

## MEDIA'S LATIN NAME GIVEN AFTER BITTER CONFLICT

Around the name Media is steeped all sorts of discussion and; significance. The establishment of the countyseat alone was the point of a long and bitter battle and naming it turned into a similar conflict.

When it was finally decided to move the countyseat of Delaware County to the county property in Upper Providence in 1847, the question of a name came up.

Minshall Pinter suggested Media and this was adopted - but only after a lot of argument

The printed program for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Media says: "Minshall Painter looking on a map of the county and seeing that here at last a central location had been found called the unborn town "Media". The gentleman's pretty wit has made us his debtors."

Historians say that Painter derived the name from the Latin adjective medius, media meaning central. The name was in itself intended to be a memorial to the bitter struggle which residents engaged in with opponents of the plan to move the countyseat from Chester. The removalists' main contention was that a more central location was desirable.

Further derivation of the name is thought to be from the ancient oriental city of Media. With this in mind, some of the residents favored Numedia or New Media. But since Painter first thought of the name as reflecting the central location rather than in remembrance of the ancient city, this idea did not prevail.

At first, resident had proposed the name of Providence after the township. However, supporters of this name conceded that since so many other places used this name there would be confusion.

Most vigorous opposition to the signifying bill would be descriptive of the locality.

In opposition to the name Media "John of the Hills" wrote in a local newspaper: "To say that it was called after the ancient country of Media would place us in a purely ridiculous position. To derive it from the Latin adjective, converting it into a noun as the name of a place, would give it, if it were etymologically defensible, an origin as feeble as to all, it very closely to contempt."

To this, one observer replied, "Today Media is no mean town and no one thinks that it has a ridiculous name"

Despite the opposition the name Media was adopted at a meeting held at Providence Inn, January 10, 1850. For many years newspapers, and even the borough clerk spelled the name Medea, the same as the of the Asiatic queen. However, gradually the present

spelling became popular and thus the town's name became an indication of its central location as it was originally intended to be by Painter.

Establishment of Media as the countyseat came only after two years of discussion. Opposition to the removal from Chester was strong. But finally the borough was formed with the Act of Incorporation in 1847.

Action for removal of the countyseat from Chester began in 1845. Finally, a popular vote was arranged – voters balloting with for the old location in Chester or the new property in Upper Providence. By a margin of 753 votes the latter location won out.

However, this was not the end of the discussion. The Pennsylvania Senate refused to approve the removal, although the lower House sanctioned it readily. Senate opposition was led by William Williamson, then State Speaker of the Senate, and very much against removal.

The removalists took the case to the Supreme Court and this prompted the Senate, for political reasons, to change their minds and vote again – this time approving the name.