

THE LHS ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

Wednesday, May 8, 1985 - The Catlin House, 6:30 P.M.

The Annual Dinner Meeting of the Lackawanna Historical Society will be held at the Catlin House on Wednesday, May 8, at 6:30 P.M. The cost of the roast beef dinner, catered by Dippre, will be \$9.00 per person. Members and their guests are welcome, and reservations may be made by calling the Catlin House at 344-3841. The speaker for the evening will be Dr. David Salay, Director of the Anthracite Museum Complex, who will present a slide lecture about the history of the Lackawanna Iron and Coal Company.

CATLIN HOUSE NEWS

During the first quarter of 1985, a total of 469 individuals and 14 groups visited the Catlin House for research and tours. Groups have included the Y.W.C.A. Day Care Center, Girl Scout Troops, Cub Scout packs, and several classes from area public schools and colleges. We also exchanged information with a small tour group from Japan. Our Japanese guests, Akikiko Tomiguchi, Toshiro Sato, and Yutaka Ohiniug, are engineering students who had been visiting Pennsylvania electric generating facilities.

SOME WELL-SUITED BUSINESSES

— by Dorothy Allen

In April, 1873, the Hinsdell Clothing House was established at 408 Lackawanna Avenue, Scranton, taking over the business which had been run at that address by John Ross Tailoring. The Hinsdell firm advertised its ready-to-wear clothing as "made expressly for the Scranton trade." The business expanded rapidly, with profits increasing by as much as fifty percent each year, and by 1880, the store which was operated by Henry D. Hinsdell, P.J. Horan and M.J. Healey leased another building at 400-402 Lackawanna Avenue, formerly occupied by the G.A. Fuller Company.

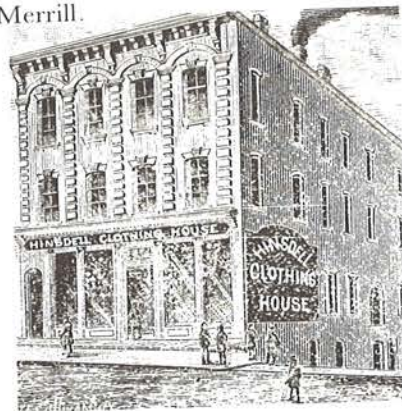
Hinsdell remodelled the interior of the building and advertised it as "the handsomest and most convenient in the city. . . It is splendidly lighted on three sides, the walls are beautifully decorated with truthful mottoes, is provided with a number of dressing rooms, and a spacious and elegant appointed waiting room for ladies, is presided over by polite, affable and competent salesmen, and to crown all is filled with the finest and most complete stock of goods in its way to be found in this country."

The firm hired a New York trained tailor, "Professor" William Sinnet to supervise its custom tailoring department. They expanded into the mail order business and hired A.J. Merrill to manage the Order Department.

The Hinsdell Clothing proprietors, in 1880, were aware of the value of advertising in selling products to the American people. To help promote their establishment, they published the *Scranton Art Journal*, an eight page magazine containing short articles about popular art, anecdotes, historical tidbits, advertisements of local businesses, and "reproducing sixty celebrated oil paintings during the year." The first volume was published in April of 1880. Art journals of this type were becoming popular in many U.S. cities as a way of reaching the public through "eye appeal." Many types of businesses would advertise in the art journals which were sold through yearly subscriptions. It is interesting to note that a second *Scranton Art Journal*, Volume I, Number 1, was published in April of 1884 by Nicholas

Kiefer, editor and proprietor of the *Scranton Herald* newspaper. Kiefer's first edition offered a new selection of art reproductions, but many of the articles were reproduced verbatim from the Hinsdell publication!

The Hinsdell firm continued at 400-402 Lackawanna Avenue until 1886. At that time, George Fuller assumed management of that business, and Hinsdell relocated at 416 Lackawanna Avenue. Mr. Hinsdell died in 1891, and the management of the store was turned over to his business associates, P.J. Horan and A.J. Merrill.



HINSDPELL CLOTHING HOUSE. 1880



"THE FAIR," 1894

The firm at 400-402 Lackawanna Avenue remained under the management of George Fuller until 1893 when Irving Howe and Company took over. In 1894, Ernest Friend and Francis J. Ruyl ran a dry goods store at that location which they named "The Fair."

From 1897 to 1912, a series of clothiers and dry goods firms occupied the premises, including Adolph Breschel and James Moir from 1897 to 1901. In 1902, John G. McConnell, the former manager of the Clelland & Simpson "Globe," acquired the property and operated his own department store there until 1908 when Gordon M. Taylor and Samuel G. Browning (his associates) bought the business. The Taylor-Browning Company went out of business in 1912. In 1913, the building at 400-402 Lackawanna was vacant. However, next door at 404 Lackawanna stood the small Lackawanna Trust & Safe Deposit building which had been built in 1900. When the Lackawanna Trust, under its president J. Benjamin Dimmick, merged with the First National of Scranton, under Charles S. Weston, in 1914, the banking firm purchased the adjacent vacant building. The old Hinsdell building was razed and a new structure was erected, incorporating the Lackawanna Trust & Safe Deposit building within a new facade.

The banking firm occupied the building until 1929 when it moved to its Wyoming and Spruce location. But what of the building at 400 Lackawanna? The location seemed destined to remain a retail sales location. The former banking house was sub-divided, becoming the location of a shoe store, dress shops, dry goods store, and optician's office.



FIRST NATIONAL BANK. 1916



STORE FRONTS, 1944

GENEALOGY SERVICES

Many researchers who visit the Catlin House come seeking information about ancestors or grandparents who had settled in the Lackawanna County area. The LHS library and archives offer a wealth of information which can aid the amateur historian or genealogist in his search. In addition, the Lackawanna County Courthouse contains records which may prove invaluable. Member genealogist Glenn Knight has prepared the following aid for use of naturalization records of the Lackawanna County Courts:

Prior to 1906, when the Federal Court acquired exclusive jurisdiction over naturalization proceedings, thousands of naturalization petitions were heard in State and local courts. The formation of Lackawanna County from Luzerne County in 1878 was marked by the establishment of the Court of Common Pleas and the Court of Quarter Sessions in Scranton. Moreover, the Mayors' Courts of Carbondale (1851-1875) and Scranton (1866-1875) also heard immigrants' petitions and granted naturalizations.

Genealogists and local historians interested in immigrants who may have been naturalized in Lackawanna County prior to 1906 can find a considerable volume of material in the office of the Clerk of Judicial Records at the Lackawanna County Courthouse on Washington Avenue, Scranton. The records are filed in two offices: Civil Records (on the first floor) and Criminal Records (on the third).

Naturalization records consist of thousands of documents filed in *numerical* order. There are indices which can enable the researcher to identify the number of the particular document needed. Each index book contains a list of petitions heard or declarations of intention received by the court, grouped by the first letter of the surnames of the petitioners. The names are *not* alphabetically ordered under each given letter. Thus, a page might list "Brown, Beeman, Bauman, Booker" with no internal order.

Information available in the indices varies and is often partial. In the *Naturalization Docket, Common Pleas* (Civil Records) each entry may include the surname, first name, middle initial, docket number, city, county, country of origin, date of filing declaration, date of filing petition, date of disposition, whether granted or refused, and a witness's name. A typical entry might read:

Loughney, Michael 4403 Ireland Octob 6, 1894 no Coggins

The *Alien Docket No. 1* provides a docket number, surname, (first) name, nationality, date granted, grounds, and a witness's name; for example:

| No. | Surname | Name | Nationality | Date | Grounds |
|------|---------|--------|-------------|--------------|----------|
| 1795 | Ryan | Thomas | Ireland | Oct. 4, 1884 | Under 18 |

Once a docket number is found, the researcher can inspect the original documents. Usually, these consist of: (1) a *Declaration of Intention* to become an immigrant, known as "first papers" (usually filed shortly after arrival in the U.S.), (2) a *Petition for Naturalization*, with the result given, (3) a *Petition for Naturalization of Minors* based on the fact that the immigrant was under eighteen years of age when he or she entered the U.S., (4) a *Military Service Naturalization* (granted in a few cases during the 1860's on the grounds of military service in the U.S. forces during the Civil War).

The indices to naturalization records in Lackawanna County Courthouse offices are bound in ten large and somewhat fragile volumes, arranged as follows:

- A. JUDICIAL RECORDS, CIVIL No. 1 — FIRST FLOOR
1. *Naturalization Docket No. 1, Common Pleas, Lackawanna County* (1879-1899)
 2. *Naturalization Docket No. 2, Common Pleas, Lackawanna County* (1900-1906)
- B. JUDICIAL RECORDS, CRIMINAL No. 1 — THIRD FLOOR
3. *Alien Docket No. 1, Lackawanna County* (1879-1900)
 4. *Naturalization Docket No. 2, Quarter Sessions, Lackawanna County* (1900-1906)
 5. *Declaration of Intentions No. 1, Lackawanna County* (1878-1906)
 6. *Alien Docket Mayor's Court No. 1, Lackawanna County* (c. 1866-1872)
 7. *Alien Docket No. 1, Declaration of Intention, Scranton Mayor's Court* (1866-1872)
 8. *Alien Docket Mayor's Court, City of Carbondale*, (c. 1851-1875)
 9. *Declaration of Intention, Mayor's Court, Carbondale* (1851-1875)
 10. *Record, Mayor's Court, Carbondale* (from 1870)

Among the useful information to be found in naturalization documents is the date and port of arrival in the United States. This information can be used to initiate a search of the *Ships Passenger List* files at the National Archives.

— by Glenn A. Knight

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