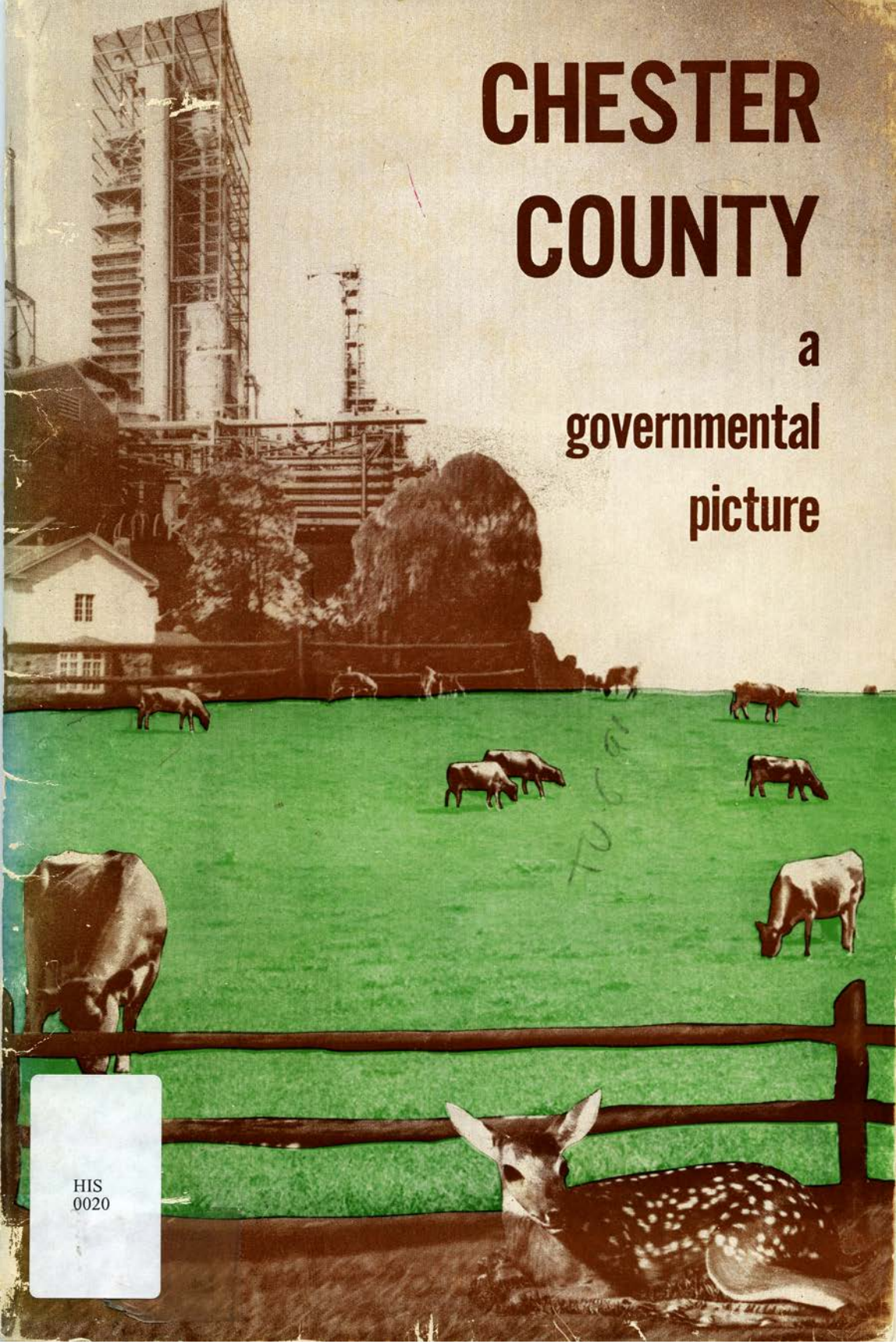


CHESTER COUNTY

a
governmental
picture



HIS
0020

CHESTER COUNTY

Issued by
THE COMMISSIONERS OF
CHESTER COUNTY



WEST CHESTER
PENNSYLVANIA
1959



FOREWORD:

As the Administrative body of your Chester County government, we consider it our duty to make available to County citizens all possible pertinent information which will allow them to keep abreast of our many County problems.

It is likewise our obligation to provide such information to attract new residents and new industries, the addition of whom will substantially contribute to the future economic, social, religious and educational development of Chester County.

Since William Penn first saw our rolling, rich lands in 1682, men have been attracted to Chester County by the beauty of its countryside, and the potential of its abundant resources.

We therefore dedicate this brochure to the end that it may express the pride in Chester County which we all feel, and may initiate a desire on the part of other individuals and organizations to settle here and, through their diversified talents, be an important factor in Chester County's continuing growth.

C. Gilbert Hazlett

Jesse W. Cox

Henry P. Corcoran

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



HISTORY

“Providence has brought us here safe. What wilt thou I should call this place?” William Penn asked his friend, Robert Pearson, when in 1682, the English owner first looked upon this portion of his vast holdings in the New World.

Robert Pearson answered “Chester” in honor and memory of his home in England.

So it was that Chester County became, with Bucks and Philadelphia counties, one of the first three counties in Pennsylvania. The original Chester County extended east from the Susquehanna to the Schuylkill River, south to what was to become the Mason and Dixon Line which in 1763, was established, ending the confusion of farmers in the area who didn’t know whether they lived in Chester County, Pennsylvania . . . or in Maryland.

From its earliest days, Chester County’s rivers, woods, gentle rolling hills and fertile soil have strongly attracted men to settle here, to establish homes and richly productive farms; later, to set up businesses and industries to meet the needs of a fast-growing population.

Before 1750, comfortable, spacious houses dotted the countryside; a number of them of the size and elegance to properly be termed mansions, some of which were to become historically famous. Longwood, the George Peirce house, built in 1730, is an example.



Longwood Gardens, one of Chester County's most beautiful spots, contains gardens, fountains and conservatories which attract, by their rare beauty, visitors not only from Chester and neighboring Counties, but from all corners of the globe.

Longwood took its part in history in the years before the Civil War when Rachel Peirce offered her home as a "station" in the Underground Railroad; the estate was destined for world-wide fame when, in 1906, it was purchased by the du Ponts and became beautiful Longwood Gardens, renowned for its fountains and conservatories.

Well before 1789 when Chester County assumed its present size, the eastern portion becoming Delaware County, meeting houses, churches and schools had appeared; London Grove Meeting, constructed of logs in 1724, enlarged with brick in 1743, was supplanted by the present building in 1818; the Old Kennett Meeting House, built as early as 1710 is remarkable for its solid masonry, and its lawn was the scene of General Maxwell's surprise attack on the British in the Battle of the Brandywine in September, 1777. Among the earliest Chester County schools, provided in accordance with William Penn's decree that public schools should be established, was The School House at

Birmingham, near Chadds Ford, whose original structure was erected in 1753, replaced in 1819 with the still standing "eight-square," or Octagonal, building.



The Eight-Square or Octagonal School House, built in 1819, stands today near Chadds Ford, a reminder that even in early years, public education was a concern of government.

Industry was beginning in the 18th century, meeting both the needs of peace . . . and those of war: Reading Furnace (Redding Furnace Farm), a manufacturer of Benjamin Franklin's popular Franklin Stoves, supplied cannon for use in the Revolution. The peaceful pursuits of mills, like Strodes Mill on Lenape Road, which had mushroomed along the rivers, were turned in Revolutionary War years to providing flour for Washington's Army.

Chester County residents in these busy 18th century years, the English, Welsh, German and Irish, still found time to join in the formation of good government in their prospering County. When, in

September, 1786, West Chester became the County Seat, the first session of Court was held but two months later. That year marked, too, the election of the first three County Commissioners, John Worth, Joseph Gibbons and James Moore.



Birmingham Meeting House, near Chadds Ford, was the scene of fierce fighting during the Battle of the Brandywine, September, 1777. The Meeting House was used as a hospital for both American and British casualties.

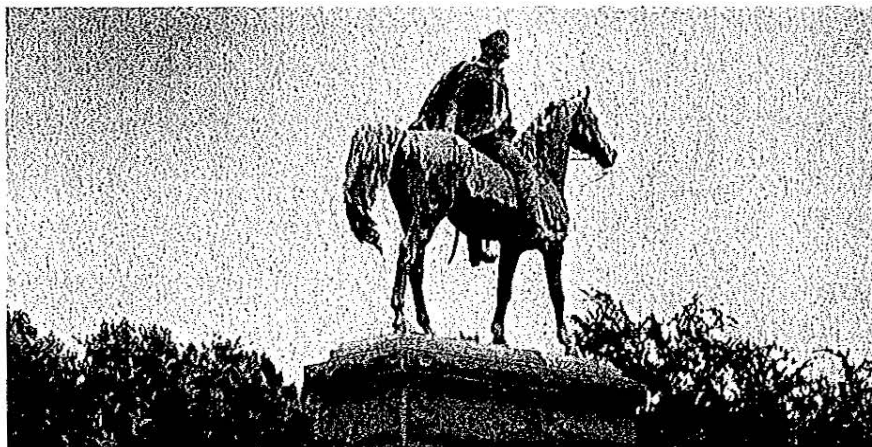
Before the close of the 18th century, roads were stretching across the County; opened in 1795, America's first turnpike, the Lancaster Pike, crossed Chester and Delaware Counties. This and other lesser roads served to promote easier communication, and inns sprang up to accommodate the travelers. One, the General Warren Inn in Malvern, was known during the Revolution as a loyalist house, frequented by such guests as Major John Andre, the British spy who with Benedict Arnold sought to betray West Point to the Crown. Another, also contributing to Revolutionary history, was the Turks Head Tavern in West Chester, which served as a hospital for wounded American and British soldiers; and the Red Rose Inn, near West Grove, whose rental, to be paid to the descendants of William Penn, was specified in 1731 to be one red rose yearly, a custom still observed by the Inn's present owners.

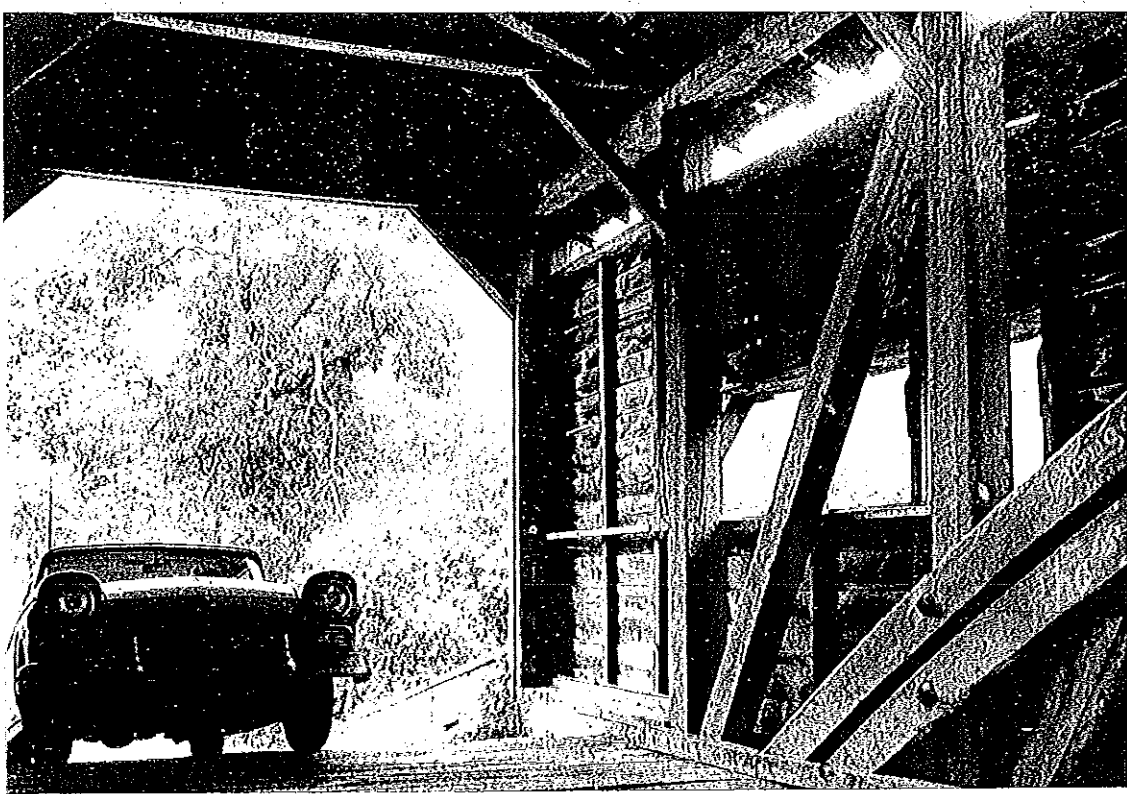
The 19th century history of Chester County continues to be a story of growth and progress. More homes were built; more of the rich farmland, under production. More communities were born; more churches and schools were erected, at least two of which are known to be the work of the celebrated "Greek Revival" architect, Thomas U. Walter: The First Presbyterian Church, built in 1834, and Fontgarth Hall, a private school, both located in West Chester. Arising soon after, also in West Chester, the Court House, the Old Bank (National Bank of Chester County), and the former County Prison are examples of this noted architect's style . . . and are indicative to us of the County-wide expansion in economy, governmental organization and cultural advantages, during that period.

And industry was keeping pace. The first iron rolling mill in America was established by Isaac Pennock in 1793, on Buck Run, and was moved to Coatesville in 1810, where in 1817, it was leased to Charles Lukens, Rebecca Pennock's husband. After her husband's death, Rebecca Lukens assumed full responsibility for the mill's management, becoming known in later years as the outstanding woman executive of her time. So began the history of one of Chester County's leading industries, Lukens Steel Company.

Moving steadily forward during this century in which we live, Chester County has proven the firm foundation which its forward looking early residents provided. Now, still forward looking, Chester Countians, proud of their history, continue to plan, to promote its future.

General Anthony Wayne, Mad Anthony of Revolutionary fame, surveys the quiet and beauty at Valley Forge.

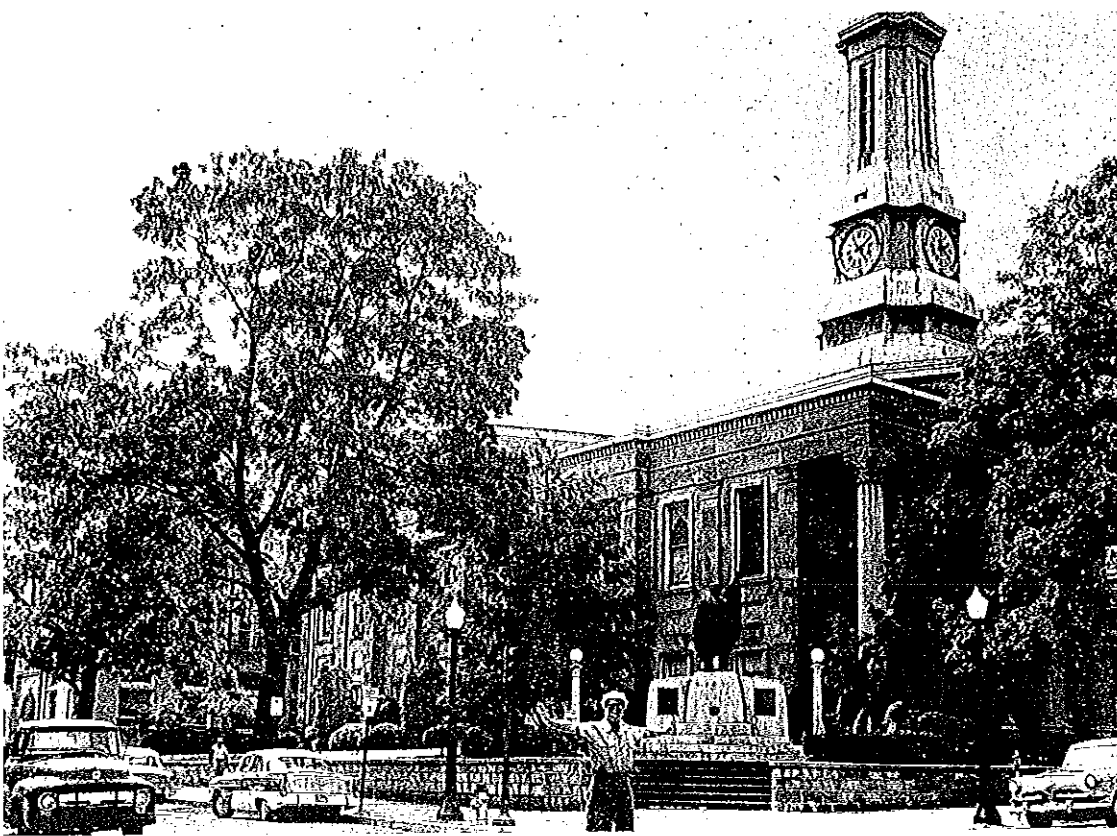




Combining the old with the new, this view of one of Chester County's remaining covered bridges reflects the sound construction of early days, the modern way of life through motoring, and the constant beauty so profuse in Chester County.

Grim reminders of America's struggle for independence are the Soldiers' Huts, just one of the many attractions at Valley Forge, at the northern end of Chester County.





ADVANTAGES

Chester County offers countless advantages, spiritual, physical, cultural and economic, to those considering the establishment of a permanent personal or business residence within its confines. While it would be impractical to enumerate all of the manifold advantages, a few are listed.

Located in the southeastern section of Pennsylvania, with a moderate climate which avoids extremes, Chester County offers easy accessibility to nearby Philadelphia, Wilmington and Harrisburg, the State Capital. The Pennsylvania Turnpike, with its several interchanges in Chester County, shortens the distance to New York and to the West. Chesapeake Bay, Ocean resorts, and winter and summer sports in the Poconos are all within easy driving range.

Chester County offers a suburban, almost rural atmosphere with its more than 760 square miles in which its nearly 200,000 residents have elbow room. Yet, its good roads and adequate transportation bring other communities as close as you desire. Chester County is continuing to experience a healthy growth and is meeting that growth with the practical planning and common sense traditional in the County.

Religion has always been an integral part of the Chester County way of life. At present, some 286 churches, meeting houses and synagogues provide the facilities for the worship of God according to the dictates of the individual conscience.

It is, perhaps, because of the influence of the churches that Chester County is a law abiding family of good citizens interested in helping their neighbors throughout the 73 municipalities which make up the county-wide community. Historically, Chester County has maintained an enviable record of giving strong support to community activities.

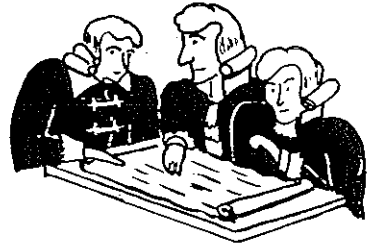
Closely following the churches is the school system, a strong force in the development of the minds and the guidance of our younger citizens. Chester County has, at present, 16 Secondary and 71 Elementary Public Schools in addition to numerous Parochial and Private Schools, a State Teachers College, Lincoln University, Royer Greaves School for the Blind and Immaculata College.

Among the advantages in choosing Chester County are its health protection facilities. There are six voluntary or community hospitals, each with its staff of able and qualified physicians; two Schools of Nursing Education, and numerous clinics for physical and mental health needs.

Chester County offers an abundance of recreational facilities, with even more under study against future anticipated population growth. Outstanding is Valley Forge, eternal testimony to the faith of Washington and his men during the lowest ebb of fortune in this nation's struggle to be independent and free.

Industrially, Chester County offers much. A harmonious "family" relationship exists between the numerous employers and their employees; industry ranges from a few exceedingly large industrial units to a myriad of smaller plants and companies. There is ample room, however, to welcome new industrial residents and to share with them the low County tax rate, the conservative yet progressive County Government, and the multiple other blessings showered upon Chester County.

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Owen 6-0118

The three County Commissioners are, in effect, the business managers of Chester County. In the Commissioners are vested the corporate powers of the County, and it is they who have the official seal, and on whom legal process against the County is served.

The Commissioners have jurisdiction over County bridges, elections, registration, maintenance and supervision of the Court House. They constitute the County Board of Elections, the Registration Commission, and also serve as the administrative and executive officers of the County Institution District. Budgets and tax rates for County and Institution District purposes are adopted by the Commissioners.

Members of the Board for the Assessment and Revision of Taxes, the Sealer of Weights and Measures and his assistants, members of such Commissions and Boards as may be deemed necessary, together with all employees in offices and departments under the jurisdiction of the Commissioners are appointed by them.

By law, two Commissioners are elected by the majority party and one by the minority party. The term is for four years, always starting the first Monday of leap years.

In carrying out their duties, the County Commissioners are assisted by various officers appointed by them. Among them are the Chief Clerk to the Commissioners, the County Solicitor, and Engineer.

The Chief Clerk to the County Commissioners serves as an Administrative Assistant, exercising coordinative and administrative functions with respect to departments responsible to the Commissioners, and makes decisions on operational problems referred to him by Department heads in the absence of the Commissioners, if action cannot be postponed.

The Chief Clerk meets with persons making inquiries, suggestions or complaints or having other County Business, and makes recommendations concerning these matters.

He arranges for advertising of bids and opens and reads them in public meetings of the Commissioners, attended by bidders or others interested. He attends Commissioners' meetings in order to advise the Commissioners on problems requiring his advice and to keep informed on County Business.

The Chief Clerk also insures appropriate action pursuant to Commissioners' resolutions and investigates matters referred to him.

The County Solicitor is the legal advisor to the Commissioners

in all matters wherein the County is involved. The Solicitor is consulted by the Commissioners in affairs involving legal aspects or problems and interprets for them all laws affecting Counties of the Fourth Class passed by the General Assembly.

The County Engineer, a registered engineer, with the aid of his staff prepares surveys, plans, specifications and estimates for all engineering work undertaken by the County Commissioners. The official County road map is prepared and revised periodically by the County Engineer.

CONTROLLER

James G. Matthews

Owen 6-0371



The Controller might well be called the "Auditor of the County", for on his shoulders rests the heavy responsibility of supervising the fiscal affairs of the County including the accounts and official acts of all officers or other persons who shall collect, receive, hold or disburse the public moneys of the county.

Elected by the voters of Chester County for a four-year term, the Controller may be thought of as the watchdog of county funds, for all payments by the County must bear his approval prior to the signing of the checks by the Commissioners and the Treasurer. In fact, the Chester County Controller prepares all checks upon request from the departments concerned.

The Controller maintains the official books of the County, reflecting all its properties, receipts and expenditures, all debts and accounts due by county officers and other personnel, and the amount raised by each source of revenue. In addition, it is the Controller who prescribes the form and manner of keeping the books of each of the county offices.

Annually, the Controller completes the audit of all county officers and reports in detail to the Court of Common Pleas.

It is to the Controller that the Commissioners turn each November as they begin the preparation of the proposed budget for the coming year. Arming the Commissioners with comparative statements of revenues and expenditures for the current and preceding years, the Controller also furnishes the Commissioners with a statement of all appropriation requests from all county offices and agencies, that the Commissioners, in their role of responsible managers and administrators of the county's fiscal affairs, may complete the county budget.

The Controller is a member of the Salary Board and serves as Secretary of the Retirement Board.

Aided by a Deputy, the Controller employs such clerical assistants as are necessary for the proper functioning of his office with its numerous responsibilities.



PROTHONOTARY

George R. James

Owen 6-0222

From the days of the Byzantine Court of the Eastern Empire, as early as 400 A.D., the Prothonotary has been a respected officer, rendering innumerable and valued services.

In Pennsylvania, the Prothonotary was, until 1838, appointed by the Governor. Now, the Prothonotary is elected by the voters of each county and serves a four-year term. To be eligible for election, the candidate must be an American citizen and a resident of the county for a minimum of a year prior to taking office.

Briefly, the Prothonotary is, in fact, Clerk or Secretary to the Court of Common Pleas, and in that capacity it is his duty to maintain records pertaining to all civil cases and to establish dockets and books for the keeping of such records.

The Prothonotary is empowered to sign and affix the seal of the court to all its writs and processes; to take bail in civil actions; to enter and sign all judgments; to take acknowledgements of satisfactions of judgments or decrees entered on the record of the court; to administer oaths and affirmations in conducting the business of the office, and to assume custody of the seal and all records of the court.

The records kept by the Prothonotary are voluminous. Included are the judgment docket in which he copies every judgment or award of the court, and the satisfaction, extension or revival of judgments; common pleas minutes; argument lists; appearance dockets; divorce records; plaintiff and defendant indexes; records of municipal, tax and merchandise liens; conditional sales records; records of equity proceedings; records of fictitious names in business; charters of certain corporations and organizations, including churches and charitable organizations; record of trusts; jury records and, in the case of contested elections, such election records over which the Court of Common Pleas has jurisdiction.

In serving the citizens of Chester County, the Prothonotary assists in obtaining naturalization papers and passports, thus eliminating the necessity of leaving our county for these documents.

The Prothonotary appoints, subject to approval by the County Salary Board, two Deputies and such clerical assistants as may be required to maintain the court records in the efficient manner to which Chester Countians are accustomed.

CLERK OF COURTS

David Brittingham

Owen 6-0238



Opposite number to the Prothonotary, who serves as Secretary or Clerk to the Court of Common Pleas, the Clerk of Courts serves in a like capacity to the Quarter Session and Oyer and Terminer Courts. It is in the Quarter Sessions Term of Court that those charged with misdemeanors are brought to trial, while the Oyer and Terminer Terms deal with those charged with the commission of felonies. At present, there are five terms of Court each year, making for a full schedule for the Clerk of Courts.

It is the Clerk of Courts or his duly appointed Deputies, who are empowered to sign and affix the seal of the court to all its writs and processes, to administer oaths and affirmations in conducting the business of the office, and to assume custody of the seal and all records of the courts.

The records maintained by the Clerk of Courts are of great magnitude, including, as they do, records of all decisions of the courts, convictions, acquittals, dismissals and appeals.

Too, as Secretary to the Court, the Clerk of Courts maintains a listing or docket of all persons to be brought before the Courts for trial.

It is the Clerk of Courts who receives the bonds of Constables and Tax Collectors, one for each Township within the County.

In addition to his heavy duties pertaining to the Courts to which he is Clerk, the Clerk of Courts maintains all road and bridge records for the County. Here, in Chester County, one may find, carefully kept, road records dating back as far as 1700, inscribed in the style of penmanship peculiar to that era.

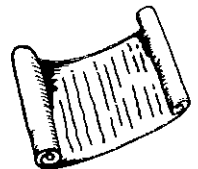
In serving the citizens of Chester County, the Clerk of Courts maintains all records in well bound volumes, cross-indexed for more easy reference by those interested parties whose duties cause them to require access to such records.

Elected by the citizens of Chester County, the Clerk of Courts and his duly appointed Deputies, fill a considerable need to Chester County residents.

REGISTER OF WILLS AND CLERK OF ORPHANS' COURT

Thomas A. Pitt

Owen 6-0243



This elected official serves the County in the dual capacity of Register of Wills and ex-officio Clerk of the Orphans' Court.

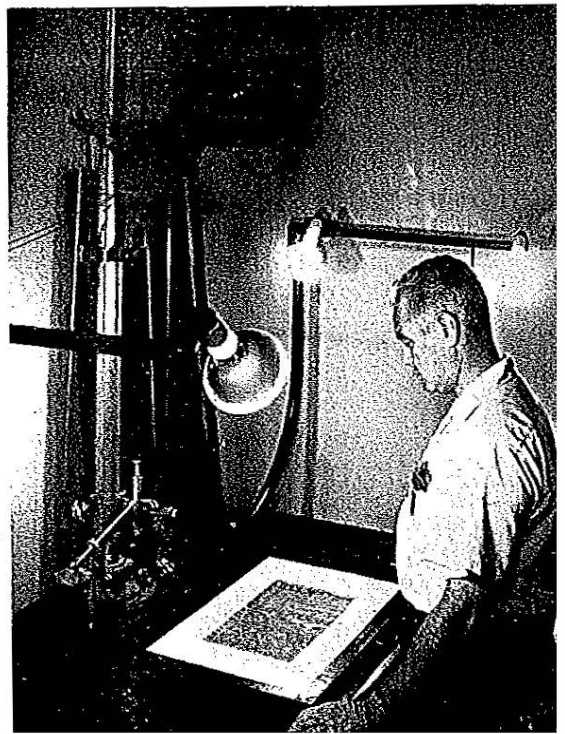
In his capacity as Register of Wills, he has jurisdiction over the admitting of wills to probate, and for the granting of letters of admin-

istration or letters testamentary. It is the responsibility of the Register of Wills to make the necessary inventories and to appraise estates. He serves as agent for the Commonwealth in the collection of inheritance taxes and may retain a percentage upon the gross amount of the tax collected from each estate. The percentage varies downward from five percent to one-quarter of one percent, depending on the amount of the collected tax. Administrators and executors file their accounts and inventories with the Register of Wills, and appeals from the probate of wills are taken with him. The Register issues certified copies of wills and short certificates for the transfer of certain securities as required by law.

As ex-officio Clerk of the Orphans' Court, he accepts for filing the accounts of trustees and guardians and acts on the appointment of these guardians and trustees. He has charge of the docket of the Orphans' Court and maintains all records of that Court. Accounts are transmitted to the Clerk from the Register for advertising. It is the Clerk of the Orphans' Court who issues all marriage licenses in the County, and who maintains the records of all persons born in Chester County between 1893 and 1906. Prior to 1893, there was no law providing for the registration of births, and in 1906, the Assembly directed the filing of birth registration records directly with the State.

With these dual responsibilities and duties, the elected official, his four Deputies and their necessary clerical assistants, give valued service.

Photocopying of records is one role of County Government. In this manner a permanent record, impervious to the ravages of time, is maintained of important documents.



TREASURER

Raymond S. Crossan

Owen 6-0264



Of considerable importance in the proper administration of County fiscal affairs is the Treasurer, chosen each four years by the voters of Chester County.

It is the Treasurer who must receive all money due the County; issue receipts for money received, maintain accounts of all funds received and disbursed and, with the County Commissioners, sign all County checks, which, as they are returned in the form of cancelled checks, must be filed in his office as permanent records.

Daily, the Treasurer records all disbursements from the County Treasury and forwards such records to the Controller, along with daily records of all receipts, thus providing a further double safeguard on all public funds entrusted to his care.

Annually, the Treasurer states his accounts, along with receipts and vouchers, presents them to the County Commissioners for examination, and submits them to the Controller for final audit.

It is the responsibility of the Treasurer, together with the County Commissioners, to designate by resolution the depositories for all county funds. By law, such depositories must be banks, banking institutions or trust companies located within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. By custom, such depositories are located within Chester County. For further protection, each depository chosen by the Treasurer and the Commissioners furnishes a bond to secure payment of deposits and such interest as may accrue to the County. Or, in lieu of such a bond, securities may be placed in escrow with the Federal Reserve Bank.

More than 80,000 receipts, all in triplicate, are recorded annually by the Treasurer. Licenses in excess of 22,000 a year are issued by his office which is the Agent for the Commonwealth for Fishing, Hunting and Dog Licenses. Checks for payment of all County expenditures are drawn in his office. Thus, it is obvious that the Treasurer, a member of the Retirement Board in addition to his other duties, his two Deputies and their clerical assistants have a full and busy role in the transaction of County fiscal affairs.

CORONER

Ashton B. J. Smith

The office of Coroner, which dates from ancient English law, has undergone substantial changes from the time of its inception. In Pennsylvania, the Coroner's jurisdiction over the wrecks of the sea,

sturgeons and whales was not applicable; forfeiture, outlawry, confession and abjuration have long been forgotten in this Commonwealth and no longer apply to the duties of the Coroner, and this officer has long since relinquished his ancient role as collector of the king's revenue. Instead, in our Commonwealth, he has become the county officer whose duty it is to investigate the death of those who come to a sudden or violent end.

All deaths of sudden, violent or suspicious nature are to be investigated by the Coroner and, under law, must be reported immediately to him. In the event that the cause of death cannot be learned adequately otherwise, the Coroner may direct that an autopsy be performed upon the body of the deceased.

An inquest is conducted by the Coroner in cases of highway fatalities, homicides, or deaths of suspicious nature. At an inquest, it is the responsibility of the Coroner's Jury, composed of six persons, to decide the cause of death from evidence submitted, and to determine if there is criminal negligence or intent in the case. The Coroner's Jury must render a verdict and make such recommendations as it sees fit. If criminal negligence or intent is found and a person is held, his case then goes before a Grand Jury.

In Chester County, the Coroner has four Deputies to act in his stead in their own districts. Autopsies, when indicated, are usually performed, on a fee basis, set by the County Commissioners, in the Pathological Laboratories of the voluntary hospitals within the County.

RECORDER OF DEEDS

Thelma L. Yergay

Owen 6-0223



In a county the size of Chester County, the office of the Recorder of Deeds is a busy place. It is the responsibility of this elected county official to record all Deeds, Mortgages and Assignments of Mortgages, Satisfactions of Mortgages, Rights-of-Way, Agreements, Commissions, Powers and Letters of Attorney, as well as certain Financial Statements, and Armed Service Discharges.

Here, too, are recorded and maintained copies of all highway maps, as well as maps and plans of all developments within Chester County, including Plans of Subdivisions, and instruments pertaining to the titles of land.

Although fees, as prescribed by the Legislature, are charged for recording and for the making of copies of the various deeds and other documents maintained by the Recorder of Deeds, there is one commendable exception; that of recording at no charge, a copy of his or

her Discharge, for each veteran of the Armed Services. Because of the importance of a veteran's Discharge, it is the philosophy of Chester County that the veteran be given a copy as a gift from the County in recognition of the veteran's service to the country.

The Recorder of Deeds makes photostatic copies of all records, maintaining one copy of each record at the County Court House, while the negative is retained, as an additional precaution against possible loss or damage through fire or other disaster, in the vaults of the commercial photostat firm with which the County does business.

As an additional, although not inconsequential duty, the Recorder of Deeds serves as agent for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the collection of all realty transfer taxes.

In addition to the Recorder of Deeds, elected to that office for a four-year term, there are a First and Second Deputy, plus certain clerical assistants, all empowered to administer oaths and affirmations with the same force and effect as if administered by the Recorder or the Deputies.

In observing the activities in the office of the Recorder of Deeds, watching attorneys and their representatives searching through the huge volumes of deeds and other papers, each one cross-indexed for easier reference, and realizing that in one year, more than 17,000 legal instruments have been recorded in this one department, it is obvious that the Recorder of Deeds serves a vital role in Chester County.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

John E. Stively, Jr.

Owen 6-1270

The only point held in common by the Chester County District Attorney and those in radio and television dramatic presentations is



Criminal Identification is an important role in crime prevention. Here photographs and fingerprints are reviewed. Chester County maintains a close liaison with the municipal police authorities.

that all are "learned in the law!" Here, pyrotechnical displays of oratory, would-be-feats of legalistic legerdemain have no place in our County Courts; in their stead, one finds the District Attorney and the Assistant District Attorneys serving as public servants intent upon full justice, and striving toward that goal fairly, and without fear.

As the principal law enforcement officer in the County, the District Attorney derives his authority from the Attorney General of the Commonwealth. In fact, the office originally was known as Deputy Attorney General. However, in 1850, the modern term "District Attorney" began to be applied.

It is the responsibility of the District Attorney: To investigate any violations or alleged violations of the laws of the Commonwealth which may come to his notice; to take such steps, and adopt such means, as may be reasonably necessary to enforce the laws of the Commonwealth; and to sign all bills of indictment, and conduct in court all criminal or other prosecutions in the name of the Commonwealth.

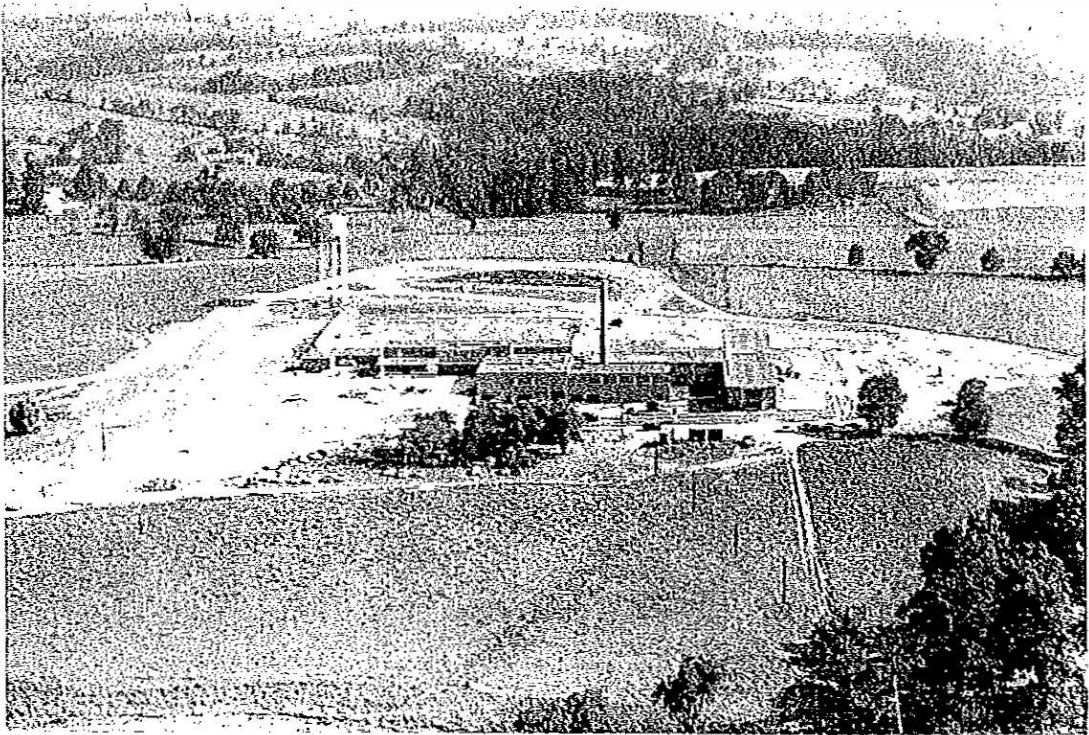
It is the practice of the District Attorney to work in harmony with other police agencies in the County. A cooperative attitude among all the law enforcement agencies is apparent.

In the office of the District Attorney exists what might be termed a Bureau of Criminal Identification at county level. Here, photographs, fingerprints and other means of identification of criminals are maintained in modern, current filing systems, available for use by all police within the County.

The District Attorney appoints one Chief County Detective, and the necessary Assistant County Detectives, who work from his offices in investigating and reporting to him evidence required by the District Attorney in criminal cases. Such County Detectives are general peace officers with the power of constables as they relate to criminal law and procedure.

Through a recently enacted reciprocal arrangement with other states, the District Attorney is now able to be of considerable assistance to Chester County wives whose husbands have left the County or Commonwealth and who are not contributing to their support. Through legal procedures, the District Attorney may place the facts of the case before the proper court in the state in which the errant husband is residing. There, a proper hearing is held and, if the court finds for the wife, a support order is entered against the husband. His payments of support are channeled to the wife through the County Probation Office.

In view of the enormous volume of investigation, prosecution and the related clerical and detail work, the District Attorney, the three Assistant District Attorneys, the County Detective and two assistants, and the clerical staff are all kept busy in the proper fulfillment of the duties of the office.



Taken during construction, this view shows the new Chester County Farms, the County Prison and Detention Home.

CHESTER COUNTY FARMS

The maintaining of a County Prison is but one of the many facets of County Administration. On January 14, 1959, Chester County Farms, Chester County's new prison and detention home, was formally dedicated.

A far different structure than the original institution built in 1839 to house a maximum of 42 prisoners, Chester County Farms affords modern facilities for 172 occupants; and because foresight was used in the planning of the utilities, kitchen, hospital ward, chapel and other basic services, it may be expanded to accommodate some 350 prisoners by the simple addition of one and a half wings of cells or housing space.

In the old County Prison, the census has averaged 113, a number in excess of that contemplated even when the original building was expanded. There have been some 85 confinements and releases a month.

Chester County prison policy does not encourage idleness among the prisoners while serving their sentences. Numerous tasks, both within and outside the prison proper, are available, and those who work are paid. The health of prisoners is cared for by both a physician and a dentist. Food is ample and well prepared but delicacies are not included; the Farms themselves will provide a large percentage of the food products consumed both by the Prison and adjoining Pocopson Home.

Personnel totalling 27, including the Warden and Matron are on duty, a reasonable figure when one considers that security must be maintained 24 hours a day.

Motor code violations account for the largest single cause of confinement since the Courts are justifiably strict in the punishment of those who endanger human life through improper use of automobiles.

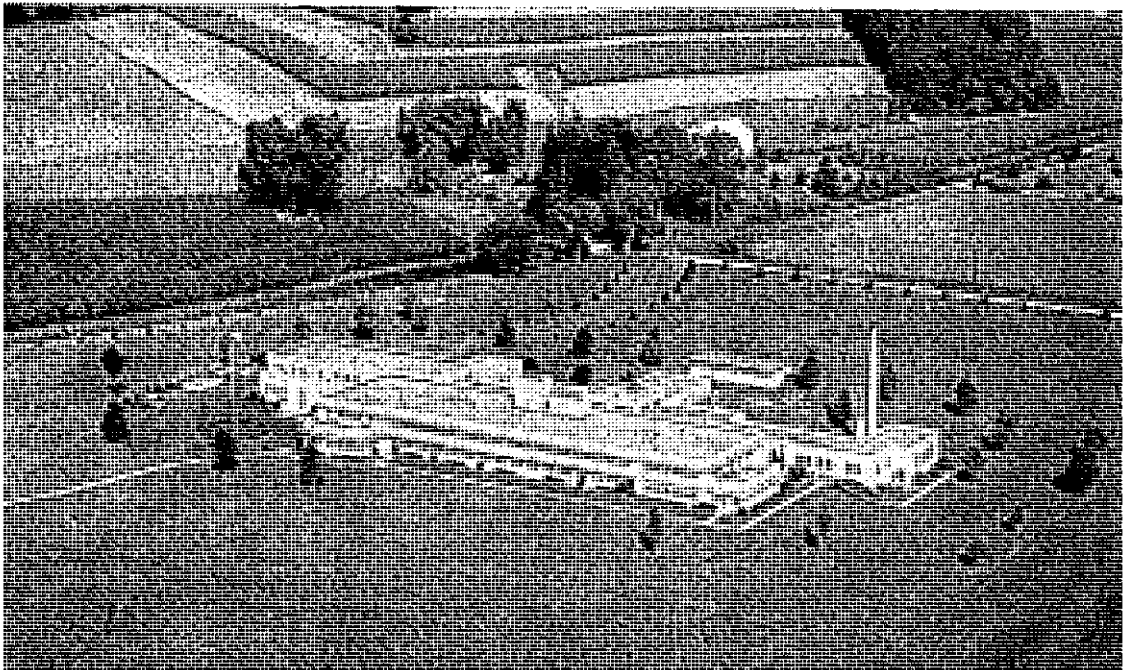
A modern and humane attitude governs the administration of the Prison. A Board of Prison Inspectors, consisting of the two Judges of the Common Pleas Court, County Commissioners, the District Attorney, Controller and Sheriff make periodic inspection tours of the Prison. The Board of Prison Inspectors, serving without pay, has, as its prime responsibility, the inspection of the facilities, all matters pertaining to its proper conduct and maintenance, and to the treatment received by the inmates. This is another balance or check in the task of administering the affairs of the County fairly and efficiently.

POCOPSON HOME

Care of indigent residents is a matter of conscientious concern to those who administer the affairs of Chester County; to this end, Pocopson Home was established.

The present Pocopson Home was opened in May, 1951 with a census of 140 residents. Today, more than 200 men and women make their home within its walls, admitted after careful investigation as to

Modern construction, comfort, and attractive scenery are combined to create healthy morale among the residents.



their finances or means of support.

Today's Pocopson Home is indeed a far cry from the Alms House or Poor House of early days. A humane quality, concern over those less fortunate in worldly or material means, and a desire to see that the declining days of the residents are made as comfortable as possible consistent with a commendable husbanding of county funds, seem to be the guiding motives in the administration of the care of the guests of the Home.

Pocopson Home, a two-story structure with a basement, is divided into areas for men and women and further divided into areas for ambulatory residents, and for those requiring special attention.

The first floor, in addition to housing the administrative area, contains a comfortable, well-furnished sitting room where residents may meet and enjoy visitors; a chapel, in which services of the major faiths are conducted; a kitchen, spotless and with tempting aromas prevalent as meals are prepared; dining rooms for the ambulatory residents, and the dormitories, one for men, the other for women. Ample sanitation facilities are provided.

The first floor also houses a most interesting area, the Department of Occupational Therapy. Here residents are encouraged to occupy themselves, using skills of former years, in the making of needlecraft, leather craft, and other items requiring imagination and dexterity. Aprons, pot holders, belts, towels, and many other skillfully contrived items are on display and may be sold. Proceeds go back to the fund from which materials are purchased for this therapy.

The second floor of Pocopson Home is devoted to those residents requiring special attention. Many, because of the infirmities of age, are confined to their beds. Others, still needing the special care, are semi-ambulatory. A physician makes regular calls and is on call should illness strike.

The basement contains the laundry in which all the clothing, as well as bed linens, towels and other washable items are laundered and pressed. Store rooms and maintenance facilities complete the basement.

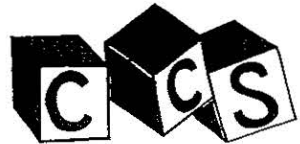
Every resident of Pocopson Home is given the opportunity to work within the limits of his or her physical abilities. No one, however, is ever forced to work; it is on a purely voluntary basis. Some of the residents work in the laundry, some in the kitchen, while others, who prefer outdoor occupations, busy themselves around the grounds. All of the milk consumed at Pocopson comes from the fine herd of dairy cattle maintained at the Home. Many of the vegetables which appear at meal times are grown at the Home.

Those residents who choose the limited opportunities to work, are paid; the money, although modest, is theirs to spend as they see fit.

Admission may be accomplished by applying directly to the Superintendent, and, if the qualifications for admission are met, placement on the waiting list until a vacancy occurs.



CHILD CARE SERVICE



"Better Chester County Citizens" is the obvious goal of Chester County's Child Care Service, a County Department recently organized to keep pace with changing conditions.

Realizing that the needs of children could be met more effectively by expanding the services of Child Care Service beyond its original intent of providing foster care, the County Commissioners, in 1957, put into effect an expanded scope of service.

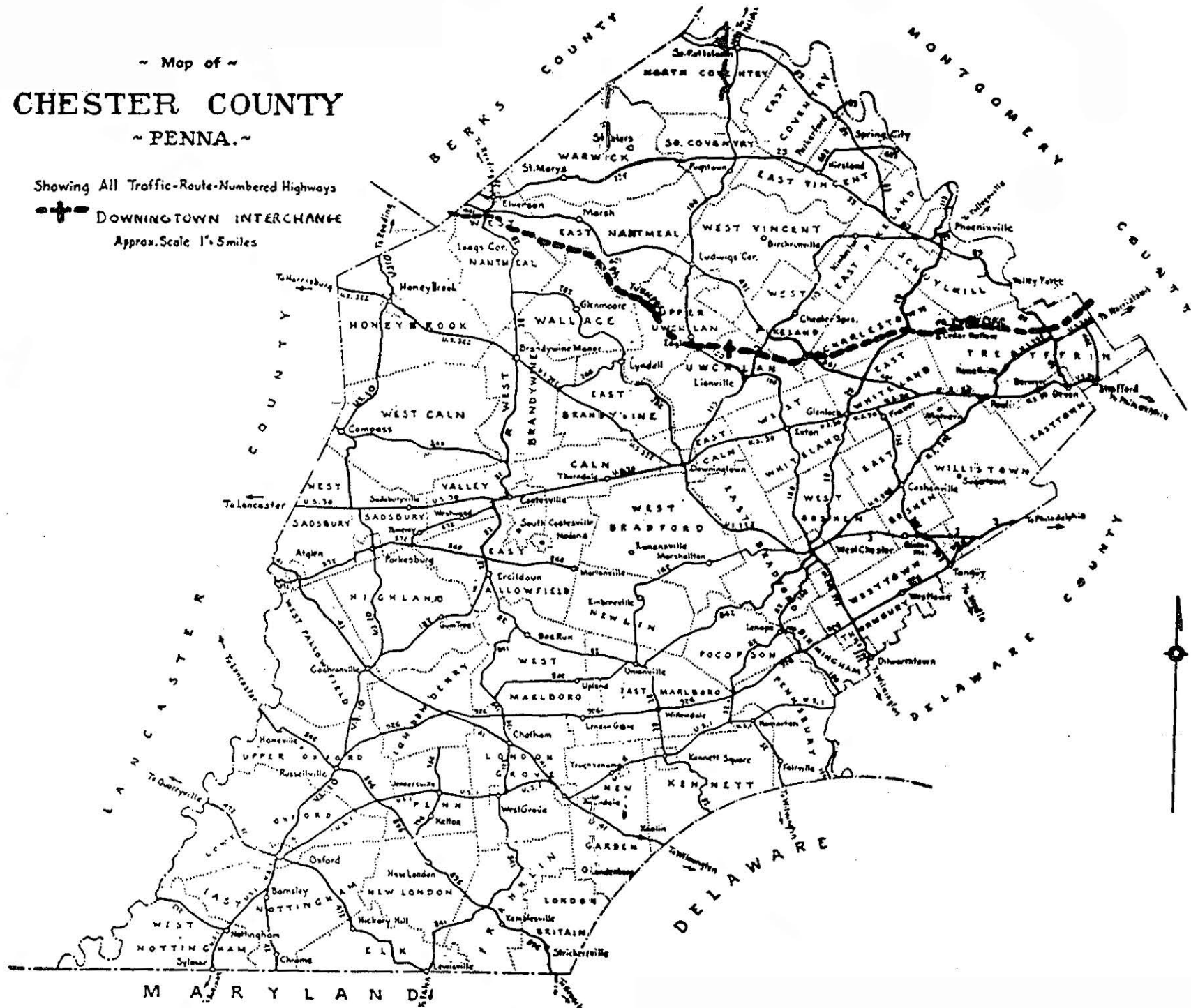
Believing that a child needs its own home, and dedicated to the premise that the child should be kept there if at all possible, Child Care Service works untiringly with parents, attempting to produce conditions within the home which will aid in the growth and development of the child. It is the aim of Child Care Service to assist families to stay together and to help parents become better parents.

~ Map of ~
CHESTER COUNTY
 ~ PENNA. ~

Showing All Traffic-Route-Numbered Highways

+ DOWNINGTOWN INTERCHANGE

Approx. Scale 1" = 5 miles



In addition to the Director of Child Care Service and the staff of personnel qualified through training and experience, an Advisory Committee of Chester County residents serves without pay, assuring county-wide representation in the service devoted to younger citizens threatened by neglect.

Striving to offer its services as a protective force from without, and a preventive force from within, Child Care Service, through counseling and moral assistance to the parent or parents, attempts to establish and promote a home atmosphere healthy in every respect to a growing child. In numerous instances, such counseling is successful and the child is retained at home. Unfortunately, however, all situations do not respond to help, and it is sometimes necessary to place the affected child or children in what is hoped to be a temporary foster home.

During the period while a child is being cared for in a foster home, Child Care Service offers casework service, not only to the child, but to the child's parents and foster parents so that the period of separation may be generally constructive. Every effort is made to find and develop latent strength within the parents so that the home may be reestablished and the child returned.

Extreme caution is exercised in placing dependent or neglected children in foster homes and, in each instance where a child is placed in such a home, it is impressed on the foster parent that the child's stay may well be temporary, in keeping with the goal of restoring the child to its natural home if at all possible.

There are numerous applicants for the role of foster parent, and each must meet rigid qualifications. An applicant must be independent of the recompense for housing the child, must be fully mature mentally and morally, and must wish to share the homelife without displacing the actual parents in the mind or heart of the child.

At times, there is no possibility of reestablishing the child's own home. In such situations, casework service is given to assist the parents in relinquishing the children so that, through adoption, these children may obtain the security of a permanent home. Although adoption itself is under the jurisdiction of the Court, Child Care Service renders valuable assistance in the preliminary steps required before a child may be adopted. In Chester County, matters pertaining to adoption are secret, in that a couple adopting a child may not know the child's parents, nor may the parents know the identity of those adopting the child.

The problem of unwed mothers, old as man himself, represents another phase of Child Care Service. In these instances assistance and counsel to the unwed mother, and her parents if necessary, are given that the soundest decision be made for the mother and child.



John R. Schofield
Owen 6-0212

The Sheriff, an elected County Official responsible for the execution of the law and the preservation of order, is the chief legal officer for the Court in civil and criminal matters.

Chosen by the citizens of the County to serve for a four-year term, the Sheriff is responsible for the serving of all necessary papers in connection with the Common Pleas Court.

Among the duties performed by the Sheriff or his Deputies, in connection with civil court matters, is the collection of all non-satisfied judgments when so ordered by the Court. In such collection proceedings, the Sheriff causes to be sold by auction such real estate or personal property as may be involved in the collection of the non-satisfied judgment. Monthly auctions are held under the supervision of the Sheriff.

A review of the Sheriff's activities reveals that his office deals with more than one hundred cases a month pertaining to the Common Pleas Court, and an additional thirty to forty other executions a month on various legal matters.

In Criminal Court, the Sheriff is charged with the conveying of prisoners from the Prison to the Court and returning them; with the transporting of committed prisoners; with transporting of juveniles when so requested, and with the serving of all bench warrants.

It is the Sheriff who, armed with the proper order or writ from the Court, effects the release of prisoners from confinement and, under certain conditions, maintains custody of prisoners who may be permitted to be absent from prison. An example of this situation might be that a prisoner, awaiting trial; suffers a death in his immediate family and wishes to attend the funeral. If, in the opinion of the Court, the prisoner should be permitted to attend, the Sheriff transports the prisoner from the Prison to the funeral and returns him to Prison.

During each session of Criminal Court, the Sheriff must assign a Deputy to each Court for the proper safeguarding of prisoners, and must assign additional Deputies to the task of transporting the prisoners. For this purpose, he appoints additional Deputy Sheriffs on a per diem basis, thus conserving public funds and, at the same time, performing properly the duties of his office.

It is also the responsibility of the Sheriff to safeguard the Jury Wheel from which the names of all jurors are drawn, and to notify jurors chosen for the panel, of their selection.

The office of the Sheriff is a self supporting office, its income being derived from the legally prescribed fees charged for services rendered.

To offer citizens of Chester County prompt and efficient service, the Sheriff has deputized his clerical assistants, thus giving each one the same authority which he holds.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASE UNIT



The providing of special facilities for the care and treatment of contagious diseases is both corrective and preventive. It assures that proper and capable care will be given to those suffering from such illnesses and, by means of isolation, it removes such stricken persons from contact with other individuals, thus preventing the spread of contagion.

In Chester County, the problem of controlling contagion is solved at a special hospital wing, known as the Chester County Contagious Disease Unit, maintained at Chester County Hospital in West Chester, a voluntary or community hospital of nearly 200 beds. The Unit, built in 1930, at the west extremity of the hospital, while part of the general hospital, is completely isolated from the other hospital services.

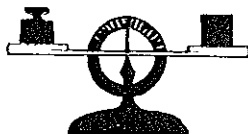
A self contained wing, the Unit can offer care to eleven patients at a time, by means of two private rooms and nine cubicles, plus certain ancillary services. In addition to a nurse station, there is an operating room where minor surgery may be performed. Patients suffering from contagious diseases requiring major surgery would, of course, be taken to the hospital's main surgical suite.

Extreme precautions are taken to prevent contamination. Typical is the food service. Food prepared in the hospital's dietary department is brought to the Contagious Disease Unit, but it is served on plates and dishes which never leave the Unit. A special sterilizer, in which all china, glassware and silver are rendered sterile, is maintained in the Unit's well equipped serving kitchen.

Operated by Chester County Hospital, the Unit is maintained by Chester County by the payment of an annual \$20,000 appropriation in lieu of the establishment of a County Contagious Hospital at greater expense.

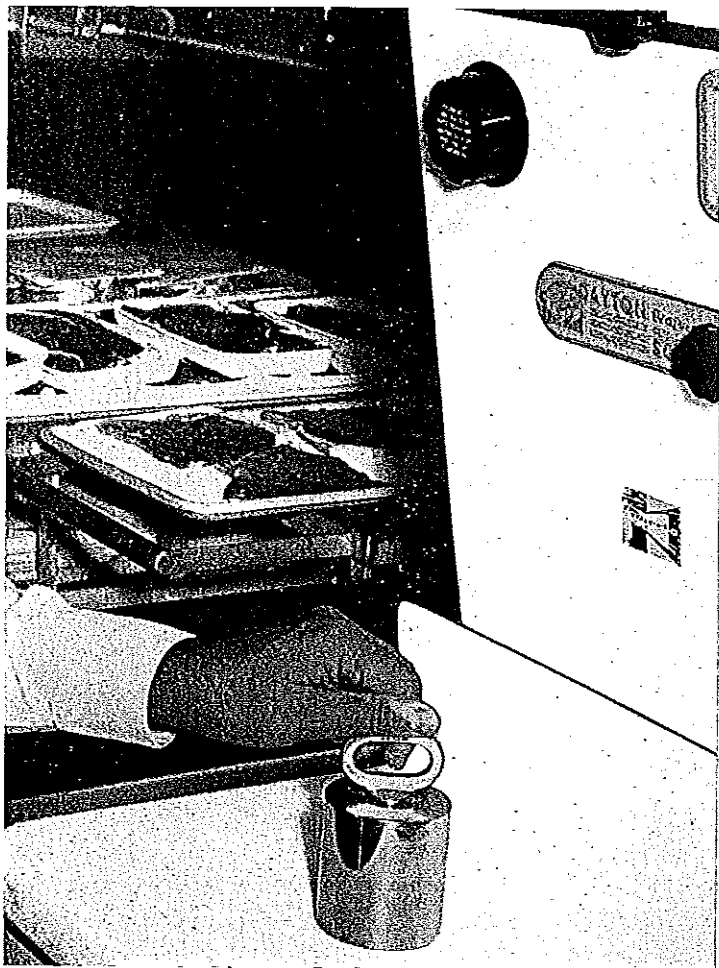
Because of advances in preventive medicine during the years and improvements in public sanitation, the demands placed upon the facilities of the Contagious Disease Unit have decreased over the years. However, a constant vigil is maintained so that persons suffering from diseases with a high risk of contagion may be properly isolated while their ills are treated.

SEALER OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

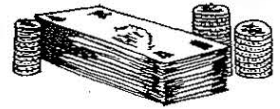


Protection of the public, through inspection and testing of all scales and measuring devices in business establishments, is another service given by the County. The Sealer of Weights and Measures and his Deputies make periodic inspection and test visits. Scales found to be inaccurate are removed from service until corrected and retested. In the event the Sealer of Weights and Measures discovers a device used deliberately to cheat the public in weight or measure, the device is confiscated and the user prosecuted. All gasoline pumps are checked at specified intervals to assure correct measure being given.

Meat scales are checked for accuracy by the Sealer of Weights and Measures in another phase of protection by the County for its residents.



ASSISTANCE TO COMMUNITY HOSPITALS



Recognizing the substantial amount of free or staff care given by the voluntary hospitals in the County to its residents, the County Commissioners make annual appropriations to those hospitals to assist them in defraying such expenses. Currently, the annual appropriation is \$70,700, including the Chester County Mental Health Clinic.

SURVEYOR

Thomas G. Colesworthy



This office, an elective County position, is of historic interest only. Originally, the County Surveyor performed engineering duties as required by the County Commissioners. Since the creation of the position of County Engineer, all such duties are now handled by that office. It is, nevertheless mandatory that a Surveyor be elected along with other County "Row" Officers. Elected for a term of four years, the Surveyor receives no salary.

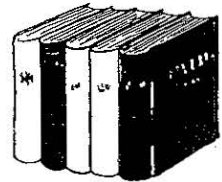
SERVICE TO VETERANS



A Veterans Bureau, presided over by an official known as the Director of Veterans' Affairs, acts as a general clearing house for information on all matters and problems affecting veterans and their dependents. The Bureau is operated to give service to veterans, the widows and children of veterans, and the mothers of veterans when occasion arises. It furnishes guidance to the solution of such problems as rehabilitation, insurance, pensions and bonus money after veterans have been discharged from the service. The Director of Veterans' Affairs assists in obtaining hospitalization for veterans and aids in obtaining burial allowances. He distributes bronze gravemarkers and granite headstones provided by the County upon proper authorization, to mark the graves in the County of veterans of all wars in which the United States has been engaged. In its budget, the County includes annual appropriations to local veterans' organizations for patriotic exercises in honoring deceased veterans and for decorating their graves.



CHESTER COUNTY LIBRARY



Because books are of such tremendous importance to the culture of a people, the Chester County Library, with its "Bookmobile", was established to provide a wider source of literature primarily for students in rural schools within Chester County. The Library is governed by a Library Board whose members serve without pay.

COUNTY CIVIL DEFENSE COUNCIL



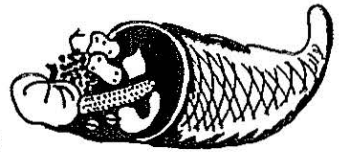
Just as each citizen of Chester County is an American, so the County is a basic unit of the entire country. To meet any state or national emergency in the event of war, the Chester County Civil Defense Council was established with headquarters in the Court House Annex. Its role has been to form defense units throughout the County and to lend assistance to those units in their preparation for quick and efficient action.

Chester County is cooperating with similar organizations in an eleven-county area for the purpose of mutual aid in the event of attack.

SURPLUS FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Harry DiLabbio

Owen 6-2623



An excellent example of how various echelons of government work well together is the distribution of surplus food to those whose needs require it.

Beginning with the Federal level of government, surplus foods are assembled and made available to the various states. In Pennsylvania, the agency working with both national and county governments is the Department of Property and Supplies, and it is from this office that the Chester County Office of Surplus Food Distribution requisitions its required foods.

Basically, those residents of Chester County who are receiving Social Security, aid from the Department of Public Assistance or whose needs, determined by light or limited income, are demonstrable, may qualify to receive assistance from this source.

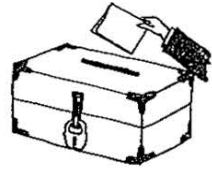
A warehouse for the storing of the surplus food has been established by the County in Coatesville, and it is from this location that qualified persons in that area receive the food. In West Chester, a distribution center has been established at the Armory, and there are other distribution points in specific food stores throughout the County, in Parkesburg, Kennett Square, Oxford, Malvern, Wayne, Phoenixville, Spring City, North Coventry and Downingtown.

SCHOOL SYSTEM



Although, in Pennsylvania, public schools fall within the jurisdiction of the State Government, Chester County makes available much assistance to the State by furnishing office space and maintenance and by supplying the clerical staff engaged in the office of the County Superintendent of Schools.

REGISTRATION AND VOTING



Because voting is one of the most precious privileges and responsibilities of an American citizen, meticulous attention is paid to each detail of the mechanics of voting and of the registration of voters.

A Permanent Personal Registration Commission has been established to assist residents in proper registration, a necessary requisite to voting.

Once registered, a voter need not re-register unless, because he has not voted within a two year period, his registration is cancelled. Even then, if he files his reinstatement application within ten days after having received notice that his registration will be cancelled, his registration will remain active.

Registration may be accomplished at either the Office of the Registration Commission, located in the Court House Annex, or at the proper location in the various municipalities throughout the County, which the Traveling Registrars visit as they make their rounds offering their services to all eligible citizens. The sites chosen by the Traveling Registrars are always well publicized in advance of the Registrars' visit.

Registration of voters closes fifty (50) days prior to all Primary Elections, and reopens five (5) days after Primary Elections. Registration also closes fifty (50) days prior to all Municipal and General Elections, and reopens thirty (30) days following such elections.

A qualified voter, moving from one precinct to another within Chester County, need not re-register. Instead, by applying for, completing and returning a Change of Address Form, the Registration records are adjusted without the voter's having to appear in person.

A qualified voter may change party affiliation only between the November Elections which are held on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November, and the Primary Elections which are held on the third Tuesday of May each year, except in the year of the nomination of a President of the United States, in which year the general Primary shall be held on the fourth Tuesday of May.

To be eligible for registration, a person must have been a citizen of the United States for at least one month. He or she shall have resided in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for at least one year, except that a person who had previously been a qualified voter or native born citizen of the State and removed from the State, must have returned six months prior to the election. Further, a person must have resided in the election district where he or she shall offer to vote, at least two months.

A minor who will be 21 years of age not later than the day after any election may register and vote at that election. It is necessary, however, to register prior to the final date of registration.

The conduct of all elections is the responsibility of the County Board of Elections. This Board, composed of the County Commissioners, provides and maintains all of the equipment and supplies used in connection with elections. The Board provides petitions for candidates; arranges for drawings to determine places on the ballot; provides ballot boxes and booths for each voting district; causes the necessary number of ballots to be printed; arranges for the polling places, and names the tabulating board which makes the official count of votes cast. The official count is begun at noon on the Friday following Election Day. The official count is certified by the County Board of Elections, and the books are kept open for five days against the possibility of appeal.

When the County Commissioners themselves are candidates, the Court supervises the vote tabulation.

A few comparatively little known, but worthwhile facts to remember about elections are: Nomination petitions must be filed at least sixty-four (64) days prior to the Primary; No nomination petition shall be circulated prior to twenty (20) days before the last day on which such petition may be filed, making the first date on which a petition may be circulated eighty-four (84) days prior to the Primary; Polls open for elections at 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m., Eastern Standard Time; County Committee Members are elected at the Primary Elections in even numbered years; All persons except watchers, persons in the course of voting, and persons lawfully giving assistance to voters, must remain at least ten (10) feet distant from the polling place during the progress of the voting, and when the hour for closing the polls shall arrive, twice the number of voters as there are voting booths, who have already qualified and are inside the enclosed space, shall be permitted to vote.

SALARY BOARD



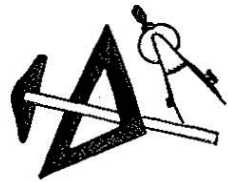
Salaries of Chester County employees, other than those provided by law, are determined by the Salary Board which is composed of the three County Commissioners, the County Controller and the elected Row Officer for whose department the salaries are to be considered.

RETIREMENT BOARD

Chester County has established a retirement system for its employees, administered by a Retirement Board consisting of the three County Commissioners and the County Controller.

All County employees on a yearly or monthly salary basis are required by state law to join the system, and elected officials may also join. They contribute sums to the retirement fund calculated on an actuarial basis according to their age and the amount of their salary. The County matches, dollar for dollar, the amount contributed by employees. The pension to which an employee is entitled is determined by the length of service and by the average salary for five years of highest salary return. An employee may go on voluntary retirement on reaching the age of sixty. One dismissed after ten years of service without reaching the age of sixty is entitled to receive a pension. Social Security status has been made available for all employees, in addition to Retirement Fund benefits.

PLANNING COMMISSION



Established by the County Commissioners, the Chester County Planning Commission is made up of Chester County citizens who serve the County without pay in the planning for the future of the County.

In creating the Planning Commission, it was the philosophy of the County Commissioners to offer the services and counsel of the Commission to municipalities within the County in a spirit of cooperative effort, but with no thought of dictation in the solving of local problems.

Early in 1958, the Commissioners approved a comprehensive plan submitted to them by the Planning Commission. The plan provides for the operation of the County Planning Commission Staff during the current year and for the continuation of the program of subdivision examination and review, the establishment of a Planning Assistance Program to assist the local political units within the County prepare or revise any or all of the basic elements of their Comprehensive Community Plan.

Such Local Planning Assistance is furnished in the form of technical planning staff and services to those communities requesting assistance within the limits of the staff and financial ability of the County Planning Commission. Local Planning Assistance is furnished to aid in the preparation or revision of the following basic elements of Comprehensive Community Plan:

- (a) A LAND USE PLAN which shows the location and extent of land in the community proposed to be used for residential, commercial, agricultural, industrial and public purposes.

- (b) A HIGHWAY PLAN which indicates the system of existing and proposed major, secondary and tertiary highways.
- (c) A COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN which shows the location and types of schools, parks, and other important public facilities.
- (d) A PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM which is a capital program and budget identifying those future public improvements necessary to carry out the community development objectives and recommending priorities for their execution.
- (e) SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS which provide for control of undeveloped land in the community in terms of adequate lot size, appropriate street grades and widths, provision of street improvements and utilities, and establishment of proper official record.

Under this Local Planning Assistance Program, the Chester County Planning Commission will:

1. Assist the respective community in making application to the Department of Commerce of the State of Pennsylvania for fifty percent (50%) of the costs of the proposed planning program under Section 701 of the U. S. Housing Act of 1954.
2. If such application is approved by the Department of Commerce, the Chester County Planning Commission will further assist the local community by furnishing technical planning staff and services in an amount equal to twenty-five percent (25%) of the costs of the proposed planning program. But, in no instance shall the total amount of assistance outlined in this paragraph exceed \$1,000.00.
3. The respective local community will furnish the balance of the cost of the proposed planning program.

The Chester County Planning Commission will continue work and study in the field of industrial development and in the study of the major expressway and highway needs within Chester County.

PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

Working closely with the County Planning Commission, the Park and Recreation Board, consisting of civic minded men and women who serve without recompense, is an advisory body which studies the County's recreational needs and makes appropriate recommendations.

BOARD OF ASSESSMENT AND REVISION OF TAXES

Weldon W. King

Owen 6-3071

To assure that all properties be assessed on a fair and equal basis, so that all citizens will pay only their proper share of the tax load, the Board of Assessment and Revision of Taxes is nearing the completion of an important task, that of equalizing assessments on all real estate in the County.

To accomplish this mission, a series of aerial maps, covering the entire County, was prepared. From these aerials, further series of maps for each of the various political sub-divisions were prepared. Each property was then plotted on the appropriate map, and a card system established by which every property is identified as to ownership.

A team of qualified appraisers then began the work of visiting and inspecting each property, taking measurements, noting type of construction, improvements, age, depreciation, type of neighborhood, and many other factors, all of which must be considered in arriving at a fair value.

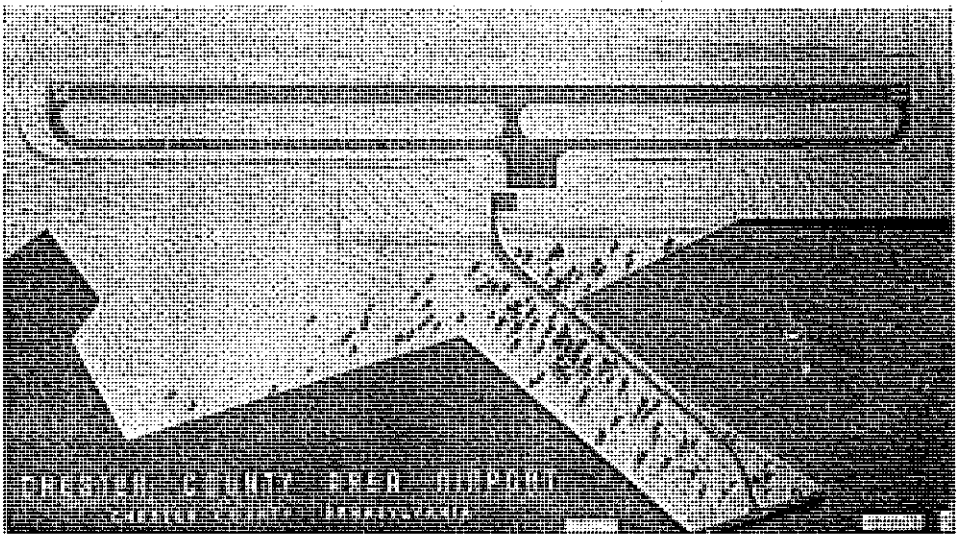
To properly re-assess the 58,000 parcels of real property within the County, there are, in addition to the Board, made up of the three County Commissioners, a Chief Assessor, an Assistant Assessor, and eight other qualified members of the staff.

When all pertinent material is assembled, and it is anticipated that this will be accomplished early in 1960, the Board will determine the tax ratio to be applied, and each property owner will be notified of the assessment placed on his property and the tax to be collected. The notice will inform the owner of his right to appeal, within thirty days, if he so desires.

CHESTER COUNTY AIRPORT

Chester County is keeping pace with man's advances in the age of flight, through the establishment of the Chester County Airport.

Located on U.S. Route 30 approximately one and a half miles west of Coatesville, the Airport is favored by topographical and atmospheric conditions. It is easily accessible from all parts of the County by automobile, bus and rail. The Downingtown-Coatesville By-pass, on which preliminary steps have already been taken, will have its western terminal near the entrance to the Airport, adding to its accessibility.



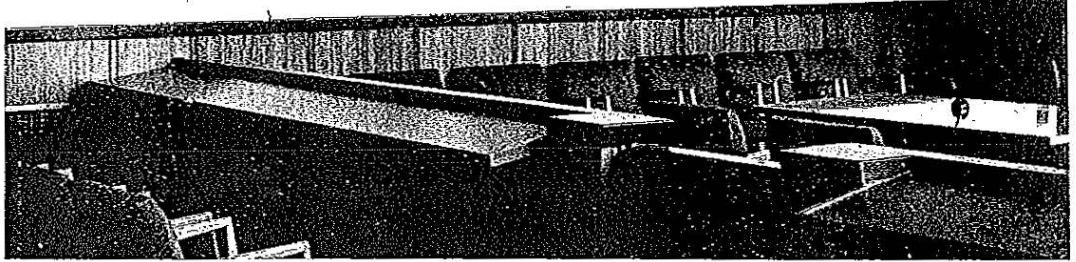
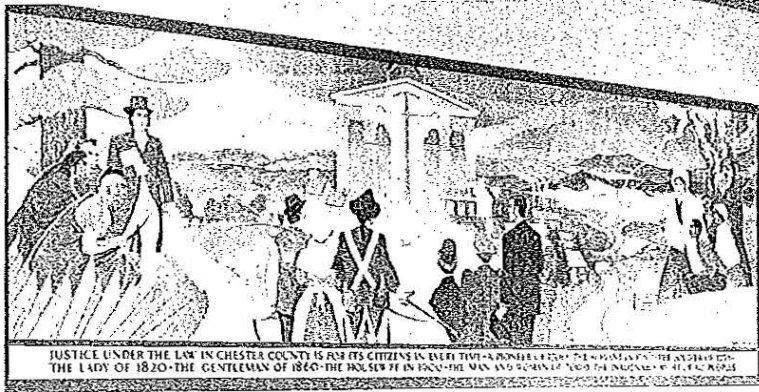
The ground-breaking has been accomplished and completion of work to a point which will permit use of the Airport is expected by Spring of 1959. When opened for use, the Airport will have a 3,500 foot runway, extendable to an estimated 8,700 feet as demands increase. In addition there will be paved taxi-ways and paved parking areas for aircraft and automobiles. Future plans call for hangar and operations buildings as well as administrative and navigational facilities.

Inspired by the activity of several progress-minded residents, the County Commissioners appointed as the official body guiding the Airport activity, the Chester County Area Airport Authority, a nine-man group, assisted by a twenty-eight man Advisory Committee. Under the guidance of the Airport Authority, which was incorporated on December 31, 1957, Federal, State and area funds on a voluntary contribution basis, were obtained to meet the nearly half-million dollar capital investment fund required.

With trans-continental and trans-Atlantic flights placing increasingly heavier demands on the larger metropolitan airports, it is reasonable to assume that a healthy potential exists for the Chester County Airport and its facilities to accommodate smaller commercial and privately owned planes. Both the conventional type aircraft and helicopters can avail themselves of the Airport.

The use of the Airport for freight and for feeder flights indicates its value to County residents, and its importance may be increased by its use as an auxiliary airport to those at Philadelphia and Wilmington.

The establishment of the Chester County Airport is a necessary and important step in the civic, industrial and residential development and progress of the entire County.



THE COURTS OF

The cornerstone of the framework of government by law, the County Courts, are an important part of County government. It is to the County Courts that appeals are made upon the decisions of Justices of the Peace. On the following pages are explanations in brief of the different kinds of cases heard by the various courts, the method of choosing jurors, and the function of a Jury of View.

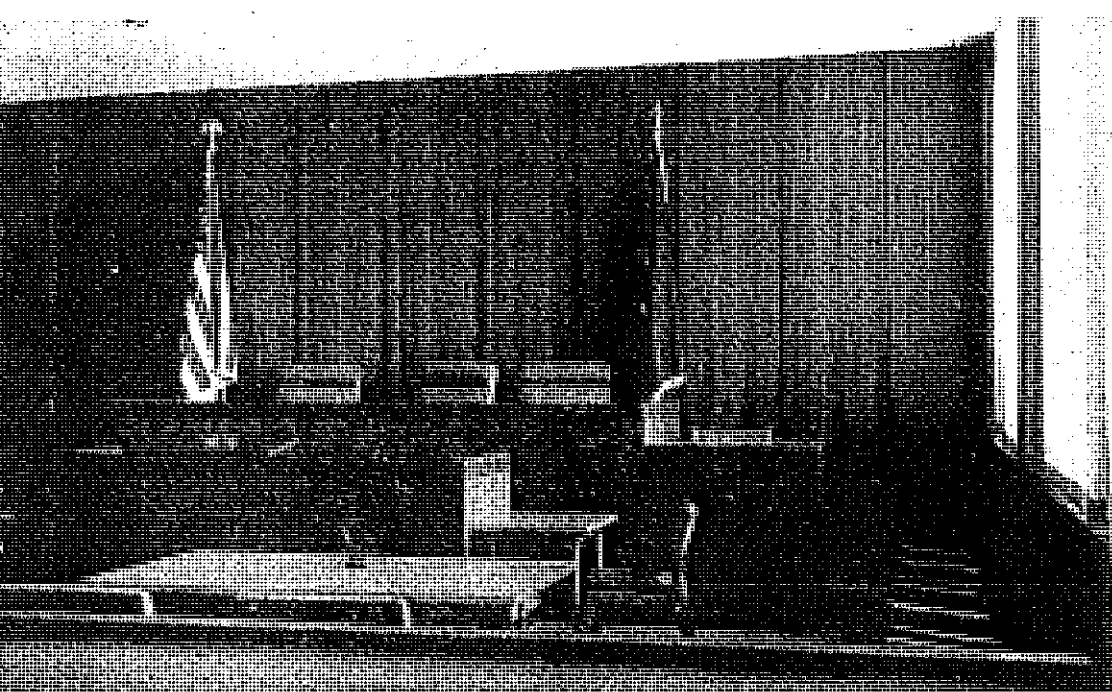
COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

Concerned with civil cases, the Court of Common Pleas hears disputes between parties in reference to personal or property rights.

This Court has original and unlimited jurisdiction over all kinds of civil action. All cases tried before this Court involve either questions of law or questions of fact. Questions of law are decided by the judges.

The Court of Common Pleas holds jurisdiction over cases appealed from judgments obtained before Justices of the Peace, and from judgments rendered by the Workmen's Compensation Board, the Board for Assessment and Revision of Taxes, Juries of View, and other administrative and semi-judicial bodies.

It is this Court which appoints guardians for the estates of weak-minded persons and has jurisdiction over the accounts filed by such guardians. In addition, it also has jurisdiction in habeas corpus proceedings.



CHESTER COUNTY

In Pennsylvania there are no separate Courts of Equity to try cases for which there is not a plain legal remedy. Suits for injunction restraining violations of building restrictions are a common illustration of equity cases. The judges of the Court of Common Pleas have jurisdiction over such cases, which are heard without a jury, the judge deciding both the law and the facts. When conducting an equity case, the judge is termed a Chancellor.

Chester County constitutes the 15th Judicial District of the Commonwealth. There are two judges of the Court of Common Pleas in Chester County, with terms set for ten years each, at a salary of \$20,000 per year, paid by the State.

ORPHANS' COURT

The administration and settlement of decedents' estates, trust estates and minors' estates comprise the chief function of the Orphans' Court which usually operates without a jury. In addition, this Court may appoint guardians for the estates of minors (a function from which the name of the Court is derived), handle adoption cases, and hold jurisdiction over appeals from the Register of Wills in the probating of wills and appeals from inheritance tax appraisements. Also within the jurisdiction of the Orphans' Court is the operation of the Marriage License Bureau.

Any person born in Pennsylvania prior to January 1, 1906 may, under the Act of July 16, 1941, petition the Orphans' Court of his native County to have his birth record filed, corrected or recorded. The petition may be referred to a Master who holds a hearing and recommends to the Court either approval or disapproval of the petition. The judge's term is for ten years and his salary of \$20,000 per year is paid by the State.

CRIMINAL COURTS

In Chester County there are two criminal courts, the "Court of Oyer and Terminer and General Jail Delivery" and the "Court of Quarter Sessions of the Peace".

The Court of Oyer and Terminer is for the trial of persons accused of serious crimes such as murder, rape, burglary and arson. The Court of Quarter Sessions is for the trial of persons accused of less serious crimes such as embezzlement, assault and battery, obtaining money under false pretenses, and for the violation of many statutes such as the Liquor Control Act. In practice, these courts are held together, presided over by the same judges with the cases tried by the same jurors. The judges of the Court of Common Pleas also preside over the Criminal Courts of Chester County.

There are, at present, five terms of Criminal Court held each year, the terms starting in January, March, May, September and November. Jury trials are usually held for nine weeks each year. Names of the courts are derived from old English law.

JUVENILE COURT

The Juvenile Court, a branch of the Criminal Courts, has jurisdiction over children up to the age of 18 years. This jurisdiction is exercised not only over children accused of violating some law . . . delinquents . . . but also over dependent and neglected children.

Sessions of the Juvenile Court are informal in nature and are referred to as "hearings" rather than "trials". In the event of hearings concerning dependent or neglected children, the Juvenile Probation Officer or the Child Care Service frequently assists the Juvenile Court.

JURY COMMISSONERS

Trial by a jury of one's peers, as provided by the Constitution of the United States, actually dates back in English Law, upon which ours is based, to the early Thirteenth century when the Magna Carta was adopted.

Locally, every conceivable human effort is extended and every possible precaution exercised to make certain that intelligent residents of good moral character and standing in the community are chosen for the all-important role of juror.

To this end, and to eliminate any possible political favoritism, one Judge of the Court and two elected Jury Commissioners, Chester County citizens who are not members of the same political party, prepare rosters of Chester County residents from which potential jurors may be chosen. The names on such rosters are checked carefully; neighbors of those nominated may be interviewed as to the character and competency of those under consideration.

Names, thus screened and known to represent citizens of good character, are then turned over to the Jury Clerk who causes them to be prepared on special forms which are then folded with the name inside to assure complete secrecy. The Jury Commissioners and the Judge fill the huge Jury Wheel annually, usually in November, and it is from this wheel that names of those chosen to serve as jurors are drawn by chance.

JURY OF VIEW

Composed of three persons appointed by the Court of Common Pleas from the Board of Viewers of the County, the Jury of View is named for three-year terms.

The Court assigns a Jury of View or Board of View when a petition is presented for the viewing, laying out, opening, grading, altering, widening, vacating or constructing of roads, sewers or bridges, or for the assessment of damages and benefits occasioned by such improvements, or for any appropriation of land by municipalities or other corporations having power of eminent domain. The Jury gives notice to parties concerned, conducts a hearing, takes testimony and evidence, and then files a report with the Court of Quarter Sessions.

PROBATION OFFICER

Although the responsibilities of a Probation Officer at county level do not normally include supervision of the more hardened criminal usually found at state or national level, they are arduous in nature and deal with human as well as legal problems.

A rather imposing amount of work done by the Probation Officer has to do with marital difficulties and with the problem of non-support. During a recent year, some 1,007 complaints were received from wives,

alleging that their husbands were failing to support them. In such instances, a hearing before the proper court may be arranged and, if the court finds for the wife, a support order is issued, compelling the husband to contribute to the wife's support in a specified amount.

Here in Chester County, however, only some ten percent, or 107 of the more than one thousand complaints ever reached the court. The Probation Officer arranged for the husband and wife to meet with him in the privacy of his office; discussed the problem with them as a friend, and sought reconciliation. In some instances reconciliations were effected, the complaints withdrawn, and the couple attempted to pick up their married lives again. In other cases, the breach between the couple had become too wide for reconciliation but, through the medium of the Probation Officer, an amount of support mutually acceptable to both parties was arrived at, and a hearing, with its necessary costs, was avoided.

In all instances where support is involved, whether it be by mutual consent or by Court Order, the collection and disbursement of Support Orders are handled by the office of the Probation Officer, and exceed a half million dollars a year.

All of the Probation Officer's energies, however, are not directed solely toward marital problems. He sees, too, situations where indigent parents are seeking support from their children, and where mothers seek support from the fathers for children born out of wedlock.

Adult parole, in Chester County, fortunately does not usually deal with the more vicious of crimes, since conviction of most felonies results in confinement in a State penitentiary. It is the responsibility of the Probation Officer, though, to counsel with the individual on parole or probation and to supervise that individual's activities during the probation period.

Although a Juvenile Probation Officer maintains separate offices, there is close cooperation between the two. Ofttimes, at the request of the Juvenile Probation Officer, assistance will be given by the Adult Probation Officer, particularly when the juvenile concerned falls in the "nearly full-grown" category.

In addition to the Chief Probation Officer, there are two assistants who complete his staff.

JUVENILE PROBATION OFFICER

Because children should be guarded from association and contact with crime and criminals and, in certain instances, be subjected to wise care, guidance and control, the Juvenile Probation Officer is an important and valued ally of the Court.

High on its list of duties is the investigation of cases of delinquent, neglected or dependent children. Allegations, each of which must be looked into, are as many and varied as are the countless quirks of human nature, and provide a never ending parade of problems to the Juvenile Probation Officer, the two Assistant Probation Officers and the two clerical assistants who staff the office.

Complaints, or information indicating the need for action on the part of the Juvenile Probation Officer, may originate at many sources. Sometimes it may be a school teacher who spots the trouble; any of the police agencies in the County may provide the initial information or, in fact, any interested citizen may bring a situation to the attention of the Juvenile Probation Office.

Some of the more than a thousand cases handled a year by this office respond to the therapy of the Probation Officer's counsel and, having been corrected, need not be brought before the Court. This is the ideal or happy situation but, unfortunately, all of the problems confronting the Office are not that easily solved.

If it becomes evident that a juvenile should be brought before the Court, necessary arrangements are made for an informal hearing. The word "Trial" is not used in connection with juvenile court cases, and no jury is utilized, the Judge conducting the hearing and determining all cases affecting children.

The Court may make one of several decisions regarding the child, most of which involve the Juvenile Probation Officer. A child may be allowed to remain in its own home, or be placed in a suitable family home, subject, in either case, to the supervision and guardianship of the Juvenile Probation Officer. Or, a child may be committed to the care of a reputable citizen of good moral character, again subject to the supervision of the Probation Officer. A child also may be committed to a suitable institution or industrial or training school. In all instances, the Juvenile Probation Officer has the responsibility for making periodic reviews and submitting appropriate recommendations to the Court.

Juvenile delinquent facilities are provided and operated under the jurisdiction of the County Commissioners for the reception of alleged juvenile delinquents on order of the Juvenile Probation Officer. Facilities are provided in a large home on West Gay Street, West Chester, Pennsylvania, with a matron and complete staff.



Among the educational facilities available in Chester County is the State Teachers College at West Chester.

Lincoln University, near Oxford, is another of the educational institutions in Chester County.



INDEX

	Page		Page
Foreword -----	2	Service to Veterans -----	30
History -----	3	Chester County Library ----	31
Advantages -----	9	County Civil Defense Council	31
County Commissioners -----	11	Surplus Food Distribution ---	32
Controller -----	12	School System -----	32
Prothonotary -----	13	Registration and Voting ----	33
Clerk of Courts -----	14	Salary Board -----	34
Register of Wills and Clerk of Orphans' Court ---	14	Retirement Board -----	34
Treasurer -----	16	Court of Common Pleas ----	40
Coroner -----	16	Orphans' Court -----	41
Recorder of Deeds -----	17	Criminal Courts -----	42
District Attorney -----	18	Juvenile Court -----	42
Chester County Farms -----	20	Jury Commissioners -----	42
Pocopson Home -----	21	Jury of View -----	43
Child Care Service -----	24	Probation Officer -----	43
Map of Chester County -----	23	Juvenile Probation Officer --	45
Sheriff -----	27	Planning Commission -----	35
Contagious Disease Unit ----	28	Park and Recreation Board _	36
Sealer of Weights and Measures -----	29	State Teachers College -----	47
Assistance to Community Hospitals -----	30	Lincoln University -----	47
Surveyor -----	30	Chester County Airport ----	38
		Board of Assessment and Revision of Taxes -----	37

