

The records of the copper mines in Maryland show that the parties in interest went through their due share of hope and realized woe. The machinery of fifty years ago was crude, assays were unreliable, ready money was scarce, and most of the mines had to be worked in a semi-rural way, the miners farming during pleasant weather and mining during that which was bad. While, therefore, the product was insignificant as compared with that of the Western mines of today, it doubtless represented at that time no mean engineering and financial ability.

The first smelting furnaces in the state were those at Mineral Hill and Liberty. The former was situated about five miles northeast of Sykesville, and the latter near the town of Liberty. The furnaces at Mineral Hill were in operation prior to 1776, and those of Liberty about 1840. In 1780 John Evans is said to have rolled copper at his mill on the Big Elk River, in Cecil County. He had an iron rolling and slitting mill and rolled copper as occasion demanded.

In 1804 Levi Hollingsworth, of Cecil County, is said to have started a rolling mill, and in 1810 he produced 100 tons. This is somewhat traditional, but it is positively known that at about this time he went to England and made a thorough study of the rolling and refining of copper, and in 1814 built the Gunpowder Copper Works on the Gunpowder River. In 1837 this company was reorganized under the name of Hollingsworth and Company. The copper itself came mostly from Chili in the form of bars or pigs. These contained about 96 per cent copper and were refined in the furnaces on the premises of the company. At the beginning of the Civil War in 1861 they were closed down.

In 1845 the Baltimore and Cuba Smelting and Copper Company was incorporated with Haslett Mc Kim as president and David Keener as ~~vice-president~~ agent. The company was originally organized to mine and

and the ores from the Ilodio Mines of ~~xxx~~ Don Bartholemew Trenard, near Santiago, Cuba, he being one of the original promoters of the scheme.

A tract of land was purchased on Locust Point, Little Cuba Street still remaining to mark the spot, and work on the furnaces was commenced at once. Trenard was made the agent of the company in Cuba and sent out to open up the mines and arrange for the shipment of the ores. Early in 1846 the works were ready, but the expected ore did not arrive, and a commission sent to Cuba to make investigations into the cause of the delay reported so unfavorably upon the Trenard mines that all relations with them were immediately severed. At this time Baltimore was largely engaged in trade with the West Indies and the west coast of South America, and the company began negotiations to purchase ores from Cuba and Chili, and also to supplement these purchases with small parcels from Maryland and the neighboring states.

In 1849 a rolling mill was built to enable the company to place a part of its product on the market in a more finished form, and in 1850 a yellow-metal mill was added. At this time there was set up at Canton, just across the river, some rival works. The old company had not been successful. The failure of the Trenard mines had left it without a regular supply of ore, and the buying of large cargoes of Chilian ore, with the attendant loss of interest and risk of the market during the passage around Cape Horn, had, as a rule, resulted in a loss. The management had much to contend with in getting men capable of organizing a large business which required so much expert knowledge. The deficit became gradually larger and larger, until in 1851 it was determined to wind up the concern.

Speaking of this, Mr. R. Brent Keyser, president of the Baltimore Copper Smelting and Rolling Company,--said: "The furnaces were demolished, part of the land sold, and finally in 1854 the works themselves were sold. In dismantling the works the amount of copper discovered in the furnace bottoms was so large that the authorities were ^{encouraged} to again

set up the business after the sale of this in England. The sale of the works was stopped, additional capital called in, and in 1855 the works were reopened on a much larger scale. Then came a year or two of a rising market and large profit followed by a year of heavy loss.

About 1860 Clinton Levering became president of the company and in 1864 the rival works at Canton were absorbed, both being run hereafter by the Baltimore Smelting and Cuba Smelting and Mining Com-

pany. Works were built at Canton. *"For the use of the merged companies."*

In 1868 the works at Locust Point were removed to Canton, the property being sold to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company. The company was reorganized under the name of the Baltimore Copper Company. The changed condition of affairs after the war, the uncertain supply of ore, and other causes brought the company into financial straits, and the prohibitive tariff of 1869 was the finishing stroke. In 1870 William Keyser became president in order to wind up the affairs of the company, John W. Garrett and Johns Hopkins being at that time virtually the sole owners.

About this time the ores from Arizona, California, and Montana began to come upon the market, and the concern now ran altogether upon the Western ores and did a large and constantly increasing business. The original operations were based upon the supply of ore from the mines on the eastern seaboard and those imported from Cuba and the west coast of South America. The former supply failed from scarcity of material and the latter was cut off by the war tariff. The works then languished, all except two on the Atlantic seaboard going out of business, until the supply of ore began to come in from the far West, seeking smelters where the fuel was cheap and where the market for the finished product was convenient.

This western copper came first in the form of raw ore and later in that of the matte or regulus, which had already been through the

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the preliminary processes and contained a higher percentage of copper

~~and a smaller~~ percentage of waste material upon which it would be necessary to pay freight. So whether the raw material still comes from the West or should part of it, under a more moderate tariff, again come from South America, Baltimore has an excellent promise of becoming what several years ago the London Times, in an article on the copper situation in America, predicted, that it would become the Swansea, the copper smelting port of this country.

The above was gotten from Mr. R. Brent Keyser, President of the Baltimore Copper Smelting and Rolling ~~Co~~ Company.