HISTORY

OF

DAUPHIN COUNTY

PENNSYLVANIA

BY

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WITH GENEALOGICAL MEMOIRS

ILLUSTRATED.

VOL. I.

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In 1904-05 the city officials were: City treasurer, O. M. Copeland; solicitor, D. M. Sietz; city engineer, Mathew B. Cowden.

The following gives the population by decades:

1790	875	1860	13,405
1800	1,472	1870	23,100
1810	2,287	1880	30,762
1820	2,990	1890	39,385
1830	4,311	1900	50,167
1840	6,020	1905 (Estimated)	65,000
1850	7,834		

At this date (1905), the city is divided into ten wards with the following area of land in acres: Ward No. 1, 514; Ward No. 2, 298; Ward No. 3, 59; Ward No. 4, 96; Ward No. 5, 65; Ward No. 6, 237; Ward No. 7, 506; Ward No. 8, 232; Ward No. 9, 237; Ward No. 10, 315; total, 2,563 acres.

STREETS, WATER WORKS, FIRE DEPARTMENT, ETC.

January 1, 1905, the city contained twenty-two miles of paved streets of the following character and amounts: Sheet asphalt paving 18 1-2 miles; vitrified brick, 2 1-2 miles; wood block, about 1-6 mile; bituminous macadem, about 1-6 mile; asphalt block, about 4-6 mile.

In addition to this, there are twenty-five miles of "earth and gravel" streets of a superior character.

Sewer and Water Pipes. At this date there are fifty miles of sewer pipes and fifty-two miles of water pipes in existence in the city, adding great value and utility to the 14,842 buildings reported by the building inspector, January 1, 1905.

Very early in the history of the place an effort was put forth to provide a supply of good water for domestic and other purposes. About 1800 several trial surveys were effected to obtain water from some of the springs on the high land east of Paxtang creek, below South street, but aside from a wooden pipe service to the tannery of Mr. Potts nothing came of it.

In 1818-19-20, Thomas Elder, Hugh Hamilton, Joseph Wallace, John Forster, Robert Harris, James R. Boyd, Jackson Watson, Abraham Bombaugh, George Beatty, Samuel Halman, John Fager and John Roberts determined upon and made a survey for a water supply for Harrisburg, then having a population of 3,000, highly cultivated but "very poor in purse." So soon after the war

of 1812-14. Their plan was to collect the spring waters by a dam at the junction of Market and Thirteenth streets, a point over a hundred feet above low water-mark in the Susquehanna. The water thus collected was to be conducted to the town in wooden pipes and supplied by gravitation. It was expected this project would cost $33,000, but the borough felt the expense too great, and it was abandoned. The place was then indebted but $2,000.

In March, 1823, an act of the legislature was passed incorporating a company "to supply the borough of Harrisburg with water, and to insure against fire." The corporators were John Zinn, John Forster, Jacob M. Haldeman, Obed Fahnestock, John Capp, Samuel Pool, Peter Keller, Robert Harris, John B. Cox, Abraham Oves, Christian Gleim, John S. Wiestling, William LeBarron, Jacob Bucher, John Gingerich; shares twenty dollars, two dollars to be paid at subscription. It was not until December, 1825, that the necessary amount of money was subscribed to set the company going. An election was then held by the subscribers. John Forster, cashier of the Harrisburg Bank, was chosen president, Dr. Thomas Whiteside treasurer, John Roberts secretary. Directors, John Zinn, tanner; John S. Wiestling, printer; Christian Gleim, printer and sheriff of the county; Samuel Pool, carpenter; John Ritchey, farmer of Lower Paxtang; Benjamin Kugler, M. D., of Philadelphia; Abraham Bombaugh, farmer; Valentine Hummel, saddler. Lamoi Baldwin, Boston, was chosen engineer. The fall from the mouth of Stony creek at Green's mill to the Market street bridge across Paxtang was found to be twelve feet. Just as this work was to commence, the Pennsylvania canal commissioners surveyed the canal over the same route chosen for the water company's line. Long and hotly contested litigation followed, and finally the supreme courts decided in favor of the canal commissioners, and the water company lost all they had put into the enterprise.

In February, 1833, a new act was passed having as corporators John Forster, Jacob M. Haldeman, Robert Harris, William Graydon, Hugh Hamilton, George Geiger, Frederick Kelker, John M. Forster, Abraham Bombaugh, Francis R. Shunk, Henry Buehler, James Lesley, Luther Reily, Joseph B. Henzey, and Isaac Updegraff. The charter allowed the company to take water from the river, "without a dam, at Brushy Rock," thence "to Pine street," where works were to be constructed to force the accumulated fluid "to a point on the uninclosed public ground, having careful regard to the safety of the arsenal." The basin was to have been where the present Mexican monument now stands. The cost was estimated at $120,000. The project never seemed to meet with the

response of the masses, and was finally abandoned, and still the city had no water supply!

The above failures, however, resulted in the introduction of Susquehanna river water into the borough of Harrisburg. The idea originated with William Ayres, a leading spirit in the Harrisburg bar at that date. As a member of the borough council, in January, 1839, he planned, and on March 26 same year he secured the passage of a bill in the legislature to supply the borough of Harrisburg with water. In compliance with this act a committee was appointed to carry out the provisions. A competent engineer was secured to "ascertain what head and fall could be had in the river from 'Miller's Ripples' to the foot of the borough, both with and without a dam." Also, they were to enquire into the expediency of employing water power, or steam, the cost of basins, pipes, etc.

The twin conflagrations of the previous year, which had destroyed two blocks of valuable property, were still fresh in mind. Colonel John Roberts, who made the survey and plot of the reservoir grounds, and the hard work of the committee, had matters in shape by the spring of 1840, ready for acceptance on the part of the council. September, 1841, saw the water-works completed. A report of January, 1844, shows there were eight miles of pipes laid; 107 stop-cocks; 99 fire plugs. The total cost of the works had been placed at $120,459. The total number using water was 658. This, with extensions, the plan, sufficed until 1868, when active measures were again taken for an improved water supply.

The water commissioners then appointed were Messrs. William Calder, A. Boyd, Hamilton, Charles F. Muench, David S. Herr, and John J. Shoemaker. On the 16th of June, 1869, the commissioners elected H. P. M. Birkinbine engineer, who at once began an investigation of all the different sources of possible water supply including plans "five," "six" and "seven":

5. Conveying the waters of Stony creek by gravitation into a reservoir located upon the elevated ground east of the city known as Prospect Hill.

6. Conveying the waters of Manada creek by gravitation into a reservoir located on Prospect Hill.

7. Pumping from the Susquehanna river at the site occupied by the present works (or at a better one if it can be found) by means of improved steam machinery, and forcing the water into a reservoir of sufficient altitude and capacity to meet the present and future wants of the city.

The fifth, sixth, and seventh sources were favorably regarded, the others decidedly objected to for various reasons. The commis-

sioners, however, themselves thoroughly examined every source of water supply, and after careful consideration decided upon the seventh plan, with a reservoir on Prospect Hill, and pumping from the Susquehanna at the foot of North street (or, as it should be gratefully named, Ayres avenue). At once reports were made to the city councils, and immediate measures taken to secure the ground, construct the reservoir, and erect such additional works at the river front as was proper and necessary. When all was completed, the city's outlay was not far from three-quarters of a million dollars, but one of the most satisfactory systems of water supply in all the Union is here found doing service and duty appreciated by the citizens.

In 1874 much of the present water-works plant was erected, and from time to time, as the city has demanded a greater supply of water, the capacity has been enlarged. Among some of the machinery in this pumping plant are engines put in operation over thirty years ago, and are now held in reserve for emergency cases.

The bonded indebtedness of this department of the city was, January 1, 1905, $445,695.

The daily pumping capacity of these works, which draw their water supply from the Susquehanna river, is twelve million gallons. The average per diem for the past year was 8,787,198 gallons. Of this amount, 4,378,727 gallons were furnished through meters for manufacturing, elevator and motor purposes. Free water is furnished to the city, and amounted last year to $27,196, and that given to hospitals, charitable institutions and churches amounted to $1,798. Free water is furnished to over seventy churches, all the hospitals, county buildings, city offices, Public Library, Y. M. C. A.; also supplies ten public drinking fountains, greatly appreciated by both man and beast.

During 1905, the greatest improvement directly creditable to the people of Harrisburg, is the immense filtering plant, which the city constructed at a cost of over half a million dollars. When fully completed, the city will have pure water and an abundance of it.

The water is pumped from the placid waters of the Susquehanna to a point on the island, opposite the pumping plant, and there it is thoroughly filtered and forced directly into the mains.

The advantage of a municipality owning the water plant can be seen by the saving shown here, in the cost of fire hydrants alone, which amounts to $20,445 per annum. Possibly no city in all the country where all the water is pumped, furnishes as great a relative proportion of its supply for manufacturing use, as the city of Harrisburg.