

# Hog Bladders And Tin Cans Were Town's First Phones

## Main Street Had Own Line In 1870

The Late Charles Cooke Left Valuable Notes On Historic Old Photo

"That," reminisced the late Charles H. Cooke, looking at a yellowed photograph of a dusty, curved village street, "was the year we had the fight over the sidewalks."

"There was the pro-sidewalk faction and the anti-sidewalk faction. I ran for Constable with the support of the sidewalk faction and I was defeated, but we got the sidewalks, by gum.

"We made 'em out of hemlock planks, 12 inches wide, one foot apart, excepting at the Main Street bridge. We had a four foot sidewalk there, laid with inch boards crosswise. Certainly was a big improvement, 'specially during the spring thaw." He gazed longingly at the old photograph and nodded his head, remembering.

"You ought to write that stuff down, before you forget it," someone told Mr. Cooke.

That was in 1925, and what with the world busy thinking about Calvin Coolidge and the Frenchmen bayoneting Riffs in Morocco and President Von Hindenburg defeating the German Socialists and a new Gardner automobile selling for \$1,395 Mr. Cooke hadn't a lot of time to write a history, but one day he sat down and filled sheet after sheet with stories he remembered each time he looked at the old picture. A few years later he died. This week the picture and Mr. Cooke's colorful recollections came to light again—a lively contribution to the history of an American town.

### Built First Telephone

As a village historian, Mr. Cooke was well-qualified. He surveyed many of the original property lines in Dallas and its vicinity and his maps are still referred to occasionally to settle disputes. He was a man of varied interests and—a fact that isn't generally known—built Dallas's first telephone line.

The line connected Smith and Garrahan's store with its neighbor to the left in the accompanying photograph. Thomas Garrahan and Mr. Cooke built the line after they had read an article in a New York newspaper. The "telephone" consisted of two tin cans and a hog's bladder, which the inventors obtained from Jacob Rice when he butchered. A twine string was stretched across the creek, from one store to the other, and messages were sent by tapping on the tin cans with the end of a pencil.

Mr. Cooke's paper discussing the business men whose establishments were pictured on the old photograph of Main Street in 1870 is sprinkled with anecdotes. Mr. Starmer, the town's only undertaker, made his own coffins and used William Randall's spring wagon as a hearse. William Frantz, Mr. Starmer's neighbor, was killed one day when the breech pin of a gun blew out and imbedded itself in his forehead. The most pretentious home in town was Captain Rice's, until William J. Honeywell outclassed him with a more impressive-looking domicile. One of the carpenters on the Honeywell home was a popular young fellow known as "The Dutchman from Bethlehem" but whose right name was Bernard W. Brickel. One of the wagons in the picture was that of George Spencer, a township supervisor, who once reported in disgust that he had spent a whole year looking in vain for a stranger whose name appeared on the tax list only as I. O. O. F. and, in the opinion of Mr. Spencer, should be exonerated because he certainly didn't live in the township.

### 19th Century Speedsters

One of Main Street's most prominent merchants—and a fertile source of stories—was Theodore Ry-

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"Man From Dakota"  
with Wallace Beery  
Comedy—Pete Smith Special  
Fox News

NEXT FRIDAY AND SATURDAY  
"South of the Border"  
with Gene Autry  
Cartoon—Comedy—Serial

MAIN STREET TRAFFIC JAM: CIRCA 1870



Mr. Cooke remembered these places well. Along the left side of Main Street, in order, were the establishment of Lewis Starm, wheelwright, cabinet maker and undertaker (note roughbox leaning against wall); William Frantz's store, Smith and Garrahan's store and the residence of James Garrahan; Ryman and Sons' store. Right side: I. O. O. F. hall, Lyman Harris' harness shop, the blacksmith shop, later moved across the street and occupied by Mame Fleming's candy store; the 70-foot flagpole, Capt. Jacob Rice's home and William J. Honeywell's home. Mr. Cooke even remembered that the wagon (center) belonged to William Randall and the team was the property of George Spencer.

man, who was in business with his brother, John, Theodore used to drive his buckboard wagon to Wilkes-Barre every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday to take orders for lumber and his little bay mare was known widely for its speed, a reputation which aggravated Harper Evans, who owned a buckboard which looked like Ryman's and a horse very much like the little bay mare. There was keen rivalry between Ryman and Evans, who frequently raced over nearby roads, until Evans purchased a horse known as Ryman's Mary, an obviously superior equine. After that, when a cloud of dust rolled along Main Street, informed people remarked, "There goes Harper and Mary Ryman".

Mr. Evans was postmaster at Evans' Falls. Once a Federal inspector scolded him because a registered letter had been lost somewhere in his office. This provoked Evans and he sent down to Bronz's store, obtained a box, packed up the odds and ends which were his "post office" and expressed the box to the First Assistant Postmaster at Washington, together with Evans' resignation.

### Paid In 'Dallas Cash'

Mr. Cooke was a clerk at Ryman's at one time and one of his duties was to take account of the lumber hauled from the Ryman's Kunkle mill. The custom was to pay the teamsters in goods, a practice which resulted in the habit of referring to cut hemlock lumber as "Dallas cash". Mr. Cooke recalls with special fondness an old-timer by the name of Adam Hoover who, when asked how much lumber he had on his wagon, would reply "Oh, just enough to ride on, 850 feet—just enough to ride on."

The teamsters' orders were pretty much alike. Generally, they left the list on their first trip and picked up the goods on their last trip. The order usually went like this: "Now, Charley, put me up a sack of flour, 10 pounds of pork, 5 pounds of sugar, a half pint of ack-ke-hol, half an ounce of camphor gum, don't put the gum in the bottle, I'll do that when I get home, 3 turnpike tickets and a dinner ticket." The turnpike ticket took them over the road to White Mills in Luzerne. The dinner ticket, worth 15c, bought their meal.

Politics was a headache in 1870, too. Mr. Cooke relates a story about the night someone cut the rope on the 70-foot flagpole which

stood near the intersection of Main and Huntsville Streets, a proud civic possession, the gift of local Republicans. A man named Badman, who worked for Captain Rice, volunteered to climb the pole and replace the rope in the pulley. After descend-

ing, he took a long sigh, looked sadly at his skinned shins and said "It was a damned mean man who cut this rope—and a mighty Badman who put it back", a pun which, in Mr. Cooke's seasoned judgment, earned Badman a niche in village history.

### TOWN'S POPULATION IN 1870 WAS 123, COUNTING THE 31 LICENSED DOGS

Dallas Township, which included the present borough when the picture to the left was taken, had a population of 92 taxables and 31 dogs in 1870, according to old records.

The assessed valuation of the township then, nine years before the division which was to bring the borough into existence, was \$38,118. Today the assessed valuation in Dallas Borough alone is about \$750,000.

By the following year the human population had shrunk to 80 taxables but the dog population had jumped to 34. Town expenses were financed by three sources: Borough tax, \$152.47; road tax, \$190.67, and dog tax, at 50c per canine, \$15.50.

### Disabled War Veterans Honor Father O'Leary

A membership class in honor of Rev. John J. O'Leary, pastor emeritus of St. Therese's Church, Shavertown, World War chaplain, was admitted by Wyoming Valley Chapter, Disabled American Veterans, on Monday night. Rev. Father O'Leary, who was severely wounded during the World War, was unable to attend.

### Chicago Jurist Delivers Lecture

#### Explains Principles Of Mary Baker Eddy

"Mortal Man without vision, without hope, without incentive gradually degrades and becomes an object of pity," said Judge Samuel W. Green of Chicago in his address on "Christian Science: The Religion of Progress" at Irem Temple, Wilkes-Barre, on Monday night.

"The Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, has given to the world a new hope, a brighter vision, founded upon spiritual understanding and progress, rather than upon material belief and limitation," Judge Green claimed.

"In following the Scriptural method of healing," he said, "she saw that the Bible requires spiritual interpretation to be properly helpful and healing. This new or spiritual interpretation, she saw, must be consistent with a proper interpretation of God, and man in God's image and likeness. The generally-accepted view of God as being the creator of both good and evil, or as being aware of both good and evil as equal realities, Mrs. Eddy perceived as being contrary to the nature of God and the teachings of the Bible."

"Humanity has apparently labored through the centuries under the delusion that man fell from his high estate as God's child or likeness, and that this fall was so real that his salvation ultimately depends upon some miraculous or supernatural intervention of Deity in his behalf.

"Christian Science teaches that man has never fallen, but that a mist, or error, has seemed to shut

### SALUTES LEHMAN



Phil Cook

... who saluted Lehman during his early "Morning Almanac" over Station WABC on Wednesday morning. It was the second time Cook had given national publicity to this section. Last June he honored Dallas on his program.

from view the real man—God's child—and has provided an unreal or false concept of man that is material, and that lives and moves and has his being not in God, but in matter. This false view of man is responsible for all discord, sin, disease, poverty, hate and death."

### Beaumont High To Graduate 19

#### Commencement To Be Held Tuesday, June 4

Nineteen Seniors will receive diplomas from Monroe Township high school, Beaumont, at the annual commencement exercises on Tuesday, June 4, W. M. A. Austin, supervising principal, announced yesterday.

Class Night will be on Wednesday, May 29; the Baccalaureate sermon will be preached on Sunday, June 2, and the annual alumni dinner will be held after commencement on June 4. W. H. Hadsell is faculty adviser for Class Night, Miss Louise Ohlman will have charge of the Baccalaureate and Robert Bellas is arranging the Commencement program.

### Humphrey Owen Delegate At Episcopal Meeting

E. Humphrey Owen of Dallas represented the Prince of Peace Episcopal Church of Dallas at the diocesan convention of the Episcopal Church at Hazleton on Tuesday and Wednesday.

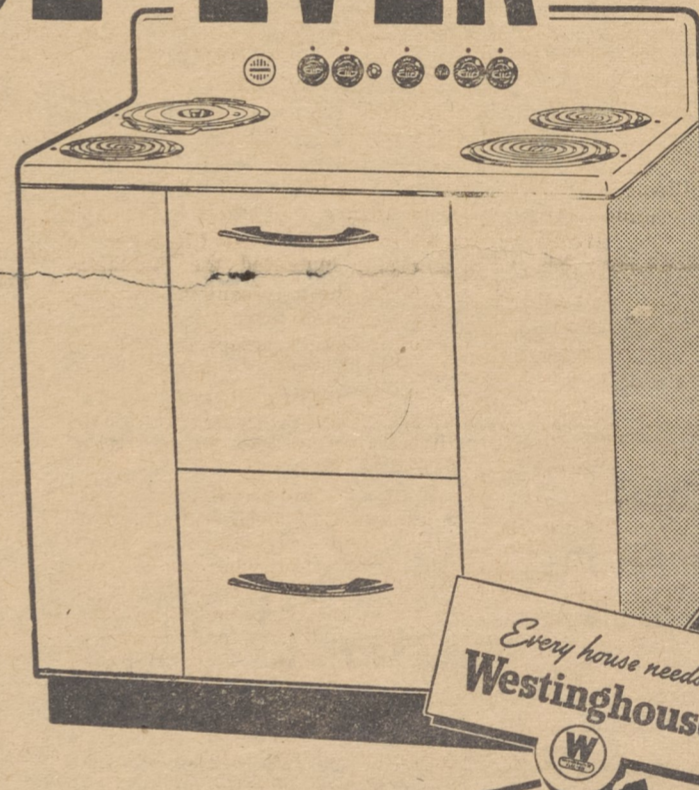
The Prince of Peace parish, which hopes to build a church soon, meets on the second Sunday of every month at 3 p. m. in the home of Mrs. F. H. Renard on Main Street, Dallas. Rev. Ralph A. Weatherly, pastor of Grace Church, Kingston, is the missionary.

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