

SECOND FLOOR LOBBY &  
HALLWAY

BERKS COUNTY  
COURTHOUSE

**BERKS COUNTY  
PROTHONOTARY  
HISTORICAL IMAGES  
GALLERY**

**Jonathan K. Del Collo**  
Prothonotary of Berks County



Berks County  
Prothonotary

POMEROY'S

LOBEL'S  
Youth Center.

LOBEL'S

GREATS

SUNSHINE  
BEER

GUTH'S

STICHTER HARDWARE COMPANY

## **FIFTH AND PENN STREETS**

### **VIEW LOOKING NORTHEAST AND EAST UP PENN STREET - CIRCA 1940**

**Berks County's Courthouse Presides Over Penn Street And Downtown Reading. Mount Penn And Reading's Iconic *Pagoda* Can Be See Along With The Famous *Pomeroy's Department Store* At Sixth And Penn. At The Center Of The Intersection, About Where The Trolley Tracks Intersect, Is The Location Of Berks County's Second Courthouse, Which Was In Service From 1762-1840. It Was Demolished In 1841.**



Images From The Collection Of The Berks History Center Research Library ([berkshistory.org](http://berkshistory.org))



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**SIXTH AND PENN STREETS**  
**LOOKING NORTH UP SIXTH STREET FROM THE**  
**SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SIXTH AND PENN**  
**CIRCA 1915**

**The “Goddess Of Liberty” Atop The Tower Of The Third Berks County Courthouse (Background) Is Standing Tall During A Celebration, Possibly An Independence Day Parade. Note The Flags And Bunting. Today, The “Goddess Of Liberty” Greets Visitors In The Lobby Of The Berks County Services Center.**



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**REAR VIEW OF BERKS COUNTY COURTHOUSE FROM**  
**INTERSECTION OF REED AND COURT STREETS,**  
**CIRCA 1930**

**Photo By John Tenschert. Third Courthouse In Berks County's History, Having Served From 1840 Until Demolished In 1931. Replaced On Same Site With Current Courthouse. Two Additions Built Onto Original 1840 Structure – A Two Story Annex In 1869 And Another In 1889 That Was “Practically Fire Proof” As It Made Considerable Use Of Iron And Cement. (Information Provided by “The Passing Scene, Vol. 8,” by George M. Meiser IX and Gloria Jean Meiser)**



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# **FRAME OF BERKS COUNTY COURTHOUSE DURING CONSTRUCTION, FALL 1931**

**The First Concrete For The Current Nineteen Story Courthouse Was Poured On June 19, 1931. Architects Were W.H. Dechant & Sons, 632 Washington Street. The Total Cost Of Building This Art Deco Structure Was \$1,836,000. It Took Approximately Eighteen Months To Construct. The Courthouse Is Made Of Granite And Indiana Limestone. The Lobby Is Finished In Black & White Grand Antique Marble From Italy. The Courthouse Was Formally Dedicated On December 2, 1932.**



Images From The Collection Of The Berks History Center Research Library ([berkshistory.org](http://berkshistory.org))



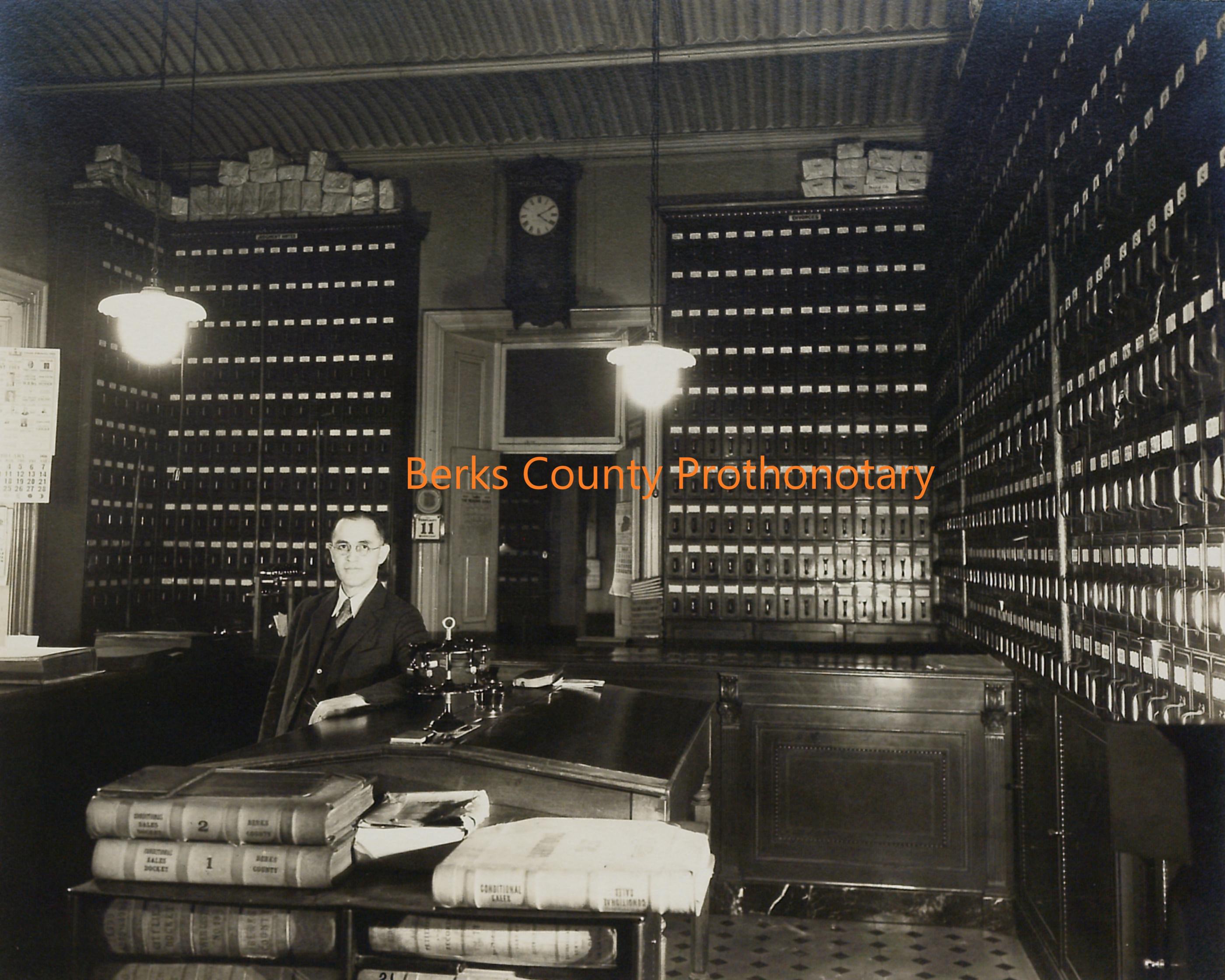
Berks County Prothonotary

**VIEW OF COURTHOUSE COLUMNS LOOKING NORTH**  
**ON SIXTH STREET TOWARDS WASHINGTON**  
**STREET, CIRCA 1930**

**Magnificent Brownstone Columns Of The Third Courthouse (1840-1931). Many Suggestions Were Made As To What To Do With These After The Courthouse Was Demolished. Some Wanted Them Erected As A Welcoming Arch At The Lindbergh Viaduct. Others Thought Incorporating Them Into A War Memorial Was Best. In The End, They Were Removed In Pieces In May, 1931 And Today Reside At Various Locations Around Berks County.**



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SALES DOCKET 2 BERKS COUNTY  
SALES DOCKET 1 BERKS COUNTY  
CONDITIONAL SALES  
RECORDS

# **PROTHONOTARY NELSON L. ROTHERMEL**

**IN HIS OFFICE - FEBRUARY 11, 1931**

**This Photograph of Nelson L. Rothermel Was Taken In His Office In The Third Courthouse Two Months Prior To Vacating It For The Temporary Courthouse In The Nogar Building At Fourth And Court Streets. Rothermel Began His Career In The Recorder's Office As A Clerk In 1914 Before Transferring To The Prothonotary's Office In 1915. He Remained There First As A Clerk, Then As A Deputy And Was Elected Prothonotary In 1925 And Re-Elected In 1929. He Was The First Prothonotary To Serve In The Current Courthouse.**



Images From The Collection Of The Berks History Center Research Library ([berkshistory.org](http://berkshistory.org))



Berks County  
Prothonotary

BERKS  
COUNTY  
TRUST  
COMPANY

LUNCH

222

**FIFTH AND PENN STREETS**  
**VIEW FROM SOUTHWEST CORNER**  
**1934**

**The New Berks County Courthouse Rises Above The City's Skyline In This Image From 1934. More Than 110,000 People Inhabited Reading During This Time And The Population Of Berks County Was About 231,000 Citizens.**



Images From The Collection Of The Berks History Center Research Library ([berkshistory.org](http://berkshistory.org))

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## **SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

### **SECOND FLOOR – BERKS COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

**DECEMBER 1932**

**This Image Was One In An Album Of Photographs Taken Prior To The Dedication And Opening Of Berks County's New Courthouse On December 2, 1932. When The Courthouse Was Completed, The Sheriff's Office Occupied The Second Floor Along With The Prothonotary's Office And The Register Of Wills Office. Today, The Sheriff's Office Occupies The Third Floor Of The Courthouse. The Space Displayed In This Image Is Now Part Of The Prothonotary's Office.**



Images From The Collection Of The Berks History Center Research Library ([berkshistory.org](http://berkshistory.org))



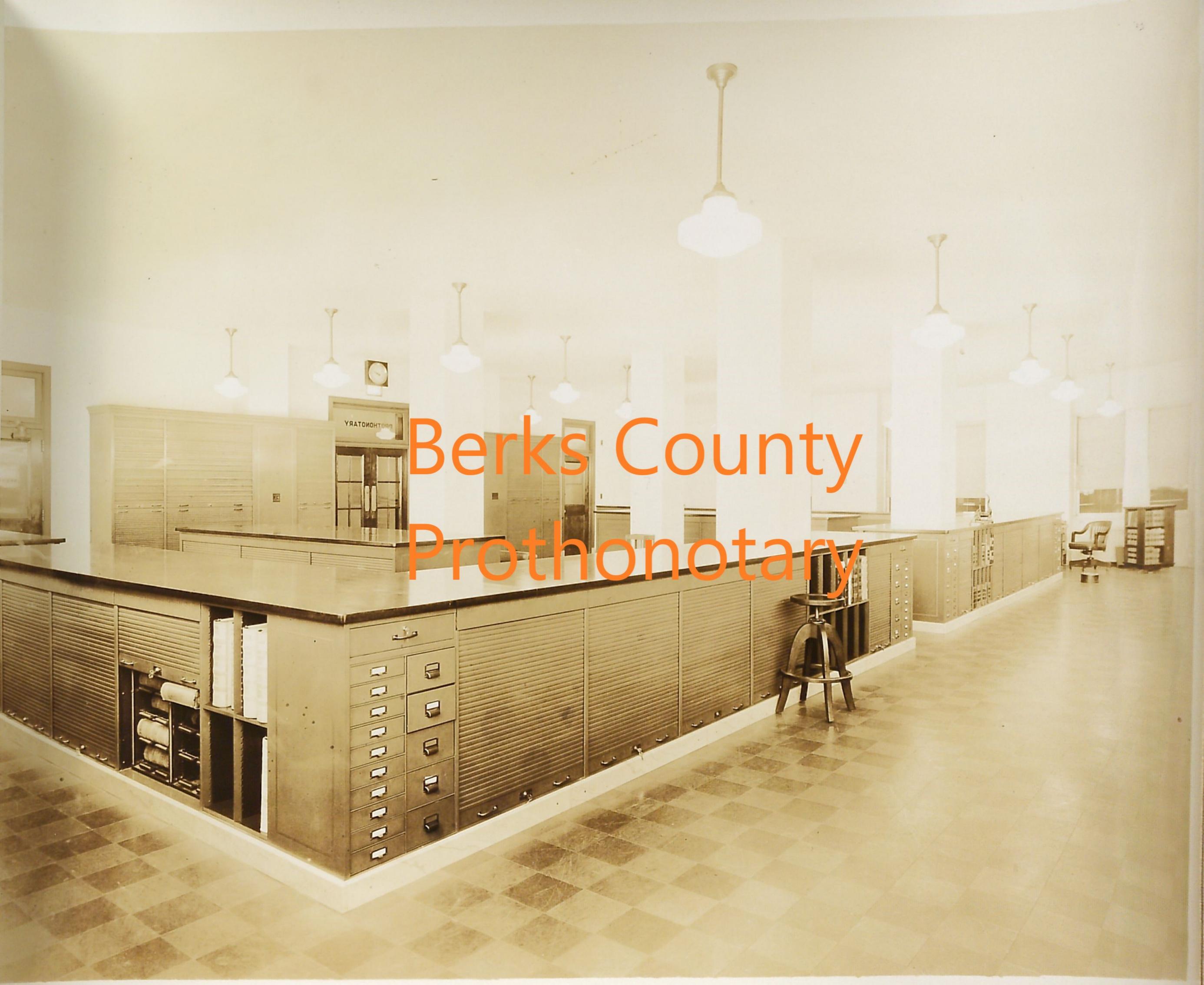
Berks County  
Prothonotary

**NATURALIZATION OFFICE**  
**SECOND FLOOR – BERKS COUNTY COURTHOUSE**  
**DECEMBER 1932**

**This Image Was One In An Album Of Photographs Taken Prior To The Dedication And Opening Of Berks County’s New Courthouse On December 2, 1932. The Naturalization Office Was Part Of The Prothonotary’s Office And Handled All Naturalization Matters For The Many Immigrants To Berks County Desiring To Become American Citizens In The First Half Of The 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Today, The Space Displayed In This Image Is Still Part Of The Prothonotary’s Office.**



Images From The Collection Of The Berks History Center Research Library ([berkshistory.org](http://berkshistory.org))



Berks County  
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Berks County  
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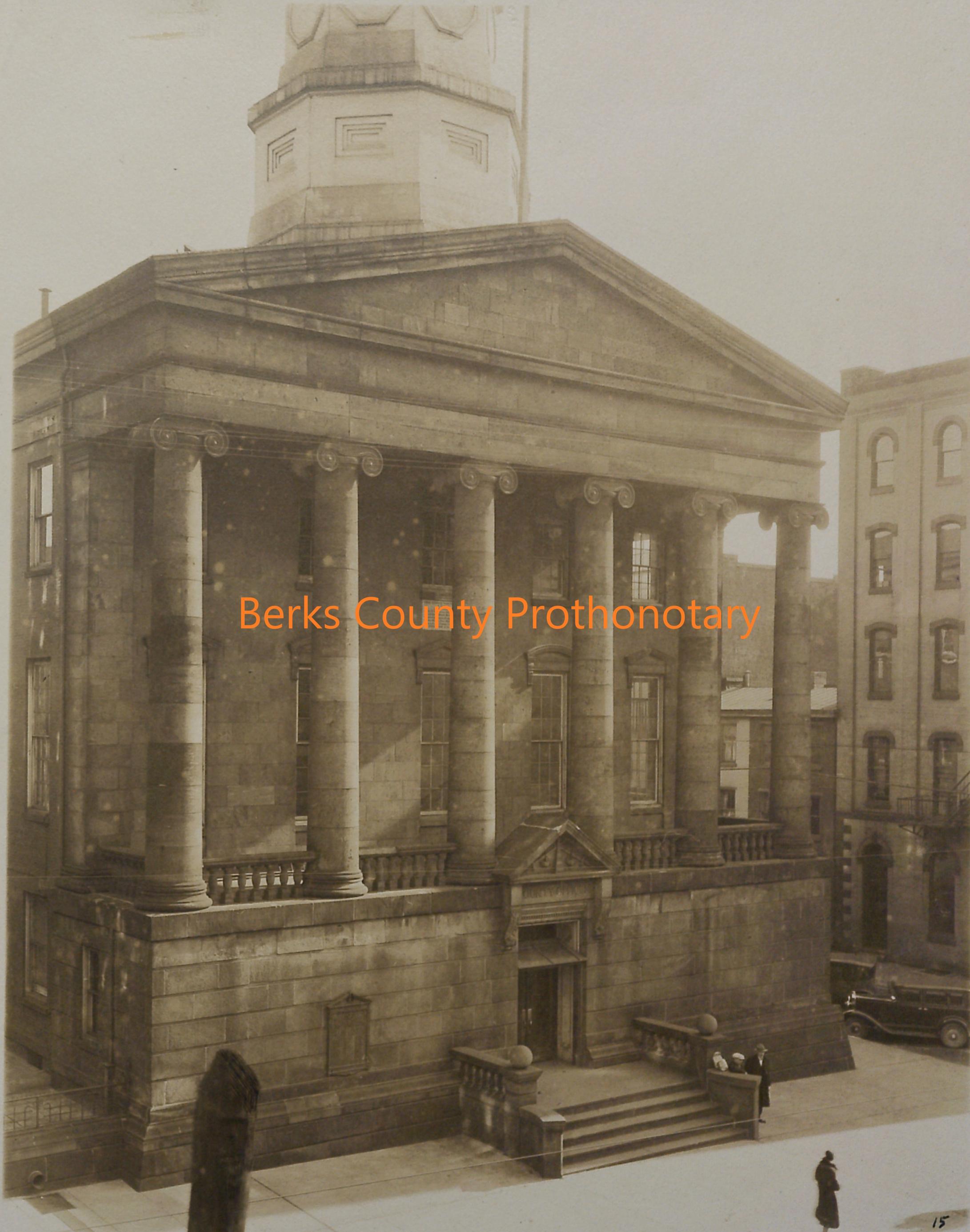
**VIEWS OF PROTHONOTARY'S OFFICE**  
**SECOND FLOOR – BERKS COUNTY COURTHOUSE**  
**DECEMBER 1932**

**These Images Were Two In An Album Of Photographs Taken Prior To The Dedication And Opening Of Berks County's New Courthouse On December 2, 1932. When The Courthouse Was Completed, The Prothonotary's Office Occupied The Second Floor Along With The Sheriff's Office And The Register Of Wills Office. Today, The Prothonotary's Office Still Occupies The Space Displayed In These Images Along With The Rest Of The Second Floor Of The Courthouse.**



Images From The Collection Of The Berks History Center Research Library ([berkshistory.org](http://berkshistory.org))

Berks County Prothonotary



**FAÇADE OF BERKS COUNTY COURTHOUSE,  
NORTHEAST CORNER OF  
SIXTH AND COURT STREETS, CIRCA 1930**

**Third Courthouse In Berks County's History, Having Served From 1840 Until Demolished In 1931. Replaced At The Same Location With Current (Fourth) Berks County Courthouse. Prothonotary's Office And Court Stenographers Were Final Two County Offices To Vacate This Courthouse On April 29, 1931 Before Moving To A Temporary Courthouse Two Blocks Away. Demolition Of This Structure Began On May 4, 1931 And Was Completed May 26, 1931.**



Images From The Collection Of The Berks History Center Research Library ([berkshistory.org](http://berkshistory.org))