

SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY AND ITS RESOURCES ONE OF THE MOST ATTRACTIVE AND FAVORED REGIONS IN THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA.

ANTE-DATING its official organization in 1812, when it was carved out of Luzerne, Susquehanna county's history may be said to extend back to the time when it was a part of the Western Reserve, or New Connecticut, a period preceding even the era when it was a portion of old Northumberland. It was in 1497 that charters were granted by the then reigning English sovereign to Connecticut and Pennsylvania, from which "all kinds of trouble" arose. Voyagers from France interposed and claimed the land by "right of discoveries," but the Frenchmen were outclassed in numbers and by diplomacy. England was nevertheless alarmed at the encroachments of the French, and in 1662 Charles II. renewed and confirmed the charter to Connecticut, the boundaries including the territory now more remote from the British crown than the antipodes but at that time a part of the country we now claim as our own Susquehanna county.

Early Strife and Contention.

Before it became what it is today, however, it was the scene of much contention. In 1664 the Dutch, who had settled on the Hudson more than fifty years previous, and who claimed the land from the Connecticut river to the Delaware, were subdued and for the time being squelched by the English, and the territory claimed by the pipe-smoking Hollanders was given to the Duke of York (because he was the duke) afterwards James II., the reigning monarch's brother. Because this line, as agreed upon in 1664, was pronounced "the western bounds of the colony of Connecticut," the plea was later made by Pennsylvania that Connecticut had relinquished all claims to land west of the Delaware. "Dutch courage" having arisen in the meantime the Van Vans got possession of the land once more; it was again wrested from them by the British, and a new charter was issued to the Duke of York. This brought on a fresh contention between royalty and the Connecticut burghers. The line between that of the Connecticut colony and the possessions invested in His Royal Highness was finally adjusted.

Complicated Rights.

The successive grants of different kings complicated matters to such an extent that the proverbial Philadelphia lawyer would have been (and mayhap was) puzzled to know who was who and what was what.

In 1753 the foundation of the Susquehanna Company was effected. The object of that "trust" may be inferred from the fact that two years later the General Assembly of Connecticut manifested their ready acquiescence in the purchase (?) made from the Indians by the Susquehanna Company, (lands we now inhabit), and gave their consent for an application to His Majesty to "erect them into a new colony." The surveyors sent out were bushwhacked by the red skins, who at that time were endeavoring to cope with the French. This caused our Yankee predecessors to halt, and after see-sawing with William Penn, to whom a charter had been granted to Pennsylvania, the Connecticut were finally and effectually relegated to the rear by an act of the Pennsylvania legislature (1779) vesting in the commonwealth the "right of soil and estate of the late Proprietaries of Pennsylvania."

Sharp Redskins.

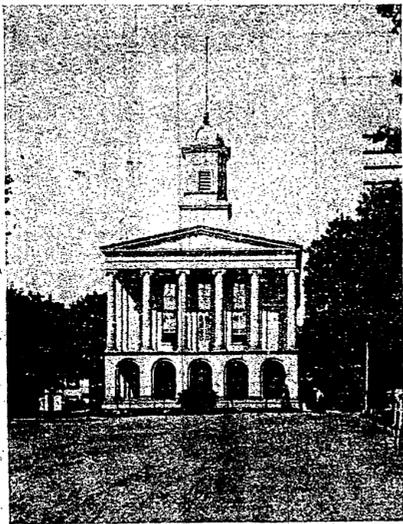
The Indians had already received £2000 sterling from the Susquehanna Company for the lands, which they afterwards sold to Pennsylvania, and as they never returned the £2000 it is one instance and the only one ever heard of in which an Indian "got the best" of a Connecticut Yankee in a trade.

The Pennamite war (1769 to 1771) ended with the Susquehanna Company in full possession of the section now embraced in Susquehanna county. At that time the town and county of Westmoreland had ceased to exist. It was known as the Wyoming Valley and included what is now known as Luzerne, Lackawanna, Wyoming, Susquehanna, Wayne and a part of Bradford counties.

The Pennamite war comprised the struggles of Connecticut settlers to retain possession of the Wyoming lands which they had purchased from the Susquehanna Company, but which were claimed also by the proprietaries of Pennsylvania, who were determined upon securing either the recognition of their claims, or the ejection of the settlers.

The Wyoming Massacre.

Over 100 persons had come from Connecticut, in 1762, and began a settle-



SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY COURT HOUSE.

The most observing critics have pronounced the architecture of the Susquehanna court house absolutely classical. The first court was held in Isaac Post's tavern, and the basement of Keeler's hotel was the first jail. The court house was built in 1854-55. The contract cost of the building was \$18,500; architect, \$200; furniture, including bookshelves, \$25,000; total, \$20,700. The ground dimensions, including a 45-foot lot, are 5425 feet. In 1870 repairs were made on the building amounting to \$1,025.00. In 1883 an addition was built on the rear end, 262 1/2 feet, containing rooms for the janitor, chambers for the judge, waiting rooms and the library room. The town clock was purchased by citizens of Montrose and placed in the cupola in earlier years.

ment in Wyoming (opposite Wilkes-Barre). Twenty of them were massacred by Delaware Indians the following year, which discouraged further efforts for nearly seven years. In 1769 two delegates went to Philadelphia and endeavored to bring about a peaceful settlement "out of court" with the proprietaries, but their mission came to naught. Pennsylvania absolutely refusing to recognize the Connecticut claim. To the contrary, an act was passed in 1774 creating Westmoreland "town," attaching it to Litchfield county. This "town" was seventy miles square and the townships six miles square.

Hostilities then ceased on the recommendation of a General Congress of representatives from all the colonies, assembled at Philadelphia to consult upon measures of mutual defence against the British forces.

Revolutionary Period.

Not a civilized inhabitant was within the boundaries of the territory now constituting Susquehanna county when the Revolutionary war was begun, but that part of Westmoreland in the vicinity of Wilkes-Barre furnished nearly 300 men to the Continental service.

When Cornwallis surrendered, the ever recurring dispute between Connecticut and Pennsylvania bobbed up again and congress appointed a commission to sit at Trenton and once and forever settle the vexed question. That commission decided that Connecticut had no right to the lands in controversy, that



BOATING ON HEART LAKE.

all the territory in dispute "do of right" belong to the state of Pennsylvania. Thus, with the close of 1782, by the Trenton decree, the jurisdiction of Connecticut ceased. That decree, however, did not "go down" with our Yankee brethren, nor did an act of the Pennsylvania legislature in 1783, pronouncing the Connecticut settlers.

When Luzerne Was Created.

A second Pennamite "war" ensued, extending over a year, and it was two years later before "healing" measures were adopted by the state of Pennsylvania creating the county of Luzerne from Northumberland. That new county extended from the mouth of the Nesqueopec to the north line of the state (120 miles north and south) and in some parts over 70 miles in width.

and adjoining counties was a vast wilderness. Then and for a long time afterwards elk, panthers, bears, wolves, wild cats and Indians held full sway. Late in that year a few settlements by white persons were made at Brooklyn, Harmony, Great Bend and Oakland and the county has since grown slowly but solidly as compared with some other counties in the state, until today the population (estimated) is 40,200. In area the county is 823 square miles of land surface.

The topography of the county is generally mountainous or hilly, diversified by inland lakes and mountain streams. The landscape view is one of mountain repose and quiet pastoral appearance. The highest land is in the eastern part of the county, on the Moosic divide. It forms a belt, five or six miles wide, and is the northern prolongation of the Carbondale coal basin.

Water-ways Plentiful.

Water-ways in the county are numerous. The Susquehanna river, in its tortuous course, receives the waters of all the creeks that drain the county, in whatever direction they flow. The Susquehanna enters the county from New York at its northeastern corner, but after going south five miles it turns abruptly west, and after continuing about ten miles makes its great bend (from which Great Bend is named) and passes northward back into New York. There it again veers west, and flows to the mouth of the Chemung river, thence southeast

into Bradford, Wyoming and Luzerne counties.

The more important creeks are: Tunkhannock, Starrucca, Canawacta, Drinkers, Mitchells, Martins, Salt Lick, Wiley's, Snake, Chocout, Apolacoon, Meshoppen, Tuscarora and Wyalusing. The Lackawanna river flows south along the eastern line of the county. There are many beautiful lakes in different parts of the county. Crystal lake, Heart lake, Silver lake, Carmalt's lake and Elki lake are the most important in size. Among the mineral waters in the county a sulphur spring in Rush is perhaps the best known. Salt springs near Great Bend, also on Silver Creek near Franklin Forks, exist.

In the valleys and along the courses of rivers and creeks the lands are alluvial, and various kinds of grain crops are

grown. On the hills and mountains the soil is apparently better adapted for fruit-raising and dairying.

Origin of Its Name.

Susquehanna county was taken from the territory of Luzerne county by an act of the legislature, passed, Feb. 21, 1810, but it was not completely organized and officers elected until February, 1812. It derives its name from the Susquehanna river first entering the state of Pennsylvania within the county limits. In the Indian dialect of that day "Susque" meant crooked and "Hanna" signified a stream of water. As the river is one of the crookedest known "Susquehanna" is no misnomer.

Organization of Susquehanna County.

A meeting was held at the home of I. Post, in Bridgewater township, Feb. 25, 1812, to recommend persons to the governor to fill the several offices necessary to the organization of the county. Davis Dimock was chairman and J. W. Raynsford secretary. Governor Snyder accordingly appointed Edward Fuller sheriff, Isaac Post treasurer, Dr. Charles Fraser prothonotary, clerk of the courts, registrar and recorder, and Bartlett Hinds, Isaac Brownson and Labran Capron commissioners. J. B. Gibson president judge, and Davis Dimock and William Thompson associate judges. The county seat had previously (July, 1811) been located at Montrose by three commissioners appointed by the governor. They were required to locate it "at a distance not exceeding seven miles from the center of the county." Brooklyn, Harford and New Milford were considered, but Bartlett Hinds and Isaac Post having donated the ground here for a public square, Montrose was chosen.

Contributors to First Court House.

Among those who contributed sums where in the county. If a man is lazy,

ed until June, 1813. It was a combination court house, jail and jailor's residence.

First Assessment of Taxes.

The first assessment of taxes was for the year 1813, and the total amount of the lists was \$3,154, the townships and respective amounts of their taxes being: Bridgewater, \$1,205.04; Clifford, \$442.22; Rush, \$418.37; Harford, \$273.71; Willingboro (Great Bend), \$226.61; New Milford, \$194.90; Lawsville, \$151.80; Harmony, \$71.22; Braintrim (Auburn), \$58.77; Nicholson (Lenox), \$57.27.

After that year the following named additional townships were created: Silver Lake, Gibson, Chocout, Middletown, Springville, Waterford, Jackson, Herrick, Dimock, Thompson, Franklin, Forest Lake, Lathrop, Jessup, Apolacoon, Ararat, and Oakland.

Our Natural Resources.

Nature has done much for Susquehanna county and if we as a people shall take deeper interest in our material development and advantage of the opportunities offered we can extend our environment and take in according to those advantages much that we can profit from.

Any point in or part of Susquehanna county is better for a poor man to locate in than if he were to remain in and breathe the fetid and pestilential atmosphere and struggle with all the unspeakable discomforts of life in many of the large cities and congested centers of population. If he is a man of some means and much energy he can make good headway in various lines of business—commercial, manufacturing, farming, dairying, fruit-raising, and other pursuits, and finally become independent. Of course, we want no paupers any-



SOLDIERS' MONUMENT, MONTROSE.

shops; journeymen painters can become master painters; coopers will find a good demand for barrels, and so on. But farming, dairying, poultry raising, and horticulture afford the better opportunities for persons with sufficient capital and energy to make a start in life and gradually attain to a competency. The professions are somewhat crowded at present, yet there is "always room for more" good lawyers, doctors, architects, etc., provided they, too, can afford to work and wait. All achievements here, however, as elsewhere, require deep, strong moral purpose, without which no true manhood is possible anywhere. Grit and the motto "I Will" can overcome almost any obstacle. We have soil, climate, wood, water, coal, railroad

Good People.

The people of this county generally are industrious, home-loving, law abiding and possessed of a delightful fund of quiet common sense. Revolting crimes are rarely if ever heard of within our borders and even petty offenses are infrequent. There are as many churches, schools, libraries, and societies which tend towards culture and intellectual development as will be found in any other section of like numerical population. Indeed, the county in this respect is above the average and it enjoys a wide distinction for hospitable, cultured communities. In the towns and villages we have many prosperous enter-

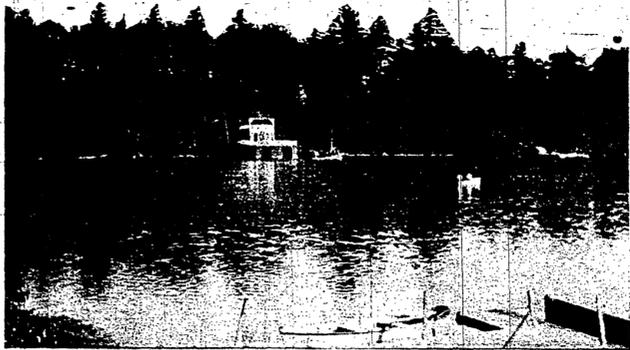
prises which will find good openings for small able an end will be welcomed in Susquehanna county.

prising business men, our lawyers, physicians and others of the learned professions are the intellectual equals of those in any part of the world.

Industries That Would Pay.

Montrose is not adapted for a general manufacturing center, with its attendant volumes of smoke and grime. There are unmistakable advantages here, however, for the lighter industries and enterprises embracing the fine arts and upon educational lines. No section of the United States affords a finer opening for a military school for boys, and a female college, as instances, and it is our sincere hope that movements may be started soon looking to the establishment of such enterprises. Montrose is also ripe for some enterprising person or persons to inaugurate such concerns as: A machine shop capable of doing all kinds of machinery repairing. Woodworking establishments of all kinds, including cooperage, the manufacture of furniture, ax handles, hog handles, etc.

Carpet weaving. Fruit canning. A silk-bobbin factory. A wagon and carriage manufactory. Brick making. A large cheese manufactory. A large modern sanitarium. An incubator manufactory. A silk mill. A basket manufactory. A hat manufactory. Knitting mills. Novelty works. Glove manufactories. Toy manufactories. Pure food products. Mattress making. There is a considerable amount of



BOAT HOUSE AND LANDING, SILVER LAKE

of money, varying from \$300 down to \$5, towards building the first court house were: Robert H. Rose, Stephen Wilson, Abinoam Hinds, Conrad Hinds, Isaac Peckins, David Harris, Jonathan Wheaton, James Trane, Simeon Taylor, Cyrus Messenger, Samuel Quick, Joseph Hubbard, Samuel Cogswell, Joseph Chapman, Edward Fuller, Joseph Butterfield, Henry Post, Levi Leonard, John Bard, Zebulon Deans, Edmond Stone, Freeman Fishback, Thomas Scott, Samuel Scott.

The first court house was a diminutive affair compared with the one now in existence. Its corner stone was laid in 1812, but the building was not finish-

shiftless and prone to idleness, he would better tie a mill stone about his neck and jump into mid-ocean than to try his "fortunes" in our country. We have few papers within our boundaries now and want less, but there is lots of room and good opportunities for hustlers and men of brains, who care to come to this region and are willing to work and wait.

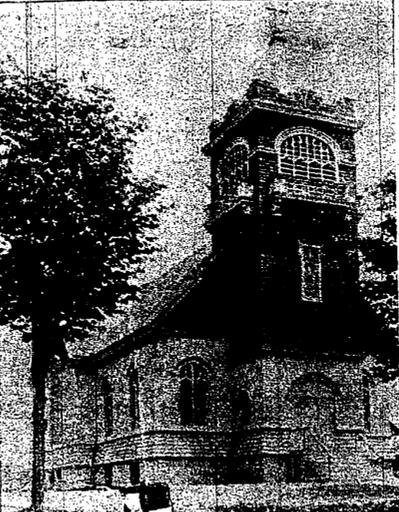
Good, Industrious Mechanics.

Men who are skilled in the arts, will also find splendid chances in Susquehanna county to engage in business on their own account. First-class, sober, industrious carpenters can soon become builders and contractors; machin-

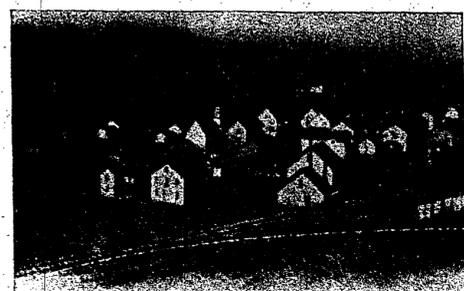
hand of fellowship to extend to those who are honestly ambitious to succeed in life and are hampered in other sections of the world by undesirable environment.

Farming and Dairying.

The plow and the cow are the ruling means of livelihood in Susquehanna county. All kinds of grain, esculents and many varieties of fruits are raised with profit in almost every part of the county. This region is famous for its dairying interests. It is one of the most extensive industries in the county. Numerous creameries abound—centers which buy the milk, bottle and ship it or make butter, cheese, etc. These



NEW CALVARY CHURCH, FRIENDSVILLE.



BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF KINGSLEY.

creameries handle large quantities of raw milk every day and pay farmers and dairymen a good price for it.

We frankly admit that the agricultural sections of our county are nevertheless susceptible of the farm-up-lift. President Roosevelt is so anxious about and for which he has appointed a commission. This commission is intended to create conditions that will improve the farms. Forest City, Susquehanna, Hallstead and farming in the United States and anything which will accomplish so de-

young people who would enter factories as workers, and we are far removed from all labor troubles and strikes. The question of wages, too, is an important factor in considering locations of enterprises in this county; the cost of living, rents, etc., is not so high as in the larger cities. Other towns in the county, such as Forest City, Susquehanna, Hallstead and Great Bend, New Milford, Uniondale, etc., with better railroad facilities