

1820

Context:

On March 15, 1820, Maine became the 23rd state.

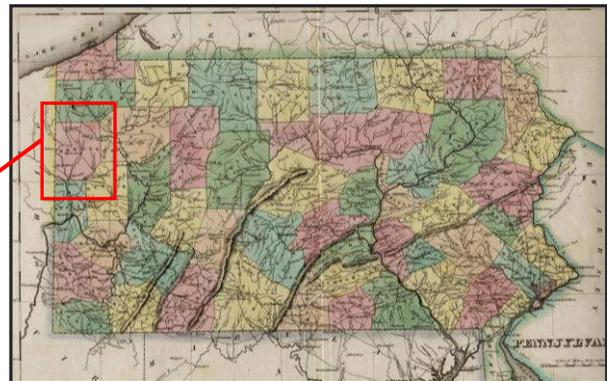
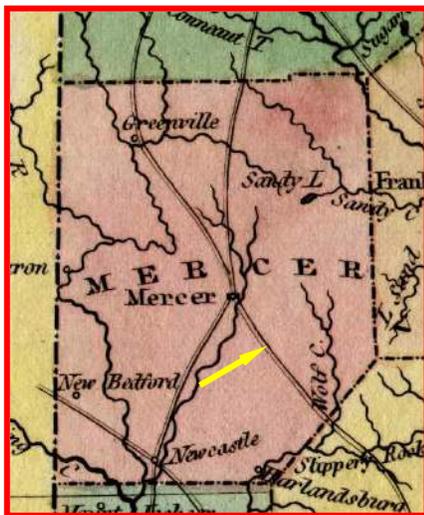
In 1824, The Supreme Court ruled that Congress had the authority to regulate interstate commerce.

1822

**No development in the Pine Grove area is identified on this 1822 map of Pennsylvania.**

Note:

Greenville, Mercer, Sandy Lake, and New Bedford are identified as established communities. A road is shown extending from Mercer to the Pine Grove area, but Pine Grove is not identified.



**The Old Stone House was built as a stopping point for travelers.**

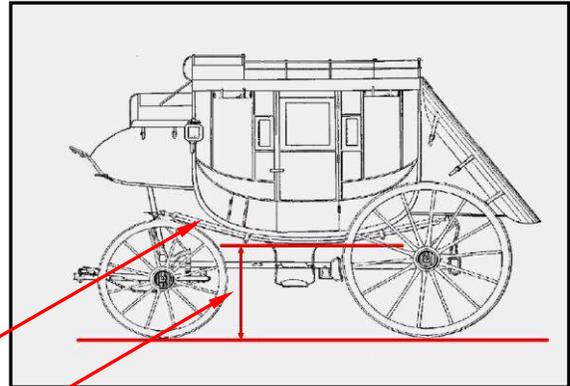
Note:

In 1798, Andrew Douglass erected a log cabin on the old Venango Path Indian trail. However, the Douglass family only stayed a short time.

After they left, John Elliot opened a tavern in the cabin. Elliot operated the tavern until 1812 when it was purchased by John Brown the tavern. In 1821, a new road, the Butler-Mercer Pike, was built along the old Indian path. This road connected with the

Pittsburgh-Erie Pike near the tavern. Seeing the opportunity for business growth Brown built the stone house for a tavern and stagecoach stop.

Stagecoaches were used for travel because they road high off the ground and were suspended on leather straps making the ride bearable over the rough roads in the area.



Leather straps

Clearance

Because of its location at the intersection of the two major roads the Old Stone House was in operation for nearly fifty years. As well as a tavern and lodging house, it was used as a local post office, and a Civil War muster point. The Marquis de Lafayette, a Revolutionary War hero, stayed at the Inn in 1825.

The Old Stone House also had its colorful history. In the 1840s, the tavern was used as a lodging point for members of two coin counterfeiting gangs. In 1843, Sam Mohawk, a Seneca Indian lumberman, spent an evening drinking at the tavern. After leaving the tavern he traveled a short distance north where he murdered the wife and five children of James Wigton, a farmer.

As time went on the local business interests changed, modes of travel changed, roads were improved and the railroad came into the area. Stagecoach travel was largely replaced by rail travel and hauling. As a result, the tavern and lodging business ceased to be profitable and in c1885 the tavern closed.

The Old Stone House became a farmhouse. It was occupied by a number of families until the last occupants abandoned the structure in 1918.

The deserted building began to deteriorate. This picture was taken in the 1950s.



This photograph shows only sections of the stonewalls remaining.

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy acquired the property, and in 1963, restored the house. Local citizens donated furniture and artifacts for the project.

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy conveyed the house and property to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC). For 20 years the Old Stone House was operated as a museum by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. As a result of budget issues the commission was unable to continue operating the facility. In 1983, Slippery Rock University began overseeing the facility and obtained full ownership of it in 2000.



This photograph shows the completed restoration of the structure.

1826

**Arthur Johnson opened the "New Lodge Inn", now known as Johnson's Tavern.**

Note:

At this time, Leesburgh was called New Lodge. Because of its proximity to New Lodge, the tavern was named New Lodge.

In 1831, a stone Greek Revival style building was erected 6 miles south of Mercer on US Rt 19 between Mercer and New Lodge, now Leesburg.

In December 1836, the New Lodge



Post Office was established and located in the tavern. The tavern keeper was also the postmaster.



In 1845, the name of the community was changed from New Lodge to Leesburgh.



The inn was located near the Springfield Furnace, a major iron furnace. This proximity undoubtedly provided an ongoing source of business for the inn.

The tavern is thought to have been a stop on the Underground Railroad.

This 1873 map shows Leesburgh. The property of W. Johnston (Lot 533) is indicated on this map.

Johnston's Tavern was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972. (This not the Johnston's Public House referred to by Benjamin Stokely in 1795.)