In recent years numerous apple and peach orchards have been planted on this soil.

Chester Loam

The Chester loam is a rather extensive type. It is developed over large areas in the southern part of the county. Being confined to the South Mountains region, these bodies occur just south of the limestone belt, and occupy a large part of Upper Milford and Lower Milford Townships. Smaller areas of the type are found in the same general region, in Salisbury and Upper Sancon Townships. Just east of Allentown there is a narrow strip of the type about 2 miles in length. In the limestone valley of Upper Saucon Township two small areas are found, surrounded by Hagerstown loam. One of these consists largely of a sandy loam soil, but owing to its small size it was not mapped separately. One small area 2 miles southwest of Emaus and one about a mile west of South Bethlehem have the same sandy characteristics. Altogether the sandy loam comprises a total area of but a few acres, and is therefore not shown separately on the map.

The surface of the Chester loam is rolling to hilly. Some of the slopes are quite steep, but cultivable, and in other places the topography is undulating. The type occupies the ridges and hills of the South Mountains. The tops of these hills are rounded and undulating to rolling, while the slopes are regular, but in places rather steep. The steeper locations, and sometimes the crests, are occupied by the Chester stony loam, while the smoother areas are usually the Chester loam.

The surface soil of the Chester loam is a mellow loam or silty loam, brown to yellowish brown in color, and having an average depth of about 10 inches. The subsoil consists of a yellow to reddish-yellow crumbly clay, which is very gritty and often contains a noticeable amount of mica flakes. In many places these mica flakes give the subsoil a greasy feel, while often the lower subsoil or substratum is composed largely of mica with other partially decomposed material of the parent rock. Fragments of the parent rocks, consisting mainly of gneiss and other crystalline rocks as well as some quartzite are scattered over the surface, but usually there are not enough of these to interfere materially with cultivation. The soil is easily cultivated and does not bake hard on drying.

No areas of the type are entirely free of stony material. In occasional small spots the soil is so stony as to resemble a stony loam. Many of the fields mapped as Chester loam were originally typical Chester stony loam, the bulk of the rocks having been cleared off in order that the land might be cultivated.

The original forest growth of chestnut, oak, hickory, and birch has been removed, and nearly all of the type has been in cultivation for many years. The Chester loam is naturally a strong, fertile soil, and where care is taken to maintain its productiveness good crop yields are secured. The soil is naturally most productive where the surface is smoothest, for in areas of more irregular topography the parent rock is near the surface, the land is more stony, and the soil body is composed more largely of the fine rock fragments which give rise to the very gritty soil and subsoil.

The crops grown consist principally of corn, oats, wheat, rye, timothy, and clover. Dairy farming is an important industry on the type. Corn produces from 25 to 60 or 70 bushels per acre, oats 30 to 60 bushels, wheat 15 to 25 bushels, rye 15 to 25 bushels, hay 1 to 1½ tons, and potatoes 75 to 150 bushels per acre.

In recent years the growing of apples and peaches on this soil has increased in importance and potato growing has decreased.

Huntington Silt Loam

The alluvial soils of the various streams are classified as the Huntington silt loam.