

= Arbogast & Bastian =

Arbogast & Bastian ( also A & B Meats ) was the name of a slaughterhouse and meat packing plant located in Allentown , Lehigh County , Pennsylvania , in the United States . Once a national leader in hog slaughtering , the company had the capacity to process most of the 850 @, @ 000 hogs raised annually in Pennsylvania for slaughtering . In its heyday , Arbogast & Bastian slaughtered an average of 4 @, @ 000 hogs daily .

Arbogast & Bastian , which was founded in 1887 , operated for nearly one hundred years before filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 1984 , citing cash flow issues brought about by market turmoil and labor disputes . The company filed Chapter 7 bankruptcy the following year .

With the sole exception of the company 's offices , the Arbogast & Bastian plant was demolished in the late 1990s . These surviving offices were later incorporated into the America On Wheels museum , which was opened on the site of the former Arbogast & Bastian plant in 2008 .

= = History = =

The Arbogast & Bastian Company was founded in 1887 by Wilson Arbogast and Morris Clinton Bastian . Arbogast , who was born in Freeburg , Snyder County , Pennsylvania , in 1851 , was a school teacher by training who entered the wholesale provisioning business in the early 1880s in Phillipsburg , New Jersey . Bastian , who was born in Lower Macungie Township , Lehigh County , Pennsylvania , in 1859 , operated a general store in Allentown .

The two partners built a two story building and stable at 25 Hamilton Street in Allentown , purchased two horses , and started supplying provisions and lard to local businesses and distributors . They used their building as a smoke house , and offered " freshly @-@ smoked " hams and bacon that were prepared using meat purchased ready @-@ cured from other suppliers . Ready @-@ cured meat is that which , after slaughter and butchery , has been treated by curing in order to prevent the growth of bacteria and to reduce the opportunity for botulism to grow , allowing for much safer transport and storage . This grew into a strong business for Arbogast & Bastian , as previously these goods had to be imported from larger cities , such as New York City and Philadelphia , and suffered in freshness and quality because of the additional time and handling required to get the finished product to Allentown .

In 1890 , the company added a hog slaughtering department , in order to offer fresh pork and sausages to their customers . The capacity of the plant increased from 150 hogs per week at inception , to over 1 @, @ 500 hogs per week in 1905 . Pork brands offered included " Pure Home Rendered Lard " and " Old Dutch " hams and bacon . With their venture in pork successful , Arbogast & Bastian soon expanded in a similar manner with beef , lamb , and mutton , first by purchasing ready @-@ cured meat from suppliers in the West to learn the trade , then by building a full @-@ scale abattoir and cold @-@ storage facilities on @-@ site . By 1905 , the company was processing over 150 head of cattle , and a similar number of lambs and sheep , weekly .

Arbogast & Bastian Company was formally incorporated in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania , with \$ 200 @, @ 000 in capital ( \$ 5 @. @ 47 million in 2016 dollars , adjusted for inflation ) , on June 19 , 1902 . The additional capital raised by the corporation was used to purchase more land and to build larger refrigeration facilities and a power plant . By 1905 , Arbogast & Bastian 's revenues exceeded \$ 1 million per year ( \$ 26 @. @ 3 million in 2016 dollars , adjusted for inflation . )

The large Arbogast & Bastian facility now occupied a prominent location at Hamilton and Front streets in Allentown , along the Lehigh River . The facility received livestock and transported goods via tracks run to the plant by the Lehigh Valley Railroad . On July 14 , 1905 , a large fire destroyed the original Arbogast & Bastian plant and the company rebuilt a larger , more modern facility . It was the first reinforced concrete meat packing plant in the United States . The Arbogast & Bastian plant , which allowed for more sanitary and safer operations , was designed and built in direct response to the unsanitary conditions in Chicago 's meat packing plants exposed by Upton Sinclair in his book , The Jungle , which led to the passage of the Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 .

During World War II , 70 percent of Arbogast & Bastian 's output went to the United States armed forces and through the Lend @-@ Lease program to the United Kingdom , the Soviet Union , China , France and other Allied nations . By 1973 , Arbogast & Bastian had 700 employees processing 160 million pounds ( 73 million kg ) of meat a year , and the company had the capacity to butcher 7 @,@ 200 hogs and 1 @,@ 000 cattle a week .

Arbogast & Bastian filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on May 11 , 1984 , citing cash flow issues brought about by " two years of turbulent market conditions in the pork industry , " a labor dispute with the Teamsters labor union and the recent shutdown of A & B 's slaughtering operations . The bankruptcy was immediately triggered because one of the company 's customers had issued a stop @-@ payment on \$ 800 @,@ 000 worth of checks paid to Arbogast & Bastian . The firm 's financial woes were further complicated by four large meat packing companies - Pork Cutters , Inc . , Rotches Pork Packers , Inc . , Otto Doerr and Son , Inc. and Crissman , Inc . - who collectively failed to pay for nearly \$ 5 million worth of pork carcasses and meat products purchased from Arbogast & Bastian in 1983 and 1984 , according to charges made by the United States Department of Agriculture . In total , about 380 workers lost their jobs . Within months of filing for bankruptcy , Purity Bacon Products Corp. , one of A & B 's most profitable divisions , was sold for \$ 1 million to an investor group led by Richard A. Strouce , the president of Arbogast & Bastian at the time it filed for bankruptcy .

The corporation filed for Chapter 7 liquidation on January 9 , 1985 . With the closure of Arbogast & Bastian , only two major meat processing facilities remained operating in the state of Pennsylvania - Hatfield Quality Meats of Hatfield , Pennsylvania , and Martins Abattoir & Wholesale Meats , Inc . , with headquarters in Godwin , North Carolina .

= = Legacy = =

As early as 1989 , city officials in Allentown had announced plans to revitalize brownfield land along the Lehigh River , which included the abandoned Arbogast & Bastian plant . This redevelopment , which was to be known as " Lehigh Landing , " was originally to include a museum , a brewery , walking trails , a footbridge across the river , and a promenade for festivals . Allentown businessman Raymond E. Holland , former president of Holiday Hair Fashions , had purchased the abandoned Arbogast & Bastian plant for \$ 250 @,@ 000 in 1985 and gave it to the Allentown Economic Development Corp. as a charitable contribution in 1990 . Development of " Lehigh Landing " was hindered by fundraising problems , environmental remediation issues , and even a national debate on pork barrel government spending . The iconic Arbogast & Bastian plant remained vacant for over a decade , often the victim of vandalism and suspicious fires . The plant was finally dismantled in late 1990s , and the company 's large heart @-@ shaped sign , long a fixture of the Allentown skyline , was taken down on June 30 , 1998 . The offices of Arbogast & Bastian , which had not been torn down , were later incorporated into the America On Wheels museum , which was opened on the site of the former Arbogast & Bastian plant in 2008 .