

Cementon, Penna.

Cementon is located in the northwestern section of the township on the west bank of the Lehigh River, about a mile above the borough of Coplay. The first settler here was Jacob Showalter, a Mennonite, who, with his sons, settled on a tract of 450 acres about 1752. Not having secured a clear title, he was compelled to purchase the land from William Allen, who had secured a patent in 1759. In 1771, Joseph Showalter sold 150 acres to John Conrad Leisenring, whose descendants owned the land for 125 years.

A ferry was established here at an early date. In 1760, a man named Feitner is mentioned as the ferryman at this place. In later years it was called Siegfried's Ferry, after Colonel John Siegfried, who kept a tavern on the Northampton county side from 1770 until his death in 1793. After the bridge was erected in 1828, both settlements on each side of the river were called Siegfried's Bridge, until 1856, when the railroad company established a station on the west bank of the river and named it Whitehall, after the township, and it was so known until 1901 (shortly after the Whitehall Portland Cement Co. established its plant here) when the name was changed to Cementon. Peter Leisenring built the first house on the site of the town in 1818.

A bridge over the river, a wooden, covered structure, of three spans was erected in 1828 by an incorporated company. It was swept away by the great flood of June 5th, 1862, but immediately rebuilt after the same style. The high water extended to the Valley House and carried many drowned people in its current down the valley. The western span adjoining Whitehall, was blown down by a great storm in 1871, and immediately restored. From the time of its erection in 1828 until 1893 toll was required for teams, pedestrians, etc., in passing to and fro; then it was declared a free county bridge by the courts of Northampton and Lehigh counties upon the application of the respective county commissioners, and as such it has since been maintained by the two counties at their joint expense. It was made free of toll for pedestrians some years before 1893.

About 1890, Albert Leisenring, M. S. Kemmerer, Thomas Righter and others organized the Whitehall Land Improvement Co., bought several farms in the vicinity of Whitehall and laid them off into building lots; then sold many of these lots and encouraged building operations. In 1899 this company organized the Whitehall Portland Cement Co. and founded an industry on a tract of 120 acres of land which contained an inexhaustible supply of first-class cement rock and this has been operated in a most successful manner until the present time. The plant was enlarged in 1903. The corporate name was changed to Whitehall Cement Co. in 1911 and is capitalized at \$550,000 and has a daily production of 4,200 barrels. The president is W. H. Harding, Vice president W. O. Lentz, secretary and treasurer, W. C. Kent and Superintendent, Arnold Hochstrasser. The employees number from 200 to 250, and the annual production is 1,400,000 barrels.

Near the works, in an elevated position, known as "Dewey Heights," the company erected two rows of ten double, two-story frame dwelling-houses for the accommodation of some of its working people.

From 1902 to 1909 the company supplied the town with electric light.