come. Greeting— Whereas it is an Established Truth that necessity is the mother of Invention, Being well known among the people at cocalico creek, near the dwelling of John Lieds, and its vicinity, that a log has been long since laid across the cocalico creek, a small distance above said John Lieds dwelling house, for the accommodations of travelers and the people of this Neighbourhood in General to pass and repass that place. And whereas the said log or footbridge is now broken down and much injured, And the Neighbours of said log or footbridge live under great inconveniences for want of a Log. The Neighbours of Rabbit Hill School House in Warwick Township Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, taken from the 8th day of April 1839..... (And so ends this tale because this is where the sheet of paper ends...)

BIT 2: In the Sunday News magazine insert on Sunday, May 22, 1927 there appears an article that tells about the first school to be erected in Lancaster County and that it is still standing on a the Carpenter farm near Pine Hill in Warwick Township. A photocopy of the

original article was found in the Place File at LancasterHistory.org. The copy of the article shows that the paper had become brittle and was falling apart. Pieces were missing and the complete story is a mystery. An attempt was made to find that original paper on microfilm, but the magazine supplement was missing from that copy.

Sunday, May 22, 1927. THE SUNDAY NEWS

First School Erected in County Still Standing on Warwick Farm

*Building Believed To Be County's First Schoolhouse, Built In
1746, Now Crumbling To Ruin On Farm Near Pine Hill,
Tenanted By Descendants Of Original Owner*

(The following is the text from the copy of the article that can be read.)



Map from the 1864 Bruns Atlas showing the section of Warwick Township near Pine Hill and the location of two buildings on the farm of Miles Carpenter. Miles and his wife Mary are buried in the family graveyard on the hill overlooking the old stone farmhouse.

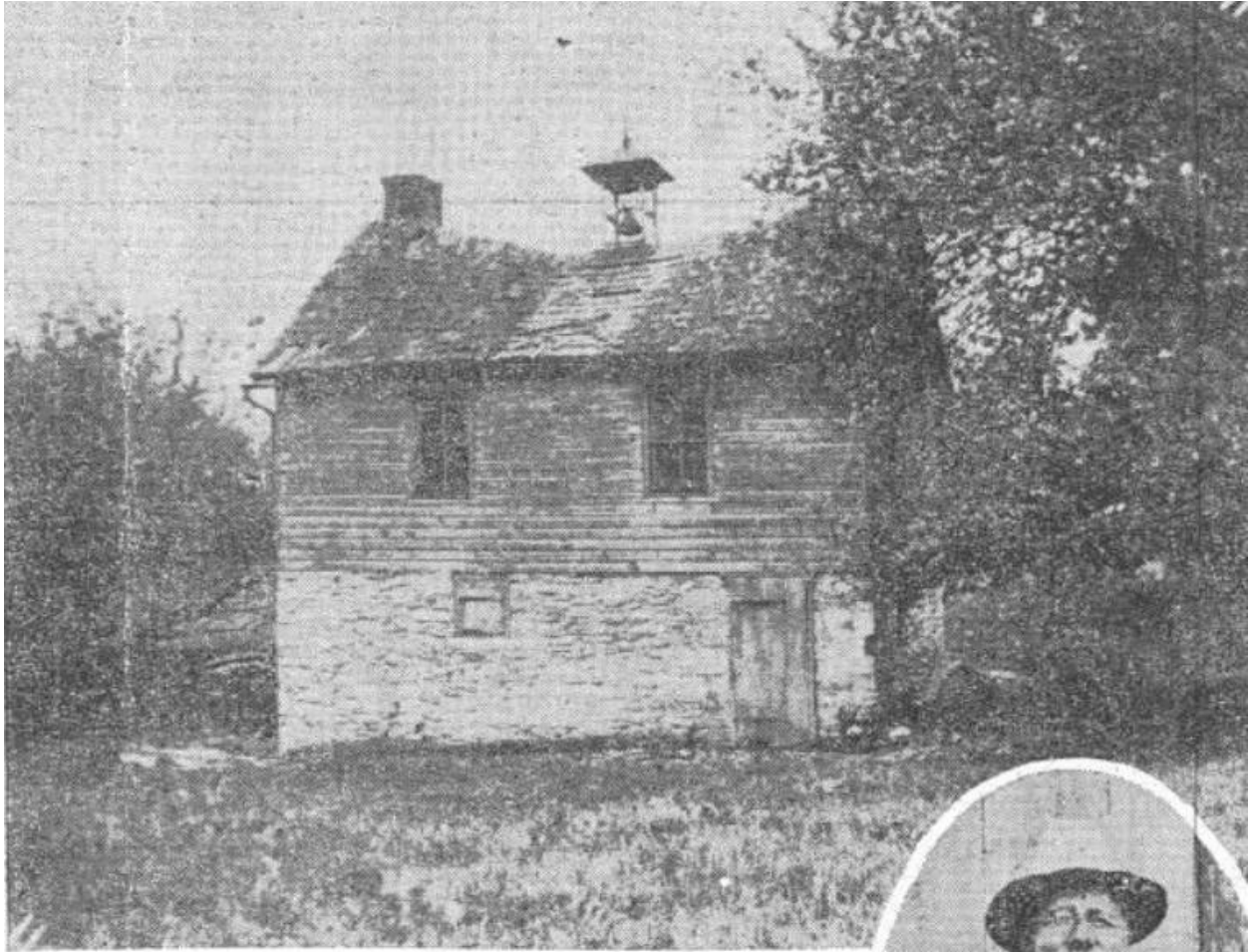
Up among the hills of Warwick township, at Pine Hill, on what is known as the old Carpenter place, stands, so far as is known, the first schoolhouse erected in Lancaster county.

Slowly crumbling into decay, a part of its roof fallen in, the ancient boards of the floor too badly rotted to bear the weight of a human being, and with fissures beginning to appear in the ancient stone foundations, the house still stands as a memorial to those early pioneers

who wanted to pass on to the others the learning which they had gleaned elsewhere themselves.

So far as is known the schoolhouse was built about 1746, the foundations being laid by a man named Gander. It was located in about the center of an 800-acre tract taken up by Melchoir Erisman, who with three brothers came to this country from Switzerland in 1728 to escape persecution by the Catholics

The house adjoining the school, which was built in 1770, has been occupied ever since that time by descendants of the Erisman family. There were two Erisman daughters and when they married each was given half of the 800-acre farm. The descendants of these two families in turn married and each time a smaller plot of land became a dowry. (At this point the copy shows that the page was torn and this story comes to a halt.)



One hundred and eighty years have passed since this old school-house, believed the first in Lancaster county, was built. The venerable structure is still standing on the farm of Sumpter Carpenter, shown in oval, near Pine Hill in Warwick township.

Mr. Carpenter, farmer, musician and historian, is a lineal descendant of the first owner of the farm, and has in his possession the original deed.

This is the picture that was with the above headline. It reads "One hundred and eighty years have passed since this old schoolhouse, believed the first in Lancaster county, was built. The venerable structure is still standing on the farm of Sumpter Carpenter, shown in oval, near Pine Hill in Warwick township. Mr. Carpenter, farmer, musician and historian, is a lineal descendant of the first owner of the farm and has in his possession the original deed.