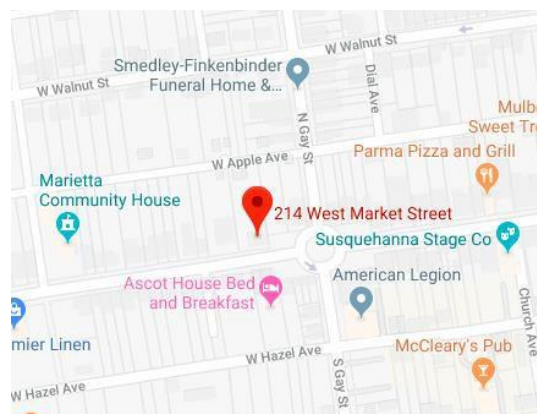


Shelley, Huston, Cresswell House: “Westerly on The Square” 214 West Market Street, Marietta, Pennsylvania



Abstract:

In 1808 carpenter and merchant John Hoyer built this Federal Adam Style house (1780-1840). In 1814 he opened a liquor store in this house strategically located on the Market Square. Referred to colloquially as both "The Shelley House" and "Westerly on the Square" this house was rented by Dr. Samuel Huston (1792-1865), a Whig candidate for the Pennsylvania State Senate, and a strong anti-Federalist. Huston was a close friend of Congressman Thaddeus Stevens (1792-1868) with whom he was involved with the Underground Rail Road in Lancaster County.¹ Eden M. Hood, who owned Shelly House until 1967, served as president of the Marietta Borough Council. In 1967 Robert V. Cresswell (1903-1991) and Mary L. Watters Cresswell (1909-1998) purchased Westerly. Robert Cresswell was a founding member and past president of the Marietta Restoration Association and served on the Marietta Borough Council, he was a leader in the local historic preservation movement.²

Property Details:

The Shelley, Huston, Cresswell house is a residential property.³ The house itself accounts for 8, 712 square feet of land, which is approximately 0.2 acres of land.⁴

Deed Search:

The first proprietor of the lot 48, later to become the Shelley, Huston, Cresswell house, was Marietta founder James Anderson. This property stayed within the Andersons until 1810, when a carpenter was hired to construct a property in the location. This carpenter, John Hoyer, would build the property in its original federal style and live out of the property until approximately 1816. Given that there is no formal documentation of Hoyer's ever having lived in the property, it is likely that he had been hired to construct the property by Anderson and began renting it afterwards. The first formal transfer of property occurred in 1812, when Anderson sold the house to John Schwalge. This is demarcated in deed J5-219 of the Lancaster archives, and further documentation of the property's deed history has been substantiated through correspondence with local historian James Landis. There is a gap in the deeds between 1812 and 1816, at which point it was sold to Daniel Shelley. The home remained in the Shelley estate until 1831, when it was

¹ "Marietta Candlelight Tour of Homes," Marietta Restoration Association, <http://www.mariettarestoration.org/2012-pictorialreview.html>, accessed 15 April 2019.

² "Marietta Candlelight Tour of Homes," Marietta Restoration Association, <http://www.mariettarestoration.org/2012-pictorialreview.html>, accessed 30 March 2019.

³ Lancaster County Property Tax Inquiry, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2019. <http://lancasterpa.devnetwedged.com/parcel/view/4201878100000/2019>

⁴ Ibid.

sold to Dr. Samuel Huston.⁵ From 1831 to 1870, the Huston family were the sole owners and occupants of the property. In 1870, John Huston and his estate sold the home to Charlotte Ohmit.⁶ In Charlotte Ohmit's will, she leaves the property to her daughter, Minnie. In 1945, Minnie and Michael Ohmit sold the property to the Hood estate.⁷ Eden M. Hood would then sell the property in 1967 to Robert and Mary Cresswell.⁸ The property remains in the Cresswell family as of the publishing of this report in May 2019, making it still directly relevant to the legacies of Robert and Mary. Mary Watters-est Cresswell inherited the property from her parents, before selling it to her own daughter for \$1 in 1999.⁹ Her daughter, Mary Ann Cresswell-McIlroy still resides in the house.

Historical Context and Purpose:

The individuals who have resided in the Shelley, Huston, Cresswell house share a common background. Without fail, the people who have lived here have been active members of the Marietta local community and often the broader, political scope of Lancaster county and Pennsylvania as a whole. This sentiment is true from the very start. During the time in which Hoyer was living in the property on the Shelley, Huston, Cresswell house, he operated a liquor shop out of the house. This is an early instance that indicates the significance of the property to the social and economic spheres of Marietta. Market square, after all, was a place where trade and commerce long flourished in Marietta. Hoyer's liquor store is just one example of the type of shops that operated on the square, contributing to the local economy. Following Hoyer, a proprietor of note is Daniel Shelley, if only for the fact that many texts about the property list it as "The Shelley House." Despite the prominence of this title in historic texts and Marietta archives, there is not much historic reporting on Shelley himself. The best that can be deduced is that he was a significant member of the community, though the nature of this significance was not found within the scope of the research on this property.

If considering the vast overarching significance of this property, there are three homeowners that solidify this property's place in the historical narrative of Lancaster county. The first being Dr. Samuel Huston, the property being in his family's possession from 1831 to 1870. Huston was a doctor, a local politician, and an ardent abolitionist. When Jackson was elected to the presidency in 1824, Houston expressed his disapproval. Houston, as a rule, was never quiet about his political beliefs. He was thus at no point quiet about his opposition to the Jackson presidency, given that "He was able and ready at all times to discuss with an opponent the most radical views."¹⁰ With the Whig party, in opposition to the Jacksonian democrats, Huston ran twice for a seat on the Pennsylvania state Senate and lost on both occasions. Despite this, the activism he was doing locally was making significant strides. Huston was a close friend to Thaddeus Stevens, the two men both being Lancaster county residents who advocated for the abolition of slavery in the United States. Houston is most remembered for his assistance with the underground railroad. He would take in runaway slaves and provide them with paid labor and temporary lodging

⁵ Lancaster County Recorder of Deeds, Search Online Records, Infodex, Document, Book: P37, Page Number: 522, accessed 12 March, 2019.

⁶ Lancaster County Recorder of Deeds, Search Online Records, Infodex, Document, Book: P37, Page Number: 523, accessed 12 March, 2019.

⁷ Lancaster County Recorder of Deeds, Search Online Records, Infodex, Document, Book: P37, Page Number: 525, accessed 12 March, 2019.

⁸ Lancaster County Recorder of Deeds, Search Online Records, Infodex, Document, Book: Z56, Page Number: 955, accessed 12 March, 2019.

⁹ Lancaster County Recorder of Deeds, Search Online Records, Infodex, Document, Book: 6097, Page Number: 396, accessed 12 March, 2019.

¹⁰ Lynn Baker Alarie, *The Scoop on Marietta: A Small River Town*, Landisville: Yurchak Printing, 2012, 642.

before assisting them as they fled North. Houston has been described as “a sincere friend of the oppressed” and based much of his political work advocating for the rights of African-Americans in the United States.¹¹

The strand of political advocacy would remain intact for the inhabitants of the home, continuing next with Eden M. Hood, while living in the property, served as president of the Marietta Borough Council.¹² Hood would eventually sell the property in 1967 to Robert and Mary Cresswell. Both spouses contributed a great deal to the social and political landscape of Marietta, PA. Robert Cresswell served on the Marietta Borough Council. In addition, Robert Cresswell was a historical advocate who founded and led the Marietta Restoration Association. He and his wife led the effort to restore Marietta and to preserve its historical authenticity. To this end, their home remains one of the most historically accurate and true examples of Federalist architecture.

Architectural Style:

The foundation of this house is built with cut indigenous blue limestone. This house was built in 1807 in the federal style.¹³ The federal style of architecture broadly overlaps with Georgian architecture, and is largely considered to be a refinement thereof. Both federal and Georgian styles are designed around a center hall floor plan and incorporate stylistic elements such as symmetry, classical influenced, and a gabled roof. Gabled roofs are pretty standard to the American conceptualization of roofing. It features an arched, triangular shape and paneling in between the roof’s frames.¹⁴ Compared to the Georgian style, the federal style features more delicacy and sophistication in its construction. To this end, federal homes are more likely to have garlands, urns, and swags incorporated in their design. The federal style also allows for an elevated sense of style. Many federalist buildings feature Palladian windows with curved arches above the front door and the presence of décor such as door surrounds and porticos.¹⁵ The window of this specific property additionally features a fan-light. Restorations of this property have allowed for it to remain both structurally sound and historically true to style. Recent restorations include the Summer kitchen and the Southern carriage house.

Appendix Historical Photos:

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., 474.

¹³ Historic Resource Information, CRGIS Report, accessed 16 March 2019.

<https://www.dot7.state.pa.us/CRGIS/Application/ASPNET/Report/Report.aspx?R=108&T=KEYNO&I=082243>

¹⁴ Will Jones, *How to Read Houses: A Crash Course in Domestic Architecture*, New York: Rizzoli. March 25, 2014, 255.

¹⁵ Ibid., 131.



Appendix Contemporary Photos:

