

Wagner, Redsecker, Ulrich Building: 9 South Market Street; Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania**Abstract:**

9 South Market Street is a Victorian style commercial building with Colonial Revival features built in 1942. This was the second location for the office of the Elizabethtown *Chronicle*, which was started by John G. Westafer and Stuart McCord in December 1869. The Westafer family ran the *Chronicle* for over 100 years and three generations. In 1975 Ray Westafer, grandson of John G. Westafer sold the paper to the Lebanon News Company after working for the paper for about 50 years, and acting as the owner, publisher, and editor of the *Chronicle* for around 25 years. Unfortunately, the *Chronicle* went out of business in 2009, when the parent corporation Journal Register Co. went bankrupt. At present, Dan Robrish owns the property and runs the Elizabethtown *Advocate*, a weekly newspaper under the parent company LNP Media Group.

Property Details:

The *Chronicle* office, presently the office for the Elizabethtown *Advocate* is located at 9 South Market Street in Elizabethtown Pennsylvania and was built prior to 1846.² The dimensions for 9 South Market Street are unavailable; however, 11 South Market Street is the other half of the structure and should have approximately the same dimensions. 11 South Market Street is a Multi-Family property of 2,052 square feet and is located on a 6,970 square foot lot.³ 9 and 11 South Market are both presently used as commercial properties, with 9 housing the *Advocate* and 11 housing Jackson Hewitt Tax Service.

Deed Search:

¹ Preliminary research conducted by Aprille Mohn.

² Lancaster County Recorder of Deeds, Search Online Records, Infodex, Document, Book: F, Volume: 9, Page Number: 248, accessed June 5, 2018, <https://www.searchiqs.com/palan/InfodexMainMP.aspx>.

³ Ibid.

The current community of Elizabethtown is situated between the Conoy Creek and the Conwego Creek along the Susquehanna River. In 1534 French King Francis, I (1494-1547) colonized North America establishing New France with Jacques Cartier (1491-1557) as Viceroy in Quebec.⁴ As early as 1615, Étienne Brûlé (1592-1633) explored the Susquehanna River and its tributaries in Lancaster County.⁵ Pennsylvania was claimed by Sweden in 1638 and then by the Dutch in 1655. The British claimed the former Dutch holdings in 1674.⁶ British King Charles, II (1630-1685) granted William Penn (1644-1718) the Province of Pennsylvania in 1681.⁷ The French and British disputed control of Pennsylvania amidst 1688-1763.⁸ During this time in 1707 French fur trader Peter Bezaillion (1662-1742) established a settlement between the Conoy and Conwego Creeks along the Susquehanna River.⁹ In 1719, Peter Bezaillion invited the Piscataway Indians to move from Maryland and settle with him along the Conoy Creek and Susquehanna River.¹⁰ Captain Thomas Harris (1695- 1801) settled in Pennsylvania in 1726. In 1730, he builds a log cabin along the Conoy Creek. In 1741, he legally owns the land, and he builds a stone house in 1745.¹¹ Then, in 1745, he builds the Sign of the Bear Tavern, which is the first permanent structure in Elizabethtown.

Deeds to the property date all the way back to Samuel Balmer, however an accurate date for original origin of the property is undetermined but the latest date of sale is on 4 April 1846.¹² The chain of ownership since includes Daniel May (4 April 1846 – 17 September 1862),¹³ Mary M. Ferguson (17 September 1862 – 31 March 1884),¹⁴ Maurice R. Roeting (31 March 1884 – 1 April 1890),¹⁵ George W. Wagner (1 April 1890 – 29 March 1901),¹⁶ Mary V. Wissley (29 March 1901 – 10 July 1916),¹⁷ John O. Redsecker (10 July 1916 – 24 September 1926),¹⁸ George A. Redsecker (24 September 1926 – 13 June 1927),¹⁹ Edward E. Beidleman (13 June 1927),²⁰ George A. Redsecker (13 June 1927 – 1 November 1933),²¹ Margaret M. McKean Redsecker (1 November 1933-4 September 1936),²² Cecile S. Wealand (4 September 1936 – 1 October 1945),²³ Robert Hallgren (1 October 1945 – 2 January 1957),²⁴ Esther M. Hallgren (2 January 1957 – 6 March 1969),²⁵ Robert Hallgren (6 March

⁴ Robert Jean Knecht, Francis I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), 333-343.

⁵ Consul Willshire Butterfield, History of Brulé's Discoveries and Explorations, 1610-1626 Being a Narrative of the Discovery by Stephen Brulé of Lakes Huron, Ontario and Superior, and of his Explorations of Pennsylvania and western New York: Also of the Province of Ontario (Cleveland, OH: Herman-Taylor, 1898), 49-51.

⁶ Randall M. Miller, ed., Pennsylvania: A History of the Commonwealth (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 2002), 50-60.

⁷ Jean R. Soderlund, William Penn and the Founding of Pennsylvania, 1680-1684: A Documentary History (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1983), 39-50.

⁸ Henry Meelchior Muhlenberg Richards, The Pennsylvania-Germans in the French and Indian War: A Historical Sketch Prepared at the Request of the Pennsylvania-German Society (Lancaster: The Pennsylvania German Society, 1905), 16-22.

⁹ David L. Martin, A Clash of Cultures: Native Americans and Colonialism in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (Morgantown, PA: Masthof Press, 2010), 21-23.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Richard K. MacMaster, Elizabethtown: The First Three Centuries (Elizabethtown, PA: Elizabethtown Historical Society, 1999), 5.

¹² Book: F, Volume: 9, Page Number: 248.

¹³ Book: M, Volume: 13, Page Number: 350.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Book: O, Volume: 16, Page Number: 375.

¹⁷ Book: R, Volume: 28, Page Number: 476.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Book: R, Volume: 32, Page Number: 537.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Book: R, Volume: 37, Page Number: 8.

²⁴ Book: R, Volume: 58, Page Number: 788.

²⁵ Ibid.

1969 – 18 February 1982),²⁶ , Lewis J. Ulrich Jr (18 February 1982 – 15 February 2006),²⁷ and most recent Lewis J. Ulrich III.²⁸

The deed search for 11 South Market Street begins with the transfer of the property from Samuel Balmer to Daniel May on April 4, 1846. There is a gap in the search records, but according to the *Chronicle*, Westafer purchased real estate lot 18 on the borough plan from Maurice Roeting, tinsmith, for \$1,552 in 1884.²⁹ Later, George A. May owned the property and transferred it to George W. Wagner on April 2, 1900.³⁰ George A. Wagner sold the property to Mary V. Wissley on March 29, 1901 for \$4,400.³¹ Here, a transfer of ownership away from Wissley is missing, but the next deed records Edward E. Beldleman as having sold the property to George A. Redsecker on July 13, 1927 for \$1.³² On November 4, 1936 Joseph S. McKean and Margaret M. McKean Redsecker sold the property to Walter B. Wealand for \$9,000.³³ Following this, on October 27, 1945, Cecile Wealand Elliott and Jack Elliott sold the property to R. Hallgren and Esther Hallgren for \$33,250.³⁴ Esther M. Hallgren sold the property to relatives Barbara and Robert Hallgren for \$17,500 on March 6, 1969.³⁵ Barbara and Robert Hallgren sold the property to Lewis J. Ulrich Jr. for \$125,000 on February 12, 1982. On February 15, 2006, Lewis J. Ulrich Jr. transferred the property to Lewis J. Ulrich III for \$1.00.

Architectural Style Report:

Italianate architecture was a style, which was strongly influenced by the romantic and picturesque movement, which was a period in time dedicated to reviving architectural forms, which were induced by various region, or periods of time-involved romanticism in earlier history. They received these kinds of influenced majorly from past architectural styles such as formal classical buildings of ancient Rome and Greece. This Romantic Movement could be seen as a strict resistance against the classical form of architecture. The point of creating this movement was to develop a stronger need for greater freedom within architectural emotion by the promotion of organic based designs, which complemented their natural setting. Italianate architecture was based off the detail and structure of medieval farmhouses in the Italian countryside. The shape and design of these farmhouses were irregularly but somehow being naturally fit into their rustic settings.³⁶

The Architectural style for the building addressed 9 South Market Street has been established to be an Italianate based structure. Focusing on the top of the building, cornices with decorative brackets, which is a prominent feature within Italianate architecture.³⁷ Various other features within Italianate architecture in which can be located on this structure is Italianate buildings are typically two or three stories in height, they have tall narrow windows, and there are elaborate window crowns.³⁸

Historical Context and Purpose:

²⁶ Book: C, Volume: 81, Page Number: 335.

²⁷ Instrument Number: 5499411.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ "Focus on Elizabethtown," *Chronicle*, (Elizabethtown, PA), Oct. 30, 1997.

³⁰ Book: F, Volume: 16, Page Number: 519.

³¹ Book: O, Volume: 16, Page Number: 375.

³² Book: R, Volume: 28; Page Number: 476.

³³ Book: R, Volume: 32, Page Number: 537.

³⁴ Book: R; Page Number: 378.

³⁵ Book: R, Volume: 58, Page Number: 788.

³⁶ Will Jones, *How to Read Houses: A Crash Course in Architectural Styles*. (NY: Rizzoli International Publications Inc., 2008), 157.

³⁷ "PHMC Italianate Villa/Italianate Style 1840 - 1885." PHMC Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide. Accessed July 06, 2018.

<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/italianate.html>.

³⁸ Ibid.

In 1800, Dr. Joseph Ross came to Elizabethtown and rented a house, which was owned by Samuel Balmer. This house was located on the opposite side 18-20 South Market Street.³⁹ In 1814, Samuel Balmer and Conrad Hoster were chosen to serve as elders for the German Reformed congregation at the Christ German Reformed Church.⁴⁰ Many artisans who lived in Elizabethtown relied on methods and techniques to anyone living in the 1750s or 1760s when producing products. Samuel Balmer was a carpenter who had a two-man crew who built three houses earning \$2,400 for the business.⁴¹

Daniel May served as an elder for the Church of God.⁴²

On February 12, 1892, around midnight, a fire broke out on the second floor of Dr. C. G. Gabel dental office, which is also known as the Lindemuth building. The fire moved downwards, into the downstairs of the Chronicle office. The fire razed several of the building from the Square including David Martin's, D. L. Landis' agency building, and the office of Dr. A.C. Treichler. Furthermore, two other buildings located at the rear and to the east of the first block of South Market Street also were leveled. Those two buildings were George W. Wagner's confectionary store and Maurice Roeting's tin ware business.⁴³

John G. Westafer, an apprentice at the Middletown Journal moved to Elizabethtown at the age of 19 in 1869. December of 1869, Westafer and Stuart McCord, a printer from Lebanon, established the Elizabethtown *Chronicle*, the same year the two moved into town.⁴⁴ Temporarily, after moving into town, both Westafer and McCord lived with shoemaker George F. Wagner in his home.⁴⁵

The *Chronicle* was not Elizabethtown's first weekly paper. The *Trumpet* preceded the *Chronicle*, as one of the earliest dated Elizabethtown newspapers, after the paper was establishment in 1864 by Benjamin Lehman.⁴⁶ The *Trumpet* included "interesting events transpiring in the community" and editorials from "clergymen, teachers, medicinal man and all others."⁴⁷ Lehman changed the name from the *Trumpet* to the *Gazette* in 1866. After the name change, the *Gazette* only ran for three years before Lehman moved to Mount Union and started another newspaper there. In response to this void, Westafer and McCord, who do not appear to have worked together prior agreed to found the *Chronicle* together.

Three years after the paper's foundation, however, Westafer took out a loan and bought out McCord's shares if the paper. Two years later, in 1874, John G. Westafer married Esther Weaver.⁴⁸ Around this time, the newspaper reached 1,000 subscribers after Westafer changed the *Chronicle* format to an 8-column sheet of 26 by 40 inches.⁴⁹ Westafer was also an active member of the community. He was actively involved with Friendship Fire and Hose company No. 1 in 1876, and served as vice president in 1878.⁵⁰

Westafer purchased real estate lot 18 on the borough plan from Maurice Roeting, tinsmith, for \$1,552 in 1884.⁵¹ On lot 18, Roeting previously owned a home goods store; however, this building along with many on South Market Street was destroyed in what was called Elizabethtown's most destructive fire. On February 12,

³⁹ MacMaster, 58.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 80.

⁴¹ Ibid., 107.

⁴² Ibid., 112.

⁴³ "New School Building Erected in Year 1873," Mildred Hipple.

⁴⁴ "Focus on Elizabethtown," *Chronicle*, (Elizabethtown, PA), Oct. 30, 1997

⁴⁵ Macmaster, 119.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ *Chronicle*, Oct. 30, 1997.

⁴⁸ *Chronicle*, March 12, 1948.

⁴⁹ *Chronicle*, Oct. 30, 1997.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.; MacMaster, 131.

1892, shortly after midnight a fire started when the stove in a nearby dentist's office was disturbed.⁵² Several buildings were destroyed, and among the wreckage the following morning the teakettle sign for Roeting's home good store still hung, discernable.

The same year as the fire, Westafer purchased the property 23 West Hummelstown Street for his growing family to live. His wife Esther bore George Washington Westafer March 15, 1873 and bore Jenny Lind Westafer in 1876. Before his death, John G. Westafer worked with his son George W. Westafer on the *Chronicle*. George W. Westafer was said to have a conservative editorial style, but an aggressive business style, which allowed the *Chronicle* to flourish. The paper enjoyed a newfound stability, and was attributed to "John G. Westafer and son, Publishers."⁵³ John G. Westafer died on August 18, 1920 at the age of 70 years old, leaving the production of the *Chronicle* to his son George W. Westafer and his widow Esther.

George W. Westafer married Daisy Angstadt; however, she died in the first year of their marriage, and following her previous wife's death, he married her sister-in-law Bertha Angstadt. Bertha Westafer bore George five children: Vera, Ruth, John, Ray, and Walter.⁵⁴ Of the five children, only Vera and Ray would get involved in the production of the *Chronicle*.⁵⁵ Ray showed especial dedication to the paper. Despite his initial lack of interest in the printing business when he graduated from Elizabethtown High School, the first Monday after his graduation his mother encouraged him to go into the print office and try printing since he was not up to anything. Ray agreed, and while there, his father gave him a piece of copy and told him to set the paper in type. The copy had to be set with individual letters in 8-point type, and this took Ray hours to set a few inches of type since he was unfamiliar with the arrangement of letters in the case.⁵⁶ After the type was set, George W. Westafer picked the paper off the composing stick and placed the paper in a gallery, but the paper was on display shortly after being removed and handed back to George. Yet, he had not showed him how to pick up the type tray properly, so all the letters fell out when Ray attempted to mimic his father. He spent the rest of the day fixing what he had spilled, but by the conclusion of tedious day Ray had decided printing was what he wanted to do with his life. Afterward, Ray learned to run the Linotype machine from his sister Vera, and became more involved in the paper for three years, until he moved away to Oakfield, NY and worked as a mechanical superintendent at a newspaper and print shop.⁵⁷

In 1929, Ray Westafer returned to Elizabethtown and the *Chronicle*, where he worked as a Linotype operator, swept out the office, melted type, and did other odd jobs. Ray was able to become a skilled Linotype machine mechanic by watching technicians work on the machines and reading repair manuals. He was even able to go to other printing establishments and repair their Linotype machines. In 1947, George W. Westafer died of a heart attack, and Ray inherited the business. Prior to the death of George Westafer, Ray had helped his father keep the books, so he also had some understanding of the business aspect of printing as well as the technical portions. As the full time publisher and proprietor of the *Chronicle*, Ray would help in the shop during the day and take the books home to work on them at night.⁵⁸ His wife Hazel worked as his fulltime secretary, and was another integral part of the paper.⁵⁹ Unfortunately, Ray Westafer could not run the *Chronicle* indefinitely, and he lacked heirs willing to take on the burden. Ray Westafer sold the *Chronicle*, a family exclusive business, to the Lebanon News Company in February 1975, hoping the company would continue to produce high quality and family friendly news, the way the *Chronicle* had for over 100 years.⁶⁰ From this point, the *Chronicle* changed

⁵² MacMaster, 141.

⁵³ *Chronicle*, January 1, 1970.

⁵⁴ *Chronicle*, Oct. 30, 1997.

⁵⁵ *Chronicle*, April 5, 1979.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Chronicle*, January 1, 1970.

⁶⁰ *Chronicle*, July 1994.

hands several times, and for a six-month period around 1981, the newspaper was not printed. Unfortunately, the paper went out of business in 2009, when the parent corporation at the time, Journal Register Co., went bankrupt.⁶¹

Appendix Historical Photos:



⁶¹ Tom Knapp, "Elizabethtown Might Get Newspaper," *Lancaster Online*, Dec. 16, 2009.



Appendix Current Photos:



