

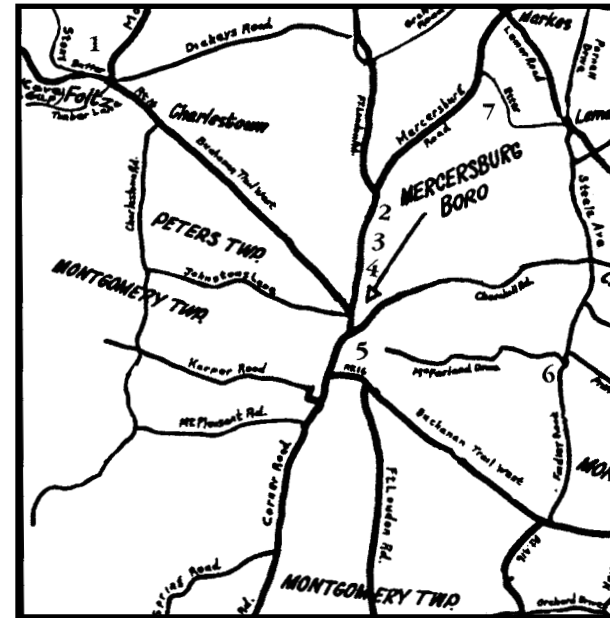
STONY BATTER

Stony Batter in Cove Gap, Pennsylvania, was an early trading post operated by James Buchanan, Sr. The stone monument, endowed by Harriet Lane Johnston, was built in 1911 to mark the site of the birth of James Buchanan, Jr. The monument's inscription reads, "This monument marks the birthplace of James Buchanan, fifteenth president of the United States, born 23 April 1791, died 1 June 1868."



PATCHWORK

Situated on the farm known as Patchwork, this Queen Anne style house of German wood siding was built around 1865, after James Buchanan sold the farm to Jeremiah S. Black, his Secretary of State. The house has ornate woodwork with natural finish and a dining room with an oval shaped ceiling medallion about three feet long. It has nine rooms with six fireplaces, three with Italian marble mantels.



- Legend
 1-Buchanan Monument, off Buchanan Trail West (Rt. 16) at Stony Batter
 2-Lane House, 14 N. Main Street
 3-Buchanan Hotel, 21 N. Main Street
 4-Mansion House, 2-4 S. Main Street
 5-Log Cabin, Academy Campus (rear)
 6-Patchwork Farm, Findley Road
 7 -Spring Grove Cemetery, Etter Road

*Historic
 Mercersburg, Pennsylvania*

*Boyhood home of
JAMES BUCHANAN
 Fifteenth President of the United States*



1791

1868



MANSION HOUSE

The earliest recorded date for the stone Mansion House shows it was transferred to Marshall College, a forerunner of the Mercersburg Academy, in 1840 for use as a dormitory. In 1856, following his ambassadorship to England, Buchanan gave a campaign speech from this balcony that launched his successful bid for the presidency. With its Italianate roofline the Mansion House remains a local landmark.



BUCHANAN HOTEL

In 1796 when James was five years old, his family moved from Stony Batter to Mercersburg. The lower part of the brick hotel was President Buchanan's boyhood home and also housed a store operated by the Buchanans. Sometime later with the installation of tile floors and a third story with a cornice of Italian design, the home became the Buchanan Hotel.



Photography by Mel Stenger

More Information: Mercersburg Area Chamber of Commerce
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 Register of Historic Places*

Harriet Lane, niece of James Buchanan, accompanied her Uncle James to the Court of St. James and later served as hostess at the White House during the Buchanan presidency. Harriet became the belle of Washington, D.C. She married Henry E. Johnston, a banker, and moved to Baltimore, Maryland. Among her many endowments are the monuments at Stony Batter and Meridian Park in Washington, D.C. Harriet's girlhood home, built in the Federal style in 1828, is on North Main Street.



JAMES BUCHANAN

A Brief Summary

James Buchanan was born in Foltz, now Cove Gap, near the town of Mercersburg on April 23, 1791. The second of eleven children, Buchanan spent his boyhood days in Mercersburg attending school and helping with the family business, James was admitted to Dickinson College at age 16, and was graduated with honors.

During his college days, James developed a love for and devotion to the law. Upon graduation from Dickinson, Buchanan took a job as a clerk in the law offices of James Hopkins in Lancaster. Here Buchanan prepared himself for the Pennsylvania Bar Exam, which he passed in 1812. Once admitted to the Pennsylvania bar, Buchanan established his own law practice in Lancaster.

After a brief stint in the army during the War of 1812, Buchanan was elected to serve in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. This election marked the beginning of a long and distinguished career in the public service.

During his career he served in the Pennsylvania legislature, the United States House of Representatives, the United States Senate, and held appointed positions as Ambassador to Russia, Secretary of State, and Ambassador to Great Britain. Buchanan distinguished himself in all of these positions.

After three unsuccessful attempts, James Buchanan finally garnered the Democratic nomination for President in 1856. Buchanan easily defeated Republican James Fremont and became the fifteenth President of the United States, the only Pennsylvanian ever elected to that position. Buchanan's objective as president was to preserve the union. He believed strongly that no issue, including slavery, was so significant that it should endanger the union. Buchanan failed in his attempt to avoid war and, as a consequence, has not been treated kindly by history.

Upon leaving office in 1861, Buchanan retired to his beloved Wheatland, outside of Lancaster, where he died in 1868. Few Americans have served their nation longer and with more dedication than Pennsylvania's favorite son, James Buchanan.

LOG CABIN

Originally located at Stony Batter, an early trading post about two and one-half miles west of Mercersburg, the log cabin of Buchanan's birth was erected sometime prior to 1791. Later it was moved to Chambersburg where it served a variety of uses. In 1953 it was returned to Mercersburg and placed on the campus of the Mercersburg Academy.



SPRING GROVE

President Buchanan's father, James, Sr., and his mother, Elizabeth Speer Buchanan, are buried in Spring Grove cemetery. Other family members in Spring Grove are the former President's brothers, William, George, and John, and sisters Mary, Maria, Sarah, Harriet, Elizabeth, and Jane. Two small markers indicate the burial sites of children. James Sr.'s crypt, in the center of the photo, has an inscription which reads in part "A tender husband, intelligent father and faithful friend ... with society he sustained the character of an honest man and useful citizen." He died an accidental death in 1821.



All ten fireplaces have hand-carved mantels, each of a different design.

The house has all original indoor shutters, elaborately carved woodwork, and a center hall with an unusual curved ceiling.



The springhouse has a Pennsylvania type pump, with a neck carved in the center of the log. The trough, once used for cooling dairy products, is still in the springhouse.