

HISTORY

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OF

TRENTON, NEW JERSEY

THE RECORD OF ITS EARLY SETTLEMENT  
AND CORPORATE PROGRESS.

SKETCHES OF ITS GENESIS,  
COLONIAL CONDITIONS AND MUNICIPAL EVOLUTION.

ITS BUSINESS, FINANCE, MANUFACTURES AND FORM OF GOVERNMENT,  
WITH PARTICULAR NOTICE OF THE MEN  
WHO BUILT THE CITY.

COMPILED FOR THE "STATE GAZETTE,"

BY

FRANCIS BAZLEY LEE,

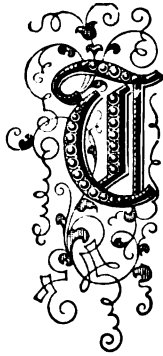
Member of the Historical Societies of New Jersey and Pennsylvania; of the Board of Managers of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania; of the American Academy of Political and Social Science; of the American Dialect Society; of the Medico-Legal Society; American Numismatic and Archaeological Society; New Jersey Society Sons of the Revolution, etc.

1895.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE CITY DEPARTMENTS.

TRENTON'S WATER-SUPPLY—HOW THE CITY SECURED WATER IN THE EARLY DAYS—THE PRESENT ORGANIZATION OF THIS DEPARTMENT—THE BOARD OF HEALTH AND ITS OFFICERS—TRENTON'S PARKS—THEIR HISTORY AND COMMISSIONERS—THE SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE SYSTEM—ITS ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT—THE EXCISE DEPARTMENT—ELECTRIC LIGHTING AND ITS HISTORY.



THE FIRST charter for the Trenton Water Works was passed December 3d, 1801. It was termed "An act to authorize Stephen Scales to convey the water from his spring through the several streets of the city of Trenton," the preamble whereof thus read: "WHEREAS, Stephen Scales hath represented that he hath purchased a spring in the city of Trenton, from which he can conduct the water through several of the streets of said city, thereby supplying the inhabitants with plenty of sweet and wholesome water, provided he can be authorized to lay his trunks through some of the intervening lots."

This charter gave him power to convey the water from said spring through any lots which he might find it necessary to pass in its way to the streets of said city, without let, trouble, hindrance, or molestation of any person or persons whatsoever, and with laborers, carts, wagons and other carriages, with their beasts of burden or draught, and all necessary tools and implements, to enter upon the lands through which it is necessary said aqueduct should pass, and to dig through and lay trunks in the same, for carrying on the said work, and for repairing the same from time to time, first giving notice to the owner, if in this State, or to the tenant in possession thereof, doing as little damage thereto as possible, and repairing any breaches they may make in the inclosures thereof, and making amends for any damage that may be sustained by the owner or owners thereof. Penalties were laid for obstructing the water works. Furthermore, the first charter granted to Stephen Scales gave him power to use only the water which should originate or rise from his spring, or upon his said lot so purchased, but that he should permit all water not originating or rising upon his said lot or from his spring freely and uninterruptedly to pass for the use of the tanyards on the stream made thereby.

It appears that Scales soon desired to sell his privilege to the inhabitants of Trenton if they would form a company, whereupon an organization, with a capital stock of \$1,200, was created. Books for obtaining subscriptions were opened by Peter Gordon, and a President, two Directors, a Secretary and Treasurer were chosen. The following citizens subscribed to the stock: Isaac Smith, Peter Gordon, Ellett Howel, Thomas M. Potter, Henry Pike, Jerh. Woolsey, William Scott, Jacob Herbert, Abraham Hunt, Gershom Craft, George Dill, Ellett Tucker, Joseph Milnor, Joshua Newbold, Hannah H. Barnes, William Potts, Mary and Sarah Barnes, Joshua Wright, Stephen Scales, John R. Smith, A. Chambers, John Chambers, James Ewing, George Henry.

On the twenty-ninth of February, 1804, the Legislature passed an act incorporating the Trenton Water Works, by the name of "The President and Directors of the Trenton Water Works."

The original corporators were James Ewing, Peter Gordon, Thomas M. Potter, Gershom Craft and Alexander Chambers. James Ewing was chosen the first President and Peter Gordon and Thomas M. Potter, Directors.

They were given authority to lay and extend their aqueduct through such of the streets of the city as they may think necessary, and to open and dig in such parts of said streets as may be convenient for their purposes. It seems that the agreement between Scales and the water company had been made upon the eighteenth of September, 1802. This act was a practical confirmation of the agreement.

On the eighth of February, 1811, an act was passed to incorporate the proprietors of the Trenton Aqueduct Company. Andrew Reeder, Charles Rice, Stacy Potts, Joseph Broadhurst and Peter Howell were the original corporators.

The object of this company was the supplying of the city of Trenton with good and wholesome water. They were incorporated as "The President and Directors of the Trenton Aqueduct Company." Andrew Reeder was chosen President; Charles Rice, Treasurer, and Stacy Potts, Joseph Broadhurst and Peter Howell, Directors.

Their charter allowed them to open only four rods at a time in any of the streets of the city, not to be kept open more than three days at a time, and to be filled up at the expense of the company, and to be rendered as good as if the same had not been taken up and removed. They were not to lay their main trunk through the streets of Trenton upon the same level with the trunks of the present company of the Trenton Water Works, but either higher or lower, that they might not impede them in carrying off their cross trunks. The capital stock was not to exceed \$3,000, and was to be appropriated exclusively to the purpose of supplying the city of Trenton with good and wholesome water.

February 29th, 1848, the Trenton and South Trenton Aqueduct Company was incorporated for more effectually supplying the city of Trenton and borough of South Trenton with water. Its capital stock was \$30,000, with the privilege of increasing the same to \$50,000. The stock was divided into shares of \$50 each. The corporators were John McKelway, William Halstead, Samuel McClurg, Charles Wright, Xenophon J. Maynard, John Sager and Alexander H. Armour.

The corporation was authorized to use the water of the Delaware river, or the Assanpink creek below the dam, but not to take away, divert or in any manner injure or impair the supply of water in the fountains used by the Trenton Water Works Company.

In 1852 "The President and Directors of the Trenton Water Works" represented to the Legislature that the population of the city would no longer warrant the use of springs, and the Legislature thereupon authorized the company to take water from the Delaware river and elevate the same to the reservoir.

This practically marks the final abolition of the bored wooden water pipe, for which the iron pipe was substituted.

This corporation, "The President and Directors of the Trenton Water Works," retained possession of all the powers, privileges and franchises of the company of 1802, which purchased Scales' rights.

In March, 1858, pursuant to an act of the Legislature, the city of Trenton voted by a large majority to purchase the water works, and upon the first of March, 1859, the Legislature sanctioned the transfer of the water works to the inhabitants. The deed was dated March 7th, 1859, and signed by Charles Moore, President.

The new Water act provided for a Board of Commissioners, who superseded the President and Directors of the old organization. A "water loan" was also created. The first commission created under this act consisted of Charles Moore, Philemon Dickinson, Daniel Lodor, David S. Anderson, Jacob M. Taylor and Albert J. Whittaker. Enabling legislation extended the scope of the commission regarding their power to borrow money to extend the system.

The pumping station at the foot of Calhoun street is most complete in its character, and in the increase of its facilities has kept pace with the demands of a growing population. The intake of the works lies southeast of the abutment of the new Calhoun street bridge, whence the water is raised to the large reservoir on Pennington avenue. The last two years have marked the erection of a massive sea-wall, fully protecting the property in time of the heaviest freshets, whilst the machinery of the works is of the best and latest design. The buildings are of brownstone, ornamental in design, and are a source of great interest to visitors, who pronounce them unequalled as illustrations of their type.

The Delaware has great prospective value as a source of water-supply for the cities of our own and adjacent States. While below Easton and the confluence of the Lehigh there is growing contamination, it will be seen by the results of a chemical analysis that there are at present no evidences of serious pollution above the city of Trenton. From the proportion of forest and the population per square mile, there are good indications of its fitness as a source of supply, especially above Easton. The portion above the Water Gap is not likely to become more populous for a long series of years, and furnishes, in all respects, a most desirable gathering-ground for public water-supply. The river already supplies 142,636 inhabitants of New Jersey with pure water, the total consumption being 17,010,464 gallons daily.

At Trenton, the maximum flow is estimated at 1,314 cubic feet per second under natural conditions, but 383 cubic feet per second is diverted for canal purposes, leaving 931 cubic feet per second minimum flow. Probably the river does not fall as low as this oftener than once in a generation. This gives 601,600,000 gallons daily as the supply without storage. At the last monthly flow shown by the record, the natural flow of the river at Trenton amounts to 880,000,000 gallons daily.



VIEW OF DELAWARE RIVER AND THE FLUME.

The Water Commissioners are Charles H. Skirm, Lewis Lawton, Duncan Mackenzie, Joseph Stokes, Robert B. Bonney and A. V. Manning. The Secretary and Treasurer is Charles A. Reid. The office of the Water Board is in a small annex to the City Hall, facing East State street.

#### THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

The present efficient Health Department of the city of Trenton is of no sporadic growth, but through the various city charters its evolution, slow though sure, may be traced. By ordinance of 1799, the Clerk of the Market is instructed to remove "unwholesome provisions" from the market or any other place where they are to be sold, to "keep clean and sweet" the market-house. Persons were required to clean the streets of mud and dirt, piling the refuse between the gutter and the "main part of the street," and remove the same in forty-eight hours or be fined \$1 for every twenty-four hours it shall remain over time. In 1842 we find the Clerk of the Market empowered with similar duties as in 1799. The citizens in this year were still obliged to clean the streets. In