

LEBANON STAMP CLUB

May, 2021

Number 22



Emergency gasoline rationing in the Northeast

79 years ago, motorists on the Eastern seaboard were heading to their nearest public school to get their first gasoline ration cards. Gasoline rationing originally applied only to selected areas in the northeast, but by the end of 1942, it was a part of every citizen's sacrifice for the war effort.


An example of one of the first ration cards is pictured below. Drivers were classified as A, B-1, B-2, B-3, or X, based on their perceived needs. The A-card was the basic ration, which every car owner could apply for without providing documentation of need. The problem with the A-card was obvious: it provided a very limited number of rations. The unit of the ration was about 4 gallons for the duration of the war. It didn't allow for much, if any, pleasure driving, which was a feature of the rationing program: pleasure driving was temporarily rendered illegal, and unpatriotic besides. But with shortages developing, both in gasoline and rubber, it needed to allow for driving to work or to the grocery store.

The B-card had three classes, which would be bestowed upon a motorist more or less based on need. A worker in an essential industry could testify on an application to his or her weekly commute, and receive a card based on that calculation. My grandfather, who worked for the Bethlehem Steel in Lebanon, worked in an essential industry, but I'll explain at the end of the newsletter why I think he might have been one of the millions of motorists who, in the words of comedian Lou Costello, had "Only a Puny A-card" ("OPA", get it?)

The driver who could flash an X-card didn't need to have it punched, because the X ration was unlimited. A doctor, government official, or taxi cab operator could have an X-card. There was a

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stipulation that a vehicle such as an ambulance or a hearse, which was readily identifiable as to its use, didn't need a card to fill up.

UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT
Form OPA R-504					
		UNITED STATES OF AMERICA OFFICE OF PRICE ADMINISTRATION		B-3	
GASOLINE RATION CARD No 6727953					
THE ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF THIS CARD CONSTITUTE AN AGREEMENT THAT THE HOLDER WILL OBSERVE THE RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING GASOLINE RATIONING AS ISSUED BY THE OFFICE OF PRICE ADMINISTRATION					
OWNER'S NAME		Henry W. Shuey			
STREET ADDRESS					
CITY OR POST OFFICE		Ono		STATE Pa.	
MAKE		Ford		BODY STYLE ch	
VEHICLE REGISTRATION NO.		DM690		STATE OF REGISTRATION Pa.	
READ INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE SIDE OF THIS CARD					

When the initial emergency period had run its course, the Office of Price Administration began issuing books with “stamps” (un-gummed, printed on safety paper) that the station attendant could detach. The punch-cards served their purpose, but didn't leave a sufficient physical record that could be returned to the OPA for accountability purposes. Classes A and B remained, and X was replaced by classes C and S (for “Service”), or later, T (“Transport”). There were also non-highway classes of gasoline, and fuel oil stamps for property owners.

The many kinds of ration stamps produced for petroleum and food can make an interesting and inexpensive conversation piece in a collection. With the right reference material, one can determine the dates the stamps were valid, and learn how to pick out production varieties that tell where they were produced, or the geographic area where they were used. Some advice: single stamps that were detached from ration books or sheets are virtually worthless, so resist the urge to overpay. Even if you are lucky to find an unused ration book, you shouldn't need to pay more than \$5 or \$10 for many of them. – Scott Ney

Ono Pa, 1892

Mrs. M. A. Meily (pictured below) was appointed postmistress at Ono, Pa., May 28, 1863. Her husband was a Union soldier, and her father had been postmaster at Ono when the office was established; and it had been called Seltzersville after him. – from *The Story of our Post Office: The Greatest Government Department in All It's Phases @1892* by Marshall Cushing; 1893 A. M. Thayer & Company, PUBLISHERS, pp 453. Courtesy of Hal Klein

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**Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. North and South America and all the ships at sea.
Let's go to a press release from the PSLC . . .**

The Philatelic Society of Lancaster County is proud to announce the launch of its YouTube page.

Here visitors will find many educational and entertaining presentations and lectures by preeminent philatelists and postal historians on a broad array of stamps, postal history and historical topics by our members and friends.

There is something for everyone young and old, so why not stop by today? More importantly, **SUBSCRIBE** so you can stay abreast of new content.

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Visit us at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoqyYYtAW8H0aWByFJLQf-w>

Chapter of the American Philatelic Society
Chapter of the American Topical Association
Sincerely
Dr. Charles J. DiComo,
President, Philatelic Society of Lancaster County

Editor's Note: There's already a lot of great content on the PSLC YouTube channel, and more continues to be added. If you haven't already, please subscribe today, and help the club reach their initial goal of 100 subscribers; at press time, we have 74 subscribers! – Scott Ney

My Favorite Stamp

By Dick Colberg

My favorite stamp? Wow, that's a toughie! I have a few, but right up there close to the top is France #C27, shown below.



I started collecting stamps in 1949 at age 8 in Chicago. At first the collection consisted entirely of U.S. stamps, mostly lots and lots of the 2- and 3-cent Prexies. All dutifully hinged to notebook paper with Scotch tape! I had a few higher values, 20- and 25-cent Prexies. These usually arrived on packages from my great aunt in Michigan. Yes, you could send a package for less than a dollar!

At the time my father worked in the export division of the International Harvester Co. He became my sole source of foreign stamps. About once a month he'd come home with a pile of envelopes from all over the world, it seemed. Mostly, I remember France, Spain and Iraq. I had a ball soaking these stamps from their envelopes. No one in my family was a stamp collector, so I had no one to tell me right from wrong; so I made a few mistakes along the way.

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This French airmail stamp, with a face value of 1,000 francs was awesome to me. One, it had a value of 1,000. And two, it was large. I had a couple of friends who also collected stamps and we traded with each other. We traded on the basis of size. Regular issue size for regular issue size. Commemorative size for commemorative size. But for this baby I commanded more because of its size and face value.

As I recall, this stamp was special because there were ten of them on the same envelope! I think I still have seven of them, though I know not where.

This stamp is the high value in a 5-stamp set: 100, 200, 300, 500 and 1,000 francs. The Scott Catalogue price for the C27, used, is \$24. In 1950 1,000 francs was equal to \$2.50.



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The 1880 Lebanon County Census Directory

This is my favorite of the 19th century directories. The title page pretty much tells everything about it: "Lebanon County. A directory of the Tenth Census of the population of the United States, published by wards, townships, precincts, boroughs, towns, cities, or counties, in connection with a business directory of the same, for advertising purposes with the addition of marginal blanks and sufficient blank pages to record changes of residence, births and deaths in the different enumerated districts." At the bottom of this run on sentence is noted the publisher, C. M. Bowman of Lebanon. Bowman's own ads noted that he was the publisher of the *Lebanon Daily Times* and the *Lebanon Valley Standard*, the latter which it was cheerfully noted to be the "largest and cheapest paper published in the Lebanon Valley, issued every Saturday." Bowman also advertised his services for job printing. The period that this directory was published was a busy one for his company, as Bowman also published a popular, tabloidesque record of the Blue-Eyed Six trial in 1879.

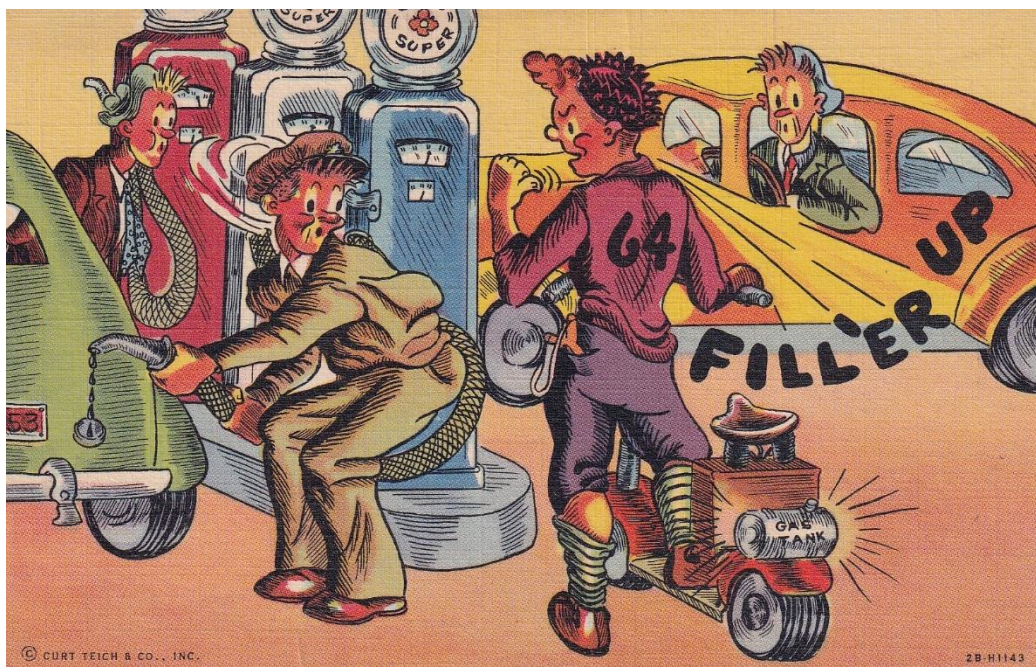
The 1880 census directory is 278 pages, including the blank pages, and most of the ads. There are 115 entries in the index to advertisers, which again include businesses from Lebanon, but also from Philadelphia and elsewhere. D.S. Raber's "American All-Healing and Strengthening Plaster" must have been doing good business, as Mr. Raber took out a full-page ad on 155 in this edition of the directory. In case you were wondering, Dr. George Ross added Raymond's Indian Compound to his full-page ad buy for his Hair Restorer. It can be gleaned from the full-page ads purchased by several druggists that the apothecary scene in old Lebanon-town was becoming quite competitive.

This directory is arranged by township, so it's useful and easy to use to do lookups of individuals. The names are listed more or less alphabetically by the head of household, with members of the household following. Oftentimes, the age and occupation of the head of household and other household members are noted, and possibly even a post office. To take a not so random example, here's the entry for my great-great grandfather in Cold Springs Township: "Nye Elias 29, laborer – Lavinia, Maggie, Katie, Emmanuel G. 1. Yellow Springs post office Dauphin County, Pa".

The write-ups for municipalities are brief but informative, the exceptions being the longer introductions of the county and borough (which Lebanon would be for a few more years). A sample is the write-up for Cold Spring Township, one of the smallest municipalities in the county: "This township is bounded on the east by Schuylkill county, north and west by Dauphin county, and on the south by East Hanover and Union townships, Lebanon county. The celebrated Cold Spring, from which the township derives its name, is situated between the Second and Third Mountains, and was at one time a noted summer resort. The township was organized in 1853, from portions of Union and East Hanover townships, and had a population in 1870 of 80. Its present population is 40 – a decrease of 40 within the last decade."

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More than 140 years have passed, and while the information from the 1880 Census is readily available online, it's a real treat to be able to browse this old book for information. The idea of taking census information and using it to produce a directory is a good one, but unfortunately, I am unaware of any other contemporary "census directories" produced for Lebanon County. But among the numerous directories we have at our disposal, this is definitely one of the better ones. – Scott Ney



Grandpa's gasoline rations

One of the countless mundane details that have been lost to history is the gasoline ration classification of my grandparents. In 1940, my grandma and grandpa moved into the house that my family now lives in. Back then you could take the trolley which ran along Oak Street (formerly Campbelltown Road outside of city limits) into town. I've always assumed my grandpa drove his own car to the building he worked at on North 5th Avenue that housed the Bethlehem Steel's galvanizing operations. This was a short commute, about four miles from home. If he made that round-trip 20 times a month, that would have added up to about 160 miles a month. I think he drove a Ford sedan; however, I don't know much about the fuel efficiency of cars in the 1940s. At 15 miles per gallon, he would have used 10 – 15 gallons per month to get to and from work. The question I wanted to answer is, did he get the A card like most people, or was his occupation and distance to work sufficient to get him a B card and a little extra gasoline each month?

I asked my aunt Darlene, who was grandpa's sister, what she remembers about rationing. She'll be 90 in a few months, and is the last family member from that generation that I can talk to

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about such things. She was born 23 years after grandpa, and stayed with them during the week so that she could attend school at Harding in the city (her mother was widowed, and moved to Reading to take care of her ailing sister). She remembered gasoline rationing, and told me an interesting story. To save gas, grandpa rigged a motor onto a bicycle, and used it to ride to work. Was it for patriotism? Maybe that was part of it, but according to Aunt Darlene, it might have been because Grandma didn't like to miss church on Sundays. They went to church in Annville, about the same distance from home as work. But apparently, figuring in necessary trips to the grocery store and other places, their ration was tight.

My grandpa, who loved to tinker with motors and other things downstairs at his workbench, probably enjoyed riding his motor-bike into town. According to Aunt Darlene, the bike saw use after the war on my dad's paper route; but unfortunately, grandpa's motor-bike is as lost to history as his ration books. – Scott Ney

9th and Cumberland

Thank you: I would like to thank Glenn Blauch for responding to my request for info regarding the Ney Post Office in Cold Spring Township, Lebanon County (1881 – 1903). I am hoping to gather enough information to write an article about the place for the *Pennsylvania Postal Historian* someday. Glenn, thanks for the info you have provided, both now and in the past! Your knowledge and kindness will be a part of that article when it's ready to be written. – Scott Ney

Editor's note: the following appendix of information is a list of service stations that appeared in wartime editions of Polk's Lebanon Directory. It was their duty to collect gasoline ration stamps from our parents and grandparents, and it puts a little bit of local context to them.

Wartime Service Stations in Lebanon, PA

Achy's Service 1501 E Cumberland Avon

Albert Ralph M 136 Canal

Andrews Stephen J 325 N 12th

Aquiler Domenick 1401 Cumberland **

Atlantic Service Station 600 Lehman

Atlantic Service Station 826 Mifflin

Automotive Service Inc 937 Lehman*

Automotive Service Inc 1201 Cumberland**

Avon Heights Service Station 2001 E Cumberland Avon

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Bambergers Front and Cumberland
Bambergers 13th and Cumberland
Bambergers 9th and Poplar*
Boro Service Station 880 Maple
Bowman's Esso Station 210 Cumberland**
Boyer Dawson G 1834 Lehman
Boyer Frank C 740 Chestnut
Boyers Sunoco Station 210 Cumberland
Brandt Theo R 444 E Cumberland
Burgner & Strohman 1201 Cumberland*
Clay Franklin D 1610 Chestnut
Cox John E 630 N 7th
Crum Isaac S 602 N 8th
DeWalt's Service Station 1441-1443 Cumberland
East Maple Service Station 254 E Maple
Eby H Forney 413 E Cumberland*
Eighth Street Service Station 129 N 8th
Gingrich Howard M 375 N 7th **
Grant Leonard W 1600 Cumberland
Groff Jacob 409 S 9th *
Gulf Oil Corp 1202 Cumberland*
Hainley's Gulf Service 1202 Cumberland**
Howerd's Atlantic Service 400 E Cumberland
Hoover's Service Station 817 Quentin Ro*
Izzy's Amoco Service 1105 Cumberland**
Jorfi Jos J 260 E Lehman
Kerkslager Kenneth 650 E Lehman**

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Kettering Simon S Sons 16th and Cumberland

Kettering Stanley L 1500 Cumberland

Kohr Frank B 525 N 5th **

Kohr's Service Station 500 Canal**

Koech's Service Station 936 Maple*

Kreider Asaph L 1105 Cumberland*

Lebanon Valley Tire Co 200 Lehman

Leedy Wm L 200 Cumberland**

Light L L Service 1443 Cumberland*

Light's Johnny Service 1120 Cumberland

Long Armand K S 9th and PRR

Market Square Service Station 27 N 9th

Mason Jas B 2 Lehman*

McGowan's Service Station 544 S 9th **

Miller John H 169 N 8th *

Miller Wm L 200 Cumberland*

Myers Harry H 169 N 8th **

Nelson Herman W 2 Lehman**

Norton's Service Station 1451 Cumberland*

Olbert Jacob 535 N 5th*

Peiffer John H 937 Lehman**

Penn Wm Service Station 16 S 7th

Progin J Henry 847 Cornwall Rd**

Reber Richard W 1041 Maple

Resovsky Martin E Sr 847 Cornwall Rd*

Russell's Texaco Service 1340 Cumberland

Shaws Sunoco Station 729 Walnut

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Shott Fredk M 1 E Cumberland

Stouffer's Mobile Service Front and Cumberland**

Strohman Horace 413 E Cumberland**

Strohman Mark 936 Maple**

Triangle Tire & Oil Co 375 N 7th *

Twelfth & Walnut Service Station 143 S 12th

Volk Jos M 409 S 9th**

Weirauch John Jr 650 E Lehman*

Wentzler's Mobile Service 2 – 4 E Cumberland*

Wolbert's Service Station 500 Canal*

Wolfe's Atlantic Service 400 E Cumberland*

Annville

Coffroath Helen V 744 E Main

Dotter's Auto Electric 885 E Main

Risser Clayton 889 E Main**

Shearer Aaron R Mobilgas 1-3 E Main (Main and White Oak)

Cleona

Imboden Grant 213 E Penn Av*

Long Walter B 201 W Penn Av**

Myerstown

Atlantic Service (Miller Motor Co) E Main and Railroad **

Bechtold Richd A W Main Av RD3**

Beck John S W Main Av

Deck Miles E 357 W Main Av*

Miller Motor Co Service Station 3 E Main Av**

Runkel's Neighborhood Service 3 E Main Av*

Smith Saml W 412 W Main Av

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Steinmetz Geo S 357 W Main Av**

Wagner Clinton I W Main Av*

Palmyra

Gans Frank S 100 E Main

Hartman Benj C NS E Main*

Kaylor Alvin L 601 W Main

Sears Walter M 220 S Railroad

Seltzer Danl H 754 N Railroad

Stark Bruce G NS E Main**

United Service Station 629 E Main

Wolfe Walter M 616 E Main**

Wolf Guy R 600 E Main*

Zeigler Chas D 328 E Main

Key: *in 1942 Directory Only

**in 1945-46 Directory Only