

Early
History of Scranton
and
The First
Presbyterian Church
in
Scranton, Pa.
WRITTEN BY J. HATT

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Early history of Scranton
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FREDERICK J. PLATT

PRESIDENT

SCRANTON ELECTRIC CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

SCRANTON, PA.



EARLY HISTORY OF SCRANTON
AND THE
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



A TALK GIVEN BY
FREDERICK J. PLATT

At a Meeting of the Lackawanna Historical Society
October 29, 1948

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I.

EARLY HISTORY OF SCRANTON

I was asked to give this talk on the Early History of Scranton and the First Presbyterian Church, probably because I am the oldest descendant of any of the founders of Scranton.

It has been the general opinion that the early settlers of Scranton came here because Anthracite coal was being mined in this section, but as a matter of fact, what they were also looking for was iron ore and limestone which they could use with Anthracite coal in making pig iron.

SLOCUM HOLLOW

In 1830 there was a small settlement called Slocum Hollow, which was located on the north side of Roaring Brook, just west of the concrete bridge crossing Roaring Brook over to what is now Cedar Avenue, below the present Laurel Line station. This settlement, consisted of a building called Slocum House, a sawmill, two small dwellings and a blacksmith shop. It was owned by Ebenezer Slocum and his brother Benjamin who came from Wyoming in 1798.

Both of the Slocums died in 1832 and left their property to a nephew, who later sold it to William Merrifield, William Rickitson and Zeno Albro.

Mr. J. J. Albright, who later was a very prominent citizen of Scranton, and in whose memory the Albright Public Library was built by his children, was born in Warwick, N. Y., near the center of the New Jersey iron ore deposits, on September 23, 1811. When a young man he evidently went into the iron business, and in 1836 was asked, at the age of twenty-five years, to go to Slocum Hollow and give a report on the value of the coal and iron deposits which had been found there. He advised

his clients to invest, but on account of the financial condition at that time his advice was not taken, and the valley's potentialities as an iron manufacturing center had to await the coming of the Scrantons. In later years, Mr. Albright said he "shook the tree but failed to gather the fruit."

Previous to 1828 blast furnaces for making pig iron were provided with cool air at the surrounding temperature, and this cool air when blown into the furnace to make the proper draft naturally cooled the molten iron which was supposed to be at a temperature of 2700 degrees Fahrenheit. It was known that by using combustion air at atmospheric pressure only a relatively low flame temperature could be reached, but if the air could be heated, this temperature would be raised substantially. As molten pig iron runs about 2700 degrees F. the higher the combustion temperature the higher would be the efficiency of the furnace..

In 1828 a Scotchman in Glasgow developed a system of heating the air so as to use a hot blast instead of a cool blast. Mr. William Henry, a civil engineer, of Stroudsburg, hearing of this development leased a blast furnace in Oxford, N. J., and a year later, in 1831, experimented with the hot air blast referred to above. He found that the charcoal which was being used as fuel, burned out much more rapidly than with the cold air blast used originally, and therefore took a larger amount of charcoal. Charcoal was very scarce and its cost gradually rising, and knowing that Anthracite coal was being mined in Slocum Hollow, and that there was also iron and limestone in the hills nearby, he induced a Mr. William Armstrong of New York City to join him and purchase 503 acres of land in Slocum Hollow, at \$16. per acre, with the idea of using this Anthracite coal for fuel instead of charcoal. Mr. Henry ordered the deeds prepared and Mr. Armstrong left his summer home on the Hudson River, near Newburg, and started for Slocum Hollow with the money to pay for the

property. On his way to the ferry his horse became frightened and Mr. Armstrong was thrown out and killed. This of course was a great blow to Mr. Henry who found that the Armstrong family did not care to complete the transaction.

SCRANTON NEARLY BECOMING ARMSTRONG

If Mr. Armstrong had not been killed he would have carried out his plan to build a large manufacturing plant here, and the town would no doubt have been called Armstrong, Pennsylvania, instead of Scranton. This shows how a simple thing like this can determine the future of a City.

As I am President of the Advisory Board of the Geisinger Memorial Hospital at Danville, Pennsylvania, I am reminded of a similar incident which happened there. Mr. Geisinger, who left a considerable estate, died in Danville, and Mrs. Geisinger wanted to build something in memory of her husband. From time to time Mrs. Geisinger, who had the first automobile in Danville, had been in the habit of taking different Danville people up to the Bloomsburg hospital for treatment. One day she was driving along the street in her automobile and saw a Miss O'Brien and her father standing on the corner, waiting for a trolley car. Mrs. Geisinger asked her where she was going, and she said she was going up to the hospital in Bloomsburg to have an operation for appendicitis. Mrs. Geisinger took her up to the hospital, and on the way back to Danville she said to her chauffeur, "I think that Danville should have a hospital, and I am going to build one in Danville in memory of my husband."

She immediately had plans prepared and built a hospital which has now grown to such an extent that about two and a half million dollars are invested there. We have raised the money and are about to let a contract for a new Clinic Building, costing \$1,650,000.00. At the present time they have forty-six

full time doctors in the hospital, and a daily census of about 200, and a waiting list for the past year of about 400. This is just another example of an apparently unimportant incident having a great influence on the future of a great number of people. If Mrs. Geisinger had not helped this woman to reach the Bloomsburg hospital, the money might have been given to some college, and the people of Danville and the surrounding country would not have had this fine hospital.

Mrs. Geisinger was a devout Christian woman, and she had a clause inserted in her Trust to the effect that every meeting of the Advisory Board should be opened with a word of prayer.

THE SCRANTONS COME TO SLOCUM HOLLOW

After Mr. Armstrong's death Mr. Henry went to Oxford Furnace where he interested his son-in-law, Mr. Seldon T. Scranton, and Mr. George W. Scranton, his brother, who lived in Belvidere, N. J., both of whom were interested in an iron mill at Oxford Furnace, and these two Scrantons came on to Slocum Hollow and looked over the ground with Mr. Henry, and inspected the ore which they found south of Lake Scranton Dam, and the limestone which they found on the south mountain, and decided that they would join Mr. Henry and build a blast furnace there.

A QUAIN CUSTOM UPHELD

They therefore purchased 503 acres from Mr. Merrifield, Mr. Rickitson and Mr. Albro, for \$8,000.00. This deed was signed in September, 1840. The wives of the men who sold the property had to sign the deed with their husbands, and it was the custom in Pennsylvania at that time that any wife who signed a deed with her husband for the transfer of property, was given a "dress pattern", or material for a dress, by the purchaser. These purchasers being from the state of New

Jersey immediately objected, as they said they had never heard of such a custom. After considerable arguing over the matter, Colonel George W. Scranton finally agreed to purchase the "dress patterns" and give them to the wives. This price of about \$16.00 per acre was considerably more than the United States paid when they purchased Alaska for 2¢ an acre, California for 8¢ an acre and Florida for 14¢ an acre.

THE SCRANTON & GRANT PARTNERSHIP FORMED

Mr. George W. Scranton brought Mr. Philip Mattes, Mr. Simon Ward, Mr. William Manness, and Mr. Sanford Grant to Scranton from Belvidere, N. J. On the trip to Slocum Hollow they stopped one night at an inn where they saw a sign "MAN AND BEAST ENTERTAINED." They formed the original Company of Scrantons & Grant, consisting of George W. Scranton, Seldon T. Scranton, Sanford Grant, and Philip Mattes, with a capital of \$20,000.00.

Mr. Simon Ward, Mr. Simon R. Ward's and Mr. Ralph E. Ward's great grandfather, and Mr. William Manness, also came to Slocum Hollow with the Scranton. Mr. Manness was a contractor, and did most all of the building and construction work for the blast furnace and rolling mills. Mr. Manness was Mr. Charles F. Manness's grandfather.

Mr. Sanford Grant was considered one of Belvidere's wealthiest citizens and invested considerable money in the original firm of Scrantons & Grant. Mr. George W. Scranton drove a team of horses in Belvidere when he was twelve years old, for which he received four dollars per week. Mr. George Scranton's father was a successful business man in Belvidere and helped in the financing of the partnership.

In order to assure themselves of a supply of iron ore they purchased 3750 acres of land where the iron ore had been discovered, from the Bank of North America, for three dollars an acre, or \$11,250.00

Anthracite coal was available within three hundred yards of the proposed location of the blast furnace, and all they had to do was to open drifts in the coal seam in the side of the hill on the south side of Roaring Brook.

THE FIRST BLAST FURNACE

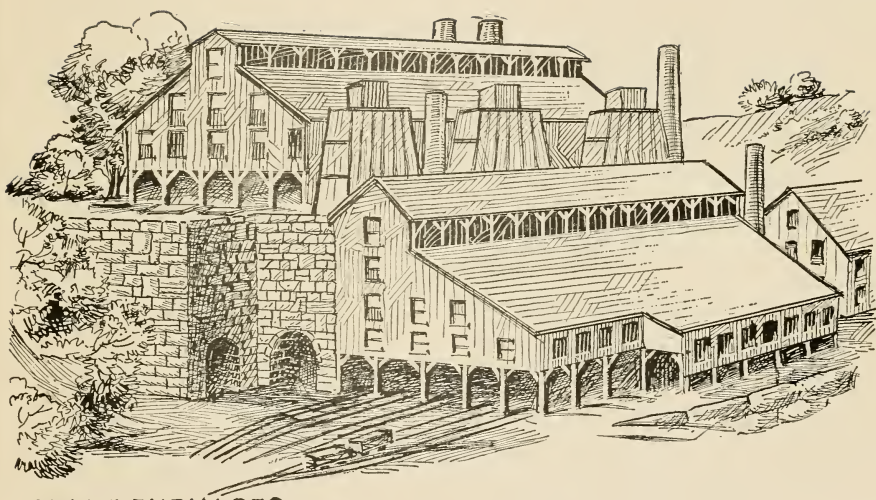
Failures and Success

They started to build their first furnace at a point just below the present Laurel Line Station on Roaring Brook, on September 8, 1840. This furnace was eight feet in diameter by thirty-five feet high. Simon Ward cut the stone for the foundation and W. W. Manness built the furnace.

The first blast was put on this furnace at 11 P. M., January 3, 1842, and after many failures they were finally obliged to secure the services of a Mr. John F. Davis, of Danville, Pa., who had had considerable experience with blast furnaces in Danville. He was able to correct their mistakes and they were finally able to operate the furnace from the 23rd day of May to the 25th of September, or eighteen weeks, without stopping, during which time they made about 374 tons of iron, or an average of about three tons per day.

They had several discouraging experiences in trying to operate the first blast furnace, one of the first being the breakdown of the blowing apparatus which provided the air draft. This caused the liquid iron in the furnace to cool rapidly and the boshes or openings in the furnace had to be removed, allowing the contents of the furnace to slide through. This was a great waste and delay and meant starting all over again. At other times other things happened; the material in the furnace hardened and they were obliged to clean out the furnace with sledge hammer and drills, which was a tremendous piece of work.

The air blast used in the first furnace consisted of an air blower driven from a water wheel, with water supplied from



BLAST FURNACES

Roaring Brook, and in order to heat the air it was passed through a nest of iron pipes which were surrounded by a mass of burning Anthracite coal.

Three failures in succession to commence with were enough to discourage the most sanguine, but these young pioneers had to succeed or financial ruin stared them in the face. After taking short naps in their straw bunks, built in the casting house, and having their meals brought to them, they went to work getting ready for another effort.

The wages paid the men to build this blast furnace were as follows: carpenters 75¢ per day, and they boarded themselves or paid the Company for their board; common laborers were paid \$17.00 per month, and the Company boarded the men for \$1.50 per week, including twenty-one meals and doing their laundry.

They found that the limestone which they had been using was of very poor quality and they finally secured some from Lime Ridge, south of Shickshinny, which was shipped up on boats by canal and river to Pittston, and from there it was hauled to the furnace by wagon.

The Company soon found that the ore which they were using was of very poor quality, and actually contained only about 25% of iron, and it was necessary to secure some higher grade ore, which they obtained from Oxford, New Jersey, Bloomsburg, Danville and Lebanon, Pennsylvania. The ore from Oxford was very rich containing 70% iron. One often wonders why Mr. Henry did not have the ore which they discovered on the south mountain, analyzed by a chemist to see what percentage of iron it contained, but on inquiry I find that there were no chemical laboratories in existence that made a specialty of analyzing the percentage of iron in iron ore, as the first laboratory that made a specialty of this was not organized until 1860.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

The following data may be of interest to those who are interested in the chronological order of the starting of the different blast furnaces, puddling and rolling mills in Pennsylvania:

Name of Company	First Furnace Started	First Rolling Mill Started	First Rails Rolled
Montour Iron Co. Danville, Pa.	1838	1844	Oct. 1, 1845 Only 15-lb. rails for industrial use only
Lehigh Coal & Navigation Co. Mauch Chunk, Pa.	July 1840	October 1843	None
Scrantons & Platt.	January 2, 1842	July 6, 1845	Aug. 9, 1847 60-lb. rails

In the year 1840 there were only six blast furnaces in operation in the state of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Henry was no doubt the pioneer in the movement to come to Slocum Hollow and start a blast furnace, and he did a great deal of preliminary work, but after the first furnace was in successful operation he left Slocum Hollow in the Spring of 1842 and turned over the operation to Colonel George W. Scranton. Mr. Henry went to Louisa Forge and followed the iron business for many years.

THE GREAT SWAMP

There are few, if any, who realize what a great swamp existed on Washington Avenue north of Spruce Street. The present Court House Square was practically the center of a bog, and the muck was so deep that Washington Avenue was impassable north of Spruce Street except in very dry weather,

and it was very dangerous to walk on the muck, as one would sink in up to the waist almost immediately.

Mr. Philip Mattes who came here with the two Scranton brothers and Sanford Grant, from Belvidere, invested money in the original Company, but never lived in Scranton. Later, when his son Charles was about eighteen years of age he sent him to Scranton to represent him. Later Mr. Charles Mattes married my grandfather's sister, and made himself very valuable in the management of the Coal & Iron Company. Mr. Charles Mattes was the grandfather of Mr. Philip Mattes, our County Solicitor.

He was a man of great vigor and energy and the following anecdote of those early days is interesting. One day while passing along what is now Spruce Street, on the side of the swamp, he saw a young deer, browsing, and in his mighty effort to capture the animal he jumped and grabbed the deer by the tail. The deer immediately plunged into the muck taking Mr. Mattes with him and making for clear water. On account of the muck it was unsafe for Mr. Mattes to let go, for the footing in the muck was precarious. Mr. Mattes held on to the deer until he ran into the thicket, at which time the deer escaped, and Mr. Mattes found himself floundering in the muck with the skin of the deer's tail in his vise-like grip.

DR. BENJAMIN THROOP

Dr. B. H. Throop came to this section in 1840, residing in Razorville, later called Providence, and as there was no doctor in the vicinity of the iron works, the Scranton Company persuaded him to move down and locate near the furnace so that he would be available to treat emergency cases at the furnace. At that time the settlement was called Harrison.

Razorville, now Providence, was called Razorville because of the sharp Yankee practices shown in horse-trading. In this trading there were said to be "as sharp as a razor."

There were two hotels in Razorville, one, the Cottrell House, where they charged six cents for a drink of liquor, six cents for lodging, such as it was, and twelve cents for a dinner, and everything else in proportion.

There were eight distilleries located on the Lackawanna River between Razorville and Slocum Hollow all of them distilling liquor from the corn which the old settlers grew, and as there were no railroads to transport the corn to market, they found it more profitable to make the corn into corn-whiskey and ship the whiskey. At that time there were no taxes, and whiskey sold for eight cents a quart. Easton, Pennsylvania, was sixty-six miles from Scranton, and was the nearest market. With the poor roads the early settlers were not able to haul more than 1,500 pounds to a load, and by turning the corn into whiskey they had only to make one-third the number of trips that they would have had to make had they hauled the corn as it came from the stalk.

Mr. Elmer Williams tells me that his father at the age of twelve drove a team of horses with a load of lumber from South Scranton to Easton taking three days for the round trip.

Dr. Throop covered about fifty miles a day with a team of horses by wagon in the summer and by sleigh in the winter, calling on the sick and injured. At one time he was called to Bear Creek to treat a man in the woods who had frozen both his feet, and gangrene had set in. Dr. Throop drove to within two miles of the man's hut and due to the depth of the snow he was obliged to unharness one of his horses and ride bare-back to the cabin. He had no surgical instruments, no anesthetics and no antiseptic bandages with him. He simply had a dull razor, and an ordinary wood saw, which he used to amputate both feet. He used an ordinary needle and cotton thread which he had in his pocket to sew up the wounds, and the man recovered.

COLONEL GEORGE W. SCRANTON

I cannot go into the history of all the early settlers but I feel I must mention the name of George W. Scranton who came from Belvidere, and who was brother of Selden T. Scranton, of Oxford Furnace. Colonel Hitchcock, writing of Colonel Scranton in his History of Scranton, states "As one looks back on the early history of Scranton he is amazed at the inflow of capital during these excessively hard times, into the coffers of the concern whose career, thus far, from a financial standpoint, had been a dismal failure. This is accounted for only by the faith of the subscribers in the pioneers of the enterprise, and particularly to the personal magnetism, character, and courage of Colonel George W. Scranton. He was one of those men who by nature are wonderfully endowed with the element of leadership. To this endowment was added a most winning gentleness of manner, a fine character, and a heroic spirit that inspired absolute faith in his word."

Colonel Scranton must have had a fine physique, for they said he could use a sledge hammer better than any of the Company's men, and used this to such an extent in removing iron from the blast furnace that it affected his heart, and he died at the age of fifty.

It is hard to realize that Colonel George W. Scranton was only twenty-nine years old, and Mr. Selden T. Scranton twenty-six, when they came to Slocum Hollow.

In Dr. Throop's notes he states that Colonel Scranton came to his house early one morning in March, 1843, and informed him that he had no money to meet the \$2,000.00 payroll, that he had just returned from Belvidere and could not get any, and that he never felt more discouraged in his life. Dr. Throop then offered to harness his horses and drive Colonel Scranton to Carbondale where he introduced him to a friend of his, a Mr. Knapp. No man was ever given better powers of

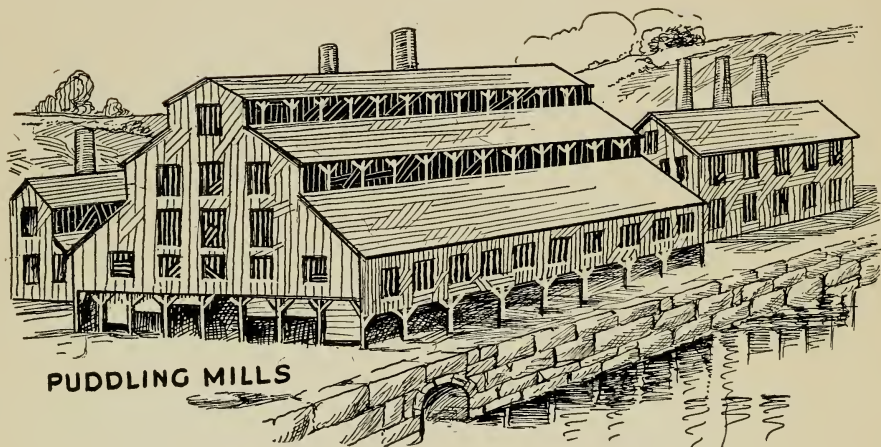
persuasion, which was evidenced by the fact that Mr. Knapp advanced him \$1,000.00. This was good luck as far as it went, but it was not enough. Dr. Throop then drove him over to Honesdale, where he succeeded in obtaining an additional \$700.00. He was still \$300.00 short.

SHINPLASTERS

When the Company did not have enough money to meet their payroll they issued what they called "shinplasters", a piece of paper, printed much like a bill, about two inches by five inches, and containing an order which the employee could use in purchasing supplies or food at the Company store. The shinplaster which I have is headed "Lackawanna Iron Works", "Pay to Bearer seventy-five cents worth of goods at the Company store," and signed in ink by Scrantons & Platt, in my grandfather's handwriting. After the goods had been delivered to the employee my grandfather scratched out the name of Scranton & Platt with pen and ink.

MARKETING OF PIG IRON

The only way to market at that time was to haul this pig iron by team to Carbondale, then over the Delaware & Hudson Railroad to Honesdale, then by canal to Rondout on the Hudson River and down to New York by boat. This method of transportation was too costly and prevented the Company from competing with other furnaces located nearer the market. In September, 1843, Joseph H. Scranton and his brother, Erastus C. Scranton, of Augusta, Georgia, who were together in the cotton business, and Mr. John Howland of New York, were taken into the Scrantons & Grant Company as special partners, and the capital was increased from \$20,000.00 to \$86,000.00.



PUDDLING MILLS

NORTH MILL CONSTRUCTED

In May, 1844, the Company contracted with Mr. William Manness, grandfather of Mr. Charles F. Manness to furnish the labor, for \$350.00, to build the first rolling mill on the site now occupied by the Laurel Line Power House. This was called the North Mill, and was 110 feet wide by 114 feet long, the Company agreeing to furnish all the material including timber standing in the forest. The following November they built a small nail factory, fifty by seventy-five feet. The first iron was puddled in April, and the first nails were made July 6, 1845.

My great uncle, Mr. William H. Platt, was superintendent of this North Mill and often took me through the mill to witness the manufacture of wrought iron bars and T iron rails. They also manufactured cut nails and shipped them in large quantities to different customers, but most of them were returned, as they were very hard and about every third nail would break when the hammer was applied to it. This attempt to manufacture nails was another loss which the Company was obliged to absorb.

TRAVEL IN 1846

Mr. Joseph H. Scranton, Mr. Worthington Scranton's grandfather, visited in Connecticut and interested his brother-in-law, (my grandfather) Mr. Joseph C. Platt, who was then a successful merchant in Fairhaven, Connecticut, to come to Scranton in 1846 and join with them in this venture. There was an interesting side-light on this trip to Scranton in March, 1846, when he brought his family to Scranton. There were no railroads from New Haven to New York, so they took a night boat from New Haven, and on their arrival in New York the next morning they found the streets of New York so full of snow that their carriage could hardly get to the Franklin Hotel at the corner of Broadway and Dey Streets. After

breakfast it was found impossible to get a carriage to take them to the ferry at the foot of Cortland Street, consequently they had to walk and a hand cart took their luggage. They crossed the ferry and took the Camden and Amboy Railroad to Newark, and the Morris & Essex Railroad from Newark to Morristown. The locomotive on the Morris & Essex had only one pair of driving wheels.

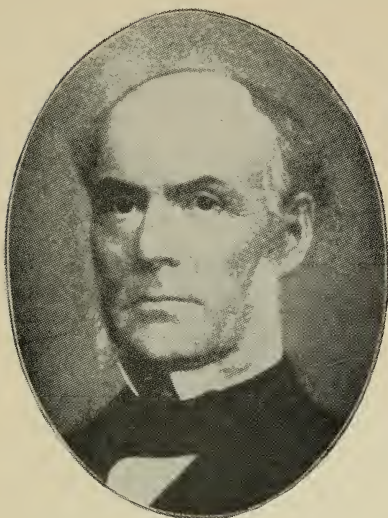
At the Summit station they found a novel plan for supplying the engine with water. A pair of wheels on a line of shafting was placed beneath the track, the upper side of them being in line and level with the top of the track. The shafting on which this pair of wheels was mounted was connected to a water pump. The locomotive was chained to the rails and ties, with the drivers of the locomotive resting on the wheels beneath the track. When the enginer turned the steam on the locomotive the driving wheels of the locomotive turned the wheels on the shafting below the track, thus pumping the water into the tender of the locomotive.

At Morristown they took the stage to Oxford Furnace where they arrived that evening. Very heavy rains at Oxford Furnace delayed their leaving, so after spending about a week in Oxford Furnace they finally drove to Tannersville, where they spent the next night, and the next morning finding good sleighing they changed their vehicle to runners and finally arrived at Mr. Selden T. Scranton's house the night of March 17th, thus taking three days from New York to Scranton. On the way to Scranton my grandfather obtained his first sight of the new telegraph lines from New York to Philadelphia.

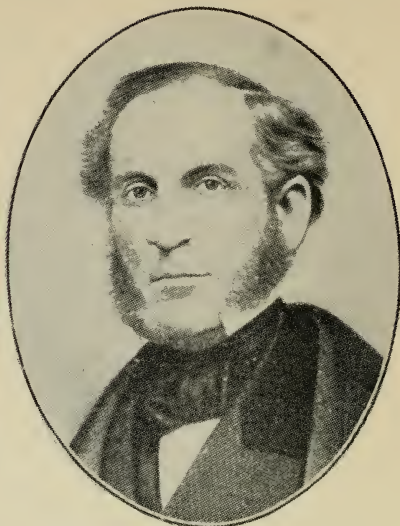
ORGANIZATION OF SCRANTONS & PLATT

In April, 1846, Mr. Sanford Grant retired from the Company and my grandfather, Mr. Joseph C. Platt, took his place. On November 7, 1846, the first firm of Scrantons & Platt was

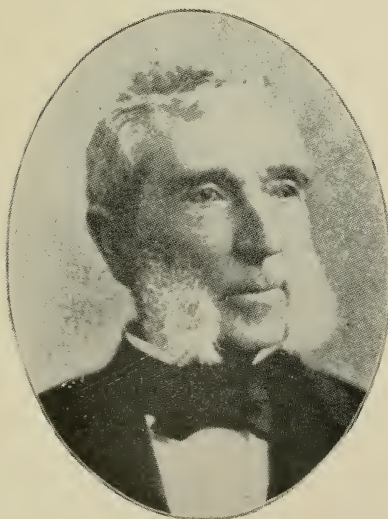
THE ORIGINAL FOUNDERS OF SCRANTON



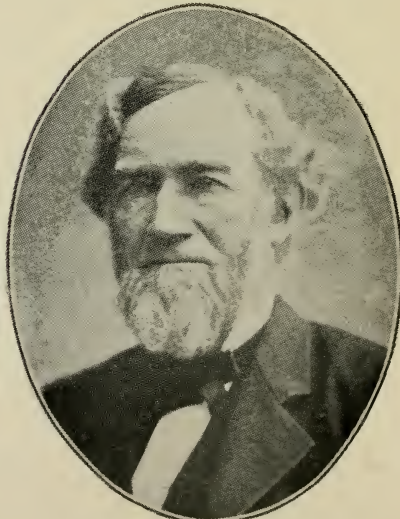
JOSEPH H. SCRANTON



GEORGE WHITFIELD SCRANTON



SELDON T. SCRANTON



JOSEPH CURTIS PLATT

duly organized, consisting of Mr. George W. Scranton, Mr. Joseph H. Scranton, Mr. Selden T. Scranton, and Mr. Joseph C. Platt, as general partners.

Three of the Scrantons in the firm of Scrantons & Platt were born in Madison, Connecticut, and my grandfather, the fourth member of the firm, was born about ten miles from Madison. These three Scrantons and my grandmother, who was a sister of Joseph H. Scranton, were all about the same age, and grew up together in Madison, until they moved to Pennsylvania. My family have spent their summers at Madison for the past forty-three years, and I now bathe with my grandchildren on the beach and between the same two rocks where I bathed with my grandmother sixty-eight years ago.

On November 11, 1846, William E. Dodge, Anson G. Phelps, Benjamin Loder, Samuel March, Henry Shelden, John I. Blair, James Blair, William B. Skidmore, James Stokes, Philip Dater, Daniel S. Miller, James A. Robinson, William H. Shelden and Frederick Griffing put in another \$115,000. as special partners. Later Mr. Moses Taylor and Mr. Percy R. Pyne joined the Company. On October 2, 1847, some of the special partners added to their subscriptions, making the total capital \$250,000.00.

The name of Charles Fuller has often been mentioned both in connection with the manufacture of iron and also in the records of the First Presbyterian Church. Mr. Fuller was born in Montrose in 1797, started to work as a clerk in a Tunkhannock store in 1810 when he was thirteen years old. In 1817 he worked in a drug store in Kingston, and in 1848 he came to Scranton and was engaged as a bookkeeper in the firm of Scrantons & Platt. He finally left this position to go into the Fire Insurance business. Mr. Fuller was Edward L. Fuller's grandfather.

JOSEPH H. SCRANTON LOOKS FOR INVESTORS

Mr. Joseph H. Scranton was of great assistance in raising additional capital for the Company. During his residence in Georgia he made the acquaintance of Mr. Fay, of the firm of Paddeford & Fay, of Savannah, Georgia, formerly of Boston, Massachusetts. Mr. Fay became very much interested in the Iron Works here, and put Mr. Scranton in touch with New York and Boston capital, with the result that he was able to secure a considerable amount of additional money.

Mr. Erastus C. Scranton was also born in Madison, Connecticut, and went to Augusta, Georgia, where he was engaged in the cotton brokerage business with his brother Joseph H. Scranton. He also invested in the firm of Scrantons & Platt but he never lived in Scranton. He resided in New Haven, Connecticut, and was President of the Second National Bank of New Haven, and also President of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad Company. He was killed by a locomotive when he stepped off a New Haven train at the South Norwalk station.

SCRANTONS & PLATT CONTRACT FOR ERIE RAILROAD RAILS

About this time the Erie Railroad had been built only as far as Port Jervis, and the State of New York had advanced them large sums of money to be used in building the railroad toward the west, but they were threatened with bankruptcy for want of further funds. The Legislature of New York offered to release their claim on three million dollars which the State of New York had loaned the Erie Railroad Company, provided the Railroad Company would complete the road as far as Binghamton in two years.

Up to that time the Erie Railroad had been obliged to purchase rails in England and to pay \$80.00 per ton plus the

freight across the ocean, and wait a long time for delivery. The firm of Scrantons & Platt was offered a contract for 12,000 tons of sixty-pound T iron rails, at \$80.00 per ton, or \$960,000. provided they would deliver these rails to the Erie Railroad Company's right of way within eighteen months after receipt of the order, so that the Erie R. R. Company could lay the rails in time to complete the extension to Binghamton in the specified time. They had never made any rails and knew very little about their manufacture, and they had no rolling mill machinery.

The Capital of the Scrantons & Platt Company at this time was \$250,000 and the undertaking of a million dollar contract with this small capital was staggering to think of, from the fact that they were obliged to use a large amount of their capital in purchasing rolling mill machinery to roll the rails. The Erie Railroad Company advanced the Company \$100,000. on this contract and this machinery was contracted for in Philadelphia. The first mill was enlarged and eight months after signing the contract with the Erie Company the first T rails were rolled.

The rails were hauled by sixteen mule teams over the different roads which were deep in mud, between Scranton and the right of way which the Erie Railroad Company had secured between Port Jervis and Binghamton.

LEGISLATURE SAVES ERIE RAILROAD FROM BANKRUPTCY AND HELPS FINANCES OF SCRANTONS & PLATT

The delivery of these rails according to contract enabled the Erie Railroad Company to finish the extension to Binghamton in about three months less than the specified two years, the result being that the New York State Legislature cancelled the three million dollar loan that the Erie Railroad

Company owed the State of New York. This transaction kept the Erie Railroad Company out of bankruptcy and helped the finances of the firm of Scrantons & Platt.

Col. George W. Scranton and Selden T. Scranton first came to Slocum Hollow in 1840. They were both interested in the Oxford Furnace property. Col. George Scranton spent most of his time in Slocum Hollow from 1840 to 1844, while Selden T. Scranton stayed in Oxford looking after the property there. In 1844 Col. George W. Scranton, who was very much discouraged with the progress in Slocum Hollow up to that time, returned to Oxford to look after the property there, and Mr. Selden T. Scranton came to Slocum Hollow to take charge of the property here.

OXFORD IRON & NAIL COMPANY

Every time I see the name Oxford Furnace I think of the Iron Company there which was called the Oxford Iron & Nail Company. Before I went away to school my grandmother told me that she would give me a thousand dollars if I did not smoke until I was twenty-one. She gave me a thousand dollar bond of the Oxford Iron & Nail Company, which failed in later years when wire nails came into the market and took the place of the old cut nails, so I never was able to realize on the thousand dollar bond. I also had a similar experience when I went to Cornell. I won a scholarship which gave free tuition. Tuition at that time was only \$125.00 per year, and my father gave me a \$500 bond in a western farm and mortgage company, to offset the cost of the tuition. This Company also failed, so my first two experiences in the financial line were not very successful.

Seldon T. Scranton was not only a more experienced iron production manager, but he was also a far better business man than George. George was by far the best promoter of new en-

terprises and he could get money for all purposes as no one else could.

Mr. Joseph H. Scranton moved his family to Scranton in June, 1847 and lived in a frame house which he built near the present site of the Stone House which he occupied until his death. He came none too soon, for business was crowding and his help was needed.

After the arrival of Mr. Joseph H. Scranton, a second reorganization of the firm of Scrantons & Platt was arranged, and more capital brought in, and the capital increased to \$400,000.00.

In looking into the ages of the four members of the firm of Scrantons & Platt I was surprised to find that the average age of the four men when they came to Slocum Hollow was only 29 years, and that their average age when they took the million dollar contract to supply rails to the Erie Railroad Company was only 32 years. I cannot imagine four men of only 32 years of age, in our day, ever having the courage and financial backing to take a contract of a million dollars and fulfilling the contract.

The name of the town had been changed to Harrison in 1841, then to Lackawanna Iron Works, and later to Scranton, and finally, the name of Scranton was officially sanctioned by the Post Office Department on January 27, 1851.

No. 2 and No. 3 blast furnaces were built the latter part of 1848, and were put in operation in October and November, 1849.

No. 2 Furnace was furnished with air from a blowing engine having a steam cylinder 4'6" in diameter and an air cylinder 9'2" in diameter, with a ten foot stroke, and having a twenty ton fly wheel. The blowing engine for No. 3 Furnace was equipped with a 37½ ton fly wheel. The air for No. 2 and No. 3 Furnaces was supplied by the blowing engines mentioned above, which were located in an engine house about three

hundred feet south of the corner of Lackawanna and Jefferson Avenues, and this air was delivered through large wrought iron pipes to the blast furnaces. The wheezing sound when the air was drawn into the air cylinders could be heard several blocks away.

The air for No. 2 and No. 3 Furnaces was heated by being passed through vertical masonry stoves, which were built alongside the blast furnace generally four in number. These stoves were lined with checker fire brick and the gasses from the top of the furnace were piped down to the under side of these stoves. The passage of the gasses and hot air was controlled by a set of dampers so arranged that after the gasses had heated up the fire-brick in one of the stoves, the dampers were changed so as to throw the heat over into the next stove, then another damper threw cold air into the bottom of the stove the fire-brick of which had previously been heated by the gasses. This process was continued from one stove to the other so as to give a continual flow of hot air. In modern blast furnace practice it is possible to heat the combustion air as high as 1500 degrees F and the blowing engines are capable of operating up to pressures of 30 to 35 pounds per square inch.

Photographs of the blast furnaces show these vertical heating stoves alongside the furnaces.

The gasses from the blast furnaces were also used underneath the boilers to produce steam to operate the blowing engines.

In 1850 Mr. Joel Amsden, architect and engineer, laid out the city, and my grandfather, Mr. Joseph C. Platt, was instrumental in naming the avenues after some of the Presidents of the United States, some of the streets after different trees; Lackawanna and Wyoming Avenues were named for the two valleys, and Penn and Franklin Avenues were named after noted Pennsylvanians. Mifflin Avenue was named for the first

governor of Pennsylvania; Clay and Webster Avenues, Irving and Prescott were named for noted Americans.

LEGGITTS GAP RAILROAD

The Leggitts Gap Railway from Scranton to Great Bend, on the Erie Railroad was put into operation in October, 1851. It was intended to be a local road that would develop the anthracite industry, and an interchange agreement was made whereby the tracks of the Erie Railroad could be used by the Leggitts Gap Railroad, from Great Bend to Owego. In the same year, 1851, the Company acquired by lease the Cayuga and Susquehanna Railroad between Owego and Lake Cayuga at Ithaca, thus by using a connection with the Erie Canal at the north end of Lake Cayuga an outlet to both the East and West was provided, for the shipment of coal and iron. The first locomotive operated on this Leggitts Gap Railway was called the "Spitfire" and was purchased from the Reading Railroad Company. In 1854 the first coal-burning locomotive was put in use on this road. In November, 1851, the name of the Leggitts Gap Railroad was changed to the Lackawanna & Western Railroad.

DELAWARE & COBBS RAILROAD

For several years prior to 1851 the Scranton people had talked of the desirability of building a railroad toward New York over the Pocono Mountains, and the engineers worked on several routes but pronounced it impossible for a locomotive railroad to be built. Nevertheless, with Colonel Scranton's characteristic energy and indomitable purpose, he and colleagues pushed ahead with undaunted courage to do the impossible. At that time, from an engineering standpoint this was the most stupendous railway undertaking yet attempted on the Continent and well illustrates the pluck and faith of

these pioneers. Its successful accomplishment is an achievement of which our city has a right to be proud. It was necessary to have a grade of 72 feet to the mile from Scranton to Nay Aug, and an average grade of 52 to the mile from Nay Aug to Lehigh.

It is rather a coincidence that the grade from Scranton to Clarks Summit is the same as from Scranton to Nay Aug, 72 feet to the mile.

On March 11, 1853 the Delaware & Cobbs Gap Rairoad was merged with the Lackawanna & Western, under the name of the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad. On May 27, 1854, the first anthracite coal burning locomotive was put in operation on this road.

In 1853 the railroad from Nay Aug to Delaware, N. J., was completed, so that trains running east had to be boarded at the Nay Aug station, then called Greenville, until the Nay Aug tunnel was completed on May 10, 1855, after which the railroad was extended through the Nay Aug tunnel to the Scranton station. Passengers for New York left the train at the Delaware station and took a bus to Belvidere, and the Jersey Central train to New York.

Later the Lackawanna & Western Railroad was extended to Binghamton, the N. Y. Lackawanna & Western was built from Binghamton to Buffalo and leased to the D. L. & W. Railroad. The road was extended from Delaware station to Dover where it joined the Morris & Essex Railroad running from Dover to Hoboken—thus completing a through line from New York to Buffalo.

James Archbald, son-in-law of Mr. J. J. Albright, and father of Mrs. John H. Brooks of Scranton, was born February 17, 1838, was graduated from Union College in the Engineering Course in 1860. On his return to Scranton he was made Civil Engineer for the D. L. & W. Railroad Company. In 1870, on the death of his father he was advanced to

the position of Chief Engineer which position he held until 1899, after forty years of service. The Oxford Tunnel, the Bergen Tunnel near Hoboken, and the extension of the D. L. & W. Railroad from Great Bend to Buffalo, were all built under his supervision.

LACKAWANNA IRON & COAL COMPANY COMES INTO BEING

In 1853 Mr. John I. Blair, Mr. James Blair, Moses Taylor, William E. Dodge, Percy R. Pyne and Samuel Sloan joined with the Company and organized the Lackawanna Iron & Coal Company, and more money was paid in by the above men. The capital was increased to \$800,000.00 and later, in April 1860, to \$1,200,000.00, and again in 1873-74 to \$3,000,000.00. After all the hardships that the founders of Scranton and their associates went through in the several times that they were nearly forced into bankruptcy, it must have given them great satisfaction when they finally made a success from their efforts and realized a profit of over four million dollars in the four years from 1867 to 1870 inclusive, or an average of over a million dollars a year.

At the organization meeting Mr. Seldon T. Scranton was elected President, and remained so until he returned to Oxford in 1858, when he was succeeded by Mr. Joseph H. Scranton, who held the position until his death on June 6, 1872.

As this section had no hotels, except the old Slocum House, money was subscribed and in 1852 the Scranton interests built the Wyoming House, on the northeast corner of Lackawanna and Wyoming Avenue, where the Scranton Dry Goods store now stands. This was erected at a cost of \$40,000.00 including the furnishings, and was operated by Mr. J. C. Burgess. Later the Forest House was built on the site of the present Hotel Jermyn.

My father, Joseph C. Platt, Jr., took an engineering course in Troy Polytechnic Institute and was graduated in 1866. Mr. W. W. Scranton, his cousin, was graduated from Yale in 1865, and both of these men worked together in the steel mills, learning the business.

In 1870 Mr. Moses Taylor, William E. Dodge, and the different men of the Company, persuaded my father to go to Franklin, N. J. and build a blast furnace, using iron ore which they obtained in New Jersey. My father built the furnace and operated it until 1875 when he went to Waterford, near Troy, N. Y., where he engaged in the manufacture of valves and hydrants until his death in 1898. I was born at Franklin Furnace, N. J. during the construction of the blast furnace.

There were very few stores in Franklin Furnace, so my mother was obliged to go to Newton, New Jersey, ten miles away, to do her shopping, and she often made the trip in the Company's steam locomotive. She happened to make the trip the day before I was born, which some say accounts for my engineering bent.

I was very fond of railroads in my younger days, and often thought I would like to be a locomotive engineer. When I visited my grandmother I watched the D. L. & W. trains going by to New York. At that time the locomotives were named for prominent citizens who were connected with the Iron Company, Thomas Dickson, Moses Taylor, William E. Dodge, and Sam Sloane. In later years my ambition was realized when in Mr. W. F. Hallstead's regime I rode on the fast passenger locomotive from Binghamton to Hoboken.

At that time there were very few houses in Scranton north of Mulberry Street. My grandfather kept several cows and I often helped his coachman drive the cows up to the pasture in the morning, letting down the bars to the pasture where the Clay Avenue apartments are now located. At that time there

were horse-drawn street cars, one of which went up Madison Avenue to Olive Street and across the fields past the west side of the Moses Taylor Hospital to Dunmore Corners. Another street car line ran up Mulberry Street to Clay Avenue, the end of the line as there were no houses beyond Clay Avenue. The horse-car barns were located just west of the Post Office, and fresh horses were taken up Linden Street to the corner where the Elm Park Church now stands, and hitched to the car.

As I have previously mentioned, the Court House Square, was originally a great swamp, and contained a pond of water on which the boys skated in the winter. In order to fill this up before building the Court House, a tunnel was driven from the North Mill, coming out at the corner of Madison Avenue and Linden Street, through which six-mule teams hauled the slag and ashes from the mill, up through the tunnel and down Linden Street, and dumped it into the pond.

Some time after graduating from Yale Mr. W. W. Scranton went to Europe to study the iron and steel business, and on returning in 1867 he was made superintendent of the Lackawanna Iron & Coal Company's rolling mill, where they were making pig iron, puddling it and rolling wrought iron bars and T iron rails.

In 1876 Mr. W. W. Scranton was appointed assistant to the President of the Company, and later, in 1874, he again visited Europe to study the Bessemer steel process which had just been discovered. He visited the steel mills in England, France and Germany. He returned to Scranton and was made general manager of the Company's rolling mill.

ORGANIZATION OF SCRANTON STEEL CO.

In 1880 Mr. Scranton resigned from the Lackawanna Iron & Coal Company and organized the Scranton Steel Company, and built a steel mill on the south side, where the Murray Plant now stands, and made steel by the Bessemer process. The Scranton Steel Company immediately became a competitor of the Lackawanna Iron & Coal Company. I remember Mr. Scranton taking me through his mill when I was a boy.

Mr. Henry Wehrum, who had been Chief Engineer of the Lackawanna Iron & Coal Company, left them and went with Mr. Scranton as Chief Engineer in the new Scranton Steel Company.

CONSOLIDATION OF LACKAWANNA IRON & COAL CO. AND THE SCRANTON STEEL CO.

In 1891 the Lackawanna Iron & Coal Company and the Scranton Steel Company were consolidated and called the Lackawanna Iron & Steel Company. Mr. Wehrum was made general manager and Mr. Scranton resigned from the Company and went with the Scranton Gas & Water Company.

About 1900 the Lackawanna Iron & Steel Company was moved to Lackawanna, N. Y., on the outskirts of Buffalo, as it was cheaper to make steel where they could obtain the ore and limestone by water on the Great Lakes. Later this company was sold to the Bethlehem Steel Company, and is still in operation.

After being graduated from Cornell in Engineering in 1892, I came to Scranton and worked for the Wightman Electric Mfg. Company, who manufactured one of the first electric street railway motors, for $7\frac{1}{2}\phi$ an hour or \$16.00 per month, which enabled me to pay for my table board, which was \$4.00 per week. This company discontinued business in 1893.

In order to learn about mining coal, and the possibility of electrification of the mines, I left with my dinner pail on the D. & H. at 6:20 in the morning for Peckville, walked three miles up the mountain, and spent all day in the Sturges Shaft Mines where I worked with the Hungarian, Poles, etc., who shared their bologna and dark brown bread with me. I was glad, later in life, to have had this experience.

Later I formed the Scranton Electric Construction Company. The General Electric Company had an office in Scranton at that time, but they closed it and we have acted as their agents in the mining field since 1895.

The first electric mine locomotive installed in this section was installed at the Erie Colliery of the Hillside Coal & Iron Company in 1889. This consisted of a six-ton General Electric locomotive with an open motor, mounted on top of the locomotive, obtaining its current from a pantagraph trolley. This locomotive was in operation for twenty-two years, and later was purchased by Henry Ford for his museum in Dearborne, Michigan. The next two locomotives were installed at the Forest City Colliery of the Hillside Coal & Iron Company in 1891, and consisted of two General Electric 12-ton so-called "terrapin back" locomotives, which were operated by one motor connected to one axle, the two axles being connected with side connecting rods. The fourth locomotive was installed at the Mount Lookout Colliery of Simpson & Watkins at Wyoming in 1893, and consisted of one General Electric 7-ton two-motor locomotive.

These four locomotives which were in operation when I came to Scranton in 1892 were finally increased until there were about 2500 electric locomotives in the anthracite mines.

After watching the operation of the first four electric locomotives in the mines, and talking to the mine superintendents and motor-men, I found that these locomotives had been designed by men who were not acquainted with mining

operation, and I found that many details should be changed to give better operation. The General Electric Company built these locomotives in their Lynn, Massachusetts, works, and they asked me to go to Lynn and consult with the designers of the locomotives, where I suggested several changes which improved the operation and control of the locomotives.

THE FIRST ELECTRIC STREET RAILWAY

There were several cities in the United States which claimed to have operated an electric street railway prior to the one which was operated in Scranton. These included Montgomery, Alabama ; Richmond, Virginia ; and South Bend, Indiana ; but on investigation it was found that while they did operate cars most all attempts resulted in a failure, so that the first street railway in the United States built entirely for operation by electric power, and to have a regular schedule, was put in operation in Scranton on November 30, 1886, and was used to carry passengers home to Green Ridge from a lecture given in the Academy of Music on Wyoming Avenue, opposite St. Luke's Church, by Henry M. Stanley, the African Explorer, who was lecturing on his discovery of Mr. David Livingstone in the wilds of Africa.

These cars ran from Scranton to Green Ridge, and the Company was known as the Scranton Suburban Electric Railway Company, organized by Mr. E. B. Sturges, Mr. O. S. Johnson, George Sanderson, Thomas F. Torrey, James W. Garvey, J. Benjamin Dimmick, A. L. Spencer, John L. Hull, and C. DuPont Breck.

The cars were equipped with a Vandepoele electric motor which was mounted on one axle of the car. The current from the trolley wire was obtained by what they called a carrier, traveling on top of the trolley wire instead of the usual trolley below as we know it. After the current passed

through the motor it returned to the rails through a wire brush which made contact on the rails. I was in Scranton in 1886 and remember seeing these cars in operation, and often saw the carrier fall off and land on the roof of the car, one car having no less than thirty holes where the carrier had punctured the roof.

Among the later builders of Scranton were J. J. Albright, Thomas Dickson, James Archbald, E. W. Weston, W. H. Richmond, George Sheldon and Joseph Sheldon. Mr. J. J. Albright was asked to go to Oxford Furnace, N. J., to manage the blast furnace there for Mr. George W. Scranton and Shelden T. Scranton, and later was asked to come to Scranton to take charge of the mining department of the Lackawanna Railroad. He held this position until 1866 when he left the Lackawanna Company and accepted a similar position with the coal department of the Delaware & Hudson Railroad Company.

I have not mentioned Mr. O. S. Johnson, who came to Scranton in 1865, as he was not one of the founders of Scranton.

Mr. Johnson was born in New Jersey, in January, 1847, and came to Scranton in 1865, when he was eighteen years old, with all his belongings in a small bag and only five dollars in his pocket. He went to work as a clerk in the Connell Coal Company's store in Minooka for the first year. The second year he worked at the Hunt Hardware Store on Lackawanna Avenue. During that time he must have studied book-keeping, for the third year he obtained a position as book-keeper with the Reiley Coal Company who were operating a colliery just east of the present Scranton Electric Company's coal pile, later called the Green Ridge Coal Company.

He made himself very valuable to Mr. Reiley, who presented him with some stock in the Company from time to time.

He saved his money and after the panic of 1873 when the Reiley Coal Company failed, Mr. Johnson obtained control.

Mr. Johnson was considered by some people to be rather unapproachable, but he was like a father to me, as my father died when I was a young man. He gave me some good advice from time to time, and one of the things he cautioned me about was endorsing notes, as he had seen many friendships broken up, and in this particular I have followed his advice, although in later years when we built an electric power plant for supplying electric light and power to five towns in Susquehanna County, he offered to endorse my note for a substantial amount while I sold the bonds for the Company. Another piece of advice he gave me was at the end of each year when he asked me if I had saved 25% of my income, as he said no young man could expect to succeed if he did not save at least that much per year, and I have followed his advice in this respect regularly. I remember Mr. Johnson's telling me that on his way to and from work he passed the residence of a Mrs. Margaret Farrell, in Dunmore, who was baking bread in an outside oven in her yard. The odor of this fresh bread attracted Mr. Johnson's attention as a boy and he often stopped at the fence. Mrs. Farrell asked him to come in and have some bread and butter and a glass of milk. Mr. Johnson remembered this, and in later years when Mr. and Mrs. Farrell were old people he supported both of them until their death.

Later Mr. Johnson joined the Lackawanna Coal Company at Blakely with Mr. H. S. Pierce, Mr. E. B. Sturges and Mr. E. N. Willard, and made a great success of the business. This Company paid dividends as high as \$40,000.00 a month.

As you all know, when Mr. Johnson died he left a large proportion of his estate for the founding of an Industrial School called the Johnson School, which is located on sixty-five acres of land in the north end of the city. Mr. Johnson came to Scranton as a poor boy, and wanted to have a school

founded which would give a good common school education to the under-privileged boy and girl, with special emphasis on giving them some kind of a trade, which was denied him in his early days. This school at the present time has 190 G. I.'s and 130 regular students, or a total of 320.

The school has been in operation continuously since 1918 and has prepared 1,951 boys and girls for useful occupations. From the fact that the school is teaching veterans, the War Assets Administration and the Federal Works Agency have given the school about \$200,000 worth of machine tools and equipment, thus giving us one of the finest equipped machine shops in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

About 5% of the boys and girls continue their schooling and take college and university training for entrance into the professions. Practically all of them have entered into fields of endeavor that are directly related to the training which they received in the Johnson School. Throughout the years many of these young people have risen to positions of great responsibility and prominence.

When I came to Scranton in 1892 most of the coal in the mines was hauled by mules, and the barn boss was quite a prominent man around the coal mines. One cold winter day while installing some electrical apparatus for the Sterrick Creek Coal Company in Jessup, the barn boss asked me to come over to his house for dinner with his family. During the meal stewed tomatoes were passed, and as each member of the family helped themselves to tomatoes, they put the tablespoon in their mouth and licked it off, and of course, being a guest, I did the same thing as I did not want them to think I was "high hat".

I think from the above outline, you can see what hardships the original founders of Scranton went through before they made a success of the manufacture of iron and saw a

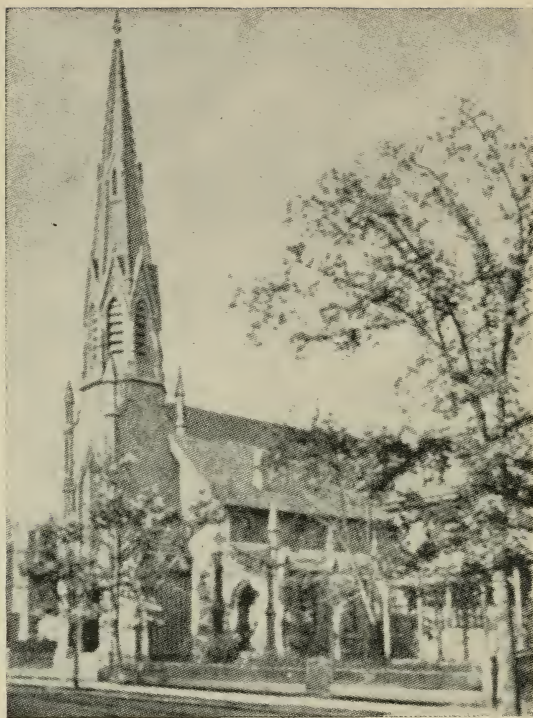
small hamlet of a few hundred people grow into a large city. The population of Scranton when the oldest of the founders died was 75,000.

I usually spent part of my summer vacations with my grandparents in Scranton, and I often went to the Company store at the corner of Lackawanna and Jefferson Avenue, and also to the offices of the Iron Company on the second floor of the same building.

One of the most enjoyable things I did when I was a boy in Scranton was to ride in the small locomotive that hauled a train of steel dump cars filled with hot slag, from the blast furnace up a narrow gauge railroad, to the slag dump on top of "Shanty Hill" where the slag was dumped. Some of this slag is now being used to make cinder building blocks. I often talked with my grandfather in the later years of his life and he gave me some of the information which I have given you.

In closing I wish to state that I obtained some of the above information from the histories of Scranton by Col. F. L. Hitchcock, Dr. Hollister, Dr. B. H. Throop and from the Reminiscences of my grandfather, Joseph C. Platt, and also from some notes given me by the Rev. A. G. Yount, of Washington, New Jersey, who is in possession of the diary of Mr. William Henry. I also received some valuable information from my good friends Thomas Murphy and Cadwallader Evans, and from Mr. Quincy Bent, of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, who was Vice-President of the Bethlehem Steel Co., in charge of operations for many years, and who is now retired.





FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Formerly located in the 100 block of Washington Avenue

II.

ESTABLISHING THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

As the establishing of a Presbyterian Church in the early days was so closely identified with the building of the blast furnace, and as the early founders of the City were as much interested in establishing a church as they were in building a furnace, I have covered the information regarding the establishing of the church in a separate section.

In February, 1842, a meeting was held in the little school house in Harrison, which stood on the northeastern corner of Lackawanna and Adams Avenue, where Preno's Restaurant now stands, to organize a Presbyterian church. The church was built in what is now called Taylor Borough, and still stands in the cemetery in Taylor. It was called the Lackawanna Presbyterian Church and included all Presbyterians from Providence to Pittston. A young man named Nathaniel G. Parke was pastor of this scattered parish, in fact it was so scattered that a meeting was held in the summer of 1848 for the purpose of finding out whether a separate church could not be organized for this section, and a petition was prepared and presented to the Presbytery, requesting that a separate Church be formed at Harrison. This request was granted and a new Church formed on October 14, 1848, called the First Presbyterian Church of Harrison, and later changed to the First Presbyterian Church of Scranton. This consisted of seventeen members under the leadership of Rev. Mr. Parke. All the Founders of Scranton were instrumental in founding the Church.

The Rev. Nathaniel G. Parke referred to above lived in West Pittston and became a very good friend of a Catholic

priest, and when the Catholics built their first Church there he collected \$1,500.00 from his Protestant friends and presented it to the Catholics, which naturally made a very good feeling.

Later, when it was necessary to enlarge the Presbyterian Church, Mr. Parke, so the story goes, went to this same priest and asked him if he would not reciprocate and subscribe \$1,500.00 toward the cost of enlarging their church. He immediately replied that Catholics could not think of giving any money toward building a Presbyterian Church. Mr. Parke told him that they expected to enlarge the Church by tearing out the front and side walls of the church and increasing the width and length. The priest told Mr. Parke that if he would send him a memorandum of the cost of tearing down some of the Presbyterian Church, that he would send him \$1,500.

The first place of worship for the Church was Odd Fellows Hall at the corner of Lackawanna and Jefferson Avenue. In 1850 Rev. J. D. Mitchell was installed as the first pastor of this congregation at a salary of \$600.00 per year. The following year the Church received a gift from the Scrantons & Platt of five lots in the 100 block of Washington Avenue, the site of the present Woolworth Store. During the pastorate of the Rev. Mr. Mitchell, sixty-seven members were added to the congregation.

The second pastor was the Rev. John F. Baker, who was installed in April, 1854, and served until January, 1855, when his pastorate was terminated on account of ill health. The third pastor was the Rev. N. J. Hickok, who was elected in March, 1855, and served for twelve and a half years. At the end of his pastorate the number of communicants had increased to 343.

While using Odd Fellows Hall as a place of worship the congregation paid a rental of \$10.00 per year, and it was

occupied regularly for worship services from the organization of the Church until September 29, 1852.

In 1846 the first request for subscriptions for a Church edifice, to be erected on Washington Avenue, was circulated, and \$640.00 was secured from the members. Later the Scrantons & Platt in addition to donating the lots, gave them \$3,200.00. Further subscription were secured, increasing the total amount to \$7,000.00. Work was started on the Church building on April 29, 1851. Mr. W. W. Manness, contractor, erected the building and the cost of the Church was \$13,000.00.

The bell was rung every Sunday for Church services as well as for fires and other important events. A large fire broke out near the Church and the bell was run for some time, and after the fire the bell was found to be broken, so a new bell was ordered and installed in 1859. Later, when the First Presbyterian Church was built at the corner of Madison Avenue and Olive Street, this bell was given to the Dr. Logan Memorial Church in Throop, where it is still in use.

Throughout the work of building the Church the Ladies Aid Society gave most efficient and timely aid by their contributions and their good choice of furnishings. My grandmother, Mrs. Joseph C. Platt, who was a sister of Mr. Joseph H. Scranton, was chairman of the Ladies Aid Society for a number of years, and was also connected with many other women's organizations founded during the early days of Scranton.

In 1859 all of the pews of the Church were occupied and it was thought necessary to build an addition on each side of the Church, thus increasing the seating capacity, and on the 16th of April, 1860, Mr. Charles Fuller reported that this work had been completed at a cost of \$4,000.00. Later, under the efficient leadership of Mr. Joseph H. Scranton, subscriptions were raised amounting to \$3,200.00 to build a parsonage adjoining the Church. On the 7th of May, 1866, the congrega-

tion resolved to build a lecture room in the rear of the Church, which was finally completed at a cost of \$3,200.00. Thus, the original cost of the buildings belonging to the congregation amounted to \$23,400.00. At that time there were 550 communicants in the Church. I remember as a boy attending Church socials in the lecture room of this Church with my grandmother.

A communion service consisting of thirteen pieces was contributed by Joseph H. Scranton, Selden T. Scranton and Joseph C. Platt.

The Church was lighted with oil lamps until gas was installed and used for the first time in December 1858.

The third pastor of the Church, Rev. Hickok was stricken with paralysis at the close of the evening service on October 13, 1867 and from that time until August 1868 the pulpit was supplied by the Rev. Dr. Cattell, who subsequently became President of Lafayette College, and then the Rev. W. W. Atterbury of New York. On August 9, 1868, the Rev. Samuel C. Logan was appointed pastor and served until 1892, at which time the membership of the Church was 629. Dr. Logan's place was taken by Dr. James McLeod of Albany, N. Y., who became pastor of the Church in November, 1893.

Mrs. Platt and I were married in the Old Church on January 24th, 1895. When we first went to housekeeping we paid a maid \$11.00 a month, and she did the cooking, waitress work, cleaning and caring for the furnace.

In March, 1874, there were quite a few of the members of the Church who lived on the hill, and they finally assembled at a meeting in the lecture room of the Church and addressed a petition to the Presbytery, requesting approval of a new Church to be known as the Second Presbyterian Church. On receipt of this petition the Presbytery appointed a committee which instituted a new Church at a meeting held in the parent

Church in June, 1874. The Memorial Fund of 1871 was given to the new Church as a "kind of a wedding trousseau to her first born daughter."

The members of the First Church who joined in this petition to the Presbytery were Henry M. Boies, Edward B. Sturges, Frederick L. Hitchcock, Ezra H. Ripple, F. E. Nettleton, Charles H. Welles, Frederick Fuller, James A. Linen, and Edward L. Fuller.

The best of feeling was shown between the members of the First Church and the members who were leaving to organize the new Second Church.

For a period of almost twelve years after the Second Church was organized they worshipped God in a one-story rough boarded temporary chapel built on the rear of the lots on Jefferson Avenue where the Second Church, now St. John's Lutheran Church, was later built. For a time, before the chapel was built, they shared the use of the German Methodist Church at the corner of Vine Street and Adams Avenue. During this period the Second Church had three pastors: the Rev. John W. Partridge, who served thirteen months; the Rev. W. H. Belden, who served until 1879; and the Rev. Thomas R. Beeber, who served until March, 1887.

In June, 1886, the Second Presbyterian Church was dedicated. It had been erected at a total cost of \$60,000.00 and at the dedication services Col. H. M. Boies, President of the Board of Trustees, and Chairman of the Building Committee, announced that all bills had been paid.

The fourth pastor was the Rev. Charles E. Robinson, who was installed in 1888 and acted as pastor until 1901, when he felt that his strength was unequal to the demands of the charge. Dr. Joseph H. Odell was installed as pastor in March, 1902 and served until 1914, after which his place was taken by Dr. George W. Wellburn, who became the sixth pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church.

In October 1894 the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church purchased the so-called reservoir lots at the corner of Olive Street and Madison Avenue, from the Scranton Gas & Water Company, who had maintained a reservoir on these lots for supplying Scranton with water. The parsonage was erected first on part of these lots in 1898, but the building of the Church was postponed until the sale of the property on Washington Avenue to the J. D. Williams Company was effected in 1902. In September, 1903, the cornerstone of the present Westminster Presbyterian Church, then the First Presbyterian Church, was laid by Mr. W. W. Scranton, Chairman of the Building Committee, his father, Joseph H. Scranton, having been Chairman of the Building Committee, of the Old Church on Washington Avenue. The new Church was dedicated in 1904.

Dr. Griffin W. Bull succeeded Dr. McLeod in 1907, and served until his death in April, 1916. Then came Dr. William L. Sawtelle the seventh and last pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, who died suddenly in 1926.

In December, 1926, the congregation of the First and Second Presbyterian Church held a meeting to petition the Lackawanna Presbytery to consolidate the two Churches. Dr. Sawtelle had died, and Dr. Wellburn, pastor of the Second Church had resigned to facilitate the union of the two Churches. The Rev. Peter K. Emmons was called as the first pastor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church and was installed in November, 1927.

Mr. Emmons has done a wonderful job in building up the Westminster Church, with the fine support given him by Miss Marion Osborne and Miss Ethel Rae Robinson. The Church has a membership of 1822 and a fine Sunday School organization of 513 members. The Church has just finished the Every Member Canvass for 1949 which "went over the top",

raising \$42,359.00 for Church support and \$21,360.00 for Benevolences, a total budget of \$63,719.00.

The Westminster Presbyterian Church has just celebrated their one hundredth anniversary, with the services continuing for a week, with a large exhibition of photographs, records and relics, including the communion table, pews, pulpit chairs and a clock from the Old First Church. A pageant was held on two successive nights in which the twenty-six members of the present congregation impersonated their ancestors who were founders of the original Church.

A Centennial Memorial Fund of \$30,000.00 was raised to remodel the Young People's Department of the Sunday School in memory of the members of the Church who lost their lives in the service.

During the Centennial week the beautiful Schautz Memorial Chapel was dedicated. This chapel of Gothic style was the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Walter L. Schautz in honor of Mrs. George J. Schautz, Mr. Schautz's mother and in memory of Mr. George J. Schautz, Sr., his father, and Mr. and Mrs. Clarence J. Layfield, the parents of Mrs. Walter L. Schautz.



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