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Front Matter

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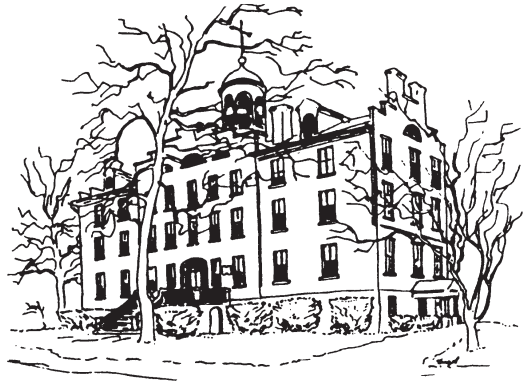
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Front Matter

ADAMS COUNTY HISTORY



2008

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Contents

Statement of Purpose.....	2
Editor's Note.....	3
Will the Real James Duncan Stand Up?.....	4
<i>Charles H. Glatfelter and Wayne E. Motts</i>	
Black Labor at Pine Grove & Caledonia Furnaces, 1789-1860.....	31
<i>Troy D. Harman</i>	
Register of Births 1854-1894 of Dr. Isaac William Pearson.....	46
<i>Edited By Kevin L. Greenholt</i>	
Expanding Horizons for American Lutherans: The Story of Abdel Ross Wentz	76
<i>A Review By Charles Hambrick-Stowe</i>	
Contributors.....	78
Index.....	79

Dr. Michael J. Birkner, editor
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Statement of Purpose

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

The editor of *Adams County History* encourages and invites the submission of essays and notices reflecting the rich history of Adams County. Submission should be typed double spaced and available in a pc compatible word processing format. Contributors should include a hardcopy and electronic copy of their work on a CD-ROM. Generally, style should conform to the latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style. Contributors should retain copies of the typescript submitted. If return is desired, a self-addressed envelope with postage should be included.

Submissions and inquires should be addressed to:

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Editor's Note

History affords us many pleasures. For readers of popular or scholarly history, satisfaction can be found in learning something one did not previously know, absorbing an engaging story, or watching historical detection unfold. As it happens, the lead essay in this issue of *Adams County History* provides elements of all three pleasures. Director Emeritus Charles H. Glatfelter and current Director Wayne Motts have collaborated in untangling and recounting the stories of two south central Pennsylvania James Duncans—each a prominent figure in their respective home towns, but decidedly not the same man! Glatfelter and Motts here correct misimpressions left by an entry in a Princeton University biographical dictionary relating to the Adams County James Duncan. In the process readers will learn a good deal about politics in Adams and surrounding counties, as well as the state of Pennsylvania in the first decades of the 19th century. Not least, they will have set the historical record straight, so that Carlisle's James Duncan—who was elected to Congress in 1820 and served for several years as Auditor General of Pennsylvania—will get his due, much as Adams County's James Duncan—a veteran of the American Revolution, Abbottstown merchant, and subsequently a long-time county officer holder based in Gettysburg—will receive his own just historical desserts. The metaphor seems apt, because Glatfelter and Motts have served up a tasty treat.

The historical detection theme continues in Troy Harman's patient excavation of sources relevant to life at the Pine Grove and Caledonia furnaces in the mid 19th century. Harman is especially interested in establishing that African Americans—some of them surely escaped fugitive slaves—did indeed work at these locations (the records for which were destroyed in June 1863 by Confederate troops). Not only does he enhance our understanding of blacks' contributions to the charcoal making process at these furnaces, he illuminates other themes, concluding with the provocative suggestion that there were distinctive parallels between life on southern plantations and life at furnaces operated by free labor. Harman graciously credits the work of historians Fred Weiser, Debra McCauslin, and Bradley Hoch as foundation points for his own investigations, which surely will spark further research and discussion of an important if historically obscure piece of the Underground Railroad story.

The third offering in this issue is sure to please genealogists. Isaac William Pearson served as a physician in York Springs for roughly half a century (1850-1900), delivering more than 1000 babies over a wide swath of this agricultural region. Pearson's original notebooks recording the births he attended from 1854-1894 have been lost. But copies exist in several locations, and Adams County Historical Society volunteer Kevin Greenholt presents a transcribed and edited version of them here.

Under my editorship the journal has tried to feature each year one or more books significant to the history of Adams County. This year we present a pungent assessment of Dr. Frederick Wentz's biography of his father, Abdel Ross Wentz. In a slender but carefully researched volume Wentz recounts and assesses his father's protean career as a teacher, preacher, scholar, seminary president, and ecumenist. It was a remarkably productive life, well rendered. Reviewer Charles Hambrick-Stowe captures the highlights and tips his cap to Fred Wentz's homage to a distinguished Adams Countian.

MJB

Michael J. Birkner

December 3, 2008