

DICKINSON HOUSE, LIVED 77 YEARS



The Dickinson House, opened in 1851, and named for Hon. A. B. Dickinson, one of its founders, that is now succeeded by the Baron Steuben Hotel as Corning's leading hotel.

Making Terra Cotta 40 Years

Public Buildings in All Sections of Nation Carry Local Factory's Product

The former Corning Brick architectural Terra Cotta in Corning in 1887. It has been manufactured continuously since that time by the successors to the old firm and at the present time it being produced by the Corning Terra Cotta Company, Inc. Architectural Terra Cotta, like most clay products, is the least understood of all building materials. The average layman believes it to be an imitation of stone and, therefore, gets the wrong impression. It is a natural clay, same as brick, and is prepared against the elements for all time. The clay used is a mixture coming from different parts of the United States. Being a plastic material it may be moulded into any shape or size and, therefore, allows for the greatest freedom in its use as a facing and trimming material.

Architectural Terra Cotta has been used for centuries and some of the buildings erected in the nineteenth century in Europe are still standing intact. It is the only material which allows for color effects on the exterior of buildings.

Color in architecture is growing rapidly and, therefore, the Architectural Terra Cotta is a product or material to be studied as to its uses and possibilities in this respect, so that the future generations may be enlightened.

The process of manufacture of this Architectural Terra Cotta is as follows: Drawings are prepared, with all design shown and lines noted. From the information on these drawings, models are made in Plaster of Paris. In the case of ornamental work sculptors model this ornamental work in plaster of Paris, which the moulds are made. The Terra Cotta clay is then pressed by hand into these plaster moulds which gives it shape, size and ornament. The Terra Cotta is then dried, after which the polychrome colors, or desired colors, are applied by hand or spray. These blocks are then burned in kilns for about two weeks, at a temperature running about 2100 degrees Fahrenheit. After cooling these blocks are then hard and impervious and are fitted to conform with drawings made for the erection in the building. Each block is marked with an identification number conforming to numbers on drawings, making it possible to handle with speed and accuracy.

At the start of operation The Corning Terra Cotta Company employed about six men and their first operation being the manufacture of material for the Howell block and the Standard House on Erie street. In the early years of manufacture it was only possible to produce Architectural Terra Cotta in a red color. However, a few years later the best colored Terra Cotta, similar to that used in the Post Office and The Evening Leader Building, was produced.

The Company has developed and today employs over 100 men and it is possible to produce Ar-

chitectural Terra Cotta in any desired color or combinations of colors. The Company is at present furnishing material for St. Luke's Church, in Buffalo, which is designed in an Italian Renaissance style. The material is in polychrome colors, similar to the Renaissance Churches of old, having the appearance of ancient hand made material. Statues, frames, holy water fonts, altars and the interior columns will also be executed in the product. This building is being designed by Mr. Chester Oakley, Architect, who recently has received great recognition since Blessed Trinity Church, of Buffalo, was dedicated on June 2nd. This building, erected extensively, The Buffalo Evening News, of June 2nd, 1925, states that this building, carried out in the Lombardic style of Architecture in its Italian conception, was destined to be an outstanding architectural triumph of modern ecclesiastical construction. This company manufactures and supplies the holy water and baptismal fonts in the above building.

The modern office building also demands the use of Terra Cotta. Weighing about one-third as much as stone and brick work and being extremely durable, tons of it may be saved in the framework of the building by the use of it. The Woolworth Building, in New York City, is an example of this. It is very easily cleaned by the use of soap and water. Under night illumination the General Electric Company has proven in exhaustive tests that through the reflective possibilities in the material a building may be satisfactorily lighted in Terra Cotta at a very great saving in cost over buildings in other materials. Also by the use of colors and ceramic finishes the building is given a great deal more advertising value, attracting people at night as well as in the daytime.

There are about 20 Companies in the United States manufacturing Terra Cotta. Quite a number of these Companies are in the New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Denver and California districts.

The Corning Company is the only Company between the Eastern Coast and the Chicago District and, therefore, has a very extensive shipping range, serving the South, Middle West and the local markets.

The Corning Terra Cotta Company has found that Corning, N. Y., is an exceptionally good location for them, inasmuch as the railroad facilities are unexcelled and it is able to reach not only the large middle western cities, as well as favorable freight rates. With the rising trend of prices in the material furnished by the Corning Company, men who come to the local plant from the larger cities invariably find Corning a very economical and comfortable place to live.

Quite a number of sculptors are employed at this factory, the ornamental models being made in clay. All types of ornamental

trimmings for buildings are executed, including figure work of all descriptions. This Company has manufactured the Terra Cotta for some very exceptional buildings, some of which are the United States War College; Columbia University dormitories; Zoological Gardens in Bronx Park, New York; Willard and Harrington Hotel, Addition, Washington, D. C.; Morrowfield Apartments, Pittsburg, Pa.; office buildings in Detroit, Mich.; several large buildings in Cleveland and Buffalo; New Keith-Albee Theatre, Rochester, N. Y.

To those who visit the Thousand Islands at Alexandria Bay, it is no doubt would be interesting to know that the Brick, Terra Cotta and the Corning Terra Cotta Co., operated by the late M. E. Gregory, predecessor of the Corning Terra Cotta Co., Inc., furnished the Terra Cotta for the very elaborate George C. Boldt Castle, which is visited by hundreds of thousands of sightseers annually.

In Corning, Architectural Terra Cotta has been used on the New Corning Free Academy, Post Office, Court House, Evening Leader Building, Northside High School, M. L. Allen, Station Hotel, Tannery Store, Barth Building, Market Basket, Morrow's Garage and the New Baron Steuben Hotel. Representatives of the George A. Fuller Co., who erected the New Baron Steuben Hotel, have stated that the material furnished by the Corning Company was the finest material of its kind that they had ever erected.

M. C. Gregory is President of the company; Mrs. Anna C. Gregory, Vice-president; and George W. Gregory is Secretary and Treasurer. The three officers form the Board of Directors.

Fuller Bros. for 44 Years Conducted Dickinson House

Dwight and George Fuller Were Known as Proprietors Over Entire State; Latter Well Known in Masonic Circles

With the passing of the Dickinson House, many of the older residents of the city recall the name of Dwight A. Fuller and his two sons, George W. and Dwight L., who conducted and managed the hotel for over 44 years. Much of the early history of Corning is interwoven with the name of Fuller and in their day, the members of the Fuller family were prominently identified with both the social and civic life of the city.

George W. Fuller was the last surviving member of the family. The father died in 1890 after which the brother continued to operate the hotel until 1895 when the younger brother Dwight L. Fuller died and the management of the hotel was turned over to William J. Fitzpatrick and Michael J. Brann.

The manner of the settling of the Fuller family in this section is interesting. Dwight A. Fuller was a tanner with a small establishment at Woodstock. In selling the product of his tannery Mr. Fuller often visited the Chenango valley, Elmira, Corning and Addison being the principal points of trade. At Elmira he saw an opportunity to start a leather business and at once made preparations to move there but when he arrived found the field already occupied.

Move to Corning. Not caring to form a partnership or engage in competition he came to Corning. This was in 1846 and the next year he engaged in the grocery business which was continued until the store was burned in the disastrous fire of 1850. This was a serious loss to him.

Out of the fire came the need for better hotel accommodations and he became proprietor of the old Western House, then a principal hotel which stood at State and Market streets. The hotel was succeeded by the Turret House on the same site of which Mr. Fuller was also proprietor until 1857 when he sold out and moved to Illinois. After a year in the west during which time he was engaged in business as a commission merchant he returned to Corning and opened a grocery.

For several years he was the proprietor of this store as well as the Arcade.

In 1855 George W. Fuller, his eldest son, leased the Dickinson

House, which throughout the period of its history had been the city's leading hotel. He was assisted by his father and brother for many years and in 1870 a large farm was purchased on the south side of the city, known as the Fuller Farm, now the Fuller plotting and which was used to supply the hotel with provisions.

Worked in Post Office. The management of the Dickinson House came to have a reputation more than state-wide with the travelling public and had as its registered guests, when this country was developing, many of the most famous men of the union.

George W. Fuller first began service to the public as a clerk in the Corning Post Office when under President Buchanan, his father, Dwight A. Fuller was the postmaster. Later he became one of the first railway mail clerks having a run from Corning to Blossburg. Besides the conduct of the Dickinson House in which George took a leading part, he was also proprietor of the Arcade now the Carlton, and formerly known as the St. James Hotel. In 1880 he successfully conducted the Crystal Springs Hotel and in 1881 and 1882 the Grove Springs Hotel at Lake Keuka.

Courtesy neither George nor his brother Dwight L., ever married. Yet both were among the most popular young men in this section in their youth. Elegant in manner, thorough gentlemen, modest in disposition and kind of heart they made lasting friendships and were leaders in society in their generation.

George W. Fuller was for 60 years an active member, worker and official in Christ Church, having much to do with the growth, support and conduct of the parish. It was, however, in his capacity as a member of the Masonic order that George W. Fuller found fullest expression of his own life. It has been said that much of the prominence which Masonry occupies in Corning today is due to his unselfish efforts in behalf of the order in making Corning a Country center. He was one of the first men of western New York to receive the highest honorary degree, the 3rd, which was conferred on him in Boston in the early 60's. He devoted many years of his life to the building up of the valuable wardrobe used in Consistory degrees and frequently gave to the lodge whole sets of costumes of the richest materials and made in the most elaborate manner after the revealed searches of historic period styles.

His death occurred on March 10, 1922, following an illness of two days of pneumonia.

FOR CORNING'S NEW HOTEL

The BARON STEUBEN

WE FURNISHED THESE MATERIALS

Atlas Portland Cement for reinforced concrete.

Plaster for complete building.

Gypsum blocks for partitions.

All form lumber for concrete work.

Some interior trim.

Several carloads of brick.

And many other builders' supplies and materials.

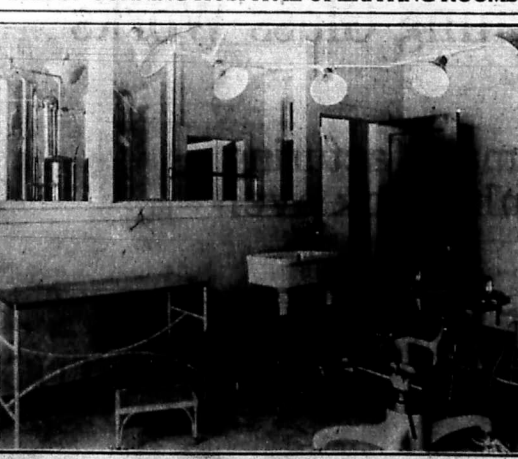
RIVERSIDE BUILDERS SUPPLY COMPANY

West Pulteney St. Phone 1200

We furnished the terra cotta trim for the

Baron Steuben Hotel

ONE OF CORNING HOSPITAL OPERATING ROOMS



Two large major operating rooms and two minor operating rooms are a part of the equipment of Corning Hospital, an institution recognized by the American College of Surgeons. The present hospital underwent many alterations and a large addition was built four years ago.

Corning Terra Cotta Co.

Corning, N. Y.