

History

Rapho Township was organized as a political entity in 1741 when it was separated from Donegal Township, one of the seventeen original townships of Lancaster County formed in 1729. The name Rapho was derived from a parish of the same name in Donegal, Ireland. (The town of Raphoe in Ireland is the ecclesiastical center of the county of Donegal. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Raphoe is practically Bishop of Donegal, and the Episcopal Bishop of Raphoe is also Bishop of Derry.) Originally, the present Manheim Borough was part of Rapho Township.

The first settlers in Rapho Township were Scotch-Irish descent and settled in the southern portion of the Township. The northern section was settled by Swiss and Germans. One of the first significant settlers was William Patterson, of Scotch-Irish descent, who settled on 300 acres in the southern part of the Township. In 1721, another settler, Samuel Scott, built the Chiques Hotel along the Chiques Creek. It should be noted that George Washington was a guest of this hotel.

Sporting Hill, west of Manheim, was originally called Casseltown and was founded by David Cassel about 1800. Thomas Masterson founded Mastersonville in 1820. In the extreme southern part of the Township is a small crossroads village called Newtown.

Founded in 1762, the town of Manheim rightfully belongs in that select list of Pennsylvania towns which antedate the Revolutionary War. Of additional interest historically is the fact that the land on which the town was laid out has a close connection with the family of the colony's founder, William Penn. Explicitly, it was in 1734 that this tract of acres in Donegal Township was given as a gift to Penn's faithful secretary, James Logan, by Penn's widow, Hannah, and her sons. In 1762 this same tract was purchased from Logan's granddaughter, Mary Morris, by Henry William Stiegel and his two business associates, Charles and Alexander Stedman. This is the step which carved the town of Manheim from Rapho Township.

Mount Joy Borough adjoins Rapho Township and indents our "bootleg" on the southern border.

Other Links:

Click on www.raphoe.com to visit Raphoe, Ireland's web site.

For more information regarding Manheim Boro, log onto the Manheim Historical Society's web site at www.manheimpa.com.

To contact Mount Joy Borough Authority, dial (717) 653-5938 or visit it's website at www.mountjoyborough.com.

For the Lancaster County Visitor's Network, visit www.pavisnet.com/lancaster.