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The
BULLETIN

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

OXFORD, NEW JERSEY

By

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Minister



Oxford Historical Record

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of Judgment.

For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

---Matthew 12:36,37

"O God, may we trust thee at all times--in times of doubt and difficulty, in times of loneliness or sorrow, for all things; needs for the body and needs for the soul, believing that as thou hast made us, so thou wilt preserve evermore the life thou thyself hast given. Amen."

The regular monthly meeting of the Ladies Aid Society will be held next Tuesday afternoon at the chapel.

Next Sabbath the Sunday School will resume regular sessions after the summer recess.

In our last issue the statement was made that Rev. James McWilliams was the first pastor to conduct regular services in Oxford.

We have since learned that his son lived in Bethlehem, Pa., and died there about ten years ago at advanced age, and left a son who still lives there. The father and son, in 1928 employed our Mr. Joseph Docker to build them a cottage at Mountain Lake, and the father told Mr. Docker that his father, Rev. James McWilliams was the first pastor of the Oxford Presbyterian Church in the 1840s. Mr. Docker knew nothing about such a person and forgot all about it until he read of it in the last Bulletin. It is surprising that no one has spoken of this fact before in all our historical reminiscences in the years past. If any one else has any information of the kind the Bulletin would be pleased to know of it.

Old Oxford Days
By Clinton E. Weston

There is an old axiom that rarely if ever fails, and it is: "The success of any business depends on its organization."

The application of this axiom was particularly true in Oxford as it was exemplified in the calibre of the Superintendents and Foremen selected to take charge in the several departments of the Oxford Iron Company. The selection of these men of course goes to the credit of Selden T. Scranton who showed a keen judgment in choosing those who were experts in their chosen lines; and consequently, all through the departments, those men were of the highest class, and of a character to be compared to the highest of any community.

Let us go back in memory to the early '90s and recall those men who are now mostly legendary to the present generation as they have all passed, with perhaps one or two exceptions, from the scene.

In the Nail Factory was Charles B. Weston, Sup't. for about 25 years.

He was succeeded by Edwin C. Perkins with George Weber as Ass't. Sup't.

In the Cooper Shop was Theodore P. Burd, who was also a member of the Board of Education for many years.

Mark, J. Axford was Sup't. of the Rolling Mill; and the Foremen were Charles Mayhew, Robert Henderson and John Snyder. John B. Smith had charge of the Foundry, and later Charles Le Pelt. Warren Ward was in the Pattern Shop and later he and Michael Repp acted as Superintendents of the Machine Shop, Foundry, etc.

James H. Lukens was Chief Engineer in charge of all boilers and Machinery, being succeeded by John Zulauf.

At the Furnace were John Schoonover, Henry Harling and George S. Humphrey - the latter being versatile was connected with other departments at various times.

William Poole, Henry and Philip Repp and Michael Quinn were at the mines; William (Uncle Billy) Stout, John Weber and John Nelson were in the Wheel Wright Shop;

T. Frank Cawley, first in the Grist Mill and later transferred to the Saw Mill, being succeeded in the Grist Mill by Charles Creveling. James Nolan had charge of the Machine Shop

In succession at the Company Store were Henry Kingsbury, D.F. Brigham, and Elias C. Allen. The rank and file of all the workers were, as a rule, devoted and keenly interested in their work.

James Selden Scranton

And now I wish to mention one of the most important departments in the Company - one that was generally unknown in Oxford, except to the Officers and the Factory Sup't., chiefly because the office did not come into contact with the workers, for it was located in New York City, (81-83-85 Washington Street).

This was the Sales Department Office in charge of James Selden Scranton. He was a man of culture, refinement and irreproachable character. He was the youngest son of Col. George W. Scranton, and was born in Belvidere in 1842. When 19 years of age he was given charge of the Oxford Colliery in Scranton, Pa. then under lease to Col. G. W. Scranton.

His connection with Scranton proved to be a happy one - he becoming one of the leading young men who strove to benefit the town in any constructive way, and therefore he was held in high esteem.

One of his unusual traits was his ability to handle his employees in such a fair and just manner as to hold their respect.

After leaving Scranton in 1871, when the Lackawanna R.R. bought the Colliery, Mr. Scranton was placed in charge of the Sales Department of the Oxford Iron Company in New York City. The unqualified success he achieved there was reflected in the enormous sales he developed through his own efforts; and no one could doubt it was largely due to his energy and foresight that the Oxford nail gained a world-wide reputation.

In the early years of the nail
(over)

business England was the largest producer and controlled the world markets. According to the record, Birmingham, England, at one time had more than fifty thousand workers, and sent to Australia annually four thousand tons of nails; to British India 1800 tons, and large amounts to other countries.

But in a comparatively short time the Oxford nail supplanted the English product, due to its higher quality, with the inevitable result that England lost its markets and its business dwindled to a low ebb.

Car load upon car load left Oxford destined to all parts of the world, and as people realized that enormous shipments were being made, quite naturally took it as a matter of course; but behind the scene was the able and efficient hand of James S. Scranton, securing the orders that poured into Oxford.

Though quiet and unassuming, Mr. Scranton had a charming personality, and resembled to a marked degree his brother William H. Scranton, and was endeared to all of his many acquaintances.

He made occasional visits to Oxford, and his family, consisting of his wife and daughters Katherine, Anna, Elizabeth and Grace, and his son William, spent many summers here.

At the close of the Oxford Company Mr. Scranton returned to Scranton in 1895, where he died in 1905, thereby closing another chapter of that interesting period in which he played an important part in the development of the iron trade in Oxford.

Mr. Weston has outdone himself in the above fine contribution, which makes a most valuable addition to our knowledge of Oxford history.

He tells us that it was submitted to Miss Grace Scranton, daughter of James S. Scranton, for her judgment and that she warmly commended it as an accurate account of her father's life and activities.

Mr. Weston will be congratulated and thanked by our readers.



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