

NOTES ON JACOB HOSTETTER, BACKGROUND AND DESCENDANTS OF COLUMBIANA COUNTY, OHIO

Collected from the internet by Connie Graves for The Huffstutter Family

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress
<http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=H000806>

HOSTETTER, Jacob, (1754 - 1831)

HOSTETTER, Jacob, a Representative from Pennsylvania; born near York, Pa., May 9, 1754; attended the common schools; was a clockmaker; member of the general assembly of Pennsylvania 1797-1802; elected as a Republican to the Fifteenth Congress to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Jacob Spangler; reelected as a Republican to the Sixteenth Congress and served from November 16, 1818, until March 3, 1821; moved to Ohio and settled in Columbiana, where he died June 29, 1831.

A Timeline of Hanover's History
<http://www.hahs.us/adlertimeline.htm>

This is a timeline representing the history of Hanover, Pennsylvania. It is by no means a complete history and is constantly being updated and added to. Dates are as specific as possible. The timeline was created by Sarah A. Adler for the Hanover Area Historical Society. Sources include books published by the borough and county as well as the *Evening Sun* newspaper.

1805

- Clockmaker/later congressional representative Jacob Hostetter establishes a brass foundry to cast parts for tall case clock works.

A Pennsylvania Clock Mystery

by John J. Snyder, Jr., published in *Antiques and Fine Art Magazine*

<http://www.antiquesandfineart.com/articles/article.cfm?request=190>



“The dial of the clock illustrated in 1947 was marked by Jacob Hostetter, a clockmaker who worked in Hanover, Pennsylvania, from the 1780s to about 1825.⁴ Hanover, a town in southwestern York County, was important on the Baltimore trade route, thereby providing an explanation for the Baltimore-style inlays used by several craftsmen.⁵”

- John R. McGrew, “Hanover, Pennsylvania, Clockmakers, Watchmakers and Silversmiths,” *NAWCC Bulletin*, Vol. 37/3, No. 296 (June 1995): 351.

Jacob Hostetter, Tall case clockmaker

By Tim Sweet

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M.O.S.T (MY OWN SWEET TIME) WATCH COMPANY, 14002 Tuckey Lane, El Paso, Tx, 79927

Hostetter, Jacob; Many of the tall case clockmakers of this period purchased the works, sometimes had a cabinetmaker build the case, turned to a clock dial maker of the face and did little more than assemble the parts. Hanover was the location of a brass boundary that was one of the few sources of such works in that part of Pennsylvania and there are probably many tall case clocks with works made in Hanover by Jacob Hostetter, but with someone else's name on the face of the clock.

Jacob Hostetter (1754-1831) was taxed as unmarried starting in 1781, and by 1784 as married living on Frederick Street adjacent to the present site of the Central Hotel. He is listed as a clockmaker on the 1788 and later tax lists. From 1802 through 1823 he operated a brass foundry and was producing clock works on the two lots he owned across Chestnut Street from the Neas House. There are over 100 extant Jacob Hostetter clocks cataloged, perhaps some made by Jacob Jr. Three of the Hostetter sons were also clockmakers.

A strange story by one John Peel was published in a Philadelphia newspaper, quoted in the Hanover Evening Sun, February 24, 1940, about how Jacob got started in clockmaking. Jacob was a watchmaker and in 1795 he set about learning how to make clocks from Richard Chester, and that he made his first tall case clock in 1798. The records show that Jacob was taxed as a clockmaker ten years earlier. It seems odd that at the age of 40 he would turn to Richard Chester, who was then only about 20, to learn the trade he had been practicing for at least 16 years. It is far more likely that Richard Chester was apprenticed to Jacob, although no documentation proof has been found. Further, there is a story in the Hanover Record Herald for Aug. 15, 1914, about a Hostetter clock made for and still in the possession of the Weikert family, complete with the receipt for part payment of 15 pounds for an eight day clock signed and dated by Jacob Hostetter on Nov. 11, 1795.

Collectors Weekly

Flashback: [Geographic Distribution of Early Clockmaking in America](#)

March 20th, 2009

By D. W. Hering

This article, written by the curator of the James Arthur Collection of Clocks and Watches at New York University, discusses clockmaking in the 18th and 19th centuries, noting the rise and fall of the independent clockmaker, the movement away from quality items to clocks that could be sold cheaply, and the differences between public and domestic clocks. It originally appeared in the November 1937 issue of [American Collector](#) magazine, a publication which ran from 1933-1948 and served antique collectors and dealers.

“...One of the best authenticated and most fully recorded of early American clocks, with peregrinations and successive sojourns in three states is an example of a practice that was common with clocks of that kind and that period. The movement complete, without a case, would be placed on a shelf or bracket or could be hung up against the wall. As thus suspended it was, to all intents and purposes, a wag-on-the-wall but if the owner wanted a case for it he would have one made to suit his taste or his purse by a cabinetmaker in his own neighborhood.

Such a clock was made by Jacob Hostetter of Hanover, Pa., in 1802, for Henry Hering who, with his father, had come to America from Switzerland some ten or twelve years earlier and settled in Frederick County, Md. While the case is not especially artistic it is of good style and well made, but the name of the cabinetmaker is not known; it is doubtful whether he ever heard of Chippendale or Sheraton, and Duncan Phyfe's star was just rising.

This clock has celebrated its centennial and is staunchly moving on to its sesquicentennial-movement made in Pennsylvania in 1802; case then made and clock installed in Maryland, where it operated for 70 years; transferred to Waynesboro, Pa., in 1872; and seven years later taken to Virginia where, through vicissitudes of storm and stress, of fire and flood, it has continued its career up to the present time. For 15 years I enjoyed the music of its matchless bell and, as a boy, delighted in seeing my father perform the Saturday winding of it. It is now the property of Robert Hering in Harrisonburg, Va., a great-great-great-grandson of its original owner, having come to him in direct lineal descent through four generations.

[The Historical Society of Carroll County](#)

<http://hsc.carr.org/collections/clocks.htm>

Of all the decorative arts objects produced by the Pennsylvania Germans, none more typifies their social aspirations of success than does the tall clock. Invariably the most expensive household furnishing, a clock often represented more than five percent of a family's net worth. This is an enormous amount, considering that agrarian owners' lives were regulated by the natural rhythms of tending livestock and crops. Hence they had little need to break days into hours and minutes, evidence that clocks were far more than just timepieces.

Clockmaking was a complex trade involving several craftsmen. Generally the maker's name painted on the clock face is that of the craftsman who made or assembled the works. The case was ordered from a cabinetmaker. When purchasing a case, customers could select from a wide variety of decorative elements, including woods, moldings, veneers and inlays, depending on how much they wished to spend.

This joint construction practice was true of the several clockmakers known to have been working in this region in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The clocks seen here are representative of the types of clocks and cases available to local purchasers.

Since the tall clock was usually the most expensive household furnishing, they were often kept in the parlor, where visitors would be sure to see them. Tall clocks remained fashionable well into the first quarter of the nineteenth century but their popularity began to decline in the 1830s. This decline was due, in part, to the introduction of mass-produced and relatively inexpensive shelf clocks imported from Connecticut.

The Historical Society owns twelve tall case clocks. Ten of the clocks are currently in the Shriver-Weybright Gallery as part of the [Doorway to the Past](#) exhibition .

Tall Case Clock, c.1810
Works by Jacob Hostetter
Hanover, Pa.
Walnut, tulip poplar
Bequest of Granville E. Bixler
93.5.2

John C. and Jesse Englar Buckey were early owners of this timepiece by Pennsylvania clockmaker Jacob Hostetter. Although not inexpensive, the relatively plain walnut case and 30-hour works indicate the clock was purchased by someone of middling wealth.

