

An Expanded Compilation of Businesses in Union County and in Lewisburg, Past and Present

Introduction

Across the long sweep of Union County's history businesses have played a central role in shaping and energizing our society and lives. The founding and spread of individually owned businesses, starting in the 1770s, marked a fairly rapid shift from a dispersed, extractive, frontier economy to a settled, economically interdependent society, progressively enveloping the County's landscape. Of course other components were simultaneously playing their own roles – church congregations, transport and infrastructure, land surveys, local government, roads and railroads, banking, market demand in cities of the Atlantic seaboard, and so on – but our local businesses were indisputably a crucial dimension of Union County's consolidation and success. In the present issue of ACCOUNTS, the article by Jean Hormell on HP Allen's store in Allenwood could not more decisively illustrate this point.

One year ago ACCOUNTS published as appendices to an article by Jeannette Lasansky two extensive compilations of the businesses operating in Union County, and in Lewisburg, giving the business's name, nature, dates of founding, and changes of ownership and identity. Richard Sauers' list covered the businesses in the Borough of Lewisburg, while Jeannette Lasansky's list covered the rest of Union County. The lists are not quite parallel. The Lasansky list is restricted to businesses that were still operating as of August, 2016. The Sauers list covers, in addition, Lewisburg's businesses that operated in the past, but which have since closed. In both lists, the number of Union County businesses lasting various generations is striking. And both lists are the product of years of compiling information on the part of these authors, themselves prolific contributors to Union County history.

After the publication of the Lasansky and Sauers appendices a year ago, both authors continued to augment their lists, entering omissions and bringing their data up to 2016. While lists like these, as with the writing of history itself, are always works in progress, the updating and refinements that Lasansky and Sauers have done makes re-publishing these more complete editions of their lists compellingly worthwhile. The lists below supersede the lists that appeared in 2015 and will be, from now forward, essential resources for Union Countians pursuing any number of historical questions and topics of our county history.

So look through these lists, recollect businesses that figured in your earlier days, and let me know if you can see where additions or changes in the listings will tell a more complete story. I will pass them along to the authors.

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