

## Lock Haven PA Water Street Historic District

The Water Street Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973. Portions of the text below were adapted from a copy of the original nomination document. [†]

The lands between the West Branch of the Susquehanna River and the Bald Eagle Creek being especially desirable, due to their fertility and location, attracted those seeking frontier homes, and by 1800 there developed quite a prosperous settlement on the site of the present Lock Haven. Commercial lumbering was started about the time of the completion of the canal (1834). This industry grew in importance throughout the rest of the century.



Most of the historic structures in this district remain on their original sites and are well-preserved. The most significant buildings are:



The L. A. Mackey House, 1854, is a Federal-Tuscan Transitional, two-story, Flemish bond brick dwelling with the main section measuring 44.5' by 39.5'. The symmetric facade has five windows across the front, a bracketed cornice with dentils (which is carried along the sides of the building), a decorated frieze with five oblong windows, and a deeply recessed entrance with circular paneled door flanked by side lights and topped by a large rectangular space filled with a semi-circular window. This front entrance is framed with a hood supported by heavy brackets and topped with a balustraded balcony. There are twin chimneys in both gable ends of the main section of this building which is close to original and in excellent condition.

The David Carskaddon Homestead, 1858, is an Italian Villa style, two-story dwelling, brick with stucco finish and constructed in the form of a Y. The low profile roof once supported a square cupola containing pairs of round-headed windows and topped with a flat roof, deep eaves and closely spaced brackets. This building has quoins at all corners, grouped pairs of windows, and once had balconies between the window pairs of the first and second floors. The space between the two front projecting wings was filled with a one-story porch topped with a balcony.

The James White House, 1856, is a Greek Revival-Tuscan Transitional style, two-story, Flemish bond brick dwelling with a symmetric facade with three windows across the front. The windows (equipped with louvered shutters) are four-over-four with a wide vertical mullion and very slender horizontal mutins. Drip mouldings decorate the otherwise plain window frames. Each side gable has twin chimneys piercing a low profile hip roof (topped by a balustraded deck) and has modest eaves which are decorated with a narrow barge board in the form of ogive curve scallops. Slightly recessed, the front entrance has a transom and side lights and a paneled door all framed by flat fluted columns supporting a decorated architrave. Earlier views show that there was originally a one-story pillared porch decorated with ogive curves similar to the barge board.



The Winslow-Crawford House, 1855, is a Formal Steamboat [Gothic style](#), two-story frame dwelling with two symmetric projecting bays on the front facade; topped with triangular gables containing round-headed, center-crested Gothic style windows. Between these gables we find a dormer with triangular pediment. In the triangular gables at each side of the main section we find double arched Gothic windows. The front entrance has a pair of rectangular paneled doors, pairs of side lights and transom. Toward the end of the century, a small centrally placed front porch was replaced with a full-width porch with ionic columns and double dentil work which was also applied to the many triangular pediments and gables as well.

The Craig-Furst House, 1860, is a typical Gothic Revival style, two-story brick with stucco finish dwelling. There are three window pairs across the front and very steep twin gables containing lanceted windows. These gables are separated by a lancet arched dormer containing a window similar to those found in the gables. The front entrance has double doors, side lights and an elliptical top light. Originally there was a full width front porch (one story).

The Clinton County Court House, 1867, was designed in the Italian Villa style by the architectural firm of Sloan and Hutton of Philadelphia. The specifications for the building read, "The building will be 64 feet two inches in front including the towers (and 55 feet two inches exclusive of the projection of the towers) by 114 feet 2 inches in length." This brick and cut stone rectangular



building has twin towers flanking a Classic Revival facade. The windows on the second floor are tall, round-headed and set in arched recessed panels. Both towers are surmounted by domed belfries. The only alterations to this building are the removal of the dormers in the belfries and the addition of a conforming addition at the rear of the building.



The Jacob Grafius House, 1857, is a Federal-Tuscan Transitional style two-story Flemish bond brick dwelling with a symmetric facade similar in treatment to the L. A. Mackey House. The end gables contain twin chimneys connected with a parapet, and have triple windows at the peak. The most outstanding feature of this building is the highly decorated frieze which has floral designs between closely spaced brackets.

The W. A. Simpson House (between 1872 and 1880) is a three-story brick dwelling covered with grooved wood to represent dressed stone work. On the front facade we find a centrally placed four story tower capped with an ogive curve mansard roof pierced by four hooded dormers. There is a one-story porch in the front which has closely placed brackets in the eaves, sixteen square columns supporting segmental arches. All sections of the dwelling have their third floor inside a concave mansard roof which is equipped with heavily hooded dormers. The deep eaves of this roof exhibit a double set of dentils and carved brackets. The windows are round-headed and have center-crested and projecting cornices supported by bracket pairs. The frames are decorated with long slender C scrolls.

On Water Street in the district there are at least eight additional important historic buildings plus a canal lock that gave its name to Lock Haven and the site of Fort Reed which was the last of a chain of forts on the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. Also in this district are to be found good examples of all remaining later Victorian architectural styles, residential and commercial. For

instance, the Kistler-Grugan House, 302 W. Church St., is an example of a Shingle style, two-story frame building with three-story circular towers with conical roofs located at the corners of the front facade, The interior is richly decorated with carved paneling, ceramic tiles and stained glass. Also there are many Italianate style, three- and four-story commercial buildings with flat roofs and ornamental brick cornices in the central business section of East Main Street.



The poor mountain side soil along the West Branch of the Susquehanna River promoted very slow growth of the virgin pine and oak causing it to be very dense. This made the timber commercially

valuable. The completion of the canal to and from Lock Haven (1834 and 1848), the building of the West Branch Boom in 1849 (a structure for the stoppage of saw logs in their course down the river), the extension of the railroads to and from Lock Haven (1859 and 1864), and the location of desirable timber in the area all promoted a lumbering industry that eventually included thirteen mills of various types. By 1860, Pennsylvania was the largest producer of lumber in the United States; in 1880 it was the third largest producer. In 1883 the aggregate cutting capacity in the Lock Haven mills was one hundred million feet per year.

Today the remaining visual heritage of this wealth extracted from this frontier community are the homes of those men who were responsible for this lumber industry, and the commercial buildings of the mercantile community that developed to service the people associated with the lumber industry. Most of the historic buildings in this District are related to the lumber industry. They are individually significant as follows:

The L. A. Mackey House, 1854, was first owned by Levi A. Mackey and built by the regional contractor, Henry Hipple. The Hon. L. A. Mackey was at one time Lock Haven's most prominent lawyer, banker, politician, and businessman. Mr. Mackey was the first Secretary and Treasurer of the West Branch Boom Co., president of the Bald Eagle Valley Railroad, president of the Lock Haven National Bank which he started, and he served two terms in the Congress. All of these activities were important to the development of the lumber industry.

The James White House, 1856. The second owner of this house was Peter Dickinson who built one of the very early saw mills and the first successful Boom on the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. It was this stoppage for timber floated down the river that initiated the rapid development of the lumber industry. The next owner was Robert W. McCormick who was one of the most successful lumber barons of the area having owned at various times four saw mills.

The David Carskaddon Homestead, 1858, was first owned by David Carskaddon and built by Henry Hipple. Mr. Carskaddon was a successful lumberman having "farmed" 30,000 acres of timber before his early death. The second owner was Albert C. Hopkins who was a member of the lumber firm of Hopkins and Weymouth. Mr. Hopkins was elected to the 53rd Congress.

The Winslow-Crawford House, 1855, was first owned by Robert Winslow who built a large sawmill on the banks of the river at the end of Mill Street.

The Craig-Furst House, 1860, was first owned by Thomas Craig who joined with Dudley Blanchard to start the Blanchard, Craig & Co. saw mill in 1858.

The Clinton County Court House, 1867. The new wealth produced in Lock Haven at this time suggested the necessity for a proper court house. The architects for this public building were Sloan and Hutton of Philadelphia. It was based on the plans for the court houses in Williamsport and Sunbury, but is perhaps the best example of all three.

The W. A. Simpson House, (between 1872 and 1880). Mr. Simpson joined with Warren Martin in 1867 to operate the very successful Simpson & Martin Mill. This building was originally a Greek Revival brick mansion, ca. 1854, but it now exhibits nearly all the features expected on the Mansardic era house.

The points of significance for the Water Street District are:

1. The district contains fine examples of 19th century architectural styles, specifically those of the Victorian era.
2. The district is still relatively intact geographically.
3. Nearly all the significant structures are in a good state of repair.
4. Modifications on the existing structures has not been radical except a few buildings in the central business area.
5. The lumbering industry which was developed by the owners of many of the dwellings in the district is of national importance.

† Wagner, Dean R., Lock Haven State College, *Water Street Historic Distric, Clinton County, PA*, nomination document, 1973, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, Washington, D.C.