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Front Matter

ADAMS COUNTY HISTORY



2000

Volume 6

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Editorial Board

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Statement of Purpose

The Adams County Historical Society is committed to the presentation of the social, economic, political, and religious history of the county and to the promotion of the study of that history. Expressing its commitment, the society maintains museum displays and a valuable library of publications, and archival and manuscript material which includes estate papers, deed books, land surveys, and newspapers. In addition, it publishes important historical studies and reprints of earlier studies on Adams county history, a monthly newsletter, and a journal.

The editorial board of *Adams County History* encourages and invites the submission of essays and notices reflecting the rich history of Adams county. Submissions should be typed double spaced. Contributors should retain copies of the typescript submitted. If they desire return of their submissions, they should enclose a self-addressed envelope with sufficient postage.

Submissions and inquiries should be addressed to:

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Adams County History
The Adams County Historical Society
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Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 17325

Editor's Note

It is an historical truism, worn almost into threadbare cliché, that nothing has molded the geography and even the style of life of Adams county so much as the battle of Gettysburg and the land upon which that terrible three-day confrontation played itself out. From the very first confused days following the battle, when residents and officials struggled to deal with the enormity of wreckage and waste left in its wake, down through the present day with its on-going debates over visitor centers, old and new, the fate of the tower, and acquisition of new land for preservation, the battlefield has determined how we organize and carry out our everyday lives.

On the occasion of the county's two-hundredth anniversary, it is therefore appropriate that volume six of *Adams County History* can feature a detailed exploration of the battlefield at the virtual historical moment, almost a hundred years after the county's formation, when it achieved definitive form. Part of his yet-to-be completed doctoral dissertation in geography, Ben Dixon's essay compellingly and articulately tackles the problems of appreciating how, in his own words, the "distinct battlefield of 1899 was part of an interactive relationship between the physical landscape and the ideas surrounding it." As the author explains further, "the battlefield both promotes ideas, values, and memories concerning battle, heroics, triumph, death, and peace, and is the product of them." It should become clear to readers once they have read the piece that Dixon's interpretation of the battlefield is destined to serve as the benchmark for subsequent studies of similar nature.

Volume six of *ACH* represents a significant, and I hope unique, departure from earlier issues. Whereas this publication annually presented essays reflecting the county's history from the eighteenth century to present day, this issue contains but one essay. In part, this limited focus was justified by the very length of Ben Dixon's thorough discussion and his inclusion of numerous illustrations intended to enhance and clarify his analysis. There was, however, another more pragmatic, if less praiseworthy, motive: cost. Although volume five was not one of the journal's larger issues, it somehow attracted the searching eye of some alert employee of the U.S. Postal Service: weighing last year's mailing, the post office determined that volume five qualified for a considerably higher postage rate than we had anticipated on the basis of earlier mailings, even with our knowledge of the recently mandated rate increase. Ac-

cordingly, we have tried this year to keep within budget by severely limiting how much each copy weighs. Thus, bureaucratic vigilance, routine increases in mailing expenses, and tight finances ever circumscribe education and human growth.

Plans for the 2001 issue, volume seven, of *ACH* are already underway. With two articles virtually in hand and another well along the way to completion, returning to the wider coverage of earlier years appears feasible. Individuals interested in submitting essays or proposals for essays for volume seven should get in touch with the editor at the society's headquarters in Schmucker Hall.

—J. P. M.