List of Articles Presented to the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania

392—Old Army Musket.
Used in the Civil-War by Dietrick Kruse, great-grandfather of the present owner, John A. T. Truxall. Upon his death in the Battle of Fair Oaks, May 31-June 1, 1862. It was returned to the Kruse family by the regimental commander, Colonel Samuel Black. It is related that just prior to the battle, Black, Kruse and one other, felt that one of the three would be killed in the following days battle, they agreed that in such event the survivors should send some remembrance to the family of the deceased.

393—Old Gilded Eagle.
Which was carved in one of Pittsburgh's steelmills for use in the first large parade of the Republican party in Pittsburgh upon its organization in 1855. It hung in the mill offices for many years and when the firm was dissolved it was secured by the general manager, Ephraim Truxall, from whom the present owner has received it.

394—Pen.
used by His Honor Mayor Charles H. Kline September 21, 1926. in signing class C. Zoning Ordinance designating, Single Family Residential Districts, Schenley Farms first district to come in under said ordinance.

395—Frame 20x46.
Showing the district destroyed by the big fire of April 10th, 1845 covering nearly sixty acres, occupied by more than one thousand buildings and causing a loss of about $8,000,000.

396—Frame 21x56.
Johnstown After the Flood.
On Friday afternoon, May 31, 1889, every building except the brick school house, on the triangular area lying between the Pennsylvania railroad, the hill and the houses shown standing, was washed away by the flood caused by the bursting of the South Fork dam, eighteen miles above Johnstown, about 5,000 lives were lost and more than $10,000,000 worth of property was destroyed.

Presented by Mr. H. A. Neeb
The Supreme Executive Council of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

To all to whom these Presents come, Greeting: KNOW YE, That in consideration of the services rendered by John Desmond private in the late army of the United States there is granted by the said commonwealth unto Thomas Carpenter assignee of the said John Desmond a certain tract or parcel of land lying in the county of Westmorelande. In the fifth district of donation Lands beginning at a White Oak the numbered corner and running North eighty seven degrees and a half East by lot no 1020 one hundred and thirty perches to a White Oak, thence South two degrees and a half East by lot No. 1024 two hundred and sixty one perches to a Hickory thence South eighty seven degrees and a half West by lot No. 1043 one hundred and thirty perches to a post thence North two degrees and a half West by lot No. 1027 two hundred and sixty one perches to the place of beginning Containing Two hundred Acres and allowance of six per cent for Roads &ca Numbered MXXI With its appurtenances, unto the said Thomas Carpenter—his heirs and assigns forever: TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said tract or parcel of land, with the appurtenances thereof, unto the said Thomas Carpenter his heirs and assigns, to the proper use and behoof of the said Thomas Carpenter——his heirs and assigns forever, free and clear of all restrictions and reservations as to mines, royalties, quit-rents or otherwise, excepting and reserving only the fifth part of all gold and silver ore for the use of this commonwealth, to be delivered at the pit's mouth clear of all charges. IN WITNESS Whereof HIS EXCELLENCY BENJAMIN FRANKLIN ESQUIRE, President of the Supreme Executive Council, hath hereunto set his hand, and caused the State seal to be affixed, the twenty-ninth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven and of the COMMONWEALTH the twelfth—

James Trimble

ATTEST. John Armstrong, Jun-Secry

The Seal of Allegheny County

Benjamin Franklin, (Signature)

Recorded in the office for recording of Deeds &ca, in and for said County, in Book H, page 340 &ca Given under my Hand and Seal of office at Pittsburgh the 17th Day of of October A. D. 1798.

For Samuel Jones, Recd.
L. Stewart.

Presented by
A descendant of Thomas Carpenter,
Mr. Joseph Banks Shaw.
Saturday, April 12th, 1845.

My Dear Father

I received your box of birds that you sent me and thank you very much for sending them. We have not yet moved out to the country. Uncle Sterling and Uncle Black's family are all well, Uncle Alexander and I are very well. Alexander and Joseph when I heard from them were very well. A dreadful calamity has befallen the city. Twenty squares of the city have been entirely destroyed by fire & from 1000 to 1200 houses destroyed. The fire originated in a frame building over an ice house belonging to William Diehl near the corner of Second & ferry. It seized the third Presbyterian Church near the corner of third street which was with difficulty saved. It got into third street burning a good piece of it, from that into water street burning towards pipetown and every ware and dwelling house from Market street until there was not a house along Water street nor in Pipetown except the gas works and the foundry beside it. That large and beautiful building called the Monongahela house was entirely destroyed with all its furniture. The Monongahela Bridge caught fire and in seven minutes it was all in flames. It is supposed that several people lost their lives upon it; The farther end was cut down and in a short time it all fell into the river.

Second, Third & Fourth streets were almost entirely consumed, Market Smithfield & Wood, were a good deal burnt. The fire was stopped at Diamond Alley in Wood street. Had it gone half a square farther it would have burned Uncle Alex's three ware houses. The flames spread so rapidly that many of the people had just time to escape from the houses without even saving their clothes. The loss is estimated at ten million dollars—At dinner time when I went to the University and I had proposed we should go on top and water the roof, but not another person could be found in the place, but we thought we would go on top where although the fire was half a mile distant the dead cinders were flying thick. We then went down town and when we came back the whole place was on fire, two of my books were burnt, Mr. Stevens carried about one hundred dollars worth of things to the river where they were burned. He however saved some of the laboratory. Uncle Blacks three houses in fourth street were burned to the ground, but fortunately he was insured three thousand dollars in Philadelphia. It has broken all the Insurance Offices in town but one. But that will never give any Dividend for years. In this office Uncle Alex had a large amount. Grandmother and Uncle Alex together lost twelve hundred dollars in the Monongahela Bridge. Uncle Sterling had just extended his warehouse from one street to another, and it was burned to the ground, Uncle Alex has his face burned by a shingle.

Your affectionate Son,

J. R. Banks.
The Pittsburgh Bank was also burned. Excuse my bad writing as I am in a hurry. J. R. B.

Having now obtained an extra paper and am already too late for today's mail, I will give you a more fully account of the fire. The public buildings, offices &c. burned were as follows. The Globe Cotton Factory owned by J. Wood & Co. The Firemen's Insurance Office. The Fire and Navigation Insurance Office. The Mayor's Office. Tombs. Reading room. Philo hall & Library. The Bank of Pittsburgh. The Chronicle Office. Exchange Offices of Sibbet & Jones, Allen Kramer, West & Hill, The Merchants Hotel, Wood Street, The Eagle Hotel, Third street, The Monongahela House, The Glass works of Bakewell & Pears, Anderson & Son Foundries & Scale Factory. The Fuller Iron Works. The Glassworks of Muller & Co. The Associate Presbyterian Church, Fourth street, The Scotch Hill market house, The Western University, The Custom House. The rest are too numerous to mention occupying a column and a half in the newspapers. If you stand on water street and look up towards the city you see nothing but chimneys and walls. Every thing helped the fire, the pipe which takes the water to the basin had been taken up and was not then down & in a short time the water ran out, several of the hose were burned, and there had not hardly been a drop of rain for two weeks.

Your affectionate son

John R. Banks.

This letter was written by thirteen year old, John R. Banks, a student at the Western University of Pittsburgh, to his father the Rev. Joseph Banks, a missionary at Trinidad, in 1845, describing the burning of Pittsburgh. A diagram of the city showing the devastated area is shown.

Presented by

Joseph Banks Shaw
Emma D. Poole, Librarian
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