

533

The
BULLETIN

OXFORD, NEW JERSEY

PUBLISHED

By

REV. A. G. YOUNT, Ph. D.

Pastor

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH



Oxford Historical Record

Bulletin No. 533 . October 20, 1940

Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. -----Philippians 4:5-7

" O God, the Fountain of life, Cleanse us now, we implore Thee, from all our sins, and bathe us with the dew of Thy divine forgiveness, that we, being renewed in spirit, may enter gladly into the pure worship of this day, and serve Thee heartily with heavenly meditation and holy music and thankful praise, with words of love and works of mercy, with joy in Thy creation and perfect peace in Thee, according to the teaching and example of Thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen."

(Henry Van Dyke)

At the close of the morning service to-day, the ladies of the congregation are requested to remain to consider a matter of great interest to the Church, of which the pastor made mention last Sabbath morning.

The painting and repairs on the Manse have begun, and when completed, the house will look very different, and very much more attractive.

The Sunday School social to be held at the residence of Supt. E. B. Foss on the evening of October 30th, promises to be well attended and many tickets have been sold.

The Presbyterian Synod of New Jersey is to meet this week at Asbury Park, N. J. in the First Presbyterian Church. The Session begins on Monday afternoon and extends over Wednesday evening. All the churches of the State are supposed to send a pastor and an Elder to this gathering.

The Founding of Scranton, Pa.

The great city of Scranton, Pennsylvania has been celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of its founding, which is dated from September eleventh, 1840.

Several friends have sent us copies of the Scranton papers containing historical accounts of the origin and growth of the city.

With the remarkable development of population and industries of the city we have nothing to add to the full accounts given in the papers.

But we do have a special interest in the statements regarding the origin of the city, because that important event was closely connected with Oxford Furnace.

The founding of Scranton has been ascribed to various persons.

Some claim that William Henry was the real founder, others give that honor to George W. and Selden T. Scranton. One writer in the Scranton Tribune states that twelve men were the founders, and his list of these begins with the Scranton brothers.

Now all these statements have a measure of truth in them, but an absolute or general claim is unsupported by the facts. We have seen no account of the founding of Scranton which gives a detailed narrative of the steps which led to that event. These were the following.

1. William Henry was undoubtedly pioneer of the movement; the first to conceive the plan, and to vision the possibilities of a great industry built upon the iron ore and the coal at Slocum Hollow.

How long he had been speculating on this is not known, but certainly by the year 1835. In 1831 he formed a company and leased the old Oxford furnace, which he made famous by the installation of Hot Blast, the first in this continent. But he found that the cost and difficulty of obtaining sufficient charcoal to smelt the ore was a great handicap in operating the furnace profitably.

He became convinced that hard coal could be substituted for charcoal and finding that both coal and ore could be found at Scranton, he soon began to plan to erect a furnace there. His changes of residence

at that period are interesting. When he leased Oxford furnace in 1831, he moved from his home in Wyoming Valley, Pa. to Belvidere, N. J.

But when the Oxford Mansion house was vacated by the Robeson family in 1834, he moved to Oxford. But after deciding on the Scranton plan he moved to Stroudsburg, Pa. where he was in convenient reach of the Oxford works, and also Slocum Hollow.

This last move occurred in 1837, which may be considered a vital date in planning for the furnace at Scranton.

He had to get financial backing, and in 1839 founded a company with a Mr. Armstrong, and they bought 500 acres of land at Slocum Hollow. But the sudden death of Mr. Armstrong soon after, dashed his hopes to the ground, but he started to look for other backers. Mr. Henry in his diary tells what then happened:—

"I left my home (Stroudsburg) to see some gentlemen in Morris County New Jersey, when on my way, I was requested by my son-in-law, Selden T. Scranton, then residing at Oxford Furnace, New Jersey, to let him have the opportunity of calling on some gentlemen with a view of forming a company to take the place of Mr. Armstrong. I consented, and, briefly Geo. W. Scranton, Philip Mattes Selden T. Scranton and Sanford Grant formed the new company, engaging me to close the bargain with the owners, as already selected and of opening roads mines of coal and iron, and erecting one furnace; and to lay out the town which I called Harrison (which remained for ten years) erect such buildings, dwellings, etc. and works as were required at such an establishment. In Pursuance of these plans I commenced making preparations on Sept. 11, 1840. In the Fall or late Summer of 1841 the furnace was ready to go into operation. Failure after failure occurred until the summer of 1842. After the establishment of the furnace a change in the management was effected."

2. G. W. and S. T. Scranton now became the moving spirits in the Scranton, Pa. enterprise.

Mr. Henry's diary makes plain the initiative taken by Selden Scranton, a fact ingored by historians, of
(over)

Scranton, Pa. Selden Scranton was then living in the mansion house and managing the Oxford furnace business

While George was at his farm near Belvidere. But the year before George and Selden had bought Oxford furnace from the Robeson family, and had some financial backing. Selden, after Mr. Henry had given consent to his forming a company to take over Mr. Henry's enterprise, took up the matter with George and their friends which resulted in the firm of G. W. and Selden T. Scranton and Sandford Grant. It must be kept in mind that Selden was an experienced iron man and that George had to depend upon his judgment in such matters.

But George showed remarkable abilities in promoting the business of building the furnace at Scranton and his success in getting money and financial backing to start the business. He promoted railroads, made markets for the products of the furnace. These were herculean tasks that he performed, and upon them the success of the enterprise wholly depended. His energy, courage and enthusiasm, together with his charming personal qualities, made him the natural leader in the great undertaking, with the result that he became the hero, received the chief credit, and has been since generally honored as the founder of Scranton.

That they were able to gather about them men of ability and wealth who gave strength to the enterprise and helped immeasurably in building up the great industrial plant, is a matter of credit to all parties.

However, the main part played by William Henry, George and Selden Scranton, in the founding of Scranton, is an established fact; and it is also certain that each of them was a vital factor in the enterprise

Now, these three men were at the time operating Oxford Furnace, which by 1840 had built up a large and flourishing business; and this fact gave them a prestige among business men, and attracted financial support.

Without this successful operation of Oxford Furnace, these men could have accomplished very little in the way of building the furnace at Slocum Hollow. In a very true sense Oxford Furnace was the mother of Scranton, Pennsylvania.



CHURCH OFFICERS

The Session

A. G. YOUNT, *Moderator*

Elders

ABRAM PITTENGER
EMMANUEL KELSKY

ELISHA B. FOSS
LEWIS BERGENBACK



Board of Trustees

JAMES RADEL
GEORGE DOCKER, JR.
FRED K. SARSON
BENJAMIN GREEN

HARRY MILLER
CHARLES RENNER
LEWIS E. GREEN
CHARLES DUX

HAYDEN DOCKER



Church Treasurer

LEWIS E. GREEN



Sunday School

<i>Superintendent</i>	E. B. FOSS
<i>Assistant Superintendent</i>	KENNETH BELL
<i>Secretary</i>	ALVIN RENNER
<i>Treasurer</i>	WILBUR FOSS
<i>Organist</i>	FRANCES PITTENGER



Ladies' Aid Society

<i>President</i>	MRS. ALBERT BRUSHETT
<i>Vice-President</i>	MRS. EDWARD BADROW
<i>Secretary</i>	MRS. VIOLET BELL
<i>Treasurer</i>	MRS. LEWIS E. GREEN

