

# FIFTY YEARS AND OVER

OF

# AKRON

AND

# SUMMIT COUNTY,

BY

EX-SHERIFF SAMUEL A. LANE.

---

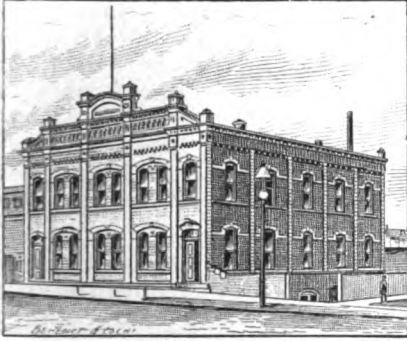
EMBELLISHED BY NEARLY SIX HUNDRED ENGRAVINGS—PORTRAITS OF  
PIONEER SETTLERS, PROMINENT CITIZENS, BUSINESS,  
OFFICIAL AND PROFESSIONAL—ANCIENT  
AND MODERN VIEWS, ETC.

---

NINE-TENTH'S OF A CENTURY OF SOLID LOCAL HISTORY—PIONEER INCIDENTS,  
INTERESTING EVENTS—INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL, FINANCIAL  
AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS, BIOGRAPHIES, ETC.

AKRON, OHIO:  
BEACON JOB DEPARTMENT.  
1892.

By ordinance passed March 15, 1886, certain described lands in Coventry township, upon the south, embracing 222.62 acres, and certain described lands in Portage township, upon the north and west, embracing 467.80 acres, were also, by subsequent proceedings, duly annexed, and are now embraced within the corporate limits of the city of Akron,



Akron City Building, South Main and Quarry Street.

**AKRON'S PRESENT POPULATION.**  
—By the official census for 1890, the population of the city of Akron is as follows; First ward, 3,793; Second ward, 3,531; Third ward, 5,045; Fourth ward, 6,716; Fifth ward, 5,194; Sixth ward, 3,322; total, 27,601. This, with the dense suburban population on the immediate unannexed territory, together with our rapidly increasing inside population makes us, in this year of grace, 1891, a city of considerable over 30,000 inhabitants. The popula-

tion of Portage township, exclusive of Akron, in 1840 was 2,382; in 1880, after annexation of sundry portions of its territory to the city, as stated, 2,580, the census of 1890 showing a total of 2,659.

**AKRON'S WATER SUPPLY.**—Though eminently a water town—with the never-failing living waters of Summit Lake, a short distance south of the city limits, and the pellucid Little Cuyahoga river traversing its entire breadth from east to west, upon the north and though a large number of springs of the very purest water were found gushing spontaneously from its innumerable hills and bluffs, Akron cannot be said to have been well-watered until a comparatively recent date.

The first attempt at "water works," for any portion of the town, was by Dr. Eliakim Crosby, in 1836, by bringing the waters of a large spring from the foot of Perkins' hill, in a continuous cement pipe, to his own house, where the Catholic parsonage now stands, with branches running to the houses of some of his near-by West Hill neighbors. The scheme worked well for a year or two, when it was found that an accumulation of fungus vegetation had filled the pipe its entire length, and the scheme had to be abandoned.

**THE AKRON COLD SPRING COMPANY.**—In the early forties the Akron Cold Spring Company was incorporated and organized, for the purpose of bringing the waters of a large spring, known as "Cold Spring," from the eastern slope of what is now called "Spring Hill," on the Portage road, about a mile and a half along what is now Aqueduct street, and West Market street, in four-inch cast-iron mains, with lead service pipes to the several residences along the route, these cast-iron mains, after nearly half a century's service, being replaced by wrought-iron pipes in 1891.

This is the very softest and purest water in the city, and is still used for domestic purposes by many of the inhabitants of that portion of the city, even among those who patronize the City Water Works for stable, lawn and street sprinkling purposes. The present officers of the company are: Directors: J. A. Long,

Lorenzo Hall, S. E. Phinney, George A. Kempel, A. M. Armstrong; president, A. M. Armstrong; secretary, Philander D. Hall, Jr.

**HOWARD STREET WATER COMPANY.**—There was originally a superb spring of water, on the premises of the late George W. Bloom, where the office of the Schumacher Milling Company now stands, corner of Broadway and Mill streets. March 14, 1865, Morrill T. Cutter, Hiram Viele, William G. Raymond, James M. Hale and Lorenzo Hall, directors of the duly incorporated Howard Street Water Company, by a grant from council, were permitted to lay pipes through the streets of Akron, and did so use a part of Mill, Howard and Market streets.

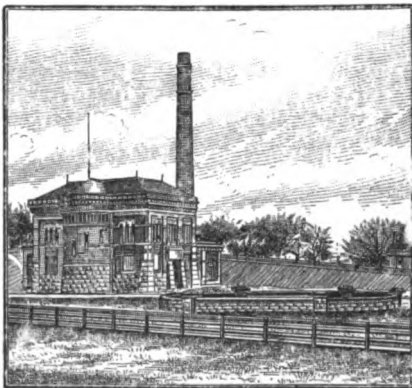
These works were quite convenient to those interested for several years, but paving, sewerage, etc., at length so interfered with a free flow of water and the extension of the system, that the project was abandoned.

**CITY WATER WORKS.**—Sometime in the latter sixties, the question of city water works for fire protection and for manufacturing and domestic purposes, began to be agitated, and on December 27, 1871, an ordinance was passed as follows:

**SECTION 1.** *Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Akron.* That water works for the purpose of furnishing said city and the inhabitants thereof, with a supply of water, are hereby ordered to be built and constructed.

This was supplemented by an ordinance passed January 8, 1872, authorizing the election of a board of three water works trustees, and at the ensuing April election a non-partisan board was elected as follows: John R. Buchtel, Alexander H. Commins and Charles Cranz. Expert hydraulic engineers, were employed, and estimates made from various points of *possible* supply, but various hindrances intervened, and the scheme was never consummated, the ordinance being repealed March 29, 1876.

**AKRON WATER WORKS COMPANY.**—July 1, 1880, an ordinance was passed granting to M. S. Frost & Son, and their associates, the privilege of using the streets, alleys and public grounds of the city

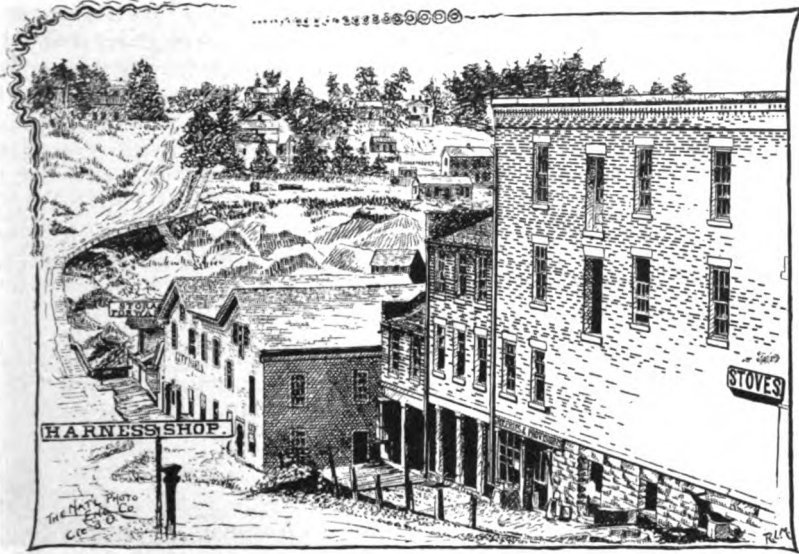


Akron Water Works Pumping Station  
—1891.

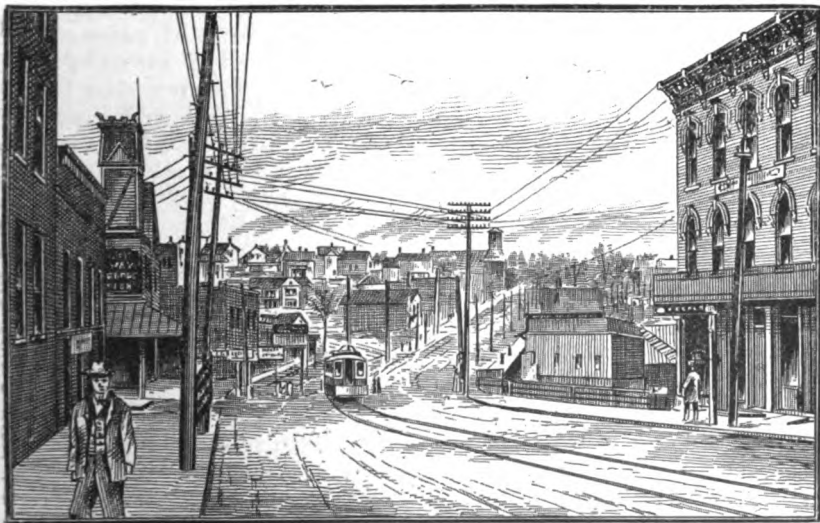
for the laying of pipes, etc., for the purpose of supplying the people of the city with water in accordance with certain propositions which had been made by said company.

The works were accordingly built, the supply being obtained from a large well upon the Mallison farm, on Wooster avenue, with a reservoir upon Sherbondy Hill in the west part of the city. The works were completed and put in operation early in 1881, but as the years passed by the supply from the well was found to be inadequate to meet the increasing demand, and the small Lake to the southward, known as Manning's pond, was purchased and utilized, and subsequently an arrangement made with the State by which the waters of

Summit Lake, still further south, are used as occasion requires, and with other more recently added wells, both in point of quantity and quality Akron's water supply is equal to that of any other city in Ohio; its fire protection being almost perfect, its waters also being quite largely used as the motive power for driving elevators, church organs, coffee grinders, printing presses, pumps, etc.



West Market Street, from Howard, showing old City Mill, old Wooden Bridge over Canal, and the original and then only Sidewalk on West Hill.—From photo by S. J. Miller, 1858.



West Market Street, from Howard, 1891.—From photo by George E. Hitchcock.

The present officers of the Akron Water Works Company are: President, Frank Adams; vice president, George W. Crouse; secretary and treasurer, Horace C. Starr; mechanical engineer and superintendent, Edward A. Lawton; civil engineer, Joseph Flannery. Capital stock, \$250,000. The company has now about 30 miles of street mains, 1,600 private and public takers, and about 200 street hydrants, or fire plugs, and the system is being rapidly extended.

**CEREAL OPERATIONS.**—It will be remembered that in its earlier history, milling was Akron's chief industry, which, while not very materially augmenting the industrial population, yet by furnishing a ready market to the surrounding farmers for their grain, greatly enhanced the commercial and financial interests of the village and county. The famous Old Stone Mill, built by Dr. Crosby and others in 1832, was the pioneer, followed by the Ætna, by William B. Mitchell and Samuel A. Wheeler in 1838; the Center Mill, by Joseph A. Beebe and William E. Wright, in 1839; the Cascade Mill, by William B. Mitchell, in 1840, and a few years later by the City Mill, by Gen. Geo. W. McNeil and others; the Ayliffe Mill, (afterwards the Carter & Steward Oatmeal Mill); the Pearl Mill, by William G. Raymond, Abraham Fulton, A. M. Barber and others, (now the Hower Oatmeal Mill); the Perkins Mill, (now the Allen Mill), etc., Akron flour, both under the old and new processes, ever having maintained a high standing in New York and other Eastern markets.

**A TRULY "LIVE DUTCHMAN."**—But it was reserved to Fred. Schumacher, to bring to Akron its chief renown as a milling center. Coming hither in 1851, Mr. Schumacher, in company with Mr. Theodore Weibezahn, opened a small notion store in Hall's block, fronting on West Market street. Withdrawing from that business in August, 1852, Mr. S. started a small family supply store, where the First National Bank now stands, afterwards removing to the larger room across the street, next to Empire House, where, for a number of years he did a profitable business, with Mr. Charles W. Bonstedt as his chief clerk.

In 1859, Mr. S. commenced the manufacture of oatmeal, on a small scale, in a frame building at the foot of Howard street, which had originally been used for a woolen factory, but later by ex-Sheriff Thomas Wilson, in the manufacture of mineral paint. This, undoubtedly the pioneer oatmeal mill in America, was appropriately named "The German Mill." Its products finding a ready sale, Mr. S. soon added the manufacture of pearl barley, for which, in 1863, a separate extensive mill was built on South Summit street, near the Union depot, which was named the "Empire Barley Mill." In 1872 the original German Mill was destroyed by fire, a new German Mill being built near the Empire Mill on Summit street. Sundry additions were made from time to time, a large elevator for the storage of grain having been erected in 1879, Mr. S. having in the meantime bought and refitted with modern machinery, the Cascade Mill, near Lock Fourteen, Ohio Canal, originally built by Mr. William B. Mitchell, in 1840.

**TERRIBLE CALAMITY.**—Other mills were added to the original plant on Summit street, including the celebrated eight story "Jumbo" mill, a large drying house, fronting on Broadway, and the splendid office building on the corner of Mill and Broadway,