

CHESTER TIMES – February 1, 1913

BUILDING AND REALTY NEWS – Duplex Metals Company to Build Addition – Viscose Annex Completed – City and County Activities

The Duplex Metals Company, foot of Lloyd Street, contemplates the erection of another addition to its place. The new building, which is to be one story in height will be 102 by 85 feet and will be used in the manufacture of copper-covered steel wire. Excepting this one operation the other new building activities reported in Chester during the past week have been of minor importance. A few new buildings have been planned for different boroughs out in the county. The West End Boat Club is also going to build a club house here.

A well-known builder, who has erected many of the houses in this city, said yesterday that the main difficulty experienced by builders and contractors in this city was in getting mortgages on operations. This has retarded the growth of Chester in this – in the county Colwyn contemplates the enlargement of the town hall. The contract had been let for the \$25,000 residence that Nathan Hayward is going to build at St. Davids. Two operations are contemplated at Cynwyd and the American Viscose Company has completed its plant additions at Marcus Hook and has nearly all of the 249 dwelling houses it is building at that place under roof.

The real estate market has been dull in Chester during the past week. The recent revision of taxes has made many people hesitate about purchasing until they ascertain what the final settlement of the taxation controversy will be. The county real estate in the markets has been more active. Several building permits were issued in Chester during the week.

IN THE CITY – Work is progressing nicely on the Beacon Light Company's improvements. The wharf is now assuming shape and the overhead tramway over West Front Street has been erected at a height of about 25 feet. J.E. Brenneman and Company of Philadelphia are the contractors.

The walls of the new \$30,000 beef house of Swift and Company at 17, 19, 21, and 23 East Second Street, are nearly completed, to the roof, which will be of concrete. The Consolidated Engineering Company of Baltimore is the general contractor.

The waiting rooms under the concrete recreation pier in Market Street wharf have been completed and are now being painted. The finishing touches remain to be done by the company at a cost that would nearly exceed \$150.

"The Commission's plan would be to publish one ward at a time, beginning with the First and going down the line. It was said in Council the other night that the cost of advertising the list of assessments would be in the neighborhood of \$5000. From the above it is easy to see how far wrong the calculation was. The members of the commissions, like all other progressive people of Chester, realize the fact that the city needs more money with which to conduct its affairs. Had the Board revised the assessments on an average basis of 15 per cent increase the additional revenue for the city for the year 1912 over last year would be \$27,000.

"If the average increase of assessments were to be fixed at 25 percent, over last year, the additional income to the city would be \$5,000. Any intelligent person knows that the more improvements that are made in the city, the more need there will be for money. In order to properly take care of the newly paved streets the Highway Department ought to have at least \$10,000 more than has been allowed. It would be a wise expenditure.

“The members of the Board of Revision of Taxes are all men of intelligence and men who have the best interests of the taxpayers at heart. There is no reason why a way should not be found to satisfy public clamor and the city’s requirements. It can all be worked out on an equitable basis, and no doubt, will be. What we all ought to strive to do is to help advance the city along practical lines, and I am sure that the disposition of Councils, the Board of Revision of Taxes and all other public spirited organizations and individuals will work along the lines that will accomplish that object.

“We must all, however, be ready to rectify a mistake when we are shown that one has been made. In this connection the Board of Revision of Taxes has left itself open to criticism whether justly or unjustly.”

“I feel an interest in this all-important matter chiefly because of the unfavorable results that are sure to follow, unless a more practical method of fixing assessments is adopted. Until the city is divided off into zones and the real estate values within such divisions are fixed on a basis of equality by experts, and with full knowledge to tax payers, the best interest of the city and the public will not be served. Some such method will have to be introduced sooner or later and the sooner it is done, the better.

KEITH LOCKHART COLLECTION