

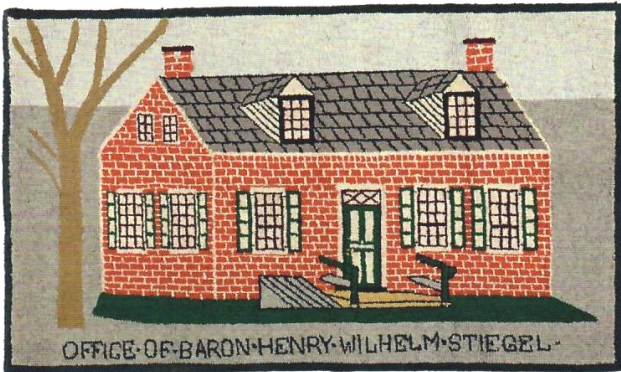
# OUR HERITAGE

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## Minnie's Fascination with Stiegel's Office



This article is a follow-up to the one published in our regular October newsletter issue concerning a great folk art rug created by Mrs. David (Minnie) Missimer. The hooked rug pictured above is also a great rug crafted by Mrs. Missimer. The scene depicted on the rug was very special to Mrs. Missimer.

Although it was only later in her married life that Minnie lived next door to the Stiegel Office, she was always fascinated with the Stiegel Office building because of its history and the lock on the front entrance door. Whenever Minnie, as a child, passed the office building, she always had the urge to lay her small hand on the large brass knob that was part of the door lock.

If only we could know about and see the many wonderful early local items of historical value that at one time were here in Manheim. It's fairly certain that when the Stiegel Office building was razed the Missimers acquired the Stiegel stove that now resides in the William Penn Museum in Harrisburg. Some of the office furniture went to George H. Danner's museum.

A bible, the property of Elizabeth (Holtz) Stiegel, was found among the razed Stiegel Office building debris and, while sold several times over the years, eventually returned to our area.

Even as late as Sylvia Rupp's Estate sale in 1991 and Elias Kready's items being sold in 2006, important items tied to our local history were leaving our area. A few of the items have since returned to our area.

Two of our members had the good fortune of knowing Mrs. Missimer's nephew, John Retallack. It was from John that some additional information was obtained concerning the Missimers. According to John, Minnie had a drawer full of antique tin quilt patterns (rarities) and early linens items. We were also able to learn where the Missimer's found some great antique items.



The lock has two brass knobs and the smaller one was seen on the outside of the door and touched by Minnie.



This is a picture of Mrs. Missimer seated on an old ladder-back chair and getting ready to operate a spinning wheel. We can't be certain but the turnings appear to be as those found on a Daniel Danner spinning wheel.

## Establishing Manheim

On pages 42 thru 56, in **Henry William Stiegel and His Associates** by George L. Heiges, is the information related to developing 729 acres in Rapho Township into a community. The 729 acres were to become our town of Manheim.

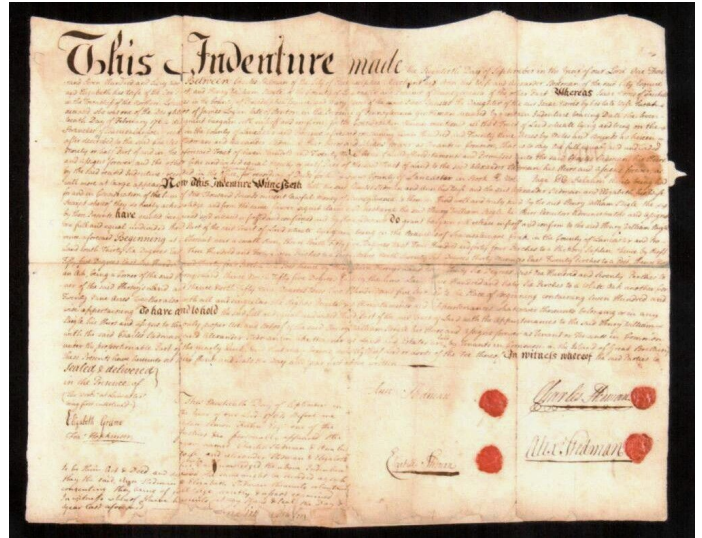
The following excerpts, taken from pages 45, 46 and 47, pretty well covers when and who established Manheim on the 729 acres.

"Charles Stedman and his brother Alexander in their years in Pennsylvania had purchased land in various areas of the province, and on Feb. 17, 1762 added further to their real estate domain by buying from Isaac Norris and his daughter Mary those 729 acres in Rapho Township, Lancaster County, which we have traced since 1724. On September 20th of 1762—the same year in which they bought it, the Stedmans and their wives sold a one-third undivided share in the tract to Henry William Stiegel. This latest venture did not partake of any signs of industry as did Charming Forge and Elizabeth Furnace when they were purchased. What they had on their hands this time was simply 729 acres of land, which was not even forested, but which was, according to old tales, unusually fine natural meadow land where early Lancaster County farmers would come from far and near to cut the tall grass for hay. However, good as these 700 and more acres might have been for hay crops, Stiegel and his partners had not purchased the tract for the purpose of making hay.

What then, did they intend to do with it?

It is certain that the Stedmans and Stiegel conferred on the possibilities of the Rapho Township tract before the Stedmans bought it; and it is just as certain that by the time Stiegel actually had the papers to show that he was owner of one-third of it, all the ground work concerning the use to which the tract was to be put had been accomplished. They had come to a decision to begin a town, and the first deeds to the lots in the new town were dated October 1, 1762, ten days after Stiegel purchased his share. We know that deeds simply could not have been prepared in those ten days, so it is very evident that Stiegel and the Stedman brothers had their heads together for quite some time discussing the potentialities of this piece of ground."

The first Manheim related indenture, the one written to establish 729 acres as our community, still exists and is pictured below. Like so many items, it too left Manheim by way of an auction. Fortunately, someone who values the preservation of history and the importance of artifacts going back home acquired the indenture and it's now back in Manheim.



Through the establishment of HMPF, many items related to our heritage have been acquired and returned to Manheim. We know that the first property deed written was for a lot on Market Square. It too exists and was sold at auction twice. Perhaps it can be located and returned to Manheim.

Unfortunately, because of our limited floor display area, HMPF had to pass on a great set of six beautifully decorated chairs crafted by George Nees of Manheim. The chairs were sold at auction in June. Also, we regret not paying a bit more attention to a betty lamp that was sold in the same June auction. Perhaps there will be a second chance for the items to return to Manheim.

## October 1, 2022 in Manheim

On the above date, Manheim will observe the date of the first assigning of a ground lot deed in the colonial town of Manheim. This occurred Oct.1, 1762. The recognition of the event is the idea of April Lynn Downey. Please visit her sites on Facebook, Instagram and [aprildowney.blogspot.com](http://aprildowney.blogspot.com).