

VILLAGE OF HARMONY, PENNSYLVANIA

Bounded by German Street to the south; Wood Street to the east;
Connoquenessing Creek to the north; and Wilson Alley to the west.

Harmony

Butler County

Pennsylvania

HALS PA-11

HALS PA-11

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior

1849 C Street NW

Washington, DC 20240-0001

**HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY
VILLAGE OF HARMONY, PENNSYLVANIA**

HALS NO. PA-11

- Location:** Bounded by German Street to the south; Wood Street to the east; Connoquenessing Creek to the north; and Wilson Alley to the west. Jackson Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania
Lat: 40.802756 Long: -80.128019 (Intersection of Mercer and Main Streets Google Earth, Simple Cylindrical Projection, WGS84).
- Present Owner:** Individual ownership, public and private
- Present Use:** Village, commercial and residential
- Significance:** Harmony was listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a Historic District on May 30th 1974 (Poh, 1973). Harmony was founded by the pietist Johann Georg Rapp and his Harmony Society in 1804 as the first Harmonist settlement in the United States. George Rapp came to America from the Duchy of Württemberg, Germany in 1803 in search of land for his followers free from the religious persecution they faced in Germany. He desired a place for his followers to worship, farm, and put into effect his communal religious teachings. In 1804, two groups of Harmonites purchased a tract of land in Butler County, Pennsylvania. Under the spiritual leadership of Father Rapp, the business and architectural skill of his adopted son, Fredrick Reichert Rapp, and hard work by all, "Harmonie" became a highly profitable venture and an example of communal living. They formally established the Harmony Society in 1805 and lived in Pennsylvania for about 10 years before selling the Harmony property to Mennonites and moving on to New Harmony, Indiana. In 1824, they moved back to Pennsylvania, this time to Economy (now Ambridge) about 20 miles south of Harmony. The settlements were economically successful, producing many goods in a clothing factory, a sawmill, a tannery, and from their vineyards and distillery. A hotel was also run in Harmony. The society exerted a major influence on the economic development of Western Pennsylvania. But since the group chose to adopt

celibacy, they eventually dissolved when John S. and his wife Susanna C. Duss, the last surviving leaders of Harmony Society, died in 1951. Still extant are most of the original Harmonites' buildings.

The group of Mennonites led by Abraham Ziegler that bought the town of Harmony in 1814 lasted until around 1904, by which time the town was selling more and more individual plots. Still extant is an old Mennonite meeting house on a hill near Harmony that was built in 1825.

Historian: Matthew Brody Little, September 2007
246 Mercer Street (Otto House ca. 1859)
Harmony, Pennsylvania

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History of Landscape

1. Periods of Landscape Development:

Harmony, 1805-1815

In the latter part of the 18th Century in Württemberg, Germany the Lutheran religion was then predominant in the country, in which every man woman and child was obliged to submit. The old teachings of Luther gave way to new principals that were regulated to keep the people subdued to the civil government. As a result there were numerous dissenters from the state-sponsored Lutheran Church. They would be known as Pietists, or even more radical were know as Separatists. They leaned to communal living, socialism and mysticism.

George Rapp, the founder of this peculiar communistic religious sect or association, was a native of Iptingen, Württemberg, Germany, where he was born October 28, 1757. He was the son of a farmer, vine-planter and weaver, the recipient of a fair common school education, a devoted reader of the Bible in his youth, and a literal interpreter of its text. This led him to take issue, in his early manhood, not only with the rationalism and betrayal of the times, but with the practices and forms of worship of the established church. From giving private expressions to his views he took, when about thirty years of age, to assembling his friends in his home and expounding the Scriptures unto them. He urged not only a return to the primitive simplicity of the early Christian worship, but a following of the example of the early Christians in the common ownership of property. He declared himself a

prophet and he and his followers considered the migration to the United States (Wilson, p. 6).

Rapp soon had a following, and notwithstanding the opposition and criticism of the clergy, his disciples increased, until they numbered over three hundred families, in 1803, when they resolved to seek religious freedom and an asylum (*Harmony Borough*, p. 410) from persecution in the New World. At their request, therefore, in that year, George Rapp came to America, accompanied by his son, John, and a few others, in search of a new home for himself and his disciples. They landed at Baltimore, visited portions of Maryland and Pennsylvania, even going as far west as the Tuscarawas valley in Ohio. Finding this place too far from civilization, they returned to Pennsylvania, visited the Connoquenessing valley, and found amid its beautiful scenery a location that pleased them, and which George Rapp secured for the society by purchasing from Dr. Detmar Basse about 5,000 acres of his 10,000-acre tract, with twenty-four acres in the village of Zelenople. The deed for this property bears the date of October 17, 1804 (*Harmony Borough*, p. 410).

Rapp's disciples in Germany were satisfied with this purchase, and early in 1804, 300 of them sailed from Amsterdam, arriving at Baltimore July 4, of the same year, where he met and secured temporary homes for them during the winter, after which, taking with him a picked party of workmen, he returned to Zelenople. The founding of the village of Harmony followed, and by the ensuing February homes were ready for the members of the new colony. Six weeks after the arrival of the first group in Baltimore, a like number, in charge of Frederick Rapp, reached Philadelphia, followed soon after by the remainder of the disciples. This latter body were nearly all persuaded to locate in Lycoming County, by Mr. Haller, who had been sent by Rapp to meet and conduct them to the new settlement.

Of the three contingents, 135 families accompanied their leader to the Connoquenessing. February 15, 1805, the Harmony Society was organized, on a purely communal basis. Money and goods all went into a common fund. A distinctive and uniform style of dress was adopted; there were no rich and no poor; the houses of all were nearly alike; and the new society sought, in its public worship and the lives of its individual members, to conform as nearly as possible, to what they conceived to be the practices and the usages of the early Christians. At the close of 1809, notwithstanding the withdrawal, in the meantime, of ten families, the community numbered 140 families, and was in a prosperous and healthful condition. All worked together in unity and harmony, each line of work being under

the superintendence of a foreman, and all under the direction of George Rapp, or of his adopted son, Frederick Rapp, or Reichert.

During the year ending in February, 1806, there were 150 acres of land cleared, 46 log houses each measuring 18 by 24 feet, a grist mill to which a race was dug of nearly three quarters of a mile, barn, machine shop and a house of worship erected. At the close of the ensuing year, 600 acres had been cleared, a vineyard of four acres set out, a distillery, tannery, brick yard, saw mill and large brick granary added to the little town. Of the farm products there was a surplus of 600 bushels of grain, which with 3,000 gallons of whisky was ready for market. The year 1808 was equally satisfactory, while that of 1809 surpassed all expectation, the products being 6,000 bushels of corn, 4,000 of wheat, 4,500, of rye, 5,000 of oats, and 10,000 of potatoes, with 4,000 pounds of flax and hemp, fifty gallons of sweet oil, manufactured from the poppy, thousands of gallons of whisky, with beef, mutton and pork far beyond the possible needs of the little community. In 1810 a woolen factory was added to the communal industries. This year no less than 2,000 acres of land were in cultivation (Melish, p. 5).

The Harmonists certainly formed a model industrial community (*Harmony Borough*, p. 411). Under Rapp's leadership they worked almost as one man. Whenever it was necessary, for instance to harvest a field, they all joined in the work. As a rule, however, each class was confined to the division of labor assigned to it. It was only in emergencies that those of one department were called to assist in another. Industry and frugality being practiced by all, prosperity was the result. Three times a year the festivals described in the history of Jackson township were observed. Provision was also made for daily recreation, Sunday being devoted to a cheerful worship of the Giver of all Good (*Harmony Borough*, p. 411).

It is difficult to state precisely what the spiritual ideas of the Harmonists were. George Rapp taught at first the doctrine of heaven for the just and hell for the unjust; later, he believed that purgatory would be the refining place of the majority, and again, he was an Adventist, giving it as his opinion that in 1837 the world would be destroyed. He and the majority of the colony taught that celibacy, with fasting and prayer, brought the creature nearer to God, and agreed that sexual intercourse between its members should cease. The society has practiced this doctrine up to the present.

In 1814 the colony advertised their property here for sale, and succeeded in finding a buyer in Abraham Ziegler, who purchased it for \$100,000 in 1815. During their

10 years in Harmony they erected 130 buildings, cleared and fenced 3,000 acres, planted two orchards with 2,000 apple trees and planted 15 acres of vineyards on Vineyard Hill just across the creek at the corner of Mercer and Evergreen Mill Roads. This is also the site of “Rapps Seat,” where Rapp would sit and meditate while looking out over his creation.

Also across the creek is the site of Dr. Christoph Muller’s botanical garden. This was the first such garden north of Pittsburgh, and here he raised herbs used in his medical practices. This was also the site of the society’s labyrinth.¹ This site is described quite beautifully in John Melish’s 1811 account from his travels in the United States:

We passed Conaquenesing Creek, by a wooden bridge, ornamented with flowers, and observed a low meadow on our left, which we were informed had been drained with a good deal of labour, and was now converted into excellent pasture ground; a pleasure garden called the labyrinth, and a botanic garden, being in the east end of it, right opposite to the bridge.

Melish goes on to describe one of the Harmonist’s barns, containing about 1000 sheep. The barn which he described was built in 1806 and is one of the oldest barns in this area. In the latter part of the 1990s it was restored and renovated into the present day “community barn” which is owned and operated by Historic Harmony Inc, a community organization dedicated to the preservation of Harmony’s past.

Melish describe the gardens:

From the warehouses we went to the Labyrinth, which is a most elegant flower-garden, with various hedgerows, disposed in such a manner as to puzzle people to get into the little temple, emblematical of Harmony, in the middle. Mr. Rapp abruptly left us as we entered, and we soon observed him over the hedge-rows, taking his seat before the house. I found my way with difficulty; but the doctor, whom I let on purpose, could not find it, and Mr. Rapp had to point it out to him. The garden and the temple are emblematical. The Labyrinth represents the difficulty of arriving at Harmony. The temple is rough in the exterior, showing that, at a distance, it has no allurements; but it is smooth and beautiful within, to show the beauty of harmony when one attained. From the Labyrinth we went to the Botanic Garden, which is well stored with valuable plants and herbs; and the two doctors pored over them for more than an hour. We afterwards

¹ Today this area is a very dense meadow with a variety of grasses, low lying shrubs, and native and non-native plant species. Recently a walking trail that circles the entire site and leads up to the Mennonite meeting house was added.

went to the doctor's house, where he showed us an elegant collection of plants, all natives of Harmony, which he had carefully arranged agreeably in the Linnaean system (Melish, p. 7-10).

In 1815 they removed to a new location on the Wabash River, in Posey County, Indiana. Here they purchased 27,000 acres of land, on which they settled and remained until 1824, when becoming involved in pecuniary difficulties, they sold both land and improvements to Robert Owen, who was anxious to try a socialistic experiment on a plan of his own. They then returned to Pennsylvania, located in Beaver County, and founded the towns of Economy and Harmony on the east bank of the Ohio River, seventeen miles northwest of Pittsburgh. Here George Rapp died, August 7, 1847, being almost ninety years of age. His adopted son, Frederick Reichert, who was a man of considerable ability, died in 1834.

Harmony, 1815-1836

The Harmony of the Zieglers is scarcely less interesting than that of the Rapps. The transfer of the property, though voluntary, made it necessary for the society to seek a new home. Its individual members, had in the meantime become attached to the place, where for ten years they had pursued quite, peaceful and industrious lives, and where their dead, loved in life, lay buried; and it was not without feelings of regret that they turned their faces westward, and left Harmony, with all its pleasant associations, behind them. The new proprietor, who took possession in 1815, bringing his family here, soon found himself embarrassed to meet the unpaid balance of the purchase money and its accruing interest. He accordingly made a trip to New Harmony, Indiana, saw Rapp, and offered to return the land and improvements to the Harmonites. Rapp urged him to hold the property, cancelled some interest coupons and agreed to pay fifty cents a pound for all the wool which the new proprietor would produce on the old Harmony estate. Returning, Mr. Ziegler entered at once on sheep farming, and, within a few years, he cleared the land of all obstacles. In accomplishing this he was aided by David Stauffer, John Schwartz, Jacob Swain, Samuel Swain and other early settlers, who were to act as shepherds for him a stated time and receive a certain area of land round their homes in compensation. The contracts were faithfully carried out and all parties concerned reaped rich rewards (*Harmony Borough*, p. 412).

In 1815 Samuel Beam moved from the Bassenheim furnace and established a blacksmith shop here. At the same time, Jacob Kelker took possession of the Harmony tavern--not the hotel of 1806--but one of the old log houses of the village; John Fleming, an Irishman, taught school; the Stauffers, Latshaws, Schwartz, and

Herrs, with Johann Ladenschlager, formerly an Economite; Baltzer Gull, the butcher; John Roth, the blacksmith; Philip Noss, the cooper; Joseph Tinsman and Francis Bassler, also coopers; Jacob Gross, the weaver; John Trinnells and John Scheely, freighters; John Boyer, the Mennonite preacher, and the members of the Ziegler family, may be accounted as the pioneers of 1815-1816.

Harmony Mid to Late 18th Century

The population in 1870, was 414; in 1880, 497, and in 1890, 585. The assessed value of property in 1893, was \$106,737; the county tax, \$426.95, and the State tax, \$93.60. The Schontz & Siegler flouring mill, north of the public square, was the Harmonist barn of 1806, converted into a manufacturing industry in 1837. The fire of 1852 swept it away, with the old houses in the neighborhood, including the original communal or manor house of Geroge Rapp, on the northwest corner of the square. Schontz became owner of another of the original barns, placed machinery therein and carried on the milling business until he sold to John Pearce. Other owners or lessees followed until David Ziegler became owner in 1872. Eight years after the concern was remodeled and new machinery introduced. The Siedel mill, now known as the Harper mill, is more of a Zelienople or township than of a Harmony industry, and therefore, finds mention in the chapters on Jackson township and Zelienople. The woolen factory of 1837, like the flouring mill, was one of Schontz enterprises. Ten years before the big colony barn was burned, this factory became a prey to the flames; but Schontz rebuilt on the same site, put in new machinery and carried on the industry until 1850, when Robert Sample became interested in the enterprise. In 1865 John Pearce purchased Schontz's interest therein and the new firm extended the industry. In 1871 Robert Sample sold his half interest to Pearce, who subsequently made his son a partner and raised the old woolen mill to a great industry.

Almost thirty years before the Schontz factory was started, the Harmonists did a flourishing business in flannel and cloth manufacture. H. M. Bentle & Company's planing mills at Zelienople and in this borough, are modern manufacturing enterprises. Wagon and carriage shops and other industries are plentiful round the twin boroughs. Latshaw & Ziegler established a machine shop in 1866, and H. Weckbecker bought the foundry from William Latshaw sometime later (*Harmony Borough*, p. 413). Andrew Zieglers's tannery may be considered the successor of the original Harmonist tannery. He was followed later by J. Bowman as proprietor, but the business was finally abandoned (*Harmony Borough*, p. 413).

In 1835 Samuel Beam, the blacksmith, purchased the frame inn-building of 1806 from Abraham Ziegler, the consideration being seventy-five cents a day for ten years, or \$2,737.50. The property was sold by the Beam estate, the building torn down, and in 1862 Jacob Schoene built a large brick house on the site for hotel purposes. The third story was subsequently added, and in 1881 Beam & Dindinger became the landlords. In Jacob Kelker's tavern the Fourth of July banquet, described in the general history, was served. Henry Shepard, who gave up the trade of hatter to become a tavern keeper, was here in the "twenties," and in 1825 James Mehard built the Welcome Inn--an old hostelry, in which one or more of the Beams presided.

John Fleming kept the first store in the town after its sale to Abraham Ziegler. Later, Henry and John Schwartz began business, and were followed by George Howell, Alfred Pearce, Peter Otto, John and Isaac Latshaw, Reuben Musselman, E. L. Gillespie, Peffer & Randolph, Enslin & Haine, Peffer & Swain, Swain & Moyer, Swain & Householder, Swain & Bentle and G. D. Swain; also Latshaw & Stamm and Milleman Brothers. These firms succeeded each other with various measures of success. At the close of 1894, the general stores of G. D. Swain and Milleman Brothers; A. Foehringer, tinner; F. R. Latshaw, and George Milleman; the hardware stores of George Dindinger and the Oil Well Supply Company; the drug store of J. H. Huber; the flour and feed store of F. B. Stiver; the bakery of H. W. Bame; the coal yard of A. Eppinger; the lumber business of H. M. Bentle & Company; the livery stables of Alfred M. Wise, and the foundries, mills, machine, carriage, blacksmith and carpenter shops were all doing a thriving business.

The Harmony Savings Bank was incorporated in 1867, and organized a few months later, in 1868, with Alfred Pearce, president; R. H. Palmer, treasurer; George Beam, John Enslin, Henry Goehring, Joseph Schwartz, J. C. Scott, and the president and treasurer, directors. In 1877 Henry Goehring was elected president and George Beam treasurer. They, with Messrs. Pearce, Goehring, Enslin, Jacob Sleppy, David Ziegler, E. F. Winter and J. C. Scott were the directors. William Wilson presided in 1882, with H. M. Wise, cashier, who held the office from 1878 to 1884. Ira and Abraham Stauffer, Alexander Stewart and other stockholders have been on the directory, while Henry Goehring has served as president of the institution (Wilson, p. 32).

The Harmony National Bank was organized in 1876, with W. H. H. Riddle president, and H. J. Mitchel cashier. John Dindinger was one of the organizers. In 1882 Edward Mellon was president. Butler men were for a long time the principal

stockholders and directors. The Commercial Bank was established by S. E. Niece, March 1, 1892. He was one of the early operators in this oil field and a well known man in banking circles (*Harmony Borough*, p. 414). It lasted only a brief period.

The schools and teachers from 1805 to the departure of the Economites, were part and parcel of the community, like the farmers, weavers, vineyard workers, dairy hands, etc. In 1815 or 1816 John Fleming established a school, in which the teachers named in the history of Zelienople taught subsequently, one of them, Jacob Heberling, the mason, teaching where G. D. Swain's store now stands, and William Huntzberger, where in later years stood the Umpstead building. The Harmony Collegiate Institute is the successor of a long line of select schools carried on here since the forties, and has done good work in the cause of education. Since the advent of public schools, Harmony has enjoyed similar advantages to other boroughs throughout the county. In June, 1893, there were sixty-seven male and eighty-three female children of school age within the borough; while the total revenue for school purposes amounted to \$1,834.64.

The Mennonite Church is the pioneer religious organization of modern Harmony. For ten or eleven years before the Zieglers arrived, the Pietists observed the teachings of George Rapp here, as well as in the pastoral towns of Eidenau, Ramsdale and Oilbronn. Rev. John Boyer was the first Mennonite preacher, and Abraham Ziegler the principal supporter of the church from 1816, when a building was constructed, to his death, in 1836. In 1825 he caused a stone building to be erected, which is to-day the house of worship. Rev. Abraham Tinsman succeeded Mr. Boyer, and Rev. Jacob Kulp came after Tinsman. Then Rev. Joseph Ziegler became pastor, and for forty years preached to the little congregation. In 1816 the Zieglers and the families of David Stauffer, John Schwartz and the Wises formed the congregation. Today, almost eighty years after its organization, it embraces about the same number of members, though many of the grandchildren of the founders have joined other Protestant denominations.

Grace Reformed Church was organized in 1826, as a German speaking society, by Rev. John Koch, with the following named members: Conrad Stamm, Daniel Shanor, John Rice, Samuel Moyer, Abraham Moyer, Gottlieb Burry, Andrew Ziegler and their wives, and Henry Muntz. The pastors, in order of service, are named as follows: Revs. John Koch, 1826; Daniel Rahouser, 1827; Jacob Daubert, 1835; E. F. Winter, 1837; J. F. Dieffenbacher, 1839; E. F. Winter, 1843; Samuel Miller, 1845; L. D. Lieberman, 1848; Samuel Miller, 1849; Joseph Miller, 1852; H. F. Hartman, 1853; Lucian Cort, 1857; F. W. Dechant, 1858; William M. Landis,

1864; F. A. Edmonds, 1870; H. H. Sandoe, 1885, and E. H. Otting, 1887 (*Harmony Borough*, p. 416). Mr. Otting resigned early in 1894, after having brought the membership up to 260. The old brick meeting house of the Pietists, built under the direction of the Rapps in 1805, has been the meeting house of this congregation since its purchase from Abraham Ziegler in 1826. It has been subjected to repeated remodeling, the last having been finished October 30, 1892, when the building was re-dedicated.

The German Evangelical Church was organized in 1843, by Rev. Eli Steaver, an itinerant of that denomination. For about ten years the little society worshipped in the school house or in private houses; then a frame house was purchased and transformed into a church, which was used for worship until 1868, when the little brick building was completed.

The Methodist Episcopal Church was organized at Zelienople, in 1842, where a brick building was erected, which was used until 1880, when the congregation moved to Harmony, by the advice of Rev. J. W. Righter, who was then in charge of the circuit. A church building was commenced and completed and dedicated August 15, of that year, at a cost of about \$2,000, exclusive of the building lot. The Baptist Church of Harmony, never a prosperous society, though owning a building, is merely a reminiscence. The Church of God was organized here by Rev. W. B. Long, who was pastor at Benwood, West Virginia, in recent years. He secured a number of converts, baptized them in the Connoquenessing, and sent them forth to bring others into the fold.

The First Cemetery was the old burial ground of the Harmony Society, from 1805 to 1815, which was covered, in the last named year, with rock, to a depth of several feet, so that the bones of their dead would not be disturbed, was restored in 1869, by the representatives of the old community, who built a wall around the graveyard, removed the rocks and marked the graves of those interred there. The work was performed by Elias Ziegler, at an expense of over \$7,000.

2. Historical Summary: Harmony, Pennsylvania:

On December 22, 1804, the first payment on land in Butler County, PA was made. The land was not the most desirable; it was on the non-navigable Connoquenessing Creek, 30 miles north of Pittsburgh. The Harmonists could not secure as much land in one unbroken area as they needed. During the winter of 1805, 31 families arrived and began work. On February 15, 1805, Articles of Association were signed and the Harmony Society came into being with about 500 members. This did not include

those followers still in Ohio, most of whom later sued to regain their funds placed in Rapp's common treasury. [Note: According to Arndt, although the founding date of the Society is correct, the Articles were prepared later and backdated, possibly as evidence in a lawsuit of the 1820s.] In 1805 Rapp officially adopted Frederick Reichert as his son. Frederick became the invaluable business manager for this community-organized religious sect. Growth was slow at first, for the group was relatively poor and did not expect to remain in Pennsylvania for long. But when Rapp's request for government land in Ohio was turned down in 1806, development picked up quickly.

George Rapp was accepted as the spiritual and organizational head of the Society. After 1809, his followers began to address him as "Father." He preached, heard confessions, led prayers and religious discussion, and advised in spiritual matters. Rapp also knew much about agriculture and manufacturing and was involved in all details of daily life in Harmony.

In 1807-1808 a religious revival occurred. From the late 1790s Rapp had preached that the second coming of Christ was imminent. Rapp saw the prophecy of the "Book of Revelation" being fulfilled in historical events of his time, especially those dealing with the rise of Napoleon. To purify themselves for Christ's advent, the Harmonists gave up tobacco, and adopted a chaste or celibate life. The last marriage on record until 1817 is that of George Rapp's son John in 1807.

By 1815 the Society had planted orchards, vineyards, fields of grain, and tended merino sheep. The Harmonists, who became American citizens, operated several mills, a brewery, a tannery, and manufactured woolen cloth. The Harmony Inn accommodated visitors and the general store provided supplies for the community members. Each family had its own house on a quarter acre lot. A school was held, and a small brass band was formed. Religious services were held twice on Sunday and once in mid-week in the brick church, constructed in 1808, on the town square.

The Harmonists could not expand their land holdings. They had also had trouble with their neighbors, and the climate was not good for cultivation of grapes. However, not only for these reasons but just as much because of his interpretation of the "Book of Revelation" did Rapp, together with John Baker and Ludwig Schreiber, set off in 1814 to find a location for a new town. In May they found it along the banks of the Wabash. In June, Harmony, PA was offered for sale. It sold in May 1815 for \$100,000, half of the original asking price.

The Mennonites were farmers and were not prepared to take over a town. Therefore people of other faiths started to come to Harmony to fill the void. Unfortunately, times were difficult and money was hard to come by. The Harmony Farm Company was created and Abraham Ziegler's store settled its accounts with the locals through due bills rather than cash.

By 1818, the situation had deteriorated to the point that Ziegler disbanded the Harmony Farm Company and went to Indiana to renegotiate his mortgage with the Harmonists. The Harmonists forgave a portion of the interest due and also agreed to purchase wool from Zeigler in order to help him meet his obligations. However not all was bleak in Harmony immediately after the departure of George Rapp and his followers. Jacob Schnee operated the first all girls school west of the Alleghenies called the Harmony Institute. It attracted girls from Pittsburgh and other parts of Western Pennsylvania.

In 1906, the Pittsburgh, Harmony, Butler, and New Castle Railway company's Harmony Line was completed to Harmony. This interurban line allowed passengers to reach Pittsburgh in less than 45 minutes. This was faster than automobile traffic could reach the city until the completion of I-279 in the late 1980s. The trolley made travel between Harmony and the city commonplace and Harmony became a vacation spot for the city dwellers. In the P.H.B. & N.C. publication, "The Harmony Route", the company extolled the virtues of traveling north to the Harmony area. "Out of the bustle and hum of the greatest industrial city in the world, away from this clanging jarring smoke-dimmed hive of ceaseless energy and toiling, tired humanity; - come with us for a little time, out into the glorious, shining land of blue skies, of rolling sun-flecked meadows, come and smell once again the cool, subtle perfume of the deep-shaded valley. Ah, city dweller, you think you are living, cooped up in your little house, on your little street. Living! Journey with us through these pages and let us show you what true living means - big, broad, healthful, happy country living."

The Hotel Beam, Hotel Zeigler, Enslin Cottages, Henry Bame, Oakwood Farm, and several other locations advertised rooms and camp sites along the Harmony Line. A few years after the advent of the Harmony Line, the Emma Farm Association's Emma Kaufmann Camp was opened. It was located just across the Connoquenessing Creek, west of the town on a piece of land known as "the Island." Built in 1921 and opened in 1922, it employed many local residents. Each summer over 1000 mothers and children from Pittsburgh enjoyed outings here. In 1972,

Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh moved the operation of the Emma Farm Camp from Harmony to Morgantown, West Virginia (Smith, p. 12).

Harmony has had numerous banks during its 200 years. In addition to the notes issued by the Harmony Farm Company and the Harmony Institute, Harmony was also home to the Harmony Savings Bank, the Harmony National Bank, the Peoples National Bank, and Mellon Bank. In the 1850s, Harmony had some significant disasters. In 1852, fire destroyed the northeast corner of the town. Four years later a tornado unroofed many of the remaining buildings.

Around 1870, the Pittsburgh, New Castle, and Lake Erie reached Harmony. Prior to that time, the best way to reach Pittsburgh was to go to Rochester and catch a steam packet to the city. The other option was to follow the rugged Perry Highway to Pittsburgh. After the railroad company failed in 1879, the Pittsburgh and Western Railroad assumed control of the tracks. In 1899, Harmony Borough donated property to the railroad for the purpose of constructing a railroad station in the borough. The train station was abandoned in the 1930s.

In 1874, an addition to the town was laid out on the south and east. Today this area is known as Swampoodle. Swampoodle is believed to be an oil drilling term and was given to this area because it was the site of the Harmony ‘oil boom’ of the 1890s.

PART II. PHYSICAL INFORMATION

A. Landscape Character and Description Summary:

Today, as Butler County works to develop tourism as one of its major economic forces, Harmony is the major focus of the county’s heritage. Thanks to the borough’s historic zoning ordinances, Harmony is preserving its past while surrounding communities are seeing their past disappear under the bulldozer of progress.

Southern Butler County is expanding at a rapid pace. Because of Harmony’s quaint atmosphere, the town’s business community has evolved into one focused on the arts, antiques, and gift shops. Currently, the town boasts two music shops and a dance studio. During the summer, the business association conducts a series of free concerts in an attempt to bring more people to the town.

Over the past forty years the village of Harmony has seen a revitalization of its inner square. Thanks in part to a handful of residents and business owners, Harmony has

maintained its essence and is building on its past. Potential threats include an increase in housing developments surrounding the town, the lack of governmental support for small business owners, and a history of natural disasters.

In 2004, after years of prosperity the town was once again hit by a natural disaster. Hurricane Ivan caused a massive amount of rain to gush into the Connoquenessing Creek. A newly renovated bridge on Hartman Road was damaged and 5 feet of water covered Harmony from Spring Street to the Harmony Bridge. Numerous small businesses were damaged and forced to move away from the town. Anderson Health Emporium, Lazier's Music Studios, Otto & Gert's Ice Cream shop; bakery, antique store, coffee shop, and floral Company, Crafty Corner, and In Harmony, were among the stores that were hit the hardest.

For the past two years the town has slowly recovered and some business have moved back. Small non historic homes and buildings have been washed away and land that was once considered unsightly is now a blank canvas. Historic homes that were once damaged are now being converted into businesses and apartments. As of the census of 2000, there were 937 people, 409 households, and 267 families residing in the borough.

B. Character Defining Features:

1. Spatial Organization: The 0.4 square mile town's original town plan and diamond shaped town square survive. This can be observed by John Melish's 1811 account, "The town is regularly laid out. There is a square of 75 by 100 feet, in the middle; and three streets run east and west, and three north and south, crossing one another at right angles. The main street is 50 feet wide, and the others 32 feet."

2. Land Use: Harmony has been a town since 1805, with residences, businesses, streets, walkways, and parks. It has become more urban and less pastoral through the centuries.

3. Topography: The town of Harmony is relatively flat. It lies in a small depression along the Connoquenessing Creek.

4. Vegetation: The town buildings are surrounded by lawn, flower gardens, and trees. Some of the older trees that remain in town are between 50 to 60 feet tall and consist of oak, maple, black walnut, pine and hemlock. The majority of these are located along Connoquenessing Creek adjacent to Wood Street Park. Most likely they were planted along the property lines of farmsteads as hedgerows. A large part

of the landscaping in this park is a result of Eagle Projects and High School Senior Projects.

5. Circulation: Harmony is laid out in a grid located between Connoquenessing Creek and I-79 and Route 19. There are five major streets located in the heart of Harmony: Main Street, Wood Street, Mercer Street, Spring Street, and German Street. Mercer Street and Main Street are the roads most frequently utilized by travelers coming and going through town. Because of the construction of I-79 and the location of its access points much commuter traffic is channeled through the town of Harmony. At the center of the town is the original diamond where Main Street and Mercer Street converge. This site serves as the heart of the town, featuring many of the shops and historic architecture that has made Harmony unique. Sidewalks, including handicap accessible ones, provide access to pedestrians who wish to circulate throughout the town. Brick paths lead to backyard flower gardens.

The Railroad tracks have had a negative impact of the circulation of pedestrian traffic which has caused the town to split in two, creating limited access and decreasing property values located along the tracks. The central part of town, located between Mercer Street and German Streets, has witnessed this decline first-hand. The majority of the properties located along the railroad tracks have become parking lots or abandoned homes.

6. Water: Connoquenessing Creek, a tributary of the Beaver River, flows along the north side of Harmony. It begins in eastern Butler County and flows southwest. The creek periodically floods the town.

7. Buildings and Structures:

The buildings and structures of Harmony are one of the town's greatest assets. There are only a handful of Harmonist and Mennonite structures that still remain. For the most part a majority of the buildings in Harmony are occupied by business, residence or rental. Based on the 2000 census, there are 434 homes in town. Of those 434 homes, 409 are occupied; with 299 owner occupied and 110 renter occupied.

Many of the older buildings built in the 19th Century are in good to fair condition, but some are for sale or are slowly declining because of pressure from larger businesses and the availability of inexpensive prefabricated homes that are being developed in the surrounding areas. Many of the older structures have been

refurbished or rehabilitated in the last 10 to 20 years, and many have been converted into rental properties. These include: the Weingartner Haus which was built in 1810; the Lusk House ca. 1880; the Kodel Haus ca. 1812; the Neff Haus ca. 1808; the Otto Haus ca. 1859; the Rope Maker Shop ca. 1807, a log structure with clapboard siding; and the Bank of Harmony ca. 1868. Owner occupied historic structures include: the Fredrick Rapp House ca. 1811; the one-and-one half story, common bond brick Schreiber house ca. 1807; as well as numerous others that were built in the 19th century. The Fredrick Rapp House was built for George Rapp's adopted son is two-and-one-half stories tall and constructed of brick laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers (Poh, 1973).

Other structures that are currently being used for commercial or historical use are: the Harmony Borough Building and Post Office ca. 1882 (formally the Harmony Public School); the Austin Pearce House ca. 1856 (currently the Harmony Inn); The two-and-one half story, common bond brick Wagner Bental Haus ca. 1809 (currently the Harmony Museum Shop); the Harmony Museum ca. 1809; the Zeigler Log Haus ca. 1819 (currently owned by Historic Harmony Inc. and used as an exhibit); and the log house ca. 1805 (moved in 1999 from the west end of German Street to its present location on Mercer Street and used for different town functions).

Other structures in town hold historic significance, but are in disrepair. The Beam Hotel, later Sapienza's Market, closed in 2003 and now houses a few residents. The building itself is a three story brick building that is structurally sound but is slowly declining in condition. Knauf's Mill on the corner of Spring Street and German Street was a feed mill and hardware store until the owner's death a few years ago. The building now is vacant and is for sale. The Muller Weaver house ca. 1810, located on Mercer Street, was once an Architectural Firm until last 2011. It is also for sale. This building is in good condition and sits relatively close to the diamond. Finally the Harmonite Stohr ca. 1807 is in severe disrepair. The two-and-one-half-story, common bond brick building served as the Harmonists' community store and sits on the diamond. It has a vaulted wine cellar under the east end. It was bought by a local resident and is currently being rehabilitated.

The Harmonist Cemetery -- Also part of the Harmony Historic District, is located approximately one fourth mile southeast of the center of the District, on Pennsylvania Route 68. The cemetery, as mentioned, is bounded by a limestone wall.

8. Small Scale Elements: A bee hive oven behind the Harmony Museum is currently being restored. The addition of period gas street lights, black wrought iron waste receptacles, appropriate benches, and the use of period building materials all enhance the historic quality of Harmony. White picketed fences line the town sidewalks. Grape arbors with intricate lattices are rich with green leaves during the summer months. A new stone bridge with black wrought iron fencing was added in 2000 and has won awards for its design. Swampoodle Park, another park in town, has a multi-purpose concrete deck for basketball, hockey, and skateboarding. It also has an obstacle course designed for ages 6 - 12. The Old School House Playground, located behind the Borough Building is designed for pre-school children and includes a swing set and a climbing box.

9. Views and Vistas: Rapp's Seat on Vineyard Hill provides an excellent vantage point of the town. Another great vista of the town is provided from the Mennonite Meeting house and the Harmonist Cemetery. Views within the town retain integrity with the preserved buildings and spatial organization.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Butler County. Atlas. city unknown: G.M. Hopkins & Co., 1874.

Harmony Borough: History of Butler County Pennsylvania. city unknown: R.C. Brown Co. 1895.

Harmony. Map. city unknown: T.M. Fowler & James B. Moyer, 1901.

Melish, John. *Harmony in 1811* from *Travels in the United States of America*. Harmony, PA: Historic Harmony Inc., 1998.

Poh, Carol Ann. *Harmony Historic District National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form*: National Park Service, 1973.

Stoltz, Charles Morse. "The Harmony Society." *The Early Architecture of Western Pennsylvania*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1936.

Smith, Jeffrey. *Harmony Bicentennial 1804-2004*. Harmony, PA: Harmony Borough, 2004.

Wilson, John H. *The Historic Town of Harmony, Butler County Pennsylvania*. Harmony, PA: Historic Harmony Inc., 1998.