



# Rediscovering the York County, Pa., home of Christopher [33] Stedham

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Photography by Herb Nix*

I was contacted recently by Herb Nix of Mount Wolf, Pa., seeking any information I might have regarding the property he had purchased recently, which just so happened to be the property once owned by Christopher [33] Stedham in the early 18th century.

The main house on the property is of more recent construction, built in 1798 by a later family who had purchased the property from James and Margaret (Stedham) Welsh, and provides Mr. Nix and his family their home. However, also on the property is an old stone structure labeled the “spring house” on York Co., land documents. His goal is to turn the structure into an Air BnB

with the original stone walls and hand-hewn beams exposed.

Recalling the history of the building, he said it was used as a band practice area by the previous



**Although hard to make out in this photo, carved on a stone on the side of the house (within the white oval) is the date 1741.**

owner’s teenage children; before that, a thrift store; and for the previous 100 years before the store — give or take — the property was an orchard and the building used as housing for the hired hands.

Through his own research, Mr. Nix was aware that Christopher Stedham was a grandson of Timen Stiddem and had located me through social media on The Timen Stiddem Society’s Facebook page.

His research noted that in 1748, James Welsh, husband of Margaret [104] Stedham, applies for a warrant on what would have been his father-in-law’s property. The warrant includes a quit claim rent which is retroactive back to 1742.



**Above left: Exterior photo of Christopher and Johanna Stedham's house as seen earlier this Spring with snow from a recent storm still covering the house and yard. Above right: Exterior photo of the right side wall where the date 1741 (circled in white oval) is etched. Interior photo below shows the the progress of restoration thus far, with the old plaster removed, exposing the stone and hand-hewn beam construction of the early 18th century.**

This would mean that they acknowledged that they had been on the property back at least to 1742, but may have been their longer. Mr. Nix says about half the people he shows the stone to on the side of the house believe it says 1741. So they would have definitely moved here between 1735 (after the death of child [106b]) and 1742.

According to Holy Trinity (Old Swedes) Church records, a child [106a] of Christopher Stedham was buried in the church's burying ground in 1734, and yet another child [106b] in 1735. This informs us that the family was still living in New Castle County, Del., as late as 1735. Their last child born was Johannah (Hannah) [107] Stedham in 1748 in York County, Pa., in what would have been this stone structure you see here.

In New Castle Co, Delaware Orphan Court Records (p. 65) it states, "Come into court James Welch, administrator of the estate of Christopher Stedham deceased, and prayed that some proper persons may



be appointed as Guardian of Hannah Stedham, a minor orphan of Christopher Stedham, late of Manchester Township, deceased, aged 8 years."

It's exciting to think that someday, when Mr. Nix fulfills his goal of repurposing this old building into a fashionable Air BnB, descendants of

Christopher and Johanna Stedham will have the opportunity to spend a night or two in the house their ancestors once called home.

We'll stay in touch with Mr. Nix and make an announcement when the old home is restored and ready for accommodations. Stay tuned!