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ANTHONY TUNIS 1693/4 - 1762

Innkeeper, Tunis Ordinary, Merion, Pa., 1746 - 1762

Anthony Tunis, son of Abraham Tunis Klinken, was born 24 March 1673/4 in German Town, Pennsylvania. He married Mary Williams, daughter of John and Ellen (Klinken) Williams born 7 April 1697 in Philadelphia County, Pa. She died 19 September 1769 and Anthony died before 29 May 1762, the probate date of his will.

Anthony Tunis rented in 1746 what had been since 1709 the "Wayside Inn" from the heirs of Robert Jones, founder and owner. On his assumption of the small building Anthony added an Ordinary Room and on the basis of this addition, the inn now became known as "Tunis Ordinary" the name it bore until after his death.

The Tunis Ordinary was at one of the main intersections of the Philadelphia-Lancaster Road, and the main highway to the east then opening West, so it became an important stopping place and a center of activity for the township. According to remaining accounts, the price of a meal was 2 shillings, the same price charged for lodging a man and feeding his horse over night.

Anthony Tunis, sheriff of Lower Merion Township, an affable, gregarious person, was not only an innkeeper, but also a fine, experienced blacksmith, which was an added reason for travelers to use the services offered at his inn. The inn was the local post office and it is reported that Benjamin Franklin visited there in 1763 as Postmaster-General on his inspection of the colonies' post offices, and is supposed to have helped sort the mail on that visit.

Some time in May 1762 Tunis died leaving a will naming his wife Mary, sons Joseph and Abraham, seven daughters and six grandchildren. The family continued to run the inn until 1776 when it was sold to Abraham Streeper and they renamed it "Streeper's Inn". In 1795 it became the "General Wayne Inn", still serving meals and liquors as it did from its beginning in 1704 at its location, now known as Montgomery Avenue, Merion, Pa.

-Robert J. Hardie, Sr.

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