

The Pittsburgh Post, Saturday, February 5, 1898

Eminent Engineer Has Passed Away

Sigismund Low Dead at Glenwood after a Long and Honorable Life

He Built Many Railroads

His Career as a Revolutionist and as a Man of Affairs

Funeral Takes Place Sunday

Sigismund Low, for nearly half a century, a resident of Pittsburg and one of the best known civil engineers in the United States, died Thursday at his home on Dyke street, near Renova street, Glenwood, aged 73 years. His death was due to general disability and effects of old age.

Sigismund Low was born November 18, 1825 in Ehrenstetten, District of Staufen, Grand Duchy of Baden. He came of a family of civil engineers, his father and grandfather having risen to eminence in that profession. He received his technical education in the Karlsruhe polytechnic, the most famous educational establishment of its kind in Europe at that time. He graduated in 1848 with distinction.

After receiving his degree, Mr. Low began the practice of his profession, but became connected with the revolutionary party in Southern Germany and joined the revolutionary army under General Franz Sigel. He rose to the rank of major, and upon the disastrous ending of the attempt against the established government was forced to fly with his friend, Carl Schurz, to Switzerland. From that country he came to the United States, sailing from Havre for New York on July 26, 1850. He landed September 16. He arrived in Pittsburg a few weeks later, having secured a place with the field staff of engineers then building the Cleveland & Mahoning railroad. His next work was on the old Pittsburg & Connellsville railroad, he being the chief engineer of construction from 1853 to 1867. He built the road from Pittsburg to Connellsville, and also the Cumberland extension.

In 1867 and 1868 he was engaged in surveying the Ohio river for the United States government and in 1869 was made chief engineer of the Monongahela Valley railroad, now the Pittsburg, Virginia & Charleston division of the Pennsylvania railroad. In 1870 he made the survey for the Youngstown line of the Baltimore & Ohio railroad, now known as the Pittsburg & Western.

In 1871 and 1872 he was engaged as chief engineer of the Northern Pacific railroad, locating the line of the road through the famous Yellowstone valley. Upon the completion of this service Mr. Low returned to the service of the Baltimore & Ohio railroad.

It was shortly after this that he accomplished what was then and still is spoken as a marvelous feat. The Pinkerton tunnel was on fire, preventing the passage of trains, and in less than one week he built a line four miles long around the tunnel with a force of only 700 men.

In 1878 he was engaged in piping natural gas into Pittsburg, and in 1881 and 1882 he was in Mexico as engineer of construction of the Mexican Central railroad. He located, surveyed and built this line, and then returned to the United States, where he built the Wheeling division of the Baltimore & Ohio railroad. He returned to Mexico later as consulting engineer of a mining company and then was employed in the same capacity with an irrigation company in California. In his later years he was connected with Baltimore and Ohio railroad in charge of right of way matters. He was the founder of the *Pittsburgh Volksblatt*.

Mr. Low was married to Annie Marie Hussel April 22, 1863. His wife died about ten years ago. The deceased is survived by the following children: Emile, who is assistant United States engineer at Buffalo; William, a druggist in this city; Theodore, superintendent of the Norfolk & Western railroad; Harry F., secretary and treasurer of the Scoble & Parker Company; Edwin C. of the same concern; Miss Louisa M. and Miss Emma Low, both living at home. He has also one brother John Low who resides near this city, and a sister in Europe.

The funeral will take place Sunday afternoon at 2 o'clock from St. Stephens Church Hazelwood.

The Pittsburg Leader, February 4, 1898

Sigismund Low Dead

Interesting Record of a Brilliant Engineer

Leader in the German Revolution of 1848 and an Associate of Carl Schurz – Escaped Death Through the Friendship of a Schoolmate. Prominent Here as a Railroad Engineer.

Sigismund, Low, one of the best known old engineers in this city, and a man who had quite a history as a participant in the insurrection of '48 in Germany, died yesterday at this home on Dye street, near Renova, Glenwood. The cause of his death was a general breaking down in old age. He had been ailing for two months, but at no time was his condition considered serious.

Sigismund Low was born November 18, 1825 at Ehrenstetten, County Staufen, in the grand duchy of Baden, Germany. He came from a family of civil engineers, his father and grandfather before him having followed that profession and held high places in its ranks. The deceased, after the usual school education, entered the Karlsruhe Polytechnic school, which was then one of the larger engineering institutions in Germany. While there he displayed exceptionally great talents in his chosen line of work, graduating in 1848 with considerable distinction. He was a classmate of many boys who shortly afterward became leaders in the revolution of that year. Among the best known of these are Carl Schurz and General Sigel. In the spring of 1849 became one of the bands of many of whom were students who attempted to raise a revolution at Bonn, in Germany. His career was exceedingly eventful and on several occasions he barely escaped with his life. Mr. Low could never forget these stirring times of his youth, and his many tales of this insurrection were always most interesting to his friends. He frequently related his last connection with Carl Schurz in 1849. Mr. Low was then a major in the revolting army and at that time had command of the strongest fort in Germany. They were completely surrounded by the royal forces, but held the fort and starved out. It was then that General Sigel and Carl Schurz with others escaped to Switzerland but Mr. Low was captured with fifteen others. They were all sentenced to be shot, and for a time it seemed Mr. Low would be of the number. It happened, however, that the general who had taken him prisoner had been an old college classmate, and bore a great friendship for Mr. Low on account of a fortress the latter had designed while in college for a brother of the grand duke. It was by the aid of this friend that Mr. Low escaped and left Germany on July 26, 1850. He came direct to America, landing in New York September 16, 1850. From there he came to Pittsburg, and arrived there the same month.

Mr. Low's first work in this country was on the old Pittsburg and Connellsville railroad. He was made chief engineer of this road, and to him can be attributed much of the success in its construction. After leaving there he went on the government survey and was on the engineering corps that surveyed the Ohio river. From this position he became associated with the engineering department of the Northern Pacific and later was made chief engineer of the Guanajuat division of the Mexican Central railroad. Then coming back to Pittsburg, he again was connected with the Baltimore and Ohio, which by that time had absorbed the Pittsburg and Connellsville. Later Mr. Low was employed by the government in their engineering offices in Washington, after which he returned to Pittsburg and at times was interested in several engineering enterprises here. As an engineer, Mr. Low was acknowledged to be one of the best in this part of the country. As a railroad engineer he had few equals and was often in his later days called upon to settle difficult problems arising in this profession. He was a man of the most genial temperament and is remembered with the greatest regard by the entire profession in this city.

Mr. Low was married to Miss Annie Marie Hussell April 22, 1853. His wife died about ten years ago. The deceased is survived by the following children: Emile, who is assistant government engineer at Buffalo, William, a druggist in this city, Theodore, superintendent of the Norfolk and Western railroad, Harry G. secretary and treasurer of the Scobie and Parker company, Edwin C. of the same concern, Miss Louisa M. and Miss Low, both living at home. He has also one brother, John Low, who resides near this city, and a sister in Europe.

Mr. Low will be remembered by many of Pittsburg's older residents as the man that superintended the construction of the fort on Squirrel Hill during the late war, at the time of the battle of Gettysburg. The ruins of the breastworks still remain on the hill and are now quite a curiosity. Mr. Low made a carefully drawn map of the fortifications and it is now in the possession of the family. It is drawn on heavy drawing paper and the whole pasted on the back of an American flag. Mr. Low was one of the founders of the *Pittsburg Volksblatt* and during the year 1859 held considerable stock in the paper.

The picture that is reproduced here is the only one of Mr. Low that has been preserved. It was taken in 1871 while he was in the Yellowstone park working on the Northern Pacific railroad.

The funeral service will be held in St. Stephen's church Hazelwood, Sunday afternoon at 2 o'clock. The interment will be later and private.

Pittsburgh Chronicle Telegraph 1898.02.04

The Death Roll

Sigismund Loew

Sigismund Loew died yesterday at his home on Dyke st, near Renova st, Glenwood. Mr Loew was a distinguished civil engineer. He was connected with some of

the most important early railroad construction work in the United States. Under the late General William Latimer, who was president of the old Pittsburgh and Connellsville railroad, now a part of the Baltimore and Ohio system, Mr. Loew was chief engineer. He continued with the road for a time after the Pittsburgh and Connellsville road passed under the management of the Baltimore and Ohio.

Mr. Loew was born in Baden 73 years ago. He was educated there for the profession of a civil engineer and achieved distinction as young man in his native land. In the spring of 1849 Mr. Loew became one of General Franz Sigel's lieutenants in the latter's unsuccessful effort to promote an insurrection in Germany, for which he was banished and came to this country.

Within recent years, Mr. Loew had not been actively engaged in his profession, owing to failing health. Occasionally he assisted in settling claims for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company. He was immensely popular with the members of his profession and was regarded by them as having great ability. Mr. Loew is survived by three sons and one daughter. One of his sons lives in Buffalo, NY. A brother John Loew has been a resident of Braddock for over 40 years.

Pittsburg Times 1898.02.04

Identical to *Chronicle Telegraph* except

Low instead of Loew

Germany instead of Baden

Carl Schurz instead of Franz Sigel

At Bonn in Germany instead of in Germany

No mention of brother John Loew

Pittsburgh Dispatch 1898.02.05

A Busy and Varied Life

The Death of Sigismund Low Removes a Well-Known Civil Engineer—Was Educated in Germany

Sigismund Low, who died Thursday afternoon, was a well-known civil engineer, and his demise marks the close of an active and varied career. He was 72 years old. During his life he had been connected with numerous railroads in the capacity of surveyor and chief engineer. He was one of the first to advocate natural gas for Pittsburgh and had taken a prominent part in the city's interests for the past 25 years, having been in Select Council for several years from the old Third Ward.

Mr. Low was born November 18, 1824, at Ehrenstetten, District of Staufen, Germany. His late home was on Dyke street, near Renova, Glenwood, in the Twenty-Third ward. After his school education he took a complete course of engineering and graduated from the Polytechnic School of Karlsruhe, the capital of Baden. Mr. Low arrived in the United States in September 1850 and lived for a time at Sandusky, O., coming to Pittsburgh from that town.

His name was associated with many engineering feats in Allegheny county. In 1867 he was made assistant engineer in charge of the Ohio river for the Government. Two years later he left his Government position and returned to railway surveys in different parts of the country. In 1881 he went to Mexico in the service of the Mexican Central Railroad and returned to build the Wheeling branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

Of recent years Mr. Low had been in Mexico and California looking after mining interests and hydraulic works. He was the founder of the *Pittsburgh Volksblatt* and before the war was a candidate for the Pennsylvania Legislature. Among the monuments of his engineering skill are the Squirrel Hill fortifications.

Five sons and two daughters survive Major Low. His wife died on August 13, 1888.

Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette 1898.02.05

The Death Roll

Sigismund Low

Sigismund Low, the eminent civil engineer of this city, died Thursday at 4 pm at his residence on Dyke street, near Renova, Glenwood, aged 73 years. He was born in Germany, the town of Ehrenstetten, grand duchy of Baden. He took a prominent part in the revolution in Southern Germany in 1848-49. Gen Franz Sigel was in charge of the revolution and Mr. Low had the rank of major. He escaped to Switzerland and remained in the country until July 26, 1850 when he emigrated to America. He has been associated with a large number of railroads, include the Cleveland & Mahoning, Pittsburgh & Connellsville, Cleveland & Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Ft. Wayne & Chicago, Monongahela Valley, Baltimore & Ohio, Northern Pacific and Mexican Central. He has been identified with various schemes and enterprises in the vicinity of Pittsburgh, in California, and in Mexico.

Mr. Low founded the *Volksblatt* in 1858 and was connected with the paper for several years. He was also a candidate for the Pennsylvania legislature at the beginning of the war, and for several year served as a member of select councils from the Third ward. He was married April 22, 1853 to Anna Marie Husel. He is survived by seven children, five boys and two girls. His wife died August 12, 1888. The funeral will be held Sunday at 2 pm from St. Stephen's church, Hazelwood.

Pittsburgher Volksblatt 1898.02.05

Herr Sigismund Loew, der bekannte Zivil Ingenieur, ueber dessen Ableben bereits im gestrigen "Volksblatt" gemeldet wurde, wird morgen Nachmittag privatim zur letzten Ruhe gebettet werden, nachdem zuvor um 2Uhr in der St. Stephens Kirche, Hazelwood, die Leichenfeier stattgefunden hat. Der Verstorbene wird von folgenden Kindern ueberlebt: Emile, gegenwaertig Bundes Ingenieur in Buffalo, William, ein Apotheker in dieser Stadt; Theodor, Superintendent der Norfolk und Western Eisenbahn; Harry F. Sekretuer und Schatzmeister der Scobie und Parker Company; Edwin K, von der naemlichen Firma, Fril. Louise M. und Fril. Emma Loew, die bei dem Vater lebten. Ausserdem hat der Verstorbene einem Bruder, John Loew, der nahe dieser Stadt wohnt, sowie eine in Europa lebende Schwester. In anderer Stelle des heutigen Volksblatt widmet Prof. Paul F. Rohrbacher seinem alten Freunde einen ehrenden Nachruf.

Mr. Sigismund Loew, the famous civil engineer, whose death was reported in yesterday's *Volksblatt*, will be laid to rest privately tomorrow afternoon after the 2 pm funeral at St. Stephen's Church, Hazelwood. The deceased is survived by the following children: Emile, currently Federal engineer in Buffalo; William, a pharmacist in this city; Theodore, superintendent of the Norfolk and Western Railway; Harry F., secretary and treasurer of the Scobie and Parker Company; Edwin K, of the same company; Miss Louise M. and Miss Emma Loew, who lived with their father. In addition, the deceased's brother, John Loew, who lives near this city, and a sister living in Europe. Elsewhere in today's *Volksblatt* Prof. Paul F. Rohrbacher dedicates an honorable obituary to his old friend.

Pittsburgher Volksblatt 1898.02.05

Sigismund Loew lebt! So moege es denn einem der aeltesten Freunde des Dahingeshiedenen vergoennt sein, einige Worte der aufrichtigsten Anerkennung auf die Jahre zu legen. Sigismund Loew war ein eigener Charakter. Unter den tuechtigen Ingenieuren dieses Landes war er einer der tuechtigsten. Die alten Beamten der Baltimore und Ohio Eisenbahn schaezten ihn hoch trotz seines eigenen Wesens. Er haette die hoechste und beste Stellung einnehmen koennen, waere es nicht in Folge von Umstaenden anders gekommen.

Meine Empfindungen fuer den Dahingeshiedenen sind die warmsten - ich kannte ihn als Mann von deutscher Treue und Biederkeit. Ich konnte ihn im alten Vaterlande. In dem denkwuerdigen Jahre Badens 1849 befahligte Loew als Major ein Bataillon Oberlaender. Er war in dem heissen Gefecht bei Waghauseel - war zur Deckung einer Batterie kommandirt. Die braven Oberlaender unter der _ackern (?) Fuehrung Loew's zeigten gresse Tapferkeit und bedeckten sich mit Ruhm.

Nach dem Gefecht bei Kuppenheim marschirte er mit seinen Braven nach Rastatt. Nach Uebergabe der Festung war er laengere Zeit in den Kasematten eingekerkert, von dort entkam er endlich nach der Schweiz. Im Jahre 1850 kam er nach den Vereinigten Staaten und fand bald lohnende Beschaeftigung in seinem Berufe. Seine Vermessung des Ohio Flusses wird von dem Kriegs Departement unserer Regierung als die beste anerkannt. Er

unterzeichnete seinen Bericht in so kleinen Schriftzuegen , dass der Name Sigismund Loew kaum eine Vergrößerungsglas zu entziffern ist. Er war in seinem Sache die Bescheidenheit selbst. Er war ein Mitbegründer des "*Volksblatt*". In the den trüben Tagen der "Know Nothing" Herrschaft betonte er bei jeder Gelegenheit sein Deutschthum und sein persönlicher Muth ist damals manchem schüchternen Landsmann zu Hülfe gekommen. Loew war ein seltener Mensch. Es ist fraglich, ob sie Stadt Pittsburg je einen besseren Ingenieur sehen wird. Der heimgegangene ruht nach langem, wechselvollen Leben. Möge ihm die Erde leicht sein.

Paul F. Rohrbacher
Sewickley, Pa, den 4. Febr 1898

Sigismund Loew lives! So may one of the oldest friends of the departed be allowed to put a few words of the most sincere appreciation to the years. Sigismund Loew was a distinct character. Among the capable engineers of this country, he was one of the most able. The old officials of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad esteemed him highly despite his own being (?). He would have had the highest and best position, had the circumstances been different.

My feelings for the departed are the warmest - I knew him as a man of German loyalty and honesty. I knew him in the old country. During the memorable year of 1849 for Baden, as major, Loew commanded an Oberlaender (south Baden) battalion. He was in the heat of battle at Waghäusel – was in command of the defense of a battery. Under the _____ leadership of Loew, the good Oberlaender showed great bravery and covered themselves with glory.

After the battle of Kuppenheim he marched with his brave men to Rastatt. After the surrender of the fortress, he was incarcerated a length of time in its casemates (bunkers), from there he escaped finally to Switzerland. In 1850 he came to the United States and soon found worthwhile employment in his profession. His survey of the Ohio River would be recognized as the best by the War Department of our government. He signed his report in such small writing, that the name Sigismund Loew can hardly be deciphered without a magnifying glass. He was modest in his things. He was a cofounder of the *Volksblatt*. In the murky days of the "Know Nothing" reign, he emphasized at every opportunity his Germanness and his personal spirit is such that he has often come to help a shy fellow countryman. Loew was a rare man. It is questionable whether the city of Pittsburg will ever see a better engineer. The departed rests after a long, eventful life. May the earth be light to him.

Paul F. Rohrbacher
Sewickley, Pa, 4. Febr 1898