Martinsburg shales

The only place in Lehigh County where shales are known to have been used for brick manufacture is on the north slope of Huckleberry Ridge. The plant is now in ruins. Weathered Martinsburg shales were used. The product was paving brick. From the appearance of the broken brick about the place, they were of good quality.

The following account of this operation is given in the History of Lehigh County (Roberts et. al. 1914).

Vitrified Brick Plant.—In 1896, Dr. H. K. Hartzell, William F. Mosser, and Andrew Keck embarked in the manufacture of vitrified brick in the township (South Whitehall), near Guth’s Station on the C. & F. R. R. A superior plant was established and a fine circular smoke-stack, 124½ feet high, was erected, with ovens having a capacity of 50,000 bricks; and 15 acres of land with a large deposit of shale material was purchased. Active and successful operations were carried on by them for a number of years. In 1910, a reorganization was effected as the Allentown Brick Co., with H. L. Dougherty as president and J. R. Connelly as superintendent and the business was carried on until 1913. The character of the brick was recognized as superior. (p. 888.)

White clay

The descriptions of the limonite iron ore mines on previous pages contain many references to white clays associated with the iron ores. Since there is a continuous and increasing demand for white clay for a variety of purposes, some attempts have been made in Lehigh County to locate deposits of this material in commercial quantities. So far the prospecting has not discovered pockets of sufficient size to justify the opening of pits. The white clay is commonly in small pockets or lenses associated with yellow, red, gray, and blue-black clays in such a manner that it would scarcely be possible to get any quantity of uncontaminated white clay. However, it is possible that a more favorable locality than any now known may be found.

T. C. Hopkins* says that about half a mile southeast of the Friedensville zinc mines is a deposit of white clay in which a shaft has been sunk, it is said, to a depth of 65 feet. The material at the mouth of the shaft, which is now closed up, is a grayish-white, light, powdery clay containing small fragments of hydromica slate. So far as known, no attempt has been made to utilize it, although it has the appearance of being a superior grade of clay. (p. 25.)

White clay was dug some years ago in a line of pits on the north slope of Lock Ridge directly south of Alburtis. Some of the clay about the pits appears to be of good quality. The clay is in the Hardyston formation which is mainly composed of sandstone but with considerable shale in places. Evidently the white clay represents some of the shale bands. Little information concerning the deposits or the operations has been obtained. A few years ago an attempt was made to obtain white clay in the talus and residual shale deposits on the lower slope of Kittatinny (Blue) Mountain north of Slatedale. The writer twice visited the place and examined the material in the pits that had been dug. Only a gray clay was seen and it was so inti-