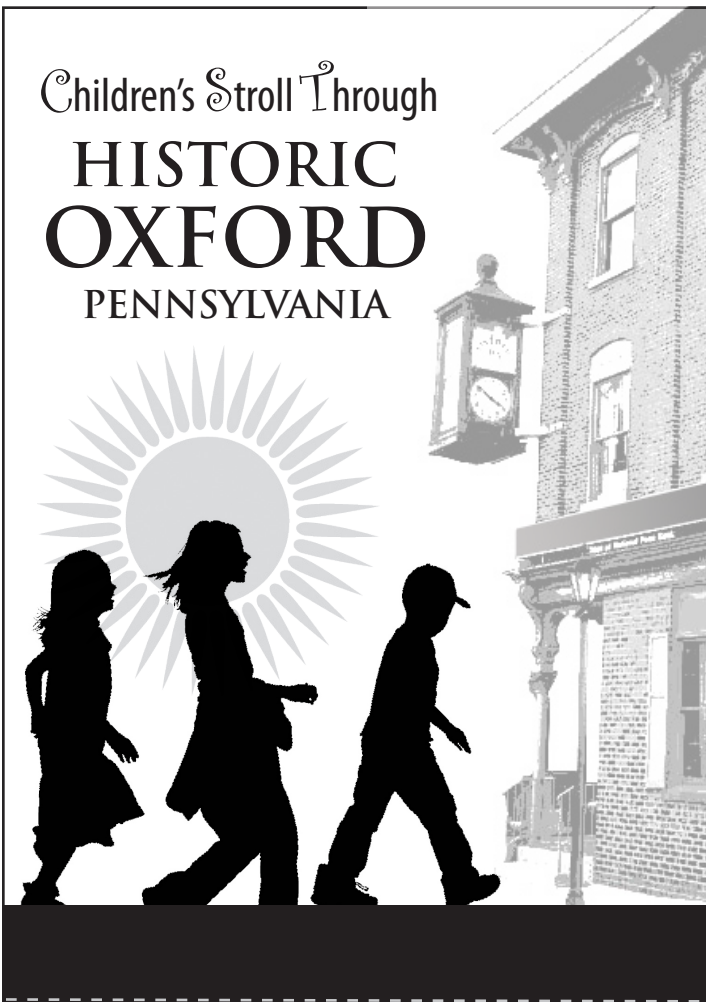


Children's Stroll Through HISTORIC OXFORD PENNSYLVANIA



Welcome to the Historic Oxford, PA. Walking Tour

Did you know that the town of Oxford, PA was named after the town Oxford, England? In England, during Saxon times, the name Oxford was initially spelled "OxenaRfoda", meaning "Ford of the Ox".



Fords were very important before the days of bridges. A ford is a place in a stream or river that is shallow enough to be crossed by wading, on horseback, or in a wheeled vehicle and it is a much cheaper form of river-crossing than a bridge.

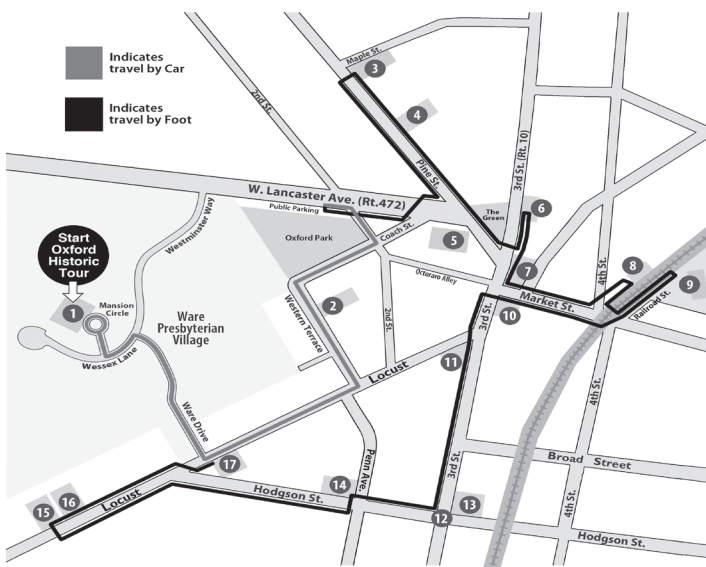
Inside this book you will learn even more facts and information about Oxford, PA.

- Everytime you see the initials FYI (for your information)- Get ready! You are about to learn an interesting fact in Oxford's history.
- When you see the phrase **Let's Talk About It**, It is an opportunity to think and answer fun questions about what you see or have read. Answers are in the back.
- And finally you can play a little game called **I Spy**, a chance to identify objects around you.

Please be mindful that some of the properties you will visit are privately owned homes and we ask that you be respectful by not trespassing. Thank you for participating and have a great walk!

1.

Strolling Through Historic Oxford Map



1. *Enter Ware driveway from Locust St. Turn left on Wessex Lane & immediately right into Mansion Circle.

1 Ware Mansion

FYI: Have you ever heard of a house taking a train ride? This one did. On November 21, 1931 this house began to move from Mount Vernon Street, located across route 472 to your right and reached its present location in January 1932. The building was raised up on 110 steel beams and was winched on rollers over 8 railroad tracks laid for the project. It could be moved one foot per minute. The lights were reconnected at the end of a work day and the Ware family lived in the house during the move. Built by Milton Walker in 1888, the mansion is one of the best examples in Oxford of "Walker Construction".

Let's Talk About It: If you could move your home to another location, where would you take it?

I Spy: Guess "Ware" there is a hidden fountain.

*Exit Mansion Circle, turn left on Wessex Lane & turn right onto Ware Drive. At Locust Street turn left and then left onto Western Terrace. Stop at #2.

2.

3.

2 Number 45 Western Terrace

FYI: This house was built for William G. Brinton, in 1895 by Milton Walker, a notable builder in Oxford during the 1880s and 90s. William was the son of Henry L. Brinton who started the *Oxford Press* weekly newspaper in 1866 after returning from the Civil War. The Brinton family had ownership of the paper for 94 years. It was purchased in 1960 and combined with the *Oxford News* to create the *Chester County Press*.

Talk About it: Newspapers were once essential to the American public. This is no longer true. More and more newspapers are going out of business. Do you have any ideas why this is so?

I Spy: Four oval windows and a fire hydrant.

** Proceed down Western Terrace and around the sharp bend by the park. Make a left turn onto Second Street and another left onto West Lancaster Avenue (Rte. 472). Here you will find parking so that you can continue the tour on foot.*

4.

3 Number 85 Pine Street

FYI: Built in the 1890s, this elaborate Victorian home is an outstanding example of the Queen Anne style, an American imitation of an English country house.

Queen Anne's have little to do with a Queen. The term was coined in England to describe buildings that were transitional, meaning changing from one state or condition to another. Queen Anne's are noted for their eclectic combinations of different architectural details.

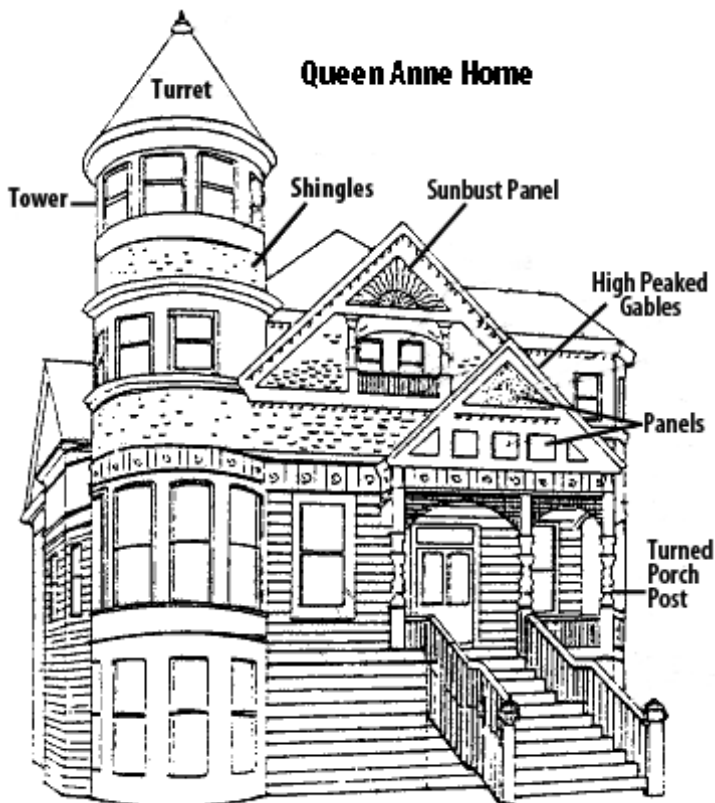
Talk About It: Although easy to spot, the Queen Anne style takes on many shapes and is not orderly or easily classified. Look at the sample on the next page. Can you identify some of those features in house in front of you?

I Spy: A fixed pole with a ring to which a horse can be hitched to prevent it from straying.

I Spy: A red ornate metal balcony.

**Walk down the east side of Pine Street back towards town to stop #4.*

5.



6.

4 Number 61 Pine Street

FYI: This early Victorian house is an outstanding example of the **Carpenter Gothic** style, popular from 1840 to 1880. Note the steep roof & prominent central gable with the large upside down **V**.

These houses, built for large families, often had rooms for servants. In the rear was a carriage shed with a stable area for a horse & an upper storage room for hay & feed.

Talk About It: Pine Street, one of Oxford's original intersecting roadways, developed as a residential area for prosperous merchants and professionals. The street is called "Scroggy Road" beyond the borough line. Scrog'gy is an adjective that means abounding in scrog; but also twisted. Can you guess why a road would have such a name?

I Spy: A fixed pole with a ring to which a horse can be hitched to prevent it from straying.

**Walk south to the Green. Stop at the corner of Lancaster Avenue & Third Street. Stay here and read about stop #5.*

7.

5 Oxford Presbyterian Church

FYI: On the Green, a small congregation worshipped in 1754, first in a small log cabin, then in the large Gothic sanctuary across Pine St. In 1866 this church was destroyed by fire except for the base of the steeple. The main sanctuary burned to the ground again in the 1980's and the steeple is all that remained of the original building.

The Green was also the site of Oxford's first burial ground. In 1856, a new cemetery was established in a quieter spot on the edge of town and the graves here on the Green were disinterred and moved for reburial.

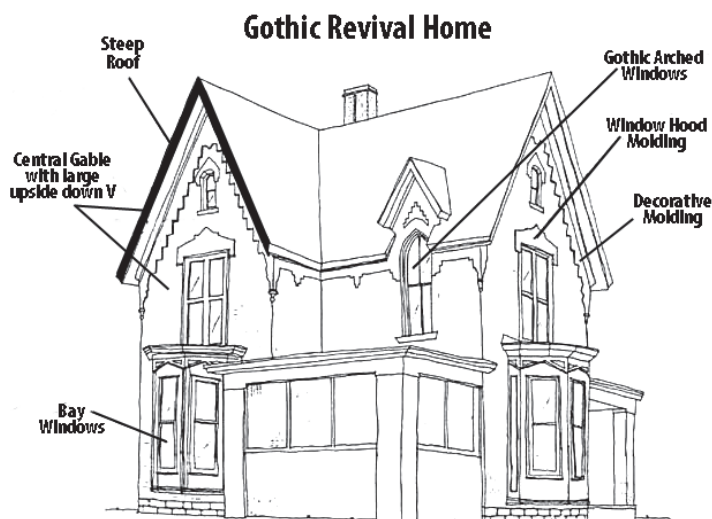
Talk About It: Do you notice the different coloration of the brick from the part that was recently rebuilt? Can you find where the new brick and the old brick meet? Do you know why a church has a steeple?

I Spy: A plaque on the green that is shaped like a square with the year 1929 on it

**Walk to Third Street, cross at intersection and go to stop #6*

8.

9.



6 The Masonic Building

FYI: This building was built by Jennie Dickey. She had what used to be the old farmer's market torn down & replaced in 1894 with this building that housed the post office, retail stores, professional offices, & the meeting room for Oxford's Masonic Lodge. This lodge was used by a group called the Freemasons who are members of the largest and oldest fraternity in the world. The Lodge eventually built its own new brick structure on North Third St.

Talk About It: This building has had a lot of different businesses in it since 1894. If you could decide to put a business into this building, what would it be? You may choose one below or suggest another.

Ice-cream Shop Candy Store Toy Store

I Spy: To the right of this building is a carriage house where horses used to live.

I Spy: A horse head of stone.

I Spy: A date stone that reads 1887

** Walk right to corner of Market & Third St.*

10.

7 Oxford Hotel

FYI: At this intersection of several old Indian trails that became roads, Haye's Tavern, built in 1754 was established for travelers who needed a place to rest and eat. It was renamed Hood's Tavern soon after. It was a 2-story log structure with barn, stable, and an orchard set on 39 acres. In these years, stagecoaches from Philadelphia to Baltimore ran three times a week. Oxford was the overnight rest stop for passengers who paid \$4.50 for the two-day trip.

In 1853, the old log tavern was torn down and replaced with a new brick building, which is the core of the structure you see today. It has been enlarged and enhanced over the years and renamed "The Oxford Hotel."

Talk About It: During this time there was an animal problem in Oxford. Creatures were breaking into people's gardens, dashing through open gates, sleeping under porches, lying in the middle of the muddy carriage roads and attracting clouds of flies into every house in town. Pigs were the worst offender. What do you think the town did in order to control this problem?

I Spy: 15 metal stars and a sign that says Oxford Hotel

**Walk right to corner of Market & Third Street *Walk down Market Street past the firehouse to the railroad tracks.*

11.

8 Oxford Train Station

FYI: The building you see, built in 1902, replaced an earlier station that stood on the other side of the tracks. It was originally the Oxford Station of the old Philadelphia & Baltimore Central Railroad. A trip from Philadelphia to Oxford took 2½ hours; and 3 hours from here to Baltimore. The station was a busy place with round-the-clock telegraph operators, ticket agents, baggage workers, and the station agent to handle the daily traffic.

At its busiest point at the turn of the 20th century, Oxford had a round house and a machine shop facility for repairs in this part of town, south down these tracks. Sixteen to twenty trains might pass daily. This building currently houses the Oxford Police and the Borough offices.

Talk About It: Why would Oxford no longer use a passenger train to Philadelphia and Baltimore?

I Spy : A marker with a date that tells when the Borough of Oxford was incorporated.

**You should now walk down the left side of Railroad Street (by the parked cars) and proceed to the Oxford Feed & Lumber Company.*

12.

9 Oxford Grain & Hay

FYI: You are coming to one of the oldest Oxford businesses still in existence. The Oxford Grain & Hay Company (now renamed **Oxford Feed & Lumber Company**) used the train to export grain, hay and other farm products to the cities as well as provide lumber, coal, fuel, and farm supplies to the community.

The main building, located along the tracks, was built in 1880. It is a 2½-story granary. It has a gable roof & 2 centered grain elevators—storage compartments to hold grain until it is shipped to the gristmill for grinding. The building has a foundation of rough field stone & a decorative brick exterior that masks an interior crowded with shafts, pulleys, gears & other mechanisms used to move grain to the holding bins.

Talk About It: Would a builder of homes shop in this building for supplies? Can you name other people who might shop here?

I Spy: A date stone with the year 1880. Can you read the persons name on it?

**Return down Market St. Stop at the corner of Third and Market.*

13.

10 Oxford Hall

FYI: The original name of this large square building was Oxford Hall. The design was based on the **Italianate Style** of architecture influenced by Italy. Look at the sample picture and notice the similarities.

It was built in 1864 by Thomas Sloan and Nathaniel Hudders for the Oxford Hall Association, a group of business leaders led by Samuel Dickey, who were involved in the helping the community.



Talk About It: In the first floor and basement were shops and restaurants. The second floor had a large auditorium, which was used for educational, cultural, and recreational debates, banquets, plays, musical performances and spelling bees. What are some of the ways people entertain themselves today?

I Spy: A diamond fit for a giants finger.

**Cross at the corner intersection. Turn left and walk down Third Street. to the building with the clock.*

16.

11 Dickey Building

FYI: Do you see the brick building with the corner entrance and clock? It was built in 1868 by John M. C. Dickey, a lawyer & investor. The handsome building was enlarged by the bank. It is similar in design to the Oxford Hall & the Oxford Hotel. All were built within 15 years of each other with many common design elements.

In 2001 this building became home for the Oxford Town Clock, which was first attached in 1925. Having been removed for repairs in the 1980s, the restoration of the clock stalled until 1992. Then the clock parts were found and restored by Donald Pierce, former mayor of Oxford and local historian.

Talk About It: How did people tell what time of day it was without a clock or wristwatch?

I Spy: A bronze plaque that commemorates the restoration of Oxford Town Clock and a bronze plaque that dedicates the building to a Mr. Clyde E. Mason.

**Walk down Third Street to the corner of Third and Hodgson Street.*

17.

12 Nanticoke Trail (Third Street)

FYI: As you stand on the corner of 3rd and Hodgson look left and then look right on Third Street. This is known as Oxford's main street. It was part of the Nanticoke Trail, used by Nanticoke Indians to travel from the Poconos in New York to the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland.

NAN-tuh-coke comes from Nentego, a word in the Nanticoke Indian language that means "tidewater people." The original Nanticoke home land was located in Delaware and Maryland.

Nanticoke Indian men were hunters and sometimes went to war to protect their families. Nanticoke women were farmers and also did most of the child care and cooking. Both genders took part in storytelling, artwork and music, and traditional medicine. They lived in villages of round houses called wigwams.

Talk About It: Another name for the route in the early 1800s was Limestone Road. Farmers brought crushed limestone from quarries to spread on their fields. Why would a farmer use limestone in their fields?

I Spy: Three railroad crossing signs.

**Stay here and look across the street at stop #13.*

14.

14 Number 142 Penn Avenue

FYI: Have you ever heard of the word Philanthropy? This word comes from Ancient Greek meaning "to love people". Philanthropy is the act of donating money, goods and time to support a worthy cause. Although such individuals are often rich, people may perform philanthropic acts without possessing great wealth.

A widowed philanthropist named Elizabeth Passmore, owned the home you are looking at. Milton Walker built this Colonial Revival style home in 1895 for her. Mrs. Passmore was strongly opposed to drinking alcohol; she was a leader of Oxford's chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). The WCTU was organized by women who were concerned about the destructive power of alcohol and the problems it was causing for families and society. She was also an ardent suffragist who fought for women's right to vote.

Talk About It: Can you think of something you can do that would help improve the quality of life for someone?

I Spy: A set of houses called twins. Why would they be called twins?

**Proceed down Hodgson to Locust, cross Locust to stop #15*

18.

13 The Oxford Electric Light & Power Company

FYI: In the late 1800's the people of Oxford were excited about getting electricity because it promised to benefit their work places and homes.

Mr. J.W. Bowman started a generating plant in his store & began selling electricity to neighboring shops. Soon a bigger plant was needed and built here in 1893. People were glad to escape the fire and explosion hazards of gas & kerosene lighting, for what they beleived would be cleaner and safer elctricity.

In 1894 the Oxford Electric and Power Company supplied 7 arc lights for the streets. The harsh and brilliant light was found to be suitable for outdoor public areas. Nine hundred interior incandescent lights, similar to what we use today, were used for businesses and homes.

Talk About It: Name two things that people used to light their homes before electricity.

I Spy : A datestone with the year 1893

**Continue down Hodgson St. to corner of Penn Ave.*

15.

15 Number 47 W. Locust St.

FYI: Not much information exists about this house. All that we know is that it is the oldest house in Oxford. It was built between 1732-1740. It was originally the home of Polly and Harold James.

You might wonder where did the information about this house and all the other properties along this tour come from? Most governmental agencies like the *Borough of Oxford* have what is known as Public Records. Information can also be obtained from records held by historical associations like the *Oxford Historic Commission* and the *Oxford Area Historical Association*.

While our most private information can (usually) be kept private, you can track down items like birth certificates, marriage and divorce information, obituaries, licenses and house information.

Talk About it: Can you guess how information can be found today without leaving your home?

** Stay here and take a look at the house on your right.*

19.

16 Number 39. Locust Street

FYI: What would you think if your parents decided to order a new house out of a catalog from Sears? Hattie & Douglas Brinton did. This house was ordered from a Sears & Roebuck catalog and all the pieces were sent to this site in containers. It was assembled in 1915.

Sears would copy popular home designs and change the house and hardware according to a buyer tastes. Individuals could even design their own homes and submit the blueprints. Sears, would then ship the appropriate precut and fitted materials back to the home owner giving them the freedom to build their own dream houses.

Talk About It: Sears & Roebuck catalogs encouraged people to design their houses right down to the color of the hardware on the cabinets. If you could design your home would it look like any of the ones from this tour or would you do something totally different from anything you have seen today?

I Spy: Two fixed poles with a ring to which a horse can be hitched.

*Return up Locust St. to Ware Drive. Look across the Street at stop #17.

20.

17 Research Club of Oxford

FYI: In 1894 a group of local women got together to share learning & travel experiences. The club assumed the name Research Club when it decided to study arts, music, literature, and current scientific & political events, conducting "research" into these subjects.

The club building was built, with the help of J.H. Ware II. Money for furnishings & maintenance required many fund-raising events & building rentals, though the building was often donated free for charitable events.

Talk About It: Do you know what fund raising is? Fund raising typically refers to efforts by people to gather money for non-profit organizations. Many philanthropists like Mrs. Passmore would probably participate in fund raising in order to help the causes they were interested in. What organization would you help raise money for?

I Spy: A datestone on this building. What is the date that this building was built?

*This is your final stop. Thank you for taking the time to get to know Oxford's history. For more detailed information about these homes or to participate in other Oxford tours, log on to www.oxfordpa.org.

21.

Answers

1. Answers will vary. *Florida, near Disney World.*
2. People are using the internet to find out the news.
4. It makes a scenic "roller coaster"-like drive, with twisty roads.
5. Most churches had steeples with bells which were rung on the hour to announce religious ceremonies and holidays.
6. Answers may vary. *Music store, pet shop*
7. The first Borough Council met in the tavern, to pass Oxford's Ordinance #1: it prohibited pigs from roaming the streets at will and fined negligent owners 50 cents for each violation.
8. It is a circular building, with a turntable in the center, used to turn trains around. This building was used for storing, repairing and switching locomotives.
9. Answers may vary. *But some may say movies, reading, going to concerts, video games, face book.*
10. Answers will vary. *Internet, television, movies.*
11. The sun.
12. To add nutrients to the soil so that plants would grow better.
13. Candles and kerosene lamps.
14. Answers may vary: *Volunteer at Neighborhood Services in Oxford or an Animal Resue Shelters.*
15. Internet and television news.
17. Answers will vary. *Habit for Humanity. Organizing a car wash could help to raise money.*

22.




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Walking Tour made possible by the following organizations

- Oxford Area Chamber of Commerce
www.oxfordpa.org
- Oxford Mainstreet
www.oxfordmainstreet.org
- Oxford Historic Commission
- Oxford Area Historical Association
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