

HISTORY  
OF  
BEAVER COUNTY  
PENNSYLVANIA  
AND  
ITS CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

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*ILLUSTRATED*

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same. These Academy lots, with the exception of lots Nos. 1 to 7 inclusive, constitute approximately the present Borough township. And the same Act repealed the provision of the Act of January 27, 1806, striking the outlots out of the borough, thus bringing these outlots again within its limits.<sup>1</sup>

By decree of the Court of Quarter Sessions of April 2, 1835, the town of Bridgewater was incorporated under the general borough Act of April 1, 1834,<sup>2</sup> and made to include that portion of the territory within the bounds of the borough of Beaver lying beyond the lines described in the charter.<sup>3</sup>

By the Act of April 11, 1866,<sup>4</sup> and the Act of February 25, 1869,<sup>5</sup> the boundaries of the borough of Beaver were defined, and as then fixed they are the boundaries of the borough at the present time, excepting that there has been added to the borough a small part of Academy lot No. 37, by action of the town council, November 1, 1898.

We may give here also an interesting fact which has been recently discovered. By the original plan of the town lots of Beaver, Fifth Street and Buffalo Street were of the width of two hundred feet each. By the Act of March 12, 1800<sup>6</sup> (the same which erected the county), the Governor was directed to cause to be laid off by survey out of the reserve tract adjoining the town of Beaver five hundred acres for the use of such school or academy as should by law be authorized, which survey should be returned to the Surveyor-General's office and a patent therefor issued to the trustees of the Academy. This survey when returned embraced one hundred feet of each of the streets above mentioned and reduced them to a width of one hundred feet.

#### WATER-WORKS

In his letter to Governor Mifflin, quoted above, Judge Addison, it will be seen, suggested the reservation of a sufficient

<sup>1</sup> An Act to contract the limits of the Borough of Beaver:

SECTION I. *Be it enacted, &c.* That from and after the passing of this Act, all that tract of five hundred acres of land appropriated for the use of an academy, which lies within the borough of Beaver, in the county of Beaver, shall from henceforth be without the limits of the borough of Beaver, any law to the contrary notwithstanding.

SECTION II. *And be it further enacted, &c.* That all that part of an Act of Assembly passed the twentieth of January, one thousand eight hundred and six, which attaches certain outlots of the town of Beaver, to Beaver township, be and the same is hereby repealed. Approved by Governor Simon Snyder, February 25, 1814.—P. L., 66.

<sup>2</sup> P. L., 163.

<sup>3</sup> See Deed Book M, No. 12, p. 289.

<sup>4</sup> P. L., 743.

<sup>5</sup> P. L., 246.

<sup>6</sup> 3 Smith's L., 429, Sec. 17.

quantity of land around "a certain spring, at some distance from the town," and his suggestion took effect. In the Act incorporating Beaver into a borough the Surveyor-General was authorized to survey two separate lots, containing in the whole not more than fifteen acres, on the north side of the inlots of the town of Beaver, so as to include several streams or springs of water, which were "granted to the inhabitants of said borough forever." And from the proceeds of each of the sales of lots under the Acts of April 10, 1826, and of April 15, 1834, five hundred dollars were granted to the borough of Beaver for the supply of water. One of the first public enterprises of the new borough was the utilization of the water from the springs just mentioned by the construction of a water-works. This was in the first year of its corporate existence, viz., 1802. Daniel Reisinger, referred to below, told a living witness, namely, ex-Sheriff Henry E. Cook, that this water-works was upon the lot adjoining his (Cook's) residence. The borough took charge of the works and had ordinances passed to authorize issue of bonds to refund the subscriptions. The bonds were payable in six years, with interest at six per cent. The response was generous, some making donations of money, some of timber, and some of work. David Marquis, the father of the late David Marquis, M.D., of Rochester, had charge of the boring out of the logs which were used as mains; and Daniel Reisinger, a blacksmith, made the iron end-bands. The following account, which was found in an old ledger belonging to General Abner Lacock, is of interest as referring to this early enterprise:

BEAVER TOWN CORPORATION, DR.,			
	£	s	d
1802.			
June 24—To boarding borers 47 days	3	15	6
" 12 half pints whiskey		5	74
" 7 days burying water pipes	1	6	3
" Cash paid Aaron Porter	1	5	8
" Cash paid Thomas Lewis	1	11	14
" 2 days rafting waterpipe logs		9	4
" 14 half pints whiskey		6	18
" Secretary charge, postage	1	6	
			<hr/>
1803.	10	7	04
June 13—By cash in full	10	7	04

And in the borough records for 1803 is found a bill of Jacob

Small against the borough for £1 13s. 3d.<sup>1</sup> for repairing pipes and pumps.

The supply from this source must have been insufficient, for in the accounts of the Treasury of Beaver County for 1806 we find this entry, "John Lawrence, 1st payment for digging a well \$100."<sup>2</sup> This well was a little east of the old court-house, in the northeast center reserved square, and until a late day could still be seen, though filled up with rubbish. The records of the town council for the same year (1806) show the borough's indebtedness to John Lawrence for two and one half days' service in repairing the water-works, \$2.50; and in 1807 the council agreed with Hugh Wilson to build a stone house, 11 x 13 feet, and seven feet high, on the ground at the source of the springs which supplied the water-works; for which he was given an order on the treasurer for \$25. The borough officers in 1804 were: Samuel Lawrence, chairman; Thomas Henry, treasurer; Hugh Picknoll, clerk; and Joseph Hemphill, waterman. In 1812, as the records show, steps were taken towards erecting a new water-works. On the 8th of April in that year the council passed an ordinance authorizing two things: (1) the bringing down to the public square, in wooden pipes, of the water from the springs in the reserve lots, both of which abutted on the line of the lands of John Wolf; and (2) the borrowing of money at six per cent. to defray the cost of the work.<sup>3</sup> The council of Beaver until recently maintained this water-works, furnishing from the same springs a good quality of water.

<sup>1</sup> Pounds, shillings, and pence are found in certain of our old Pennsylvania statutes and official papers still in force and use; for instance, the penalty of one hundred pounds to be imposed upon a non-attending witness duly subpoenaed; but under a post-Revolution order made by the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, the pound so mentioned was made of the value of \$2.66½, so that 100 pounds was of the value of \$266.66½. See *Chapman v. Calder*, 14 Pa., 357. *Crumrine's Bench and Bar of Wash. Co.*, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> By an Act approved Feb. 10, 1807, the Legislature authorized the commissioners of Beaver County to apply the sum of seven hundred dollars "from the monies arising from the sales of the inlots and reserved lands adjoining Beaver Town to the sinking and completing a public well, in such part of the public square in the borough of Beaver as they shall think most proper." P. L., 29.

See just below in this chapter what is said about this ancient well and the water-works in an extract from Cuming's *Sketches of a Tour*, etc.

<sup>3</sup> The form of the bonds issued by the council to subscribers to this fund was as follows:

We, the town council of the borough of Beaver, certify that Samuel Power has loaned to, and for the use of, the borough of Beaver, thirty dollars, to be refunded to the said Samuel Power or bearer, by six annual installments, with interest, from the 7th of July, 1812, to which payment the fund of the said borough is hereby pledged. Done in council, May 8, 1812.

Attest:  
HUGH PICKNOLL, *Town Clerk*.

SAMUEL LAWRENCE,  
*Chairman*.

One of these water lots was sold during the past year (1903) by the council of the borough of Beaver to John Galey, who now owns a part of the John Wolf lands. It was thought best that the sale should have the approval of the Commonwealth, and accordingly an Act of Assembly was passed for this purpose, but his Excellency, Samuel W. Pennypacker, returned the same without his approval.

In the year 1845 the first reservoir was built in the water lot adjacent to the property of Henry E. Cook on Fifth Street, and a line of pipe laid therefrom. At that time, and for many years thereafter, there were four hydrants connected with this line of pipe. The first was at Fourth Street and Branch Bank Alley, and was under the charge of Eli Reed; the second on Third Street, at the corner of the same alley, under the care of Dr. Oliver Cunningham, then a member of council; the third on Third Street, in front of the clothing store of Isaac N. Atkins; and the fourth, added later, was about opposite the house of George W. Hamilton, on Third Street. About the year 1848, a reservoir was erected on the water lot adjacent to what is now John Galey's property, and a line of pipe laid therefrom, on which hydrants were placed; the first on Market and Fourth streets, near the house of Daniel Reisinger; the second at the corner of Market and Third streets, near the Presbyterian Church, as it was then located; and, later, a third was placed in front of the property now of Martha McDonald on Third Street then of Hugh Anderson; and a fourth at Fifth and Market, on the property now of Mrs. McConkey. At this time, and for some time preceding this, there had been a well on the property now of Snitger Brothers; one upon the property of David Minis on Buffalo Street; and one on the property where John Caughey lives, being the place where the stages came and left the town; and a fourth, as previously stated, was at the old jail in the northeast center (now Harmar) square.

The next step in furnishing the town with water was the erection of a pumping station opposite what is now Brodhead Square. This system was in operation until November 1, 1898, when it was found inadequate to meet the wants of the growing borough, and accordingly ten wells were sunk upon borough property on the bank of the Ohio River, immediately opposite Wayne Square, and a pumping station erected by Simon Harrold,

a well-known contractor of that day. A water-main was laid up Beaver Street to a reservoir built on the top of the hill within the limits of Bridgewater borough, on land bought from Joseph May's heirs. From this reservoir water is now distributed to all points in Beaver.

#### EARLY MENTION OF BEAVER BOROUGH

We congratulate ourselves on some finds that we have made among the treasures of the Carnegie libraries in Pittsburg and Allegheny, in rare and precious old volumes which delight the heart of the antiquary. From these we are able to obtain exact information concerning this region as it was, in some instances, over a century ago. Extracts from these books will be found in other places in our work, and we give one or two here. In 1796 an eminent man, named General Georges Henri Victor Collot, made a journey through the western part of North America, at the instance of Adet, Minister from France to the United States, in order to gather details of its civil, political, and military conditions. His researches led him to voyage down the Ohio River, which he particularly describes. Of that part of his description which pertains to this immediate locality, we give on page 628 the original French, of which the following is a free translation:

Four miles below the head of Crow's island is *Big-Beaver's-Creek*. The land through which it flows is light.

Big-Beaver's-Creek, at its mouth, is hardly fifty fathoms wide. A fall three miles above prevents passage beyond (that distance). On the banks of this creek and on a plateau on the right hand side of the Ohio, a little town called *Beaver's-Town* is being laid out; there are here as yet only five or six houses; on the opposite bank, facing Beaver's-Town is a pretty farm called *Kerr's*. The soundings at the mouth of Beaver's-Creek showed eight, twelve and thirteen feet.

Below Beaver's-Town, the river continues to run in a channel without obstructions. The depth of the water is ten to twelve feet; the soil is thin.

About five miles from Big-Beaver's-Creek, are two small, low islands, which are left to the right. The depth of the water in the channel is six feet. The two chains of hills come closer together and shut the river in at this place; this is the most northerly point of the Ohio.

About two miles farther on is another island called *Grant Island*. One leaves it to the left hand and sails close to the right bank: the current is