



This is NewsLetter Issue №. Five ~ For the year 2020

# Fort Bedford Powder Magazine

## *Hiding In Plain Sight*

During a recent renovation project, the structure of the David Farquhar Mann House in Bedford Borough was discovered to be half-timbered, a form of architecture generally attributed to the *American Colonial* style. The *American Colonial* style was popular from circa 1700 to circa 1780. The style was most often ‘vernacular’ meaning that it was interpreted by local craftsmen without the assistance of professional architects. Until the discovery of this *Colonial* style structure, the Espy House was the only example of that style still standing in Bedford County.

Half-timbered structures employed framing using hand-hewn or sawn wood timbers with the spaces between the timbers being infilled with brick or wattle and daub. The exterior of half-timbered structures were seldom left uncovered. During construction, the exterior walls would have been covered with lap or similar wood siding.

Anyone, not aware of how a half-timber structure was constructed, upon seeing such a building, would assume that it was simply a wood frame structure. Although it is nostalgic to see

exposed logs and chinking of a log house, even log structures were often covered with clapboard siding if it could be afforded. The siding protected the structural elements from the destructive aspects of weather and insects.

The Fort Bedford powder magazine, being of half-timber construction, and therefore being covered in wood clapboards from the day it was built, hid in plain sight for over two hundred and sixty-two years. If it had not been for a renovation project undertaken by the current owner, it would still be hiding in plain sight.

## *The Powder Magazine*

By the fall of 1758, with the abandonment of Fort Duquesne by the French, and thereby the end of the Forbes Expedition, the main British Army had left this frontier region and headed back east. Fort Bedford was garrisoned by a small force under the command of Lieutenant Lewis Oury. In a letter written from Fort Bedford by Lieutenant Oury to Colonel Henry Bouquet on 13 November 1759, he commented on the slowing down of work there. In that letter, Oury stated: “*This week I shall*

*dismiss the Carpenters except two, having completed all the Stores, & Granaries, & finish'd the necessary House & put the Guns under Cover..."*

The *House* noted by Ourry was not necessarily meant to imply a residential structure. In the context of putting the ‘*guns under cover*’ it no doubt meant a building in which to *house* the ammunition and arms.

The idea that Fort Bedford’s powder magazine was located in a part of the basement of the David F. Mann Building at 111 S. Juliana Street was suggested in 1971 in *The Official Program of the 1971 Bicentennial*. The idea of an above-ground powder magazine was not even considered. In any case, the structure housed jewelry stores over many years, and the owners had no intention of renovating it. The secret hidden in the walls remained just that: a secret.

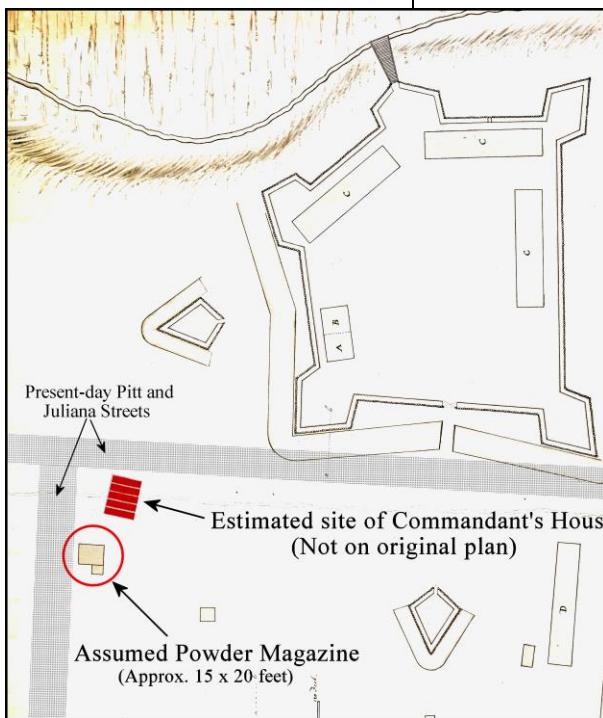
In the year 2018, Tyna Walker-Lay purchased the structure and soon after opened her Peppercorn Market shop in one half of its ground floor. During the following year Tyna and her husband embarked on a renovation project. When the walls were uncovered it was discovered that the structure consisted of hand-hewn timbers approximately four inches by four inches with hand-moulded bricks in the spaces. The Lays surmised that the building was probably constructed at the same time that the fort was built ~ it presented a mystery to be solved. Then the legends that the fort’s powder magazine might have been located on the site reasserted themselves.

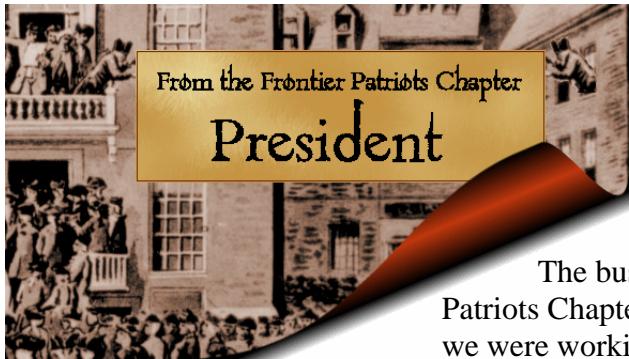
Built at the same time that Fort Bedford was constructed, the powder magazine or armory may have been built as early as the fall of 1758. It most definitely would have been completed prior to 13 November 1759, the date on which the commandant of Fort Bedford, Lieutenant Lewis Ourry wrote to Colonel Henry Bouquet stating that he had “*finish'd the necessary House & put the Guns under Cover*”.

Powder magazines were usually located outside of the stockade fortification in order to minimize the danger of explosion. Fort Bedford’s powder magazine was not identified on any contemporary map, but its location can be deduced. To the north and east of the fort were steep slopes

above the Juniata River. If it had been located to the north or east of the fort, the powder magazine would have required transport of any weapons or ammunition uphill to the fort. To the south two log structures served as the hospital. Locating the powder magazine in their vicinity would have been illogical. To the west a virtual village of sutlers’ cabins and shops stretched along Forbes Road. Southwest of the stockade a large stone building was constructed to serve as the Commandant’s House. The hospital and the sutlers were already established to the west and the south by the time that Lieutenant Ourry noted the ‘house’ for the guns was completed.

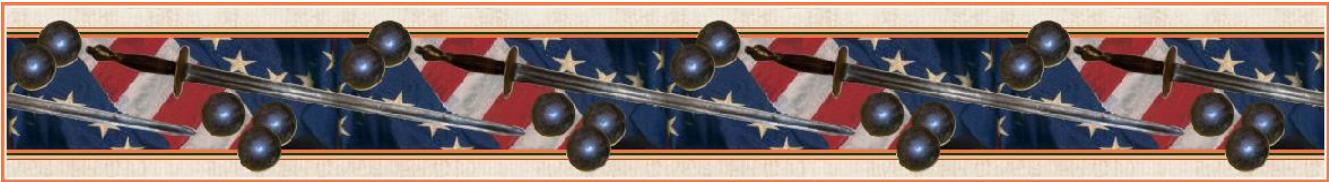
The field to the southwest was the most logical location for the powder magazine because it would have been at the same elevation as the stockade fort and it was unoccupied by any other structures at the time. Also, being located to the south of the Commandant’s House, that structure would have shielded the fort from any explosion in the powder magazine.





The next meeting of the Frontier Patriots Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution will be held at the Hoss's Restaurant at 4308 Business 220, Bedford on Saturday, 12 December 2020 starting at 12 Noon.

The business portion of the upcoming meeting of the Frontier Patriots Chapter should not be very long. Many of the projects which we were working on through this past year have been completed. So other than the installation of officers for next year, there is not much on the agenda. For that reason, and because the meeting is so close to Christmas, you might consider joining us ~ with your spouse or any guest ~ for a nice meal.



# Reminder

This newsletter is hopefully going to reach you prior to Thanksgiving. You should already have received a notice that the membership dues payment date has been moved ahead one month.

Instead of a deadline at the end of December, your yearly membership dues must be paid by the 30th of November. Failure to pay them by that date will result in your being dropped from the membership rolls ~ and to be reinstated will cost an additional \$10. If you think \$64 is a lot, won't \$74 be worse?

Please make every effort to pay your membership dues on time.



# The Tory

During the American Revolutionary War, there were two groups of people who remained loyal to the King and Parliament of Great Britain: Loyalists and Tories. The *Loyalists* were loyal, but they were seldom militant. Rather than have to choose to fight for either side, many Loyalists tended to move to Great Britain, Canada or elsewhere. They left their property here in the Colonies to be confiscated but at least they saved their and their family's lives. On the other hand, *Tories* were not just loyal; they wanted to prevent the Colonies from gaining independence. In areas where they were very numerous, they formed their own militias or joined established British military units to fight their rebel neighbors.

The word *Tory* comes from the Middle Irish word *tóraidhe*, which translates as 'outlaw'. It descended through the Gaelic Irish word *toir* meaning 'pursuit' to the Irish *toruighe*, which translates as 'plunderer'. Unverified sources claim that the word was in use as early as 1566. But the first verified source, according to the Oxford English Dictionary comes from 1634. That source noted that the Tarrenteen tribe of Amerindians questioned any seafarers to arrive at their lands in present-day Maine if they were the "*King Charles his Torries*."

The word *tory* progressed from a simple word for 'outlaw' to the name assigned to insurrectionary fighters when it found widespread usage during the English Civil Wars referring to the Irish peasants who rebelled against Oliver Cromwell's conquest of Ireland. Forty years later, the name would be applied to Irishmen who fought guerilla style on the side of King James in the Jacobite Rebellion of 1688. Through the Jacobite Risings, the name *Tory* was given to the supporters of the Roman Catholic James II/VII (*i.e.* Jacobus). Thirty years after the Rising of 1745, the name resurfaced when American Colonists loyal to Great Britain attacked their neighbors who advocated liberty and independence.

Through all the conflicts in which the name was applied, it referred to people who carried out unconventional, guerilla tactics against their neighbors. Those tactics included raids, ambushes and sabotage.

In Bedford County, Tories gained notoriety by attempting to incite the Amerindians at Kittanning to attack the Euro-American settlements on the east side of the Allegheny Mountain. For information regarding that incident, check out the webpage at:

[motherbedford.com/Tory.htm](http://motherbedford.com/Tory.htm)

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## Engagement of Frankstown Monument

**UPDATE** The members present at the 10 October meeting voted to change the location of the proposed monument from the Allegheny Township Municipal Office property to the Imler's Poultry property along Route 764. Fred Imler II has offered to allow us to erect the monument on a solid part of a tract declared to be 'wetlands'. The 'wetlands' designation ensures that the tract will never be built upon. Mr. Imler will also add a covenant to his deed stating that the monument site is to be preserved forever after. Production of the bronze plaque for the monument has been started by Olde Mill Impressions of Mechanicsburg.

Frontier Patriots Chapter website: <http://www.motherbedford.com/FrontierPatriots.htm>

For those of you that receive this newsletter by US mail, if you have an email address, we would appreciate you sending it to us to use for future newsletters. Printing and mailing these newsletters is very expensive. Please send to our Secretary Melvin McDowell at [melvin.mcdowell@gmail.com](mailto:melvin.mcdowell@gmail.com)