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11 Notes on Charles E. Lucas Sr. & Jr. and the Lucas Tag Company

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**Notes on Charles E. Lucas Sr. & Jr. and
the Lucas Tag Company**

compiled by Jim Jones

This file contains assorted facts from West Chester history collected for the HIS480 "Computer methods of historical research" class at West Chester University. Each fact consists of specific information, a reference note to its source, and a date. The "facts" are organized in chronological order.

Collected by Jim Jones (Spring 1997). Last edited by Jim Jones (January 15, 1998).

1905/08/31

"Lucas-Hill" in *Daily Local News* (September 1, 1905), in CCHS clippings file: "Lucas, C."

Charles E. Lucas (Sr.) married Gertrude J. Hill in the "Church of the Sure Foundation" with pastor Euclid Philips presiding. He was a machinist. They planned to make "an extended trip" to "Lewiston, Altoona and other places." On their return, they lived on S. Matlack Street.

1914/05/30

"The Lucas Machine Works, Charles E. Lucas, proprietor: Designing and Repairing" in *West Chester Star* (May 30, 1914), in CCHS clippings file: "West Chester Business Houses; Lucas Machine Works."

"As an indication that West Chester is steadily growing along industrial lines, the fact may be pointed to that since the beginning of the year several new enterprises have been established here and all of them are doing a good business. Prominent among these new concerns is the Lucas Machine Works, the plant of which is located just off

Barnard street, between Walnut and Matlack."

Charles E. Lucas began operations on March 1, 1914 to construct and repair machinery for other businesses. "He is prepared to design and build special machinery of all kinds, do all kinds of experimental work, and his repair department is complete in every particular. Special attention is given to the repairing of automobiles and the most expert service is guaranteed, while at the same time the prices are reasonable."

The shop occupied a 50x36 sq. ft. two-story building in Nield's Alley just off Barnard Street (JJ: modern no. 219).

Lucas also acted as a retailer for several products including "`Frictionless Babbitt' metal, `Visco' oils and greases, `Bull Dog' gas, gasoline and kerosene engine and pumps, Michener automobile gasoline saver, and primer and other machinery."

1922/03/23

"Tag Industry Grows" in *Daily Local News* (March 23, 1922), in CCHS clippings file: "West Chester Business Houses, Lucas Tag Co."

The Lucas Tag company was located in the "old Methodist Episcopal Church building at Market and Darlington streets." They planned to alter the interior so that there would be more room for offices and manufacturing. Mr. P. E. Jefferis had the contract to do the work. Business was good for the firm, which did its manufacturing in the congregational meeting room.

Charles Lucas was "the inventor and patentee of a new and ingenious tag making machine." Business was "good and exceeds even his most sanguine expectations, many orders coming in from agents and dealers, besides other manufacturers. West Chester seems to be a tag industry center."

1923/06/23

Daily Local News (June 23, 1923), in CCHS clippings file "West Chester Business Houses--Denney Tag."

On the occasion of remodeling of the Denney Tag Company Building, this article appeared with various nostalgic bits about the company and the neighborhood.

"Every morning at six o'clock may be seen a train of small express wagons drawn by boys and girls, mostly Italians, on their way to the plant, every wagon piled high with

boxes of tags which have been strung at homes of workers and are now being returned. Motive power for these wagons is largely supplied by girls of the grammar grades in school. They have jet hair and glistening black eyes, and many of them wear small earrings. While waiting for the doors to open and admit them and their tags, they jump rope and have many other games, occasionally singing the latest American songs. While they have the Italian cast of countenance, their speech is purely American and their slang is up to date."

There are two other tag companies in West Chester, the Keystone and the Lucas.

1942/08/??

"Lucas-Cloud" in *Daily Local News* (August 17, 1942), in CCHS clippings file:
"Lucas, C."

Last Saturday, Charles E. Lucas Jr., son of the inventor, married Rachel Pyle Cloud, daughter of Pusey Cloud of Kennett Square. She graduated from Unionville Consolidated School and Drexel Institute of Technology. He graduated from Morrisville HS (PA, opposite Trenton), and attended U of Pennsylvania. He worked as a reporter for the *Daily Local News*.

1942/11/09

"Lucas-Zimmer" in *Daily Local News* (November 9, 1942), in CCHS clippings file:
"Lucas, J."

This wedding announcement is for John James Lucas, son of Charles E. (Sr.) and brother of Charles E. (Jr) who went on to become mayor. John James married Dorothy Blanche Zimmer of 233 Price Street [JJ: a neighbor from the next block]. They were married Saturday evening in the Church of the holy Trinity. She graduated from the Westtown School and WC State Teachers College. He graduated from WC High School and worked in the master mechanic's office at Lukens Steel Company in Coatesville.

After a honeymoon, they planned to live at 317 S. High Street.

1948/01/03

"Charles E. Lucas, Sr." in *Daily Local News* (January 3, 1948), in CCHS clippings file: "Lucas, C."

Lucas died in his home at 430 S. Matlack Street at age 66 [JJ: born in 1882], after a

period of poor health. He was born in Lewiston (Mifflin County, PA) on December 18, 1882 to William J. and Laura Lucas. His father died while he was young and his mother remarried William Graul. He brought her and Charles to West Chester in 1895.

Charles Lucas lived the rest of his life in West Chester except 1927-1932 when he lived in Morrisville, PA, opposite Trenton, NJ. He had a summer home in Promiseland, PA.

As a young man, Charles worked for the *Daily Local News* [JJ: so did his son Charles Jr.] and later learned to be a machinist at the Sharpless Separator Works.

Charles E. Lucas Sr. was survived by his mother Laura Graul, wife Gertrude Hill Lucas, his son John James Lucas (14 Everhart Avenue), his son Charles E. Lucas Jr. (314 S. Walnut Street), and his daughter Dorothy May, at home. A half-brother, Norman Graul, also survived, as did two grandchildren.

He was buried from Hicks Funeral Home at 220 S. high Street and interred in Greenmount Cemetery.

1958/01/06

"Now It's MAYOR Lucas" in *Daily Local News* (September 1, 1961), in CCHS clippings file: "Lucas, C."

Charles E. Lucas Jr. became Burgess of WC on January 6, 1958. On September 1, 1961, his title was changed to mayor by act of the Pennsylvania State Legislature. The article described it as a tough job because "Everybody, well, nearly everybody, knows him and has the privilege of `bending his ear' night and day." That is no exaggeration. Ask the Mayor or any of his predecessors. And the pay for this is the munificent sum of \$1,000 a year!"

1960/09/19

"West Chester's Burgess" in *Daily Local News* (September 19, 1960), in CCHS clippings file: "Lucas, C."

Charles E. Lucas Jr. was Burgess of West Chester. He lived at 312 Price Street in West Chester. In this clipping, he is shown on the steps of the West Chester State College, welcoming students.

1965/11/09

"Honor Mayor Lucas" in *Daily Local News* (November 9, 1965), in CCHS clippings file: "Lucas, C."

Charles E. Lucas Jr. ended his term as mayor of West Chester. He was replaced by Charles Andress, former head of the borough's microfilming department.

1967/08/15

Daily Local News (August 18, 1967), in CCHS clippings file: "Lucas, C."

This is an announcement that Charles E. Lucas Jr. and his wife celebrated their silver wedding anniversary on August 15, 1967. Three of their children attended: Joan, Jeff, and Loraine. A fourth child, Bill, was absent because he was in the Air Force in England.
