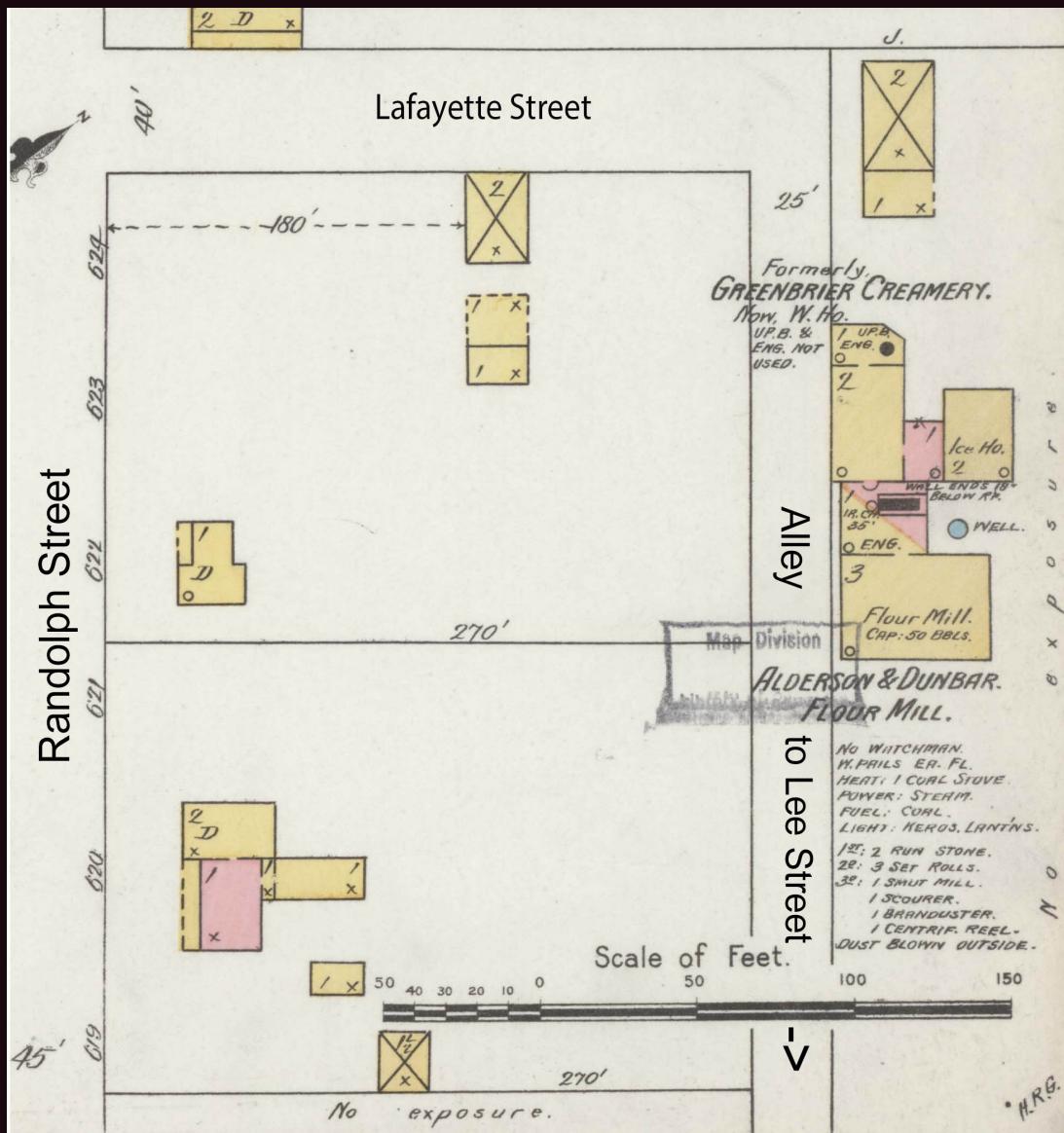


Greenbrier Creamery Company

1886 – 1898



Sanborn 1905 Fire Map

Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Sanborn Maps Collection

From the establishment of a tannery in 1796 until the sale of the Blue Grass Mill property in 1956, the hollow where Montwell Commons is located was the industrial center of Lewisburg. At various times the Withrow Tannery, the Donnally Glove Factory, several flour mills, the Lewisburg Milling and Electric Light Company, the Greenbrier Creamery, the Greenbrier Canning Company, and the Bluegrass Supply Company had been located on the property. Water for several of those businesses was supplied by the Andrew Lewis Spring on the west side of Jefferson St. and the Beirne Spring on the hillside to the east of Lafayette St., just above the PSD pumping station. While each of these businesses had an impact on the town and the Greenbrier Valley, the Greenbrier Creamery provided many farmers with a steady stream of income.

The 1898 Sanborn fire map shows that a 25' lane ran from the end of Lafayette Street, past the Worsham Stable on lots 13 and 14 (The white house there was moved in 2018 from where the Montwell Commons recycle shed is located.), and up the hill to Lee St. The Greenbrier Creamery was at the bottom of the hill, just below the flour mill. The map indicates there was an unused 8 HP steam engine in the former Creamery

building, and the *Greenbrier Independent* reports that Aquilla Lipps purchased it in 1899. Water came from the nearby Beirne spring, ice came from the Greenbrier River, and the waste materials undoubtedly ended up in the sinkhole.

September 2, 1886

John Estill, John Lutz, and J.M. McWhorter of Lewisburg and two others each purchased 20 shares of stock at \$50 per share (\$1800 per share in today's dollars) and agreed "to become a corporation by the name of The Greenbrier Creamery Company, for the purpose of manufacturing butter and other products of milk". The incorporation documents were certified by Henry S. Walker, Secretary of State of the State of West Virginia on September 2, 1886. (1)

June 21, 1888

The Greenbrier Creamery Editor, *Greenbrier Independent*:

Let me call the attention of the farmers of Greenbrier specially to the new enterprise of the Greenbrier Creamery Co. This is certainly a paying one to the farmer, much more so than raising young cattle. The Creamery Company propose working on two systems, viz.: 1) Farmers haul the milk and get so much per hundred pounds at the Creamery; and, 2) on the Farmlamb system of settling milk and letting the Creamery Co. send for and only buy the cream. This saves the farmer the trouble and expense of hauling and allows him to keep the skimmed milk at home for his calves and hogs. The system to be adopted finally is the one that suits the farmer best. (Separators were installed at Richlands, Falling Spring, near the Arbuckle farm on Arbuckle Lane, Frankford which processed 1000 lbs of milk per day, and Organ Cave which processed 1100 lbs of milk daily.)

This Company is now making the first-class butter and have made a contract to furnish The Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs with their butter. 'Tis certainly to the interest of every man to look into this matter and consult with parties that have been furnishing milk and see if the don't pay. This Creamery Co, is on a solid basis, and the stockholders say they intend to make it a success. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 23 no. 3

December 27, 1888

Cox and Hodson convey for \$400 (\$14,000 in today's dollars) the part of their Mill Lot to the Greenbrier Creamery where the creamery building had already been built: ". . . we convey to said Greenbrier Creamery company all that part of the mill lot lying West of the East wall of the Creamery building beginning at the South east corner of said lot conveyed . . . We also convey the right to said Creamery Company to lay the necessary piping to carry water from the spring or from a tank to be erected at the end of the water trough to the Creamery building for use at said Creamery . . . and we hereby grant unto the said Creamery Company a sufficient amount of the waste water running from the spring to supply said Creamery . . . and that the parties of the first part reserves to themselves the right to a passaway for wagons and teams over the lot hereby conveyed so as to reach the rear part of the mill building, but not to interfere with the Creamery building. . ." *Deed 40-97*

February 28, 1889

Why is it that the Creamery Company passes by our section? I see they propose to establish separators in other parts of the county, but say nothing about Williamsburg. I am not informed as to what the people think on the subject, but it occurs to me that we have advantages similar to any possessed by other places – fine grass, plenty of grain and good cows. If something could be started up here to break the monotony and dead-lock in which business of most kinds is now held, and extricate us from the old ruts in which we have been dragging along for so long, I, for one, think we should hail it with delight – anything for advancement. A.B.W. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 23 no. 39

March 14, 1889

The new machinery for the Greenbrier Creamery has arrived in Lewisburg and is now being placed in the new building. The Company now has much larger machinery, both engine and separator, and are determined to be ready for their increased patronage.

At a meeting of the directors of the Greenbrier Creamery Co., a few days ago, they determined to put a separator in Frankford at once. The separator at Organ Cave will be started as soon as the house can be built. As this is a set??? for the farmers in Frankford and the Organ Cave neighborhood can be getting cows ready for business. We are pleased to learn that so many of our farmers in this section have (after a fair ??? the Creamery) decided to stock their farms so extensively. This is ??? conclusion, and one that will be of great profit to them. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 23 no. 41

May 23, 1889

The Greenbrier creamery now receives on an average over three tons of milk per day. (This would be about 150 5-gallon milk cans.) *Greenbrier Independent* vol 23 no. 51

June 6, 1889

Profitable Cows We are in receipt of the following figures from Messers. W.F. Ludington and Howard Skaggs, patrons of the Greenbrier Creamery. The figures for the month of May:

Mr. Howard Skaggs furnished the milk from ten cows, which brought him an average of \$8.50 each (\$300 today). His best cow, stimulated by other food and grass, produced 1,522 pounds, which brought him \$13.70 (\$490 today). His second best, feeding on grass only, produced 1,124 ½ pounds, which brought him \$10.12. [2021 typical production: 1900 lbs/mo, \$18.40/100 lbs, \$3500/mo] *Greenbrier Independent* vol 24 no. 1

June 20, 1889

The Creamery Co.'s separator at Frankford receives about 1,000 pounds of milk per day, and their separator at Organ Cave receives about 1,100 pounds daily. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 24 no. 3

September 12, 1889

During the month of August the Greenbrier Creamery Company turned out over 12,000 pounds of butter, the product of over 300,000 pounds of milk, for which the farmers received over \$2,500. This enterprise is now on an established basis, and is making itself felt in this section – the amount of money it pours into this community being a God-send in these hard times. It is the aim of the company to reach a monthly expenditure for milk of \$10,000. With this end in view we understand that the company proposes to expend \$5,000 immediately in enlarging its capacity and increasing its facilities. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 24 no. 16

October 24, 1889

Fall, Winter, and Spring Milk We have made a schedule for fall, winter, and spring milk, in order to induce farmers to have their cows come in so as to give the bulk of milk in winter instead of summer. It takes but little figuring to see that the Creamery can handle winter milk to better advantage than they can summer milk, and it takes less figuring to prove that the winter milk pays the farmer much better than the summer milk. They have little else to do in winter but attend to their cows, and only have to deliver the milk to the creamery every other day. There are many other reasons, of which we will speak more fully in the future, why the winter milk will pay them best. In order to induce farmers to stock up for winter milk we will pay during the month of November, 90 cents per hundred pounds; December and January, \$1.00; February and March, \$1.10 (\$32 today); April, \$1.00; May, 90 cts.

We can't say as to summer milk; that will be controlled entirely by the butter market, and every indication is that it will be better for you to have as little summer milk as possible, and all the fall, winter, and spring milk that you can possibly make arrangements to have, as these are long prices we pay, and you can afford to feed, build silos, &c. *Greenbrier Creamery Co. Greenbrier Independent* vol 24 no. 21

December 12, 1889

At a meeting of the directors of the Greenbrier Creamery Co. on the 11th instant it was decided to at once put a Separator at or near the residence of Mr. Alex. W. Arbuckle (at the north end of Arbuckle Lane); also to place one at or near Falling Spring next summer. They will then have the ground covered from Falling Spring to Second Creek, having out in this distance five Separators. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 24 no. 28

January 9, 1890

Falling Spring We are glad to hear that the Greenbrier Creamery expects to establish a Separator here or near this place. This would be the most central and convenient place in the neighborhood. There is a never failing spring of pure water here, and the rights and privileges to use the same can be had, and besides there are now five and as soon as the bridge is finished there will be six public roads leading to this place. It would be of interest of the people, and to the County as well, to have it at this place. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 24 no. 32

January 9, 1890

Local Matters Mr. Aquilla Lipps now has his staving machine in operation, and is putting up butter tubs for the Greenbrier Creamery. (A tub of butter typically weighed 84 lbs.) *Greenbrier Independent* vol 24 no. 32

February 13, 1890

The Creamery Co. has changed its pay day from the 10th to the 20th of the month. The cause for this change was increased business, and to give their book-keeper more time on his monthly accounts. The Company receives more orders for butter now than it can fill. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 24 no. 37

February 27, 1890

Water was reported two feet deep in the Creamery ice-house yesterday morning, caused by the recent heavy rains, and the sink hole becoming clogged up. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 24 no. 39

March 13, 1890

Last Friday morning was the coldest of the winter, 2 degrees above zero. The Creamery Co. secured 42 wagon loads of ice from an inch and a half to three and a half inches thick.

Yesterday Constable Cabell, under direction of our town council opened the sink-hole near the Creamery, which will prevent the gathering and standing of a large pond in that hollow. - The hands in digging down came across an old stone wall which some one had built around the sink many years ago. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 24 no. 41

May 15, 1890

As Mr. Charles Donnally was taking a wagon load of butter from the Creamery to Ronceverte, last Thursday evening, the bolt-pin came out and let one side of the shaft down on the horse's legs. This frightened the horse and started him to kicking and running. - He finally upset the wagon and threw Mr. Donnally and the butter out on the road. There was no damage done further than to bring the Creamery butter down for a short time. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 24 no. 50

March 22, 1894

Get your cows ready. We hear that the Greenbrier Creamery Co. are now arranging to build a house and put in machinery for another separator at or near Wm. Neal's, in the Richlands. We like to see this step taken. It is the only enterprise we have that pays well and puts money in the hands of our farmers every month. It should be encouraged well by the farmers. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 28 no. 43

May 3, 1894

The Greenbrier Creamery Company will start a separator in the Richlands by the 15th inst. It will also start its separator at Frankford in a few days. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 28

November 8, 1894

On account of the long protracted drought that has prevailed here, and which cut the grass short, thereby decreasing the supply of milk, the Greenbrier Creamery has been compelled to close down for a couple of months. It will likely start up again about the first or last of January. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 29 no. 24

January 24, 1895

The Greenbrier Creamery will start up the 15th of next month. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 29 no.39

May 23, 1895

The Greenbrier Creamery is now in full blast, receiving about 2,000 pounds of milk per day and increasing daily. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 29 no. 52

May 30, 1896

Mr. Edward Forward's lease of the Greenbrier Creamery will expire tomorrow. Mr. Wm. M. Bell has leased the same, and will take charge the 1st day of August. We hope Mr. Bell will receive a large supply of milk from the farmers. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 31 no. 1

February 11, 1897

Mr. Wm. M. Bell, proprietor of the Greenbrier Creamery, lost a good portion of his ice that he had stored away in the ice-house last Saturday, caused by high water, the sink in the hollow near the Creamery, being frozen up. A hog in a pen near by was drowned. He saved the butter by moving it out. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 31 no. 38

December 30, 1897

Notice of Stockholders Meeting: A meeting of the Stockholders of the Greenbrier Creamery Company will be held at the law office of J.S. McWhorter in Lewisburg. On Monday, January 17th, 1998, at 10 o'clock AM. A full attendance is requested. J.M. McWhorter, President. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 32 no. 32

November 7, 1898

James McWhorter, Greenbrier Creamery President, conveys property to Ernest and Wm. Echols for \$400 (same price as when purchased in 1888): ". . . . all that part of what was known as the "Mill Lot" lying West of the East wall of the Creamery Building . . . reserves the right to remove their machinery out of the buildings. . . ." *Deed* 52-460

February 23, 1899

Last Friday morning, the 17th, about 6 o'clock, the Lewisburg Roller Mill belonging to Dunbar & Alderson was discovered to be on fire. . . The building with all its costly machinery and contents, including about 1,500 bushels of grain, together with the Creamery building, immediately adjoining, was soon a mass of ruins, bringing to the owners of the mill a loss of between four and five thousand dollars, and to the owners of the Creamery building, Messrs. William and Ernest Echols – a loss of about \$400. They succeeded in saving all the Creamery machinery except the churn . . . *Greenbrier Independent* Vol 33 no. 33 p.3

March 8, 1899

Lewisburg is again the victim of another disastrous fire, this time resulting in the destruction of the roller process flouring mill of Messrs. Dunbar, Alderson & Co., and the Lewisburg Creamery Company's plant. There were about 1,500 bushels of wheat in the mill at the time. Insurance, \$1,500. The fire occurred at five o'clock in the morning and is known to be the work of an incendiary. *The Weekly Register* Pt. Pleasant 3/8/1899 p4

May 25, 1899

Having bought the Creamery eight-horse engine and a new French Burr corn-mill, I am prepared to grind the best of table meal and all kinds of feed. Will keep meal on hand to exchange for corn, at my shop. Aquilla Lipps *Greenbrier Independent* Vol 34 no. 1

The *Greenbrier Independent* newspaper was researched at the Greenbrier County Historical Society archives at the North House Museum, Lewisburg, WV, where a digitized version is available.

Deeds are identified by (book no. – page no.) and are on file in the County Clerk's office at the Greenbrier County Courthouse.

(1) <https://books.google.com/books?id=IKAxAAAAIAAJ>