

Revealing the Unique History of Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, Clockmakers

by Randy Jaye (FL)

I became interested in antique Lebanon County, PA, tallcase clocks and the clockmakers who built them after admiring several of them in private collections. When I decided to research these clocks and clockmakers, I rapidly discovered that very little information was available. My research led me to museums, historical societies, antique shops, auctions, and private homes in search of information and answers to my questions. I also communicated with several historians and clock collectors and followed various auctions for the past several years, gathering information and collecting and taking pictures of these prominent tallcase clocks. Fortunately, many of these clocks have survived, although information about the clockmakers is scarce. This article reveals some of the history of these clockmakers; a few are well known and several have been rediscovered. Many examples are shown in this article.

The Origin of the Tallcase Clock

The tallcase clock first appeared in England soon after 1660. Contrary to popular belief, the tallcase clock was not originally designed to accommodate clock movements with long pendulums. During the 1660s tallcase clocks were made with movements that had verge escapements¹ and short bob pendulums (some of which were only 9-1/2 inches long.) Around 1670 the anchor escapement² was introduced with the Royal pendulum (also referred to as the “seconds pendulum”), which has a period of two seconds (one second to swing in one direction and one second for its return swing). The Royal pendulum length is approximately 39.1 inches, so the use of a tall clock case to house a movement with this pendulum style was an obvious choice in the progression of clockmaking.

The earliest tallcase clocks in Colonial America³ were very similar to English styles because many of the early American clockmakers were trained in England. The exception was the German-settled areas of Pennsylvania, where German- and Swiss-trained clockmakers served the Germanic population.

One-of-a-kind and handmade tallcase clocks were built throughout the mid-Atlantic and New England states. Regional characteristics evolved and can be used to identify and date the origins of early American tallcase clocks.

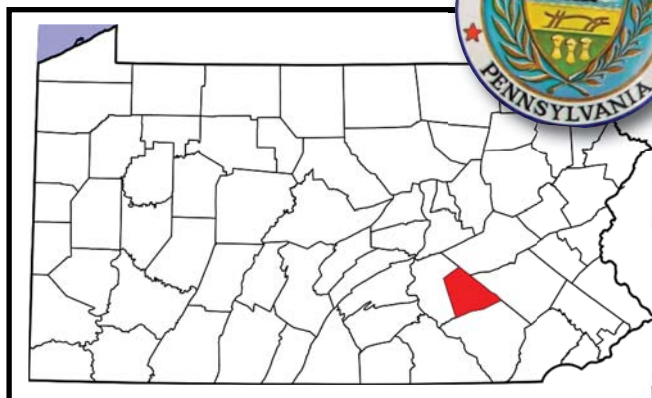


Figure 1. Map of Pennsylvania with Lebanon County highlighted.



Interesting Facts about Lebanon County

Early in 1723 the first European settlers arrived in the area that was later to become Lebanon County. They found native Indians from the Leni-Lenape⁴ and Mengwe⁵ tribes, fertile land suitable for farming, and strong native trees of various species, including American beech, chestnut, oak, cherry, black walnut, and butternut. Early settlers soon discovered that these abundant trees had beautiful wood grains that naturally influenced architecture, furniture making, cabinetmaking, and later, Pennsylvania tall clock cases.

During the Revolutionary War the Cornwall Furnace⁶ was an important supplier of munitions to the Continental Army. Local stories tell of a secret visit to the furnace by General George Washington when the British occupied Philadelphia.

President George Washington visited Lebanon County three times during his tenure in office. His first visit was to inspect the construction of the Union Canal.⁷ Lebanon County is home to the Union Canal Tunnel, which is the oldest transportation tunnel in the United States⁸ (Figure 2). His second visit was a social trip to see Captain Michael Ley (a personal friend and officer who served with him in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War.) His third visit was during the Whiskey Rebellion⁹ as he traveled to western Pennsylvania to investigate the uprising.

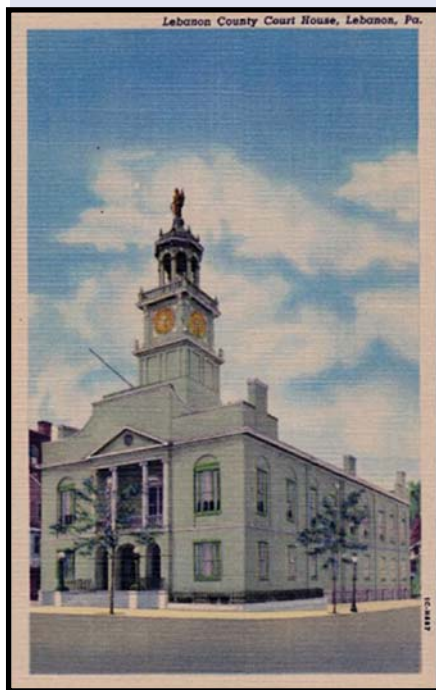
On February 16, 1813, after more than 20 years of petitioning the Pennsylvania General Assembly, the new county of Lebanon



Figure 2. The Union Canal Tunnel in Lebanon is the oldest existing transportation tunnel in the United States.

was approved and formed from parts of Dauphin and Lancaster counties. The first session of court in Lebanon County was held on December 13, 1813; several men were admitted to practice law in the new county, including future President James Buchanan.¹⁰

Figure 3, left. The Lebanon County Court House was built in 1818 and demolished in 1962. Note the four-sided clock tower, ca. 1920s.



In 1879 the Lebanon County Courthouse (Figure 3) hosted a trial that gained national and international attention as the first “murder for insurance” case in the United States. Six men were arrested for the premeditated murder of an elderly man whom they had insured without his knowledge and with no legal interest. The local and national press dubbed them “The Blue Eyed Six.” Five of the six men were found guilty of murder and were hanged in front of big, boisterous crowds that filled the streets and nearby rooftops in downtown Lebanon (Figure 4). The trial led to major changes in insurance laws throughout the country.

The Lebanon Motor Works designed and built the Upton automobile from 1905 through 1907. Few of these automobiles were built and none are known to exist today.

During World War I the Lebanon Bethlehem Steel Company plant was a major contributor to the war effort, supplying the U.S. armed forces with armor plating and other essential steel-fabricated parts. The company baseball

team, the Lebanon Club, fielded a legendary player in 1918, George Herman “Babe” Ruth.

Lebanon County is known for two tasty treats that are part of its local charm and culture: Lebanon bologna, one of the few unique sausages made in the United States, and opera fudge, a rich creamy candy covered with chocolate and primarily a local treat.

Figure 4, right. Southwest corner of Eighth and Cumberland streets in downtown Lebanon; the famous Samler Building stands in the center.



Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Pennsylvania Clockmaking

Tallcase clocks were made throughout Colonial America and the early United States up to about 1815 or 1820, when they fell out of fashion in most regions. The reason that Pennsylvania tallcase clocks were so unique was due to the German and Swiss influence on their movements and case designs.

The German-settled areas of Pennsylvania continued a demand for traditional tallcase clocks until around 1850, which made Pennsylvania unique for its longevity in tallcase clockmaking in early America.

Some of the most beautiful, intricately designed, and rare tallcase clocks were built in Pennsylvania. The “hey-day” of tallcase Pennsylvania clockmaking was from 1700 to 1850.

Tallcase clocks were expensive and took months to complete. Tallcase clock orders could be just a few each year, and clockmakers typically engaged in other occupations to supplement their income, including watchmaking, blacksmithing, gunsmithing, instrument making (mechanical, mathematical, nautical, and surveying), cabinetmaking, and furniture making.

It is not uncommon to discover a Pennsylvania clock that has been owned by the same family for several generations. Today, early Pennsylvania handmade tallcase clocks are respected and admired antiques, as anyone lucky enough to own one can surely attest.

Known Clockmakers from Lebanon County

With skilled tradesmen (mostly of German descent), beautiful local woods, unique style, and meticulous workmanship, the clockmakers of Lebanon County produced beautiful and interesting Pennsylvania tallcase clocks. The majority of case designs found on Lebanon County tallcase clocks conformed to the Chippendale¹¹ and Federal¹² furniture styles. These styles were popular from the third quarter of the eighteenth century through the middle of the nineteenth century.

Many of these clocks still exist, and many are in working order. This article reveals 14 known Lebanon County clockmakers (listed in the order of their known, or estimated, birth dates).

Grove, Jacob (1720?-?)

Graf, Jacob (1729-1778)

Meily, Samuel (1739-1802)

Spyker, John Peter (1756-1830)

Maus, Philip (1763-?)

Meily, Emanuel Sr. (1776-1851)

Stoy, Gustavus (1777-1816)

Esterle, John (1778-?)

Cooper, Charles (1779-1832)

Guthart, Jacob (1779-1867)

Oves, George (1783-1837)

Drayer, Joseph (1790?-?)

Robb, Andrew (1791-1847)

Miller, Rev. Harry E. (1874-1947)

Grove, Jacob (b.1720?-d.?) is the most obscure of the known Lebanon County clockmakers. The book *History of Dauphin and Lebanon Counties* states, “In the return of Lebanon for 1758 we have the following additional names: Jacob Grove (clockmaker).” *The Dictionary of American Clock & Watch Makers* indicates he was an active clockmaker from 1759 through 1782. The Lebanon County Direct Tax list of 1798 references a Jacob Grove, but it is unknown if he was the clockmaker. No other information about this clockmaker has been located in the Lebanon area, and no clocks bearing his name are known to exist. His birth and death dates are unknown.

Graf, Jacob (also spelled Graff) (b.1729-d.1778) was one of the earliest known clockmakers from Lebanon County. He is listed as a clockmaker in the 1750 Lebanon Township taxable records. Most other clockmakers of the period were listed as watchmakers, or advertised as watchmakers in local publications. No known references link Graf to watchmaking.

Several Jacob Graf clocks built in Lebanon County are in private and museum collections.

One Jacob Graf clock is signed other than Lebanon. It is dated 1775 and signed “Lancaster, Pa.” His will was written in German and recorded in Lancaster County on February 5, 1782. Lebanon County was formed in 1813 from part of Lancaster County, so this “Lancaster” clock could have been made in present-day Lebanon.

One of the rarest and finest examples of an early Pennsylvania tallcase clock was made by Jacob Graf and is housed at Winterthur Museum.¹³ Its black walnut wood case stands 98 inches tall. The superb case workmanship features an intricate sun wheel with tulip inlays and turned finials. The dial, made of an unusual (and then expensive) combination of brass, pewter, iron, and silver plate, is signed “Jacob Graff Machet Dieses” [Jacob Graff made this].

Jacob Graf is known as a master craftsman and one of the most talented of the Pennsylvania clockmakers. His impeccable attention to detail and style influenced and motivated his contemporaries and later Pennsylvania clockmakers. Jacob Graf died in Lebanon in 1778.

Meily, Samuel (also spelled Miley and Meyli) (b.1739-d.1802) conducted business in the Market Square area of Lebanon (South 9th Street). He married Amelia Catherine on April 26, 1763, in Lebanon. Their son, Emanuel, also became a Lebanon County clockmaker. The Lebanon County tax list of 1759 lists Samuel as a Freeman owning six acres of land.

Samuel Meily made various styles of clocks, including shelf and tallcase (with brass and white dials¹⁴ and 30-hour and 8-day movements).

An excellent example of an early (ca. 1770) Samuel Meily bracket clock with a small spring-driven brass and steel 30-hour movement, a once-on-the-hour strike, and

a verge escapement is in a private collection in Mechanicsburg, PA. The brass dial is signed "S.M." This clock features exceptional Germanic-style cabinetry work. It has three turned finials and a hood design almost identical to the Jacob Graf tallcase clock in the Winterthur Museum.

A fine example of a Samuel Meily white-dial tallcase clock has been in the possession of the Reynolds family of Fort Meyers, FL, for several generations and was originally purchased by a family member in the 1930s in Elmira, NY. This circa 1790 tallcase clock is made of solid cherry wood and stands 96 inches tall (Figure 5). The tallcase cabinetry work is typical of eighteenth-century clockmaking with Germanic influences, except for the base shield design shown in Figure 7 (a regional design used on many Lebanon County tall clock cases). The hand-painted dial is signed "Samuel Miley, Lebanon" and in-



Figure 5, above. Samuel Meily tallcase clock (96 inches tall), solid cherrywood featuring a swan neck pediment with three turned finials; dial is signed "Samuel Miley, Lebanon" ca. 1790. JACK REYNOLDS, FORT MEYERS, FL (3).



Figure 6, above. Dial of clock shown in Figure 5, signed "Samuel Miley, Lebanon." Note the unusual off-center painted signature.

Figure 7, right. Base of clock shown in Figure 5, featuring a regional (Lebanon County) shield design on the front of the base.



cludes two birds and gold leafed spandrels (Figure 6). The clock has its original eighteenth-century, brass, English-bell movement. The false plate¹⁵ is signed Osborne of Birmingham; therefore, the false plate and white dial are of English origin. Most American tallcase clocks with white dials that date prior to 1800 have English-made false plates and white dials. Samuel Meily died in Lebanon on July 26, 1802.

Spyker, John Peter (also spelled Spycher) (b.1756-d.1830) was born on November 25, 1756, to Maria Margaretha and John Spyker, who emigrated to the United States in 1737 and settled in Pennsylvania. John Peter married Susanna Kurtz and lived in Williamsburg (now Jonestown, PA).

A clock built by him (ca. 1780) was featured in a September 30, 1972, article in the *Lebanon Daily News*. This clock includes a rare deeply incised carving of a sheaf of wheat on the trunk door. In the late 1700s the most popular carved motif on furniture was sea shells, but Spyker used a wheat pattern that reflected the rural nature of the area. This clock stood in the White Horse Tavern in Jonestown for 100 years (from 1783 to 1883). The dial is signed "Williamsburg," which was the original name of Jonestown. Williamsburg's founder, William Jones, died in 1771, and after his death the town's name was changed to Jonestown.

Another clock (ca. 1785) attributed to Spyker is early Pennsylvania "Philadelphia" style, with hand-carved sunflowers and C-scroll vines on the bonnet. Spyker continued as an active clockmaker from 1784 to 1800 in the Tulpehocken, Lebanon County, area. Several other clocks built by him are known to have survived. John Peter Spyker died in Lebanon County on August 18, 1830.

Maus, Philip (b.1763-d.?) was a clockmaker who built tallcase clocks in Lebanon County during the late 1700s and early 1800s. One privately owned Philip Maus clock has a columned walnut case with three turned urn-shaped finials and hand-carved rosettes. It features delicately fashioned handmade hour and minute hands and a very unique, symbolic, cross-shaped date hand. The white dial is signed "Philip Maus, Lebanon, No. 44," perhaps indicating that this was the 44th clock Maus built. Other clocks known have been attributed to Maus, but the total number of clocks he built is unknown.

Meily, Emanuel Sr. (also spelled Miley and Meyli) (b.1776-d.1851) was born on July 14, 1776, to Samuel and Amelia Catherine Meily. He and his father were in business in the Market Square area in Lebanon (South 9th Street), where they bartered various goods, including clocks. There are many Lebanon County tallcase clocks with Emanuel's name on the dial (Figures 8, 9, and 10). He lived his entire life in Lebanon and served as the Lebanon County treasurer from 1832 to 1834. Many tallcase clocks built by Emanuel Meily feature a



Figure 8, far right. Emanuel Meily tallcase clock (95 inches tall), solid applewood featuring beautiful grain patterns with three turned finials and bracket feet, 8-day movement, dial signed "Emanuel Meily, Lebanon," ca. 1810.

Figure 9, right. Emanuel Meily tallcase clock (98 inches tall), solid cherrywood featuring hand-painted flower designs on the trunk and base with no central finial and bracket feet, 8-day movement, dial signed "Emanuel Meily, Lebanon," ca. 1805.

Figure 10, above. White dial signed "Emanuel Meily, Lebanon," ca. 1810.



definite Germanic style that was popular in Pennsylvania before and during his time. The similarity of his clockmaking style to his father Samuel Meily is an example of how clockmaking was passed from one generation to the next. Emanuel Meily Sr. died in Lebanon on April 13, 1851.

Stoy, Gustavus (b.1777-d.1816) was the son of Dr. William Henry Stoy, a minister at several German Reformed churches who spent many years preaching in Pennsylvania. Dr. Stoy, a German emigrant, was also the first pharmaceutical scientist in the United States and was a prominent Revolutionary War doctor in the Lebanon area. Dr. Stoy's Lebanon house, built in 1773 and located at 924 Cumberland Street, is the home of the Lebanon County Historical Society (Figure 11). Gustavus' brother, Henry William Stoy, was born in Lebanon in 1782 and died in Virginia in 1858. Records of Gustavus' birth are unclear, but it is likely that he too was born in Lebanon. Gustavus Stoy married Catherine Graf in 1797.

It is quite probable that the Stoy family brought the skills of cabinetmaking, clockmaking, and mechan-

ics from Germany and passed them along to their children in America. Gustavus Stoy became actively involved with the clockmaking trade at a young age and became a notable clockmaker in Lebanon from 1795 to 1805. He specialized in tallcase Pennsylvania clocks (see Figure 12), but he also made bracket clocks during this time. During the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors Convention in June 1973 a square bracket clock with a nicely finished 8-day repeating strike movement, signed "Gustavus Stoy, Lebanon" on the dial, with a balance wheel escapement and rack lever striking mechanism, was displayed. This bracket clock is made with various woods, including mahogany, birch, yellow pine, white pine, and walnut. In addition to clockmaking Stoy was also in the business of watch repair.

Sometime in 1806 Stoy moved to Lancaster, PA, and continued in the clockmaking and clock and watch repair business. An advertisement in the May 24, 1806, *Lancaster Journal* stated that Gustavus Stoy "respectively informs

his friends and the public, that he has commenced the Tavern keeping business, at the house lately occupied by Mr. John Whiteside, now the Sign of the Pennsylvania Arms, on Queen Street, a few doors north of the court house...He also carries on at said place, his business of



Figure 11, right. The Stoy House, built in 1773, served as the Lebanon County Court House from 1813 to 1818; it is now the home of the Lebanon County Historical Society.

Figure 12, far right. Gustavus Stoy tallcase clock (98 inches tall), solid walnut wood featuring a swan neck pediment with intricately carved sunflower rosettes and a regional shield design on the base, dial signed "Gustavus Stoy, Lebanon," ca. 1800. Note the turned feet; they were probably added after 1830 because ogee-style bracket feet were the popular regional design at the time this clock was built. KOCIAN DEPASQUA ANTIQUES.

Figure 13, right. Gustavus Stoy tallcase clock (95 inches tall), solid black walnut wood featuring unusual large brass door hinges; dial has a hand-painted peacock and is signed "Gustavus Stoy, Lebanon," ca. 1795. Note the missing feet; originally, this clock probably had ogee-style bracket feet. LEBANON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

CLOCK & WATCH MAKING in all its various branches. Clocks and watches repaired at the shortest notice, as warranted." It was a common practice for clockmakers of the eighteenth and nineteenth century to have other jobs or businesses in addition to their clock-making and repairing trade.

Stoy was a private in the 2nd Brigade, Pennsylvania Militia, during the War of 1812.

A handwritten record in the archives at the Lancaster County Historical Society, dated August 26, 1816, records the personal property of Gustavus Stoy's estate and is signed by his wife Catherine (Graf) Stoy. The list includes "1 set of watchmaker's tools, \$150," indicating he was involved, or at least maintained an interest, in



the clock and watchmaking trade until the end of his life.

An excellent example of an early (ca. 1795) handmade Gustavus Stoy tallcase Pennsylvania clock (Figures 13 and 14) originating in Lebanon is housed and displayed in the Stoy Museum (Lebanon County Historical Society). Gustavus Stoy died in Lancaster in August 1816.

Esterle, John (also spelled Esterlie) (b.1778-d.?) was born in Klingerstown, PA. He was the son of Jacob and Rosina (Ried) Esterle. Esterle began his clock-making career in Lebanon (Figure 15), where he married Magdalena Merck.

Esterle built approximately 200 clocks during his career. He moved to Maytown, Lancaster County, where he was listed in the 1813 tax rolls. In 1818 he moved to New Holland, also Lancaster County, where several clocks are attributed to him, including one 8-day tallcase clock that is signed on the dial "John Esterle, New Holland" (the movement is signed "J.E Bagnall").

Some of Esterle's later clocks have movements signed "Wm. Vale\Lichfield." He entered into a partnership with



Figure 14. Gustavus Stoy tallcase clock shown in Figure 13, white dial with calendar feature boasting an ornately hand-painted bird with floral designs, signed "Gustavus Stoy, Lebanon", ca. 1795. LEBANON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.



Figure 15. John Esterle tallcase clock, solid walnut wood featuring five carved finials and sunflower rosettes with a carved rosette on the center of the base. White dial has hand-painted flower designs and is signed "John Esterle, Lebanon", ca. 1805. LLOYD FAMILY OF LEBANON, PA.

watchmaker William McConaghy in 1828. An advertisement in the *New Holland Anti-Masonic Herald* on June 26, 1828, states, "John Esterle, Clockmaker, respectfully informs his friends and the public that he still continues to carry on the CLOCKMAKING Business at his old stand in the village of New Holland, where he has always on hand a handsome assortment of CLOCKS which he offers for sale at the following reduced prices, First Rate 8 Day Clocks with wild cherry cases, from \$40 to \$50; 30 hour Clocks without cases, \$18." Esterle retired to Hollidaysburg, PA, after 1835.

Cooper, Charles (b.1779-d.1832) was born on January 5, 1779. On November 27, 1803, he married Maria Dobler in Lebanon. He operated a jewelry store in the Market Square area in Lebanon (South 9th Street). Several Cooper clocks date from 1800 to 1825 (Figures 16 and 17). Some of the most beautiful and intricately designed examples of Pennsylvania tallcase clock cabinetry work are found on several of Cooper's clocks. Charles Cooper is known to have been a very good mechanic, as proven by various excellent and impressively built movements attributed to him.

One Cooper tallcase clock in a private collection in

West Virginia features a beautiful tiger maple case with a delicate string inlay of a butterfly above the trunk door and other inlays on the hood. This clock also features an impressive and colorful hand-painted white dial, an 8-day movement, and a seconds hand and calendar feature (Figures 18 and 19). Another Cooper clock that belongs to a private collection has a scarce 8-day quarter-hour striking movement with a dead-beat escapement.¹⁶ Charles Cooper died in Lebanon on February 12, 1832.

Guthart, Jacob (also spelled Goodhart) (b.1779-d.1867) was born on February 25, 1779, near Reading, PA, to Johannes and Magdalena Rightmeyer Guthart. He learned the clockmaking trade while apprenticing in Reading. He then moved to Lebanon and established a clockmaking and repair business and succeeded Jacob Graff (it is not clear if he bought Graff's business or worked with him for a time before becoming an independent clockmaker). After settling in Lebanon he married Elizabeth Uhler on February 21, 1808, and they had 10 children. He operated his business out of his home on the corner of Market Street and Spring Alley in Lebanon.

Figure 16, right. Charles Cooper tallcase clock (95 inches tall), solid cherrywood featuring an inlaid oval-shaped American eagle (a popular post-War of 1812 furniture design) above trunk door and one central carved finial. White dial has hand-painted flower designs and is signed "Charles Cooper, Lebanon," ca. 1815. LEBANON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Figure 17, below. Dial of Charles Cooper tallcase clock (95 inches tall), solid cherrywood featuring matching veneer designs on the bonnet, trunk, and base, 8-day movement with calendar feature. White dial has hand-painted and gold leaf spandrels, signed "Charles Cooper, Lebanon," ca. 1820.



Figure 18, left. Charles Cooper tallcase clock (97 inches tall), solid tiger maple wood with delicate inlays on the trunk and hood, 8-day brass English bell movement, three turned finials (center finial not shown), ca. 1820. RON HANSEN, MARTINSBURG, WV.

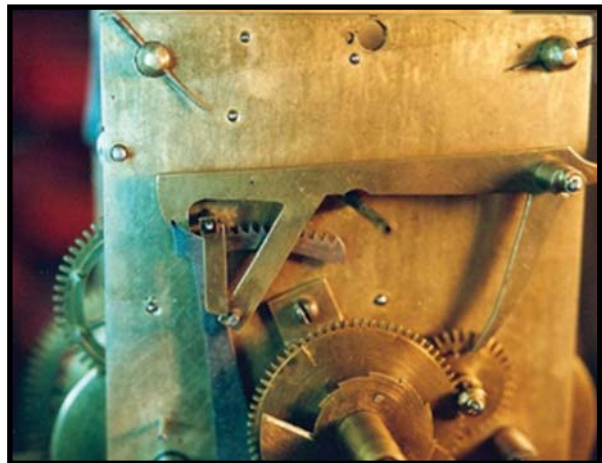
Figure 19, below. White dial of clock shown in Figure 18 with Arabic numerals, gold-leafed spandrels with circular center designs, and an intricately and colorful hand-painted moonphase dial featuring a seconds hand and calendar configuration signed "Charles Cooper, Lebanon," ca. 1820.



Figure 20, right. Jacob Guthart tallcase clock (95 inches tall), traditional Germanic style case made from solid cherrywood with four turned feet; the white dial has four painted flower designs and is signed "Jacob Guthart, Lebanon," ca. 1835.

JIM BEAUGARD OF NEW JERSEY.

Figure 21, below. Jacob Guthart movement featuring the J-Hook design. EDWIN U. SOWERS III, CMC OF LEBANON, PA.



He was the most multitalented of the Lebanon County clockmakers; in addition to his clock-making career he was also a surveyor, fireman, and politician. He had a lengthy and diverse political career. In 1813, when Lebanon became a county, he was appointed justice of the peace and remained in that position for 20 years. He was elected to three consecutive terms in the Pennsylvania General Assembly, serving until 1818. In 1821 he was appointed as the chief Burgess of Lebanon County and paid a \$5 per year salary. He served as the Lebanon County treasurer from 1826 through 1829 and again in 1840. In 1842 he briefly served again as justice of the peace.

Many tallcase clocks built by Guthart are known. One excellent example of his fine clock-making workmanship (Figure 20) is in a private collection in New Jersey.

Guthart was a clever designer of mechanical movements used in tallcase clocks. He used a little known mechanical mechanism—the J-Hook¹⁷—in several of his clock movements (Figure 21). This design is a uniquely modified rack hook that eliminates the need for a warning lever and pin as it initiates the stop and strike sequence of a clock movement. Jacob Guthart died in Lebanon on August 22, 1867.



Figure 22, right. George Oves tallcase clock (98 inches tall), solid cherrywood featuring beautiful grain patterns, columns grooved into the sides of the trunk, one central finial, and bracket feet, ca. 1810.

Figure 23, above. White dial of clock in Figure 22 features a very colorful hand-painted spandrel area and moonphase dial and is signed "George Oves, Lebanon," ca. 1810. LEBANON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY (2).

Oves, George (b.1783-d.1837) was born on April 4, 1783, to Abraham and Elizabeth Oves. He married Elizabeth Buehler on September 24, 1805. He is well known as a clockmaker and several of his tallcase clocks have survived. His Germanic-style clock cases were constructed of fine-quality local wood. He used one central finial that stood high above the broken arch, giving his clocks a taller and streamlined appearance. One of his tallcase clocks was donated to the Lebanon County Historical Society in 2009 by Mrs. Marian Smith (Figures 22 and 23). George Oves died in Lebanon on December 4, 1837.



Drayer, Joseph (b.1790?-d.?) was an active clockmaker in the 1820s in the Lebanon area. Little is known about him other than he was listed in the 1822 Lebanon County tax record and listed as an inmate of the Lebanon County prison in 1822. His name was also recorded on a Lebanon County property deed in March 1829.

A very impressive tallcase clock (ca. 1820s) bearing Joseph Drayer's name is in a private collection near Palmyra, PA. The cherrywood case features brilliant inlaid work of an American eagle on the trunk door. This clock case is very similar to clocks attributed to the prominent clockmaker Jacob Eby from nearby Manheim. The brass clock movement includes a sweep second hand feature and a moon phase disc. A central brass finial of an American eagle complements the inlaid case work. The use of American eagle motifs in furniture design following the War of 1812 represented an upsurge of patriotic feelings in early America.

Robb, Andrew (b.1791-d.1847) was born on May 20, 1791, in Westmoreland, PA, to Alexander and Barbara Light Robb. He married Elizabeth Light on October 18, 1812, in Lebanon. Elizabeth's family owned the New Market Forge in Annville Township, Lebanon County, and her father built them a home near Tenth and Cumberland streets in Lebanon. Robb was both a clockmaker and jeweler. Unlike most other Lebanon County clockmakers, who were of German descent, Robb was of Scottish ancestry. Several tallcase clocks attributed to Robb and originating from Lebanon County are known. A fine tallcase clock made by Robb (Figures 24 and 25) features a solid walnut case with swirled molding designs and a colorful white dial. This clock is in a private collection. Andrew Robb died on October 1, 1847, in Scott, IN.

Miller, Rev. Harry E. (b.1874-d.1947) was born on June 5, 1874, in Pinegrove, Schuylkill County, to Issac and Fredricka Kustebader Miller. His family relocated to Lebanon in 1888. Soon afterwards he apprenticed at the Lebanon Manufacturing Com-

Figure 25. White dial of clock in Figure 24, signed "Andrew Robb, Lebanon" featuring very colorful circular spandrels, ca. 1825.

ANN HENRY CROW.

Figure 24, below left. Andrew Robb tallcase clock (97 inches tall), solid walnut wood featuring swirled molding around the trunk and base with notched trunk and base corners and three turned finials, ca. 1825. ANN HENRY CROW.

Figure 26, below right. Rev. Harry E. Miller tallcase clock, solid mahogany wood featuring an open glass door to view the pendulum and weights, 8-day chain wind movement, and round metal dial with Arabic numerals, ca. 1926.

COURTESY OF BETTY PATCHES, LEBANON, PA.



pany. At an early age he became interested in mechanics and the workings of tallcase clocks and began to disassemble and repair them. This interest led him to a career in clockmaking, and he eventually became a recognized authority on tallcase clocks.

He did not live and work during the heyday era (1700-1850) of Pennsylvania tallcase clockmaking. But, considering his meticulous workmanship, self-taught knowledge, and clockmaking design that is comparable to earlier masters, he surely deserves to be acknowledged as an accomplished Lebanon County clockmaker.

He built approximately 400 clocks and maintained a reputation as a fine clockmaker, with many customers willing to wait for their order to be completed. He made some clock movements and also used other movements in his handmade cases. An interesting example of his fine workmanship is a circa 1926 solid mahogany wood tallcase clock (Figure 26) that features a round metal dial with ornate top molding.

He was also the pastor of the Salem United Brethren Church in Lebanon for 41 years. Rev. Harry E. Miller died on February 5, 1947, in Lebanon.

Unsigned Clocks Attributed to Lebanon County Clockmakers

Other known tallcase clocks have been attributed to Lebanon County clockmakers, but they are either unsigned or the painted signature on the dial has faded over the years and become unreadable. One of these clocks (Figure 27) displays the typical woodworking patterns and dial-painting designs (regional characteristics) found on many known Lebanon County tallcase clocks. The attached “shield” design on the center of the base is a style found on some Lebanon County tallcase clocks. It is thought that this particular tallcase clock originated in Lebanon County.

Continuing Research

The publication of this article does not conclude my research on Lebanon County clockmakers. I continue my research to further refine the stories and fill the voids of missing data about Lebanon County clockmakers. I want to hear from anyone who can provide any additional information about Lebanon County clockmakers and/or pictures of Lebanon County clocks.

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1. The verge (or crown wheel) escapement is the mechanism in a mechanical clock that controls its rate by advancing the gear train at a regular interval. It is the earliest known type of mechanical escapement device and was used in clocks and pocket watches from the fourteenth century into the 1800s. Production of the verge escapement significantly dropped after 1840, but some were being made as late as the 1870s. Its origin and inventor are unknown.

2. The anchor escapement (or recoil) is the mechanism in a clock movement that regulates the swinging of the pendulum to allow the movement's wheels to advance at each swing. It was invented and used first around 1670.

3. Colonial America refers to the beginning history of the United States from the start of European settlements in the 1500s, especially to the history of the 13 colonies of Great Britain (Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, Con-



Figure 27. Unsigned tallcase clock. Solid cherrywood featuring an open glass door (probably cut out years after this clock was originally built) to view the pendulum and weights. Eight-day movement; the trunk has an attached “shield” design and the feet, bonnet, and dial all include regional characteristics of Lebanon County workmanship, ca. 1800.

nnecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, New York, North Carolina, and Rhode Island), which were established between 1607 and 1733 and declared themselves independent in 1776.

4. The Leni-Lenape people were settled in New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania at the time of European contact. They practiced large-scale agriculture, hunting, and the harvesting of seafood.

5. The Mengwe people spoke the Iroquoian language and were settled in the Lake Ontario, Huron, and Erie area at the time of European contact. They were semisedentary, practiced agriculture, and lived in longhouses that lodged multiple families.

6. The Cornwall Furnace was built in 1742 and is located in Lebanon County. It is a unique survivor of the early American iron industry. It is a National Historic Landmark District and is considered America's most complete charcoal-fueled ironmaking complex.

7. The Union Canal construction began in 1792 and was intended as a towpath canal to connect Philadelphia with the Susquehanna River. It provided a critical early transportation route for the shipment of anthracite coal and lumber to the Philadelphia area. It closed in the 1880s but remnants of the canal still exist, and it is now listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

8. The Union Canal Tunnel is located in Lebanon. Work on the tunnel began in May 1825 and was completed in June 1827. It was designated a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark in 1970 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 1, 1974. It is the oldest existing transportation tunnel in the United States. At the time of its construction it was considered an impressive and rare engineering feat in the United States.

9. The Whiskey Rebellion was a resistance movement in the western frontier of the United States over the dissatisfaction of policies enforced by the national government. The Whiskey Act of 1791 placed an excise tax on whiskey and was the central grievance of the westerners. The new national government under President George Washington put an end to the rebellion, proving it could suppress violent resistance to its laws and maintain central control of the national government.

10. James Buchanan (1791-1868) was the fifteenth president of the United States. The Confederate States of America were created while he was in office and after Abraham Lincoln was elected in November 1860. He attempted to negotiate peace without war and chose not to take an aggressive stance against the states that seceded from the Union.

11. Chippendale-style furniture was popularized by Thomas

Chippendale (1718-1779) through his 1754 publication titled "The Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director." He adapted existing design styles, including rococo, Chinese, gothic, and neoclassical. Furniture making in the Western Hemisphere, including clock cases, in the second half of the eighteenth century was profoundly influenced by Chippendale's designs.

12. Federal-style furniture became popular in the early United States around 1789, in the so-called Federal period, which was the time following the Revolutionary War. Federalists and anti-Federalists were engaged in heated debates over the form the new American government should take. Federal-style furniture peaked in popularity between 1789 and 1820, but its influence has lasted to current times.

13. The Winterthur Museum is located in Winterthur, DE, and was the former home of Henry Francis du Pont (1880-1969). He was an expert on early American Federal-style furniture and decorative arts, an avid antiques collector, horticulturist, and a member of the prominent du Pont family (founders of the world renowned DuPont Chemical Company).

14. The white dial, which became popular in the 1780s, are painted iron dials (decorative paint hardened by heat processing) that were cheaper and easier to produce than brass dials. Most American tallcase clocks with white dials that are dated prior to 1800 have English-made dials. From approximately 1806 to 1820 increasing numbers of American tallcase clocks with white dials have dials that originated from Boston, MA. After 1820 most American tallcase clocks with white dials had William Jones' white dials from Philadelphia, PA.

15. False plates were originally made of cast iron. Around 1820 they began to be made of sheet iron. They allowed the clockmaker to attach the dial to the movement's front plate in a position relative to the moving and working parts without damaging the dial. False plates are mainly used on 8-day movements.

16. The deadbeat escapement mechanism was introduced to horology around 1675 by Thomas Tompion and Richard Towneley. It was a significant improvement over the anchor escapement because it eliminated the recoil effect, which disturbs the motion of the pendulum and causes timing inaccuracies. When the pendulum swings with a deadbeat escapement, the escape wheel tooth rests against the locking face, which prevents impulse to the pendulum and eliminates recoiling.

17. It is not certain where the J-hook strike design originated, but it was probably in Switzerland. Several early Pennsylvania clockmakers are known to have used the J-hook prior to Jacob Guthart, including John Fisher and Peter Schutz of York (1760s) and Jacob Herwick of Carlisle (1770s).

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