



1897



ca. 1914

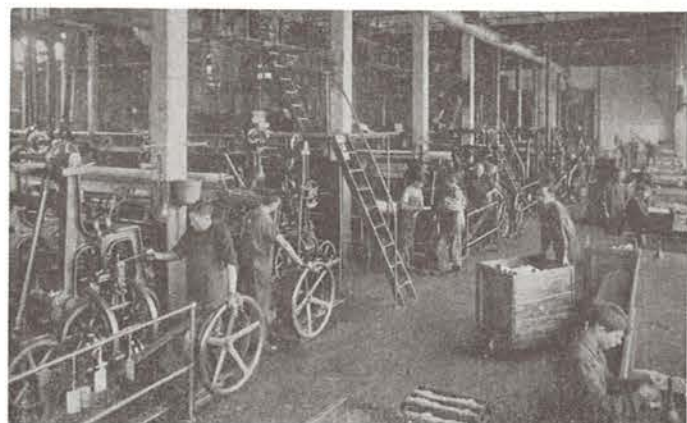
THE SCRANTON LACE COMPANY

The Scranton Lace Company was established in 1892. Property owned by Charles Du Pont Breck and J. Benjamin Dimmick on Marion Street, near Green Ridge, was purchased for the building in 1891. Machine-made lace was first produced in England in 1778, and by the Victorian era, the area around Nottingham, England, was so well-known for its lace that the name "Nottingham" was given to the type of lace made on the Heathcoat looms in use at that time. The Scranton Lace Company was established to provide U.S. competition with England for the lace market, and 15 second-hand Nottingham lace machines were purchased for the new company.

However, the new company was unable to achieve sufficient sales volume to make it a financial success. In 1897, the company was reorganized, and a number of Scranton

businessmen (Henry Belin, Jr., William Creighton, W.J. Lewis, John Simpson, William T. Smith, H.W. Taylor, T.H. Watkins, C.S. Weston, and J. Benjamin Dimmick) were invited to become stockholders in the new company. A meeting was held in the offices of Henry Belin, Jr. who had been elected secretary of the reorganization committee. The reorganization plan was presented by J. Benjamin Dimmick.

The new company was called The Scranton Lace Curtain Manufacturing Company, with Dimmick as president and Henry Belin, Jr. as vice-president. The first annual report, laboriously entered by hand in 1898 in the company's minute book, states that during that year the company had sold 901,000 yards of lace net and 186,000 pair of lace curtains, resulting in a total sales volume of \$236,000!



Scranton Lace Curtain Manufacturing Company, Weaving Room, ca. 1914

J. Benjamin Dimmick ran for mayor on the Republican ticket and was elected in 1906, defeating John Gibbons. His administration was notable for the introduction of city collection of ashes and refuse, development of playgrounds and youth recreational programs, and promotion of a city-wide road paving plan. In 1914, he made an unsuccessful bid for election to the Senate.

In 1918, President Wilson appointed J. Benjamin Dimmick chairman of the U.S. Red Cross Commission in Switzerland, with the duty of overseeing the treatment of U.S. prisoners of war during World War I. He returned from Switzerland in ill health.

In addition to his business and political pursuits, J. Ben-

jamin Dimmick was active as a trustee of the Pennsylvania Oral School (now Scranton State School for the Deaf) and as a member of the Scranton Public School Board. He held memberships in the Yale Club of New York City, the University Club, the Scranton Club, and the Scranton Country Club.

In January of 1920, he traveled to Stratford, Ontario, for surgery and he died there on January 14. He was buried in the Dimmick family plot in Glen Dyberry Cemetery, Honesdale. His youngest daughter, Mary Crosby Dimmick, married George Byers. The Byers' son, Wheaton, recently donated an oil portrait of his grandfather to the Lackawanna Historical Society.

SOCIETY PUBLISHES BOOK

As part of the Lackawanna Historical Society's Centennial Celebration throughout the 1986 year, the Society presents the book *Greetings from Scranton* by Jack Hiddlestone. The publication of this pictorial history of Scranton was made possible in part by a grant from The Scranton Area Foundation.

Greetings from Scranton contains 190 picture post-card facimilies depicting a number of well-known Scranton area landmarks. Textual commentaries highlight the evolution of the buildings through the decades from the 1890's through the 1980's. Scenes include the original Lackawanna Station, St. Thomas College, the Hahnemann Hospital, and the Throop Memorial Fountain at Nay Aug Park, as well as many public buildings, homes, and houses of worship.

Greetings from Scranton provides a service to students of local history, to architecture and post-card buffs, to all area residents, and to tourists.

The book is available to LHS members at the special price of \$10 (plus 60¢ tax.) If ordering the book by mail, please add \$1.75 for postage and handling. (Non-members: \$12.95 plus 78¢ tax.)



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LACKAWANNA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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ANNUAL SPRING RECEPTION

TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 1986, 8:00 P.M.

The Lackawanna Historical Society appreciates its many volunteers who have worked together during the past year to accomplish a variety of projects, from inventory to exhibit construction. To honor our volunteers for their services, and to welcome our new members, the Society invites you and your guests to attend the Second Annual New Members and Volunteers Spring Reception. The evening will consist of guided tours of the Catlin House, light refreshments, and a social hour.

J. BENJAMIN DIMMICK



J. Benjamin Dimmick was born in Honesdale, Pennsylvania, on October 3, 1858. The "Dymocks" were descended from David ap Madoc, Prince and Chief of the Welsh Marches during the reign of the early English Tudors. The name is derived from "Dai" or "Dy," the Welsh diminutive of David, whereby sons of David were known by the name "Daimoc" or "Dymock."

Thomas Dimmock came from Barnstable, England, circa 1630, and was one of the founders of the town of Barnstable, Massachusetts, holding public, military, and judicial positions. Timothy Dimmick, of the fourth generation of U.S. Dimmicks, married Ann Bradford, a direct descendant of Governor Bradford.

Alpheus Dimmick moved from Massachusetts to New York and represented Sullivan County in the state legislature. His son, Samuel Erskine Dimmick, studied law, entered into practice with his cousin William H. Dimmick of Honesdale, and was appointed Pennsylvania Attorney General in 1872. He married Lucretia M. Benjamin in 1855, and Joseph James Benjamin Dimmick was born in 1858.

The young Dimmick attended Adams Academy in Quincy, Massachusetts and Phillips Exeter Academy. He entered Yale, but ill health forced him to postpone his studies in his senior year. He went to Europe to recover and returned to Yale where he completed his B.A. and M.A. degrees in 1881. He studied law in the office of William H. Dimmick and was admitted to the Bar of Wayne County in 1882.

J. Benjamin Dimmick married Louisa H. Hunt, daughter of Dr. E.K. and Mary (Crosby) Hunt of Hartford, Connecticut, in 1881. In 1883, the young couple moved to Scranton, residing at 720 Marion Avenue where their first child, Jeanette Hunt Dimmick, was born that year.

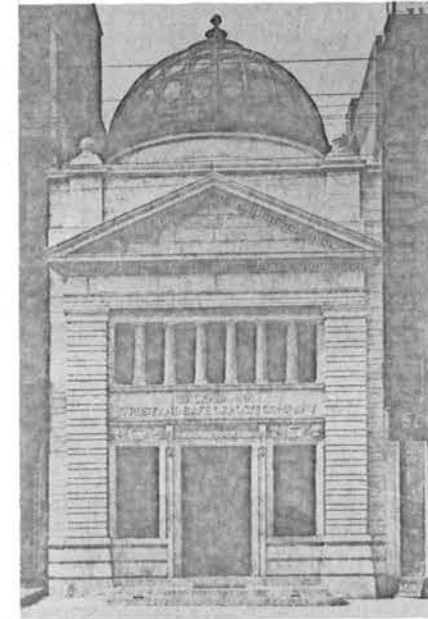
J. Benjamin entered into partnership with his cousin Edward C. Dimmick (who had married Joan Du Pont) and Charles Du Pont Breck, establishing law offices at 404 Lackawanna Avenue. In 1886, the partners expanded their firm to include a small banking institution, the Lackawanna Valley Bank. In this same year, George Sanderson, Sr., president of the George Sanderson and Company Bank, died and the bank which he had founded was reorganized.

LACKAWANNA TRUST AND SAFE DEPOSIT COMPANY



1887

LACKAWANNA TRUST AND SAFE DEPOSIT COMPANY



1900

A preliminary meeting of those interested in the formation of a safe deposit company in Scranton was held at the office of Henry Belin, Jr., on February 5, 1887. Those present were the Honorable Alfred Hand, E.B. Sturges, Charles Du Pont Breck, George Sanderson, Jr., R.T. Black, William T. Smith, William Connell, J. Benjamin Dimmick, and Henry Belin, Jr. The men agreed to merge the George Sanderson and Company Bank with the fledgling Lackawanna Valley Bank, forming the Lackawanna Trust and Safe Deposit Company. William T. Smith was first president and J. Benjamin Dimmick was first vice-president. When William T. Smith died in 1898, J. Benjamin Dimmick became president.

The bank conducted its business in Dimmick's building at



1915

404 Lackawanna Avenue (Edward C. had died in 1895 and ownership passed to his widow Joan Du Pont Dimmick) until 1900 when a new building was erected on that site. In 1909, the bank purchased the adjacent property at 400 Lackawanna (formerly "The Fair" dry goods store.)

In 1915, the Lackawanna Trust and Safe Deposit Company merged with the First National Bank of Scranton and another building was erected at 400-402 Lackawanna, incorporating the bank at 404 Lackawanna as a wing of the new structure. Charles S. Weston was president, and J. Benjamin Dimmick assumed the vice-presidency of the consolidated bank.

J. BENJAMIN DIMMICK RESIDENCE



1897

In 1890, ill health forced J. Benjamin to travel again to Europe, and for the next six years his time was divided between attending to business in Scranton and recovering in Switzerland from the effects of tuberculosis. In 1892, he was listed in the Scranton City Directory as Joseph B. Dimmick, and in 1896 as James B. Dimmick, presumably to avoid being disturbed by business pressures while he recovered from his illness. After his recovery, he was instrumental in the establishment of the Scranton Society for the Prevention and



1937

Cure of Consumption (tuberculosis) and he remained a trustee of that organization all his life.

In 1889, the Dimmick's second child, Lucretia Benjamin Dimmick, was born, and their third daughter, Mary Crosby Dimmick, was born in 1894. In 1897, the Dimmick family moved to their newly built residence at 1730 North Washington Avenue. The building was a large frame structure with an attached greenhouse in the rear. The home stood until 1937.