

1855



EIGHTY YEARS
OF SERVICE.

1935

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*Eighty Years
of Service*

TO THE
BOROUGH OF MINERSVILLE
AND VICINITY



Minersville Water Company

MINERSVILLE, PA.

Incorporated by an Act of the General Assembly
of the State of Pennsylvania
April 30, 1855,
Governor James Pollack

Foreword

The sole purpose of this booklet is to convey a better understanding and more friendly relationship between the Consumers of the MINERSVILLE WATER COMPANY and the Utility itself.

It is our sincere belief that you, as one of our consumers, will be interested in knowing some of the facts concerning the life history, construction and operation of the Utility which supplies WATER to your home.

The story told is about our Organization and the SERVICE it has given during the past eighty years. The contents presented have been compiled as truthful and accurate as possible, with extreme care being taken to insure that neither any false statement nor misleading opinion be expressed.

With these objects in view, the Company has prepared this booklet for your pleasure.

MINERSVILLE WATER COMPANY,
A. S. KEAR, *Secretary.*

Approved June 5th, 1935.

“What vast additions to the conveniences and comforts of life might mankind have acquired, if the money spent in wars had been employed in works of Utility.”

—*Benjamin Franklin.*

A STUDY MADE FOR THE
MINERSVILLE WATER COMPANY

By CARL KEAR

Eighty Years of Service

by the

Minersville Water Company

Eighty years ago, on June 2nd, 1855, the Commissioners appointed to receive subscriptions to the Capital Stock of "THE MINERSVILLE WATER AND INSURANCE COMPANY" met at the office of SEYMOUR D. BALL in the Borough of Minersville, Pennsylvania.

CHARLES W. TAYLOR was called to the Chair, and SEYMOUR D. BALL was appointed Secretary.

The Chairman made a statement that the object of the meeting of the Commissioners was an attempt to devise and adopt some means to secure the subscriptions for the required amount of stock to finance the Company.

On motion of WILLIAM DEHAVEN, SEYMOUR D. BALL was appointed a Committee to procure a suitable book for receiving subscriptions to the said stock, blank scrip certificates of stock and all other books and papers necessary in receiving said subscriptions.

On motion of SEYMOUR D. BALL, RICHARD KEAR was appointed to receive all monies paid by persons subscribing to said stock.

On motion of RICHARD KEAR, that a Town meeting be called at the ANTHRACITE HALL for the purpose of receiving said stock subscriptions.

After directing these proceedings be signed by the Commissioners and published in the *Minersville Bulletin*, on motion of JOSEPH C. WRIGHT, the meeting adjourned.

SEYMOUR D. BALL,
Secretary.

“These proceedings” were the first steps taken by the residents of Minersville to procure an abundant supply of “running water” to the Town.

The following is a list of the original subscribers to the Capital Stock of
THE MINERSVILLE WATER AND
INSURANCE COMPANY
in the order of which their subscription was received:

Richard Kear	Jonathan Humphreys	Daniel Holpp
John S. Roberts	Terrence Quinn	Thos. L. Davis
Seymour D. Ball	Robert Williams	Stephen Jones
Wm. DeHaven	Jacob Wernert	Henry Albright
Clement S. Foster	Geo. H. Helfrich	John B. Arnold
Evan Evans	Isaac Ward	George Sheard
Daniel Hoch	Frederick Roehrig	Joseph Jeans
Michael Merkle	Geo. & Harriet Marsh	Paul Neugard
Chas. Lightenberger	Jacob Wiest	James Campbell
John Witziman	Lemuel D. Jones	John O'Donnell
John H. Detwiler	Philip Jenkins	Philip Harris
Edward Shissler	Newsome Baker	Nicholas Merges
Adam Confer	George Spencer	John H. Jones
Richard Williams	J. F. G. Kumsius	George Thiel
Francis Bedford	Thomas Stewart	L. F. Whitney
Abraham Hexter	Mary Stewart	John B. Reese
B. Shartle	Joseph F. Taylor	Jacob Lill
William Best	Jacob A. Schlaseman	William Wolff
G. J. and	Moses Faust	Michael McGurl
J. S. Lawrence	Jacob Roehmer	Richard Richards
Samuel P. Bast	George Repplier	Jos. Twirlwill
Wm. Sterner	Nicholas Miller	Michael B. Corcoran
John Volpert	Valentine Ludes	Miller & Burgard
Israel Seitzinger	Daniel Freiler	Fred. Abendroth
F. Schellenberg	Howell Fisher	Henry George
Emanuel Bast	Seth W. Geer	M. Moitz
J. Kellar Burns	Daniel F. Hughes	Peter Wagner
Jno. B. Price	Michael Weirich	Seth Thomas
Louis Pfeilstecker	John Brislin	John Teager
Wm. Lindemuth	John Wadlinger	Isaac Moyer
John Quinn	Alexander Jeffrey	George Hehr
Henry Snyder	John Oerther	Shloss & Bros.
John S. Wiest	David W. Griffiths	Mathais Shuldes
Hiram W. Prevost	John Bryson	John Mainwaring
E. P. Burkert	W. B. Wells	Wm. Beddow
Michael Malone	Wm. Kear	G. F. Wiest
Michael Horn	L. S. Kauffman	Thos. M. Jenkins
Jacob Maurer	Henry Steffy	Maria Kauffman
Philips & Moore	Christ. Youngfleish	John L. Evans
Engelhart Hummel	Wm. G. Thomas	Jos. Marks
James Donahoe	W. & R. Kline	Edward Jones
Charles Mohan	Thomas Lloyd	Frederick Oerther
Wm. Halbauer	Daniel Morgans	E. Abraham
Frederick Snyder	Joseph Meyers	Samuel Kauffman
James Harley	Mary A. Lawrence	Henry R. Davis
Thomas Kear	Elizabeth Andrews	John Pearce
	Jacob Kiefer	

These original Stockholders of the Public Utility which supplies you with water were nearly *ALL* Minersville people. They were typical *Pennsylvanians*—individually, folks like yourself. They were the kind of men and women who possessed plenty of *Faith, Courage* and *Vision* when they pinned their savings on a name and an idea. For that is all their company was in the beginning, *Eighty Years Ago*, when every one had to carry their water from wells, springs or running streams; when people considered themselves fortunate if they were able to obtain water from their nearest well during the dry seasons; when the luxurious convenience of bathrooms, heating plants and “running hot and cold water” in the home was unknown in Town—even among our well-to-do families; *when fire protection and sewerage could not be purchased for any reasonable price*; when the telephone, the automobile, the aeroplane, the electric light and concrete highways were still locked up in the dreams of men.



Two years later, in the Spring of 1857, the first election of the Board of Managers of the MINERSVILLE WATER COM-

PANY* was held in the Public House of J. F. G. Kumsius. From the result of this election, the following Stockholders were declared the First Board of Managers of the said Company:

WILLIAM DEHAVEN	GEORGE REPPLIER
CLEMENT S. FOSTER	J. F. G. KUMSIUS
JACOB S. LAWRENCE	JOHN OERTHER
FREDERICK ROEHRIG	DANIEL HOCH
ABRAHAM HEXTER	JOHN VOLPERT
GEORGE SPENCER	HENRY SNYDER
CHARLES MOHAN	GEORGE HEHR
WILLIAM STERNER	

This Board duly elected RICHARD KEAR as Treasurer and SETH W. GEER as Attorney for the Company.

Considerable time and much money were spent in building the first dam on DYERS RUN, in laying the first section of eight-inch water main, in securing the proper legal rights-of-way through court procedure and in settling land damages as approved by a Board of Viewers appointed by the Court.

During this early construction period, before the days of the Civil War, the wages of labor and the price of material rose to a higher level than at any other economic period in the 19th Century—even surpassing the peak of 1814. Due to this fact, the MINERSVILLE WATER COMPANY, unfortunately, did *not* obtain so favorable a return on the *Dollar-for-*

* Some time prior to this period the title of the Company had been changed.

Dollar Value as it might have received under *normal conditions*. Thus, from the very beginning, the Company was under a heavy financial handicap.



As *Time* moves on, we find that *Today* an interesting fact concerning the stock of this Company has been disclosed. *Eighty (80%) per cent* of the shares issued is held—at the time this is written—by estates, widows and orphans, in trust funds, or by the recipients of bequests.

A surprisingly large number of residents of our Town have owned stock for *Fifty Years* or more. A partial list of these families would include:

BEDDOW	HOFFMEISTER	MOHAN
BENDER	HALBAUER	OERTHER
BRADBURY	JONES	PAULEY
BOEHMER	JEANS	PHILLIPS
CLAPPIER	KEAR	ROEHRIG
DAVIS	LAWRENCE	ROACH
DANDO	LAUDEMAN	STEFFEE
DIETZ	MAERKER	STEWART
EVANS	MOITZ	SELTZER
FERG	MOYER	SHOLLENBERGER
FENNEL	MCGURL	SNYDER
GERZ	MERKLE	WIEST
GEANSLIN	MAURER	WAGNER
HAHN	MOORE	YOUNGFLEISCH
HAMMER	MATTHIAS	ZIMMERMAN

AND

THE BOROUGH OF MINERSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA*

* The largest and oldest block of MINERSVILLE WATER COMPANY Stock is owned—at the time this is written—by the Borough of Minersville, Pennsylvania.

Most of these families and their children have lived in *Minersville* nearly all of their lives. Some were your friends and neighbors. Some were local business people in Town, fifty years ago. Some sold or traded with your grandparents in groceries and dry goods, meats, furniture, drugs and hardware, wines and liquors, ice, jewelry, paint products and other necessary commodities of life. Some were your own family's doctor, tailor, hostler, realtor and school teacher. The children of some of these families went to school with you, belonged to your church, joined your lodge and swam in the same "swimmin' hole" with you not so long ago.

These fine people were real *Empire Builders*. They were made from the same stuff as those who *Built Our Country*. Their savings invested in the MINERSVILLE WATER COMPANY, from its pioneer days, have made possible our contribution to the progress and development of the communities we serve.

Since its organization this Company has supplied to our people an ample supply of fresh, pure, sweet water. In these days, when severe droughts have been experienced and when so many localities have no water supply except from fearfully contaminated sources, our people enjoy an unequalled supply—clear, clean

and cold, as it comes from natural springs and mountain streams. All this is due to the foresight of those who organized this Company, and those who, by their cooperation, have made its operation possible.

A verification of the excellent quality of the water supplied to our consumers as found in a recent chemical analysis made by the Pennsylvania Department of Health is presented herewith.

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
HARRISBURG

March 15, 1935.

MINERSVILLE WATER COMPANY,
Schuylkill County.

MR. CARL KEAR,
Water Works Superintendent,
Minersville, Pa.

Dear Mr. Kear:

You will recall that on March 5th I collected some samples for analysis from the first house below your Dyer's Run dam. Below are listed the results of these analyses:

Chemical results expressed in parts per million.

Color	0	Nitrite nitrogen . . . . .	.003
Odor	0	Nitrate " . . . . .	.1
Turbidity	0	Chloride	5
Total residue	18	Oxygen consumed	1.2
Volatile matter	4	Alkalinity	18
Fixed residue	14	Total hardness	20
Ammonia nitrogen . . . . .	.012	Total iron . . . . .	.3
Albuminoid " . . . . .	.020	pH	7.2

Bacteriological

	Tot. Bact.	Coli Aerog.	B. Coli
First house below dam	24	0	0

You will note that the hardness of the water is quite low while the pH is at a point where now satisfactory water is being served to your consumers.

Very truly yours,
LOUIS K. SCHEFFER,
Assistant Engineer.

LKS:P

During the years of this fearful depression, the MINERSVILLE WATER COMPANY has not refused service to *any* family who could honestly and sincerely show that it was without means or income to pay its water charges.

Since the summer of 1932 it has enabled 587 families to secure water service by providing work for their members.

It paid a labor wage of FIFTY CENTS PER HOUR for such services at a time when the Federal N. R. A. Code—which the MINERSVILLE WATER COMPANY signed—declared a MINIMUM wage for this type of labor to be THIRTY-FIVE CENTS PER HOUR.

It has spent over \$24,000.00 for wages and material to have this work done.

It cooperated with the Borough of Minersville on the Federal Relief Programs—namely, the C. W. A. and L. W. D. Sewer Projects which constructed the Sunbury Street and Lytle Street Concrete Sewers for a nominal charge. This also included all of the concrete curbing finished under these same Federal Agencies.

In 1934 it cooperated with the Borough of Minersville and the Pennsylvan-

nia Railroad Company in fighting a fire under the railroad trestle along North Delaware Avenue to the extent of *Four Million Gallons of Water*—at a time when there was *no overflow* from any of its Dams or Reservoirs—at a cost of but SEVEN CENTS PER DAY.*



Have you ever stopped to think how LITTLE it costs you for the purification and transportation of STERILIZED WATER to the spigots in your home?

For our Flat Rate Service, the cost to each Family is about TWO CENTS PER DAY (actually \$.022).

For the convenience and use of a *Bath, Water Closet, and Range Boiler*—on the same Flat Rate Service—the cost is *less than* FIVE CENTS PER DAY (actually \$.048).

For a Metered Service, the actual cost is \$.049, and the more water you use, the less you pay for the water consumed.

* The Borough of Minersville pays a water service charge of \$.07 per day for each Fire Hydrant supplied by and connected to the MINERSVILLE WATER COMPANY water mains.

A comparison of the items on the following list of the present cost of liquid commodities at current day prices is of interest.

	Cost per 1000 Gallons
MILK	\$ 52.00
BEER	65.00
SODA WATER	130.00
GASOLINE	200.00
WATER .....	.08

NOTE: BEER AND SODA WATER prices are based on the cost of a TEN-OUNCE GLASS at YOUR favorite saloon or drug store.

	Cost per Ton (2000 pounds)
SAND AND GRAVEL	\$.75
RIVER SAND	5.00
COAL	7.25
CEMENT	17.00
LIME	22.80
CAST IRON PIPE	48.50
WATER .....	.22½

NOTE: The above merchandise and corresponding prices have been taken from the records of purchases made during 1934 by the MINERSVILLE WATER COMPANY.

The ACTUAL COST to each property owner in the Borough of Minersville for water supplied to its Fire Hydrants for YOUR fire protection is LESS THAN TEN CENTS (\$.10) PER MONTH — a little more than ONE-THIRD OF ONE CENT PER DAY.

Our Town has been exceptionally fortunate in that it has been well equipped with good modern fire-fighting apparatus, intelligent and courageous *Volunteer* firemen and the services of one of the highest maintained water pressure systems used in supplying water for fire protection in the State of Pennsylvania.

During the past year — 1934 — certain portions of our *Water Mains* were out of service due to leaks and broken pipes. The water supply to your home was interrupted on the AVERAGE of but *Four-Fifths of One Second per Day* throughout the whole year on account of these inconveniences. This is truly a very fortunate and most remarkable performance of SERVICE. The record, however, does not include trouble encountered such as leaks, frozen pipes, etc., on *Private Service Lines*.

In order to secure this splendid service given by the MINERSVILLE WATER COMPANY, it had to expend these amounts for

DAMS AND RESERVOIRS ..	\$274,662.24
PURIFICATION PLANT ..	6,360.22
TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION MAINS AND SERVICE LINES	331,835.71

OR A TOTAL OUTLAY OF. \$612,858.17

The large annual expenditures for maintenance, taxes and emergencies necessary to insure a continued water supply and the standard of service to which you have become accustomed are not included in the amounts previously quoted.



No individual business can operate its plant and guarantee SERVICE at a loss to the capital invested. There must be gain — if nothing more than to attract additional capital and idle money for improvement and expansion. Due to the nature of its business, a utility must continually grow, develop and replace each component part of its system, if the established standard of service is to be maintained.

The Public Service Commission of Pennsylvania, under whose sanction the MINERSVILLE WATER COMPANY operates, as well as our Federal and State Courts, have declared that "a utility must have a fair return on its capital investment." It might be interesting for our consumers to know that in the year 1934 the MINERSVILLE WATER COMPANY paid a TWO PER CENT (2%) return on the capital invested in its water works.

In addition to the investment by its Stockholders, the Company has a loan of \$80,000.00 upon which it pays to its Bondholders annual interest at the rate of 5%. With but a single exception, all of the holders of these bonds are Minersville residents or Minersville institutions. Among these are widows, estates, clergymen, doctors, merchants, mechanics, fraternal organizations and banks.

During the past few weeks the Pennsylvania Legislature has imposed upon all private water companies numerous taxes which will subject these water utilities to a State income tax of as much as 18%, which is unreasonable; the Federal income tax being less than 13.75%. If any commodity is to be exempted from taxation, certainly water should be one of the commodities. Water is a prime necessity of life. It should not be used for taxation purposes.

In order to have a healthy, growing community, we must have a healthy, growing water utility to render SERVICE, and whenever the water utility for any reason becomes embarrassed, the community suffers. Taxes, both State and Federal, are a serious problem.

This problem is one we must ALL help to solve.

