



On This Site in 1784

Benjamin Yard's home

SE corner State & Barrack Streets

Benjamin Yard, a pioneer in the American iron industry, lived on this spot in a stone house. In 1745, when he was just 27 years old, Yard purchased a plating mill by Petty's Run and shortly thereafter built a steel furnace immediately downstream from the plating mill. The steel furnace used a unique tilt hammer, and is believed to be the first of its kind in America.

Yard eventually sold his steel furnace, but continued to operate his plating mill. Yard made guns for the patriots during the Revolutionary War. A receipt survives in which Yard itemizes payments received for 12 muskets on July 4, 1776, 14 muskets on August 19, 13 muskets on August 21, and "1 pound 14 shillings" for 17 scabbards.



Yard owned a copy of the 1791 Bible produced by Trenton printer Isaac Collins. He carefully transcribed his family's births and deaths into the Bible, which survives to this day in the Trentoniana Collection at the Trenton Public Library. On March 22, 1789, Yard decided to read his Bible from cover to cover. He finished on May 17 of that year, proudly noting in the margins that it took him exactly 1 month and 25 days.

Yard outlived two wives and several of his 10 children. He died in 1808 at the remarkable age of 90.

To learn more about Trenton in 1784 and the events celebrating the 54 days Trenton was our nation's capital, visit our website at: www.trenton1784.org.