

Laying Pipe for Berlin's First Gasworks (1826)

Abstract

This lithograph shows workers in Berlin laying pipes that will supply gas to the streetlight at the right. In this comical scene, the process appears to be taking a little longer than it should, since the workers seem to be more interested in conversation than their task. Gas lighting for central Berlin's streets and squares became possible after the Prussian interior ministry and Berlin's police president negotiated a contract with a British gas concern in 1825. Berlin's first gasworks (the so-called Englische Gasanstalt) was located near Hallesches Tor and began providing the necessary gas for streetlights in 1826. With the introduction of gas streetlights, which needed to be lit every evening, lamplighters also became part of day-to-day life in the city. Frequently, Berlin's lamplighters were also employed as night watchmen. Although the city's first electric streetlights were installed in 1879, gas lights remained part of the Berlin landscape until well into the twentieth century. Lithograph by Theodor Hosemann (1807–1875), 1826.

Source



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