

Lehigh County

Created on March 6, 1812, from part of Northampton County and named for the Lehigh River. The name Lehigh is derived from the German "Lecha," which comes from the Native American term "Uchauwekink," meaning, "where there are forks." Allentown, the county seat, was laid out about 1762 and named for Chief Justice William Allen of Pennsylvania, a local landowner. It was incorporated as the Borough of Northampton on March 18, 1811, renamed Allentown in 1838, and chartered as a city on March 12, 1867. The county adopted a home rule charter in November 1975.

Although English, Scotch-Irish, and Welsh were in the Saucon Township area before 1729, large numbers of Swiss and Germans came to the Lehigh Valley after that. Philadelphians allied with the Penn proprietors received large grants and sold them to settlers. Allentown was designed to take advantage of the road to Reading. Canal development in the 1820s preceded the growth of industry. Railroads arrived in the 1840s, and Allentown grew large in the 1850s. Small iron furnaces using local ore flourished until phased out by competition elsewhere. By the late nineteenth century the slate industry, grain milling, and the manufacture of shoes, cotton, woolens, silk, cigars, beer, and cement were major enterprises, but each has been overcome by competitors elsewhere since the 1930s. Machinery manufacture was dominant until the deindustrialization period of the 1970s. Forty-three percent of the land is farmed, and the value of harvested crops exceeds that of animal products. Lehigh is in the top quarter of the counties in total farm income.

LEHIGH COUNTY - 4th Class

Formed on March 6, 1812 from part of Northampton County

Third Class City

| <u>Name of City</u> | <u>Incorporated</u> | <u>Prior Status</u> |
|---------------------|---------------------|--|
| Allentown | Mar. 12, 1867 | Settled about 1735. Laid out as a town in 1762 and called Northampton. Incorporated as the Borough of Northampton on Mar. 18, 1811. Name changed on April 16, 1833 |

Boroughs

| <u>Name of Borough</u> | <u>Incorporated</u> | <u>Town Laid Out or Settled</u> | <u>Incorporated From</u> |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Alburtis | May 9, 1913 | S 1857 | Macungie Township |
| Catasauqua | Feb. 1, 1853 | S About 1768 | Hanover Township |
| Coopersburg | Dec. 2, 1879 | S About 1730 | Upper Saucon Township |
| Coplay | Apr. 7, 1869 | About 1799 | Upper Saucon Township |
| Emmaus | Aug. 1, 1859 | Dec. 1758 | Whitehall Township |
| Fountain Hill | June 1893 | | Upper Milford Township |
| Macungie | Nov. 13, 1857 | 1776 | Macungie Township |
| Slatington | Sept. 7, 1864 | S About 1741 | Washington Township |

First Class Townships

| <u>Name of Township</u> | <u>Became First Class Twp.</u> | <u>Incorporated as a Twp.</u> | <u>Settled</u> | <u>Incorporated From</u> |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Salisbury | Nov. 6, 1951 | June 9, 1753 | | |
| Whitehall | Apr. 28, 1902 | Mar. 20, 1753 | | |

Second Class Townships

| <u>Name of Township</u> | <u>Incorporated</u> | <u>Settled</u> | <u>Incorporated From</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------|---|
| Hanover | Aug. 15, 1798 | 1745 | Allen Township |
| Heidelberg | Sept. 1752 | 1735 | Incorporated while part of Northampton County |
| | Oct. 1752 ² | | |
| Lower Macungie | May 3, 1832 | 1719 | Macungie Township |
| Lower Milford | Dec. 8, 1852 | 1733 | Milford Township |

LEHIGH COUNTY - 4th Class (cont'd)

Second Class Townships (cont'd)

| <u>Name of Township</u> | <u>Incorporated</u> | <u>Settled</u> | <u>Incorporated From</u> |
|-------------------------|---|----------------|---|
| Lowhill | Dec. 18, 1753 | 1743 | Incorporated while part of Northampton County |
| Lynn | Mar. 11, 1753 ¹ June 7, 1753 ² | | Heidelberg Township |
| North Whitehall | Jan. 1810 | 1733 | Whitehall Township |
| South Whitehall | Jan. 1810 | 1735 | Whitehall Township |
| Upper Macungie | May 3, 1832 | 1734 | Macungie Township |
| Upper Milford | Dec. 6, 1852 | 1733 | Milford Township |
| Upper Saucon | | 1743 1730 | Saucon Township |
| Washington | Dec. 6, 1847 | 1752 | Heidelberg Township |
| Weisenberg | | 1734 | Macungie Township |

1 Godcharles

2 Charles Rhoades Roberts, Rev. John Baer Stoudt et al., History of Lehigh County, Pennsylvania and A Genealogical and Biographical Record of Its Families, Vol. I (Allentown, Pa.: Lehigh Valley Publishing Company, 1914).

3 Austin Hungerford and Alfred Mathews, History of the Counties of Lehigh and Carbon in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: Everts and Richards, 1884).