

Drace-Matasevac Residence: 223-225 South Market Street; Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania**Abstract:**

This Pennsylvania Tradition German Farmhouse was built by Jacob B. Meckley in the 1880s. The home is most associated with the Drace and Matasevac families. Mary Matasevac was the daughter of Elizabeth Drace later Mrs. Rhine Smith. Frank and Mary Matasevac owned and operated Matasevac Christmas Trees on Campus Road in Elizabethtown for 65 years. Christmas trees for this business were also grown on the Hollinger the Ironstone Ranch and home of the historic of the Star Barn.

Property Details:

The Ream Residence currently functions as a residential building and is currently being rented. The Ream Residence is located along Market Street in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania. The address for the property on Market Street is 223-225 South Market Street, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, 17022. The lot size is recorded as 200 ft. x 35 ft.²

Deed Search:

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.³ As early as 1615, Étienne Brûlé (1592-1633) explored the Susquehanna River and its tributaries in Lancaster County.⁴ Pennsylvania was claimed by

¹ Preliminary research conducted by Thomas Holcomb.

² Ibid.

³ Robert Jean Knecht, *Francis I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), 333-343.

⁴ 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.

Sweden in 1638 and then by the Dutch in 1655. The British claimed the former Dutch holdings in 1674.⁵ British King Charles, II (1630-1685) granted William Penn (1644-1718) the Province of Pennsylvania in 1681.⁶ The French and British disputed control of Pennsylvania amidst 1688-1763.⁷ 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.⁸ In 1719, Peter Bezaillion invited the Piscataway Indians to move from Maryland and settle with him along the Cony Creek and Susquehanna River.⁹ 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 1745.¹⁰ Then, in 1745, he builds the Sign of the Bear Tavern, which is the first permanent structure in Elizabethtown.¹¹

Deeds to the property date all the way back to Henry Brubaker, who possessed the lot prior to 12 October 1785.¹² The chain of ownership since includes Christian Etter (12 October 1785 – 4 May 1791),¹³ Issac Ream (4 May 1791 – 21 January 1795),¹⁴ Michael Ruby (21 January 1795 – 2 May 1814),¹⁵ Christian Stauffer (2 May 1814 – 18 June 1814),¹⁶ John Eberly and Samuel Geers (18 June 1814 – 20 August 1814),¹⁷ Henry Brubaker and Mahlon Roberts (20 August 1814 – 19 March 1836),¹⁸ Joseph Boyer (19 March 1836 – 1 April 1847),¹⁹ John and Barbara Kuhns (1 April 1847 – 1851),²⁰ John and Catherine Lynch (1851 – 30 June 1858),²¹ George Byrod (30 June 1858 – 31 March 1859),²² Jacob Felix (31 March 1859 – 31 March 1866),²³ Susanna Rickert (31 March 1866 – 29 March 1879),²⁴ Joseph Keener (29 March 1879 – 1 April 1881),²⁵ Jacob B. Meckley (1 April 1881 – 26 January 1907),²⁶ Minnie A. Will (26 January 1907 – 3 April 1924),²⁷ Amos B. Drace (3 April 1924 – 3 April 1925),²⁸ Samuel and Alice Lessley (3 April 1925 – 19 October 1949),²⁹ Alice Lessley (19 October 1949 – 11 October 1971),³⁰ Elizabeth Smith (25 March 1971 – 11 October 1971),³¹ Mary Matesevac (11 October 1971 – 1

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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.

⁷ Henry Meclchior 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.

⁸ David L. Martin, A Clash of Cultures: Native Americans and Colonialism in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (Morgantown, PA: Masthof Press, 2010), 21-23.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Richard K. MacMaster, Elizabethtown: The First Three Centuries (Elizabethtown, PA: Elizabethtown Historical Society, 1999), 5.

¹¹ Ibid., 8.

¹² Lancaster County Recorder of Deeds, Search Online Records, Infodex, Document, Book: G6, Page Number: 7, accessed July 3, 2018, <https://www.searchiqs.com/palan/InfodexMainMP.aspx>.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Book: X11, Page Number: 535.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Book: Z, Volume: 18, Page Number: 58.

²⁸ Book: R, Volume: 26, Page Number: 599.

²⁹ Book: R, Volume: 27, Page Number: 65.

³⁰ Book: O, Volume: 40, Page Number: 172.

³¹ Book: P, Volume: 61, Page Number: 635.

August 1978),³² Charles and Sally Reylek (1 August 1978 – 15 March 1984),³³ Charles J. Reylek (15 March 1984 – 14 February 1986),³⁴ James M. Hoffman (1986 – 2007),³⁵ Andrew J. Weaver (2007 – 2013),³⁶ and the current owners PRRG LLC (2013 – present).³⁷

Architectural Style:

Pennsylvania German Traditional architecture, which can be seen in a variety of buildings types, display cultural ties to German settlers who came to Pennsylvania during the early stages of development within the state. Not only does this architectural style represent early German settlers but also other central Europe areas, which speak German, also known as Deutsch. This certain heavy Germanic impact is present in the southeast section of Pennsylvania where the early Germans created their first settlements in the early 1700s and later extended throughout the state.³⁸

One of the several materials used in Pennsylvania German Tradition is brick and this structure was established with brick walls as well as a brick foundation. One of the unique features present within this structure is the dual gable end chimneys located on the left and right sides of the building.³⁹ Another distinguishing element, which is seen as a critical feature of Pennsylvania German Tradition architecture, is the structure has two and a half stories. The reason for why these structures were 2 to 3 stories were for the purpose of storage or a kitchen.⁴⁰ Often these houses have a detached one room called a "summer kitchen" which is located in the rear area of these typical structures. The purpose of these summer kitchens are used to keep the heat, which comes from cooking or washing clothes, away from the main part of the house during hotter seasons.⁴¹

Historical Context and Purpose:

On March 27, 1812, Michael Ruby sold a tract of land in “that part of Elizabethtown in Mount Joy Township lately laid out by the said Michael Ruby” to an individual named John Miller. Elizabethtown citizen John Miller paid \$80 for his lot with was located on East High Street and Church Street. Michael Ruby had additional lot, located on High Street and the land went beyond the Lutheran Church, which was originally owned by Christian Etter who sold his land in 1791 to Isaac Ream. Michael Ruby later bought half of this acreage in 1795 from Isaac Ream.⁴²

In May 1814, Michael Ruby sold eighty-six acres to Martin Stauffer who was a miller in Warwick Township. Immediately, Martin Stauffer sold the entire tract of land to Dr. John Eberle and Samuel L. Geehr, who was a merchant, both of these men were from Manheim. In 1814, Dr. John Eberly and Samuel Geehr made a considerate profit when they sold forty-five acres of their original eighty-six acres to Henry Brubaker and Mahlon Roberts who were both businesspersons in Manheim.⁴³

³² Book: Q, Volume: 61, Page Number: 909.

³³ Book: R, Volume: 74, Page Number: 349.

³⁴ Book: S, Volume: 88, Page Number: 585.

³⁵ Book: C, Volume: 94, Page Number: 598.

³⁶ LanCo View, Deed Reference Number: 6265138, date accessed May 08, 2018,

https://gis.co.lancaster.pa.us/mox6/public.cfm?action=mox6_view_interface&CFID=158799&CFTOKEN=6dd22f03bc0c96c9-CC699EF0-E965-15F9-BD10C6411A7767C5.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ "PHMC Pennsylvania German Traditional 1700 - 1870." PHMC Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide. Accessed July 05, 2018.

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

³⁹ "PHMC Pennsylvania German Traditional 1700 - 1870." PHMC Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide. Accessed July 03, 2018.

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

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² MacMaster, 69.

⁴³ Ibid.

Henry Brubaker and Mahlon Roberts began developing their tract of land into lots and selling them. An advertisement was recorded from their selling of lots and Brubaker and Roberts advertised “140 elegant and convenient building lots” in a development called “Elizabethtown Continued.” With this kind of progress going on, they laid out streets and alleys and properly titled them with names, which are still used today. A few examples of the streets developed by them are Locust, Mount Joy, and Chestnut streets. Additionally, Henry Brubaker and Mahlon Roberts put aside a plot of land for the establishment of a public school building. They continued to sell a few lots on High School, which was called Manheim Street at the time. Nonetheless, this real estate boom did not last long. In 1836, Henry Brubaker sold a four-acre tract, which contained thirteen unsold lots, which were located on Mechanic Street, Verdant Alley, and Locust Street to Joseph Boyer.⁴⁴

John Lynch was born in Dauphin County and later baptized at St. Peter’s Catholic Church in Elizabethtown in 1810. Denis Lynch, his father, was originally from Derry County in Ireland. When he arrived in America, he served as a member for the Elizabethtown parish as early as 1803.⁴⁵ In 1833, John Lynch bought a stone building located at 18-20 South Market Street from Jacob Hoffman and opened a general store.⁴⁶ John Lynch was a contributor to the building of the St. Peter’s Church in Elizabethtown.⁴⁷ Lynch served as a Secretary of the Union Fire Company and continued to serve as secretary after the first reorganized of the firm in November of 1843. After the second reorganization in 1858 when Abraham Greenawalt replaced Andrew Wade as president for the new company’s name, the Friendship Fire Company, Lynch continued to serve as a secretary for both the old and the new firms.⁴⁸ John Lynch served as postmaster of Elizabethtown from 1848 to 1852.⁴⁹ John Lynch’s store was used as the post office through 1852 and later became a Market Street landmark in the 1860’s.⁵⁰ Records claim that Lynch owned a brickyard.⁵¹ John Lynch served as president for The Farmer’s and Mechanic’s Mutual Insurance Company of Elizabethtown in 1859.⁵²

George Byrod served as a Justice of the Peace in 1840, 1845, 1854, 1865, and 1870.⁵³ In 1851, Byrod also served as the secretary for the Farmer’s and Mechanic’s Mutual Insurance Company.⁵⁴ Additionally, Byrod played a role in the Civil War. During the time of the war, both sides sought men to fight. Counties and towns offered cash bounties to encourage volunteers. In 1863, Congress introduced a military draft, which gave each community a quota of men for service. In 1865, Elizabethtown was responsible for finding seventeen men for the army in the call for 300,000 nationwide. George Byrod and Henry A. Wade reported sixty-four names of men liable for the draft in Elizabethtown.⁵⁵ In 1878, Byrod took part in committee tasked with drafting a petition to the borough council and obtain signatures for a new fire engine for the Friendship Fire Company.⁵⁶

Jacob Felix was a cabinetmaker who made and sold furniture in 1870.⁵⁷ Felix was also a trustee for the Friendship Fire Company in 1860.⁵⁸ In 1894, a brickyard once occupied a location South Mount Joy Street and Joseph Kenner owned this brickyard. Although, he later moved the brickyard to a location on West High Street, somewhere near the railroad.⁵⁹ The Elizabethtown congregation of the Zion’s Church of Elizabethtown built their

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 92.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 52.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 89.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 109.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 92.

⁵¹ Ibid., 108.

⁵² Ibid., 143.

⁵³ Ibid., 301.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 109.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 116.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 143.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 122.

⁵⁸ “Friendship Fire Company begins service,” *Elizabethtown Chronicle*, December 22, 2005.

⁵⁹ “For Those Who Remember,” *Elizabethtown Chronicle*, July 9, 1970.

own meetinghouse on the corner of Park and South Mount Joy Streets on a plot of land donated by church member, Jacob B. Meckley, on July 26, 1887.⁶⁰

Appendix: Current Photos:



⁶⁰ MacMaster, 163.

