

Elizabethtown College 125th Anniversary
National Historic Preservation Trust This Place Matters Campaign & Campus Historic Building Survey
Based on the National Parks Service Historic American Building Survey
2024 Summer Creative Arts and Research Program SCARP
Ava Barton Class of 2027
Jean-Paul Benowitz, Director of Prestigious Scholarships and Fellowships and Public Heritage Studies



Joseph H. Rider (1830 – 1908)

Joseph H. Rider and his family were members of the Church of the Brethren which was called the “German Baptist Brethren or Dunkers. He belonged to the White Oak congregation which dated back to the early eighteenth century.”¹ Joseph H. Rider’s father, Elder Jacob H. Rider was the senior minister of the Chiques Church where he preached in Elizabethtown once every four weeks.² Joseph H. Rider had a store on South Market street in 1890 where he sold hardware, iron stoves, seeds, and house-furnishings. The picture above shows an “Elizabethtown Friendship fire truck on South Market Street in front of the Joseph H. Rider Hardware Store, ca. 1920s.”³

Pictured right is the “Odd fellows building prior to remodeling and the addition. The Old Washington Hotel and Joseph Rider’s buildings are on the right.”⁴ “Joseph H. Rider, for whom Elizabethtown College's Rider Memorial Hall was named, was vice president of the college's board of trustees.”⁵ His hardware store and family residence (on the right) stood side by side on



¹ Richard Kerwin MacMaster. *Elizabethtown: The First Three Centuries* (Morgantown, PA: Mastof Press, 1999), 124.

² MacMaster, 125.

³ Ibid., 190.

⁴ Ibid., 209.

⁵ The Committee, *History of the Church of the Brethren of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania*. (Lancaster, PA: Press of the New Era Printing Company, 1915) 628.

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South Market Street (now the site of the post office built by the WPA in 1939). In a crusade to close all the taverns in Elizabethtown, in 1886, Rider bought the Washington House Hotel (built in 1798 and pictured on the left) next door.”⁶ He rented the building to other tenants.

Joseph H. Rider was the first president of the Elizabethtown Exchange Bank which opened for business on March 8, 1887.⁶ The bank opened in the Brethren A.G.

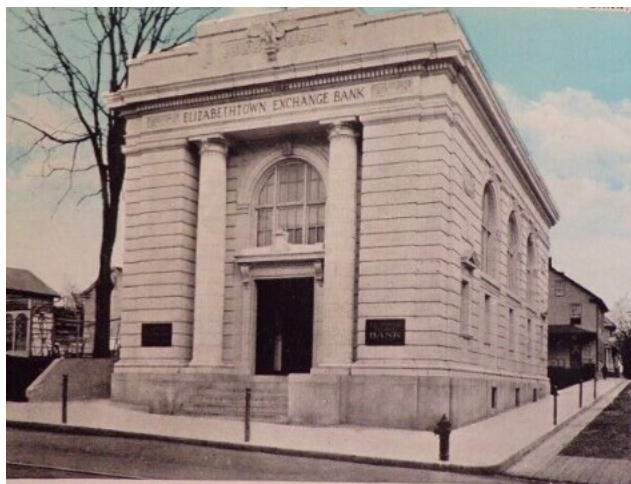
Heisey building on 244 South Market Street. In 1917 it was moved to a new building on “the corner of South Market and East Washington Streets.”⁷ The bank would go on to become the Elizabethtown Trust Company in 1927 until it merges with Farmers First Bank in 1981.⁸

Rider was very supportive of the Church of the Brethren. When the old Mechanic Street School became too small for the Brethren’s growing congregation, Rider offered to give them a large lot he owned on Washington Street. This lot was next door to the Rider Family’s home. On December 15, 1888, Joseph H. Rider and his wife, Mary Catharine Rider deeded the property to the German Baptist Church, or the Brethren. The congregation built a brick meetinghouse on this lot, measuring fifty by eighty feet. “The building had a full basement.



It faced the horse sheds and the Catholic cemetery, rather than facing Washington Street. As in most nineteenth-century Brethren meetinghouses, there were two entrances, one for the men and one for the women. This building is still in use as St. Peter’s Catholic School.”⁷

During the third public meeting for Elizabethtown College, held on June 7, 1899, the first Board of Trustees for Elizabethtown College were selected. J.H. Rider was elected



⁶ Jean-Paul Benowitz. *Images of America: Elizabethtown* (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2015), 28.

⁷ Lancaster Deeds, D-13-483. History of the Church of the Brethren of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania (Lancaster, Pa.: 1915), p. 407; MacMaster, 163-165.

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for a two-year term.⁸ Rider was also one of five names that subscribed to the College's original charter.⁹ June 16, 1899, Rider was added to a committee with S.H. Hertzler, and T.F. Imler for the purpose of securing an official charter for the College and designing a seal for the institution.¹⁰ Rider, along with S.H. Hertzler was appointed to get an article of agreement from B.G. Groff prior to the purchase of the grounds for the college.¹¹ The third, sixth, and ninth board meetings were held at the home of Joseph Rider.¹² During the ninth board meeting on August 16, 1900, Joseph H. Rider was elected as Vice President of the Board.¹³ Pictured to the right is a page from an Elizabethtown College subscription book.¹⁴

“On November 12, the day before the College was to open, there was one more emergency. Since the school building was still unfinished, classes were to



be held at the home of Joseph H. Rider on Washington Street, the parsonage of the German Baptist Brethren Church.¹⁵ But the Rider House was not yet ready to be used for this purpose. Falkenstein pivoted to use the A. Heisey building on the “corner of South Market and Bainbridge Streets.¹⁶” Heisey Hall was the site of the College's first classes. “It is believed that this photograph shows one of the three trips required in “moving the

Joseph Rider	500 ⁰⁰
Mrs. B. Mchley	100 ⁰⁰
Isaac Huffman	25 ⁰⁰
Helen	100 ⁰⁰
At W Cair	25 ^m
M H Noble	25 ⁰⁰
Frank Smith	25 ⁰⁰
A. Dissinger	25 ⁰⁰
A. S. Reidy	100 ⁰⁰
J. R. S. S. S.	200 ⁰⁰
S. S. S.	100 ⁰⁰
S. S. S.	100 ⁰⁰
ABDemy	35 ⁰⁰
J. S. Stoffer	100 ⁰⁰
Isaac S. S.	25 ⁰⁰
Isaac S. S.	50 ⁰⁰
Isaac S. S.	25 ⁰⁰
I. S. S.	50 ⁰⁰

⁸ Ralph Schlosser, *History of Elizabethtown College 1899 - 1970*. (Lebanon, PA: Sowers Printing Company, 1971), 17.

⁹ Schlosser, 21.

¹⁰ Schlosser, 25.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Schlosser, 29, 31, 34.

¹³ MacMaster, 164.

¹⁴ Schlosser, 27.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.; Jean-Paul Benowitz, and Peter J DePuydt, *Elizabethtown College*. (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 12.

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College" from the Heisey building to Rider House while Alpha Hall was still under construction.¹⁷ November 14, 1900, was the first day of "class recitations" in Heisey Hall.



On November 19, after the first week, the Rider house, located on Washington Street in Elizabethtown, was finally prepared to house the classes. The furniture and books were carried down two flights of stairs to be loaded into Rider's two-horse wagon. Rider's house offered a more efficient physical layout.¹⁸ "The layout of the first floor of the Rider house was: a front room,



containing the book room, office, reading room and library, the next room, the chapel and recitation room; the third room, a study and recitation room and the rear room, the cloak room and store room. Under such an environment the work was carried on until the Christmas vacation.¹⁹ Pictured left is the Joseph H. Rider House also known as the Washington Street Parsonage of the Church of the Brethren. The home was the site of class work from November 21, 1900, to Christmas, 1900.²⁰

¹⁷ Ibid., 40.

¹⁸ Chet Williamson, *Uniting Work and Spirit: A Centennial History of Elizabethtown College* (Elizabethtown, PA, Elizabethtown College Press, 2001), 41-42.; Jean-Paul Benowitz, and Peter J DePuydt, *Elizabethtown College*. (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 13.

¹⁹ Schlosser, 40-41.

²⁰ Ibid., 41.

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By the fifth year of the College, the student body had grown and a building in addition to Alpha Hall was needed. The building committee for the future Rider Memorial Hall consisted of Jesse C. Ziegler, Joseph H. Rider, and I.N.H. Beahm. The cost of its construction was \$14,347.45. T.F. Imler and S.H. Hertzler were tasked with selecting the building's name. They suggested Rider Memorial Hall because of Joseph Rider's generous donation to the building. Rider modestly declined to have his name on the stone of the building. Because of this, they called the building "Memorial Hall." That is, until Joseph Rider's death, when the building was finally named "Rider Memorial Hall."²¹ On March 4, 1906, "Memorial Hall" was dedicated.



"It housed the library, a "physical culture" room, and a new chapel, as well as many classrooms. The new building also boasted a bell tower, which was the scene of many pranks during the school's early years."²² Pictured to the above is a view of Alpha Hall and Rider Memorial Hall.²³ "Rider was "a quiet person, not easily ruffled" and "very cautious and precise in business



matters."²⁴ He died in 1908, but his son John G. Rider continued the hardware store.²⁵ Joseph H. Rider was born on December 8, 1830 in Lancaster County Pennsylvania and died August 4, 1908 at age 77 in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania. He is buried at the Reider Rider Graveyard in Mount Joy, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Row 2, plot 8. His parents were Reverend Jacob Rider (1804-1883) and Eva Henry Rider (1810-1845).²⁶



²¹ MacMaster, 169.; Schlosser, 60-61.

²² Williamson, 49.

²³ Benowitz, 31, 83.

²⁴ MacMaster, 135.

²⁵ Williams' Lancaster County Directory, 1890. History of the Church of the Brethren of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, p. 407. J. Richard Heisey, 1990, Heritage House.; Richard Kerwin MacMaster. *Elizabethtown: The First Three Centuries*. Elizabethtown Historical Society, 1999, P. 135

²⁶ "Joseph H. Rider (1830-1908)," Find a Grave, accessed May 24, 2024.
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/190850132/joseph-h-rider>.

Joseph Rider's Death Certificate

Form V. 2, No. 4-2004-2007

PLACE OF DEATH

County Lancaster

Township of Elizabethton Registration District No. 602

or Borough of Elizabethton Primary Registration District No. 1327

City of Pa. Ward 49

(If death occurs away from
USUAL RESIDENCE
give facts called for under
"Special Information.")

FULL NAME Joseph H. Rider

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

SEX Male COLOR White

DATE OF BIRTH December 8 1830
(Month) (Day) (Year)

AGE 77 years 7 months 26 days

SINGLE, MARRIED,
WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED married

BIRTHPLACE
(State or County) Lancaster

OCCUPATION Merchant

NAME OF FATHER Jacob Rider

BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER
(State or County) Lancaster

MARIED NAME OF MOTHER Eva Henry

BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER
(State or County) Dauphin

THE ABOVE STATED PERSONAL PARTICULARS ARE TRUE
TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

(Informant) J. G. Diekhof
(Address) Elizabethton, Pa.

FILED Aug 6 1908 C. C. Reese
Register

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS
CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

FILE NO. 75318

REGISTERED NO. 49

(If death occurred away
from usual residence,
give the NAME, address
of agent and residence.)

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

DATE OF DEATH 8 15 1908
(Month) (Day) (Year)

I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from
June 14, 1908 to Aug 4, 1908

That I last saw him Aug 4, 1908
and that death occurred on the date stated above, at 8:30

P. M. The CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows:
General Straphy & 299
Process of Prostate Gland

Several Years (Duration) (Years)

Contributory Process of Prostate
Gland (Duration) (Years)

Signed: J. G. Diekhof M. D.
Aug 5, 1908 (Address) Elizabethton

SPECIAL INFORMATION only for Hospital Institutions, Tumors, or
Special Findings

Name of Agent John H. H. H. Place of Death Pa.

What was cause related?

PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL DATE OF BURIAL

Rider Green Spring and Co's
UNDETAILED ADDRESS Elizabethton

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