

**THE CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF
KUTZTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA.
CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL
OF THE INCORPORATION OF THE
BOROUGH - 1815-1915**

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The Centennial History of Kutztown, Pennsylvania. Celebrating the Centennial of the
Incorporation of the Borough - 1815-1915 by W. W. Deatrck

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W. W. DEATRICK

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DR. HENRY W. SAUL
President Kutztown Centennial Association

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CENTENNIAL HISTORY
OF KUTZTOWN

PENNSYLVANIA

CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL OF THE INCORPORATION
OF THE BOROUGH—1815—1915

COMPILED BY THE HISTORICAL COMMITTEE OF THE KUTZTOWN CENTENNIAL
ASSOCIATION

W. W. DEATRICK, A. M., Sc. D., Chairman

1915

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FOREWORD

KUTZTOWN BOROUGH was one hundred years old in March of the present year. The town is about half a century older. Soon after the laying out, in 1755, of "The Great Road,"—the Easton Road it has long been called—a straggling hamlet, a hotel or two and some other buildings, sprang up at the crossing of the Saucony. In 1779 the town was formally laid out. From that time to this there has been growth, rapid at times, slow, almost at a standstill, at other times, but ever continuous.

This century, or century and a half, of existence of the town has been marked by events, quite as numerous and quite as noteworthy as those that have happened in most towns of the size in such a period. That these happenings might not be forgotten; that some already well-nigh forgotten incidents might be preserved to the generation coming after us; that the Centennial of Kutztown might be marked by more than the passing shows of the week of celebration that begins July 1, this year of grace; that all who read may know what of interest, great or little, has happened in our town; that the world may learn how Kutztown has grown and what a little city it is today, this CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF KUTZTOWN has been prepared.

The Historical Committee, charged by the Kutztown Centennial Association with the preparation of this volume, have found, in the course of their researches, that the history of the town is much fuller and much more stirring and interesting than even those who knew most about the matter had any notion. Readers of this volume will find some stories not told in print before. They will find here, committed to the art preservative, tales which they heard in childhood days and which they have nearly or quite forgotten. Such ones will be thankful, we are sure, that this work has been undertaken. Historians may find here, as in local histories often, some contribution to the larger history of county, state, or nation.

The book is not all history. A considerable portion of the volume is devoted to a telling to the world at large of what may be seen if folks come to Kutztown; to a not exaggerated setting forth of the industries, businesses, and social institutions of the place; as well as to some account of people now or once resident in the town. This

feature will, doubtless, be of interest. More than this, however,—these records of the present time will, certainly, by and by, prove as interesting and valuable to the future writer of a fuller, better history as the pamphlet of Professor Ermentrout, issued in 1876, was to the compilers of this book.

Readers will, certainly, discover errors in this publication. But for these indulgence is craved. No one is more conscious than the editor, chairman of the committee, of the shortcomings of the volume. That omissions, mis-statements, duplications, and even contradictions will be found is quite likely. Some misprints will occur. Critics may notice lack of uniformity in style.

Kind indulgence is, nevertheless, requested. It is proper, however, to say that not all that may be taken for error is really such. In the reprints of old documents the strange spelling and unusual phraseology are not the fault of the copyist or printer—at least not in many cases. An honest effort has been made to follow the rule at present accepted by historians—to reprint such documents with all their peculiarities. For what is not explicable in this way the editor feels that this much of explanation is due to his colleagues and himself. Lack of uniformity, especially, in style, is the result of the book being the work of many hands. There was lack of time for desirable consultation between the co-workers, and editorial supervision has been far from what was desirable. As the material came in it became a physical impossibility to examine all of it even cursorily.

The editor was hampered greatly in the work by the death of the Rev. J. J. Cressman, on whom reliance was placed for researches and write-ups on certain portions of the work.

Another reason for what some may consider worthy of criticism is that much to which time for consideration should have been given was brought to light only within the last few weeks, in which time there was great increase of interest in the forthcoming history. The amount of time and labor involved in ferreting out the truth of a matter when tradition conflicted with tradition, or when tradition was found to be at variance with discovered records, is known only to those who have had experience in such studies.

Histories, if they are to be relatively free from errors such as have been mentioned,

cannot be written to order or completed by a time set in advance. At first there was difference of opinion as to the time when this history should appear. The chairman and some other members of the committee were of opinion that its publication should take place after the Centennial. The judgment of the majority was that it should be finished before the celebration. That judgment has been accepted and the wonder is that so much has been accomplished and with so little of error, as is believed. The Centennial could not be postponed—the work had to be gotten ready before the opening of the celebration.

The committee, especially the chairman, regrets exceedingly that there are imperfections due to hurried preparation and lack of opportunity for full revision. It is

as a body thankful that so much has been done so well, especially by those who have come to the assistance of the editor and committee.

To his colleagues on the committee and to all who have helped in any way, the editor herewith returns his thanks. Of readers and critics he begs kind indulgence. Concluding, he invites criticism. Notification of errors which may be discovered will be thankfully received. In this way the publication at some future time of a fuller, more accurate history than the present one may be made possible.

W. W. DEATRICK, *Editor*

Chairman of Historical Committee

Kutztown, Pa.

June 23, 1915

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THE KUTZTOWN CENTENNIAL ASSOCIATION—ITS INCEPTION AND HISTORY

On March 4, 1909, the Kutztown Town Council held its annual reorganization, at which time Dr. H. W. Saul delivered his inaugural address as burgess. He referred to 1915 as being the time when Kutztown would be one hundred years old as an incorporated borough and suggested that preparations should be commenced to raise money fittingly to celebrate the occasion.

After thanking Council for confidence reposed in him and making some other remarks, the newly elected Burgess said:

"At the present time I have nothing to offer other than to give out one suggestion, or rather a train of thoughts that came to me like an inspiration, while making one of my drives in the country. It is this: In 1915 this borough will be one hundred years old. It behooves us, as American citizens, yea, as citizens of the Borough of Kutztown, befittingly to commemorate and celebrate this all important centennial event. To do this in a proper way requires time, energy, and money. Money is the least, for it is the easiest to command. How will you do it? Draw up a list, call it the 'Roll of Honor,' and get on this roll the names of all the sons and all the daughters who were ever born within the border limits of the Borough of Kutztown, and who are still among the living, even though they are spread over the broad expanse of the entire United States, or reside in other climes or dwell in the remotest corners of the universe. Get at least 500 on this roll and have each of them pay but one dollar a year. In one year you will have \$500 and in six years you will have \$3000. But this is not enough. How will you get more? Every industry, every business man, and every hotel-keeper in the borough is willing to subscribe at least \$25. The Keystone State Normal School on the top of the hill will be only too glad to help the cause along with at least \$200. Let the public school children enter into the patriotism and once a year contribute their pennies, nickels or dimes, and in this way raise another hundred dollars during the course of the six years. Let the Borough Council donate several hundred dollars. In all this time the money, as it comes in, will be deposited in our local bank and earn three per cent interest per annum. Then the sum will be approximately \$6000 or \$7000, with which you can begin to celebrate this great event.

To make the event all the more complete, we want all the sons and all the daughters who may have been absent five, ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty, or more years to come home to their own native town and have a grand, gala time in the old home during that summer week of 1915. Gentlemen, we are so situated and we have the facilities to make this a complete success if we only start in time. Let us make it our aim to excel, eclipse, and place in the shade, if such a thing is possible, that grand and spectacular celebration which was held some years ago in the city of Reading. Then, if we fall short in attaining such a high standard, our efforts will at least be laudable."

A special meeting of Council was held on March 12, 1909, to consider the suggestion. A number of citizens were present. President of Council, L. A. Stein, stated the object of the meeting to be the advisability of a permanent organization for the purpose of celebrating the centennial year, 1915. A financial committee was created for the purpose of raising money to defray the necessary expenses of a Centennial Celebration. This committee consisted of the Burgess, the members of the Town Council, and its secretary, the five active ministers of the Gospel of the churches of the Borough, the publishers and editors of "The Patriot," and enough other citizens to swell the committee to twenty-five. At a subsequent meeting the committee was increased to fifty members. These persons pledged themselves to pay each no less than seven dollars for the purpose named. A Roll of Honor was created, with an appropriate heading, to be signed by the contributors.

Dr. H. W. Saul, Burgess, was then unanimously elected president, A. S. Heffner secretary, Arthur Bonner treasurer, Rev. R. B. Lynch, V. H. Hauser, and A. S. Christ trustees. William B. Schaeffer, E. P. De-Turk, and Walter S. Dietrich were elected auditors. Later, because of increasing interest and consequent augmentation of necessary correspondence, Herman A. Fister, cashier of the Farmers Bank, was elected corresponding secretary, all to serve one year. All the officers were re-elected from year to year up to the time of the celebration.

On April 26, 1909, a letter from Dr. Albert J. Kutz, of Northampton, England, offering a donation of \$100.00 to the centen-