

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

THE BRAINY

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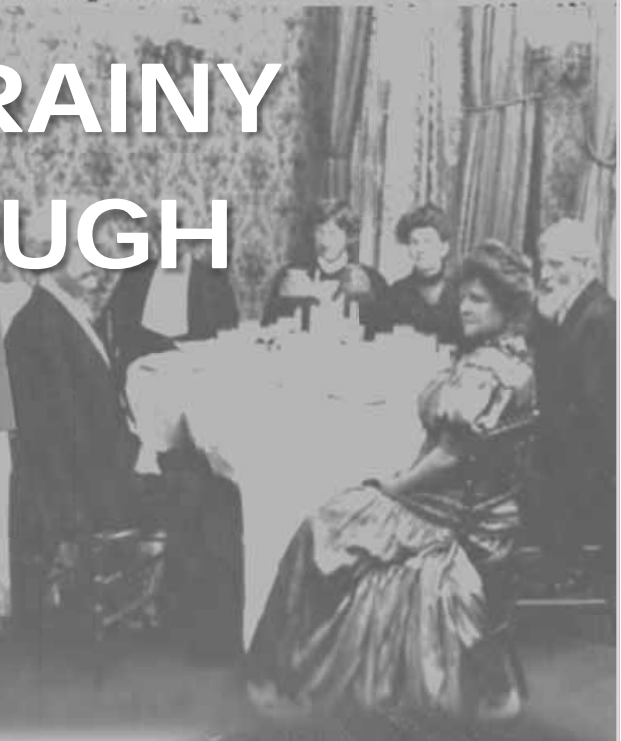
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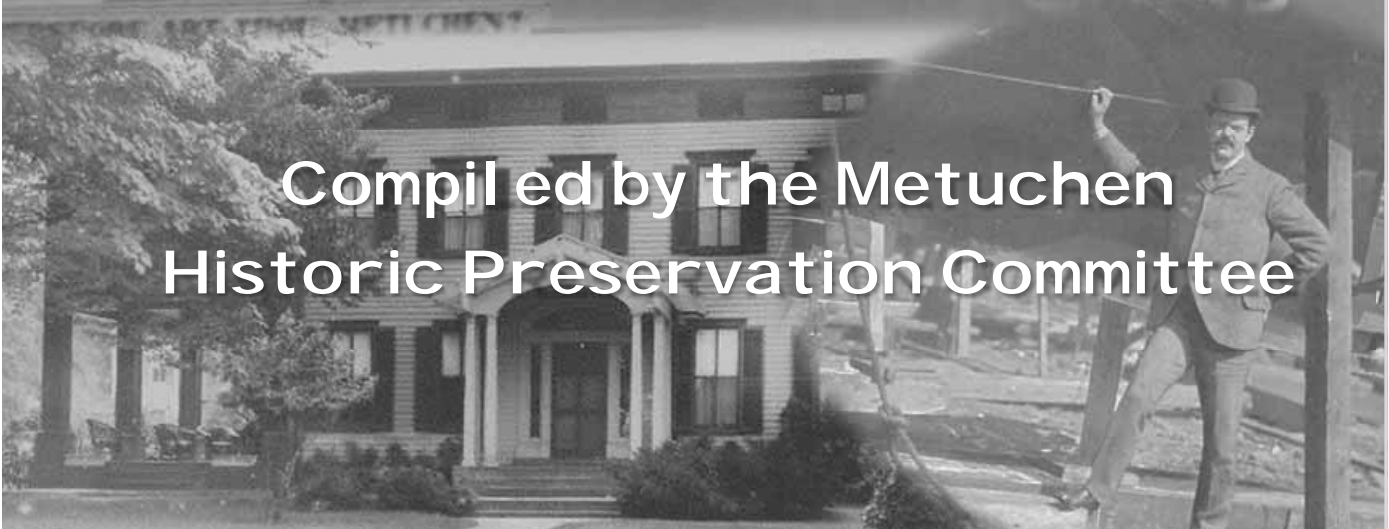
METUCHEN

THE BRAINY BOROUGH

he two volunteer fire companies, with
mobile apparatus, each with its own clubhouse,
on a blaze so swiftly that a pyromaniac with
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e Commission has put out more than 600 trees
the last two weeks. The Borough Improvement
ague, seven hustling churches, the Metuchen
ders, three literary societies, the Metuchen
-all these zip along at high speed, ever with an
eye to keeping Metuchen in the brain van. Name
your odds.



by asking for bids on furnishing
the borough's schools instead of order
borough school supply, amounting to
of tons, according to the discretion of
of the committee?



Compiled by the Metuchen
Historic Preservation Committee

Metuchen

The Br ainy Bor ough

**Compil ed by t he Met uchen hist or ic
pr eser vat ion commit tee**

The Metuchen Historic Preservation Committee was formed in January 2008 to advise the Mayor and Council on steps to strengthen Metuchen's commitment to historic preservation. The Committee's goals are to develop public education on the benefits of historic preservation, honor Metuchen's historic resources by increasing the number of structures in town listed on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places, and explore the development of a Metuchen Historic Preservation Ordinance to formally recognize and protect the town's distinctive historic and architectural character.

The Historic Preservation Committee

Suzanne Andrews
Lori Chambers
Michele Clancy
Richard Miller
Tyreen Reuter, Chair
Rebecca Seely
Richard Weber
Nancy Zerbe

Jay Muldoon, Council Liaison

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Metuchen, New Jersey.

Introduction

For several years, the Metuchen Historic Preservation Committee — with the assistance of grants from the Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission — has studied Metuchen’s history and historic neighborhoods to evaluate the potential for one or more historic districts. These studies have resulted in additional historical information, especially related to one important theme: Metuchen’s reputation as “the Brainy Borough.” Local historians were aware of the 1914-1915 newspaper “battle” between Metuchen and Glen Ridge as to which town deserved the title; however, there were no extant copies of the *Metuchen Recorder* newspaper that over the extended period of the battle carried each town’s submissions of prominent residents who would warrant their hometown being considered “brainy.” The Committee’s recent studies have not only added to the general knowledge of the battle; they resulted in a significant research find: much of Metuchen’s reporting on the subject was also reprinted in Bloomfield’s *Independent Press*,* available at the Bloomfield Public Library.

The content in this booklet is taken primarily from these news articles, not only because they inform us about the individuals, but also because the entertaining style of writing is so indicative of the time period. Images have been added throughout the text and additional “brains” not mentioned or post-dating the contest have been included in a separate section. And, since the *Metuchen Recorder* stated in 1910 that the “honor we enjoy of being known as ‘the brainy borough’ is principally due to the brilliant women who adorn our community,” there is also a section on local women who were not part of the official “battle.”

*On July 9, 1915, the *Independent Press* merged with the *Bloomfield Citizen* and became the *Independent Press and Bloomfield Citizen*.

Acknowledgements

The Historic Preservation Committee would like to thank the Borough of Metuchen's Mayor and Council for the support they have provided to our committee for this and our past projects. Also, we sincerely appreciate the assistance from the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission, and the New Jersey Historical Commission.

This booklet builds upon the work done by three historians: Linda McTeague, Dennis Bertland, and Margaret Newman. Special thanks are due to Mr. Bertland for locating and obtaining copies of the articles from the *Independent Press* and *Independent Press and Bloomfield Citizen* which have provided the bulk of the content contained here.

Also, the vast majority of images and background information was provided by the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society. Their vast collection of historic photographs, maps, and documents has been invaluable to the Historic Preservation Committee.

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origins of the nickname

The Borough of Metuchen was established as a municipality in 1900, although it had been developed as a village much earlier. While some of the 18th century infrastructure remains, Metuchen in general reflects the turn-of-the-century suburban development that resulted from the development of the railroad in the 1830s and, later, the advent of the automobile.

The railroad brought significant commercial development followed by residential growth. The 1876 *Fulton Plan of Metuchen* shows a burgeoning community crossed by two active railroad lines. At the end of the 19th century, there were 26 passenger trains to New York daily: 18 on the Pennsylvania Railroad and 8 on the Lehigh Valley. Almost one quarter of Metuchen's residents commuted on the morning train.



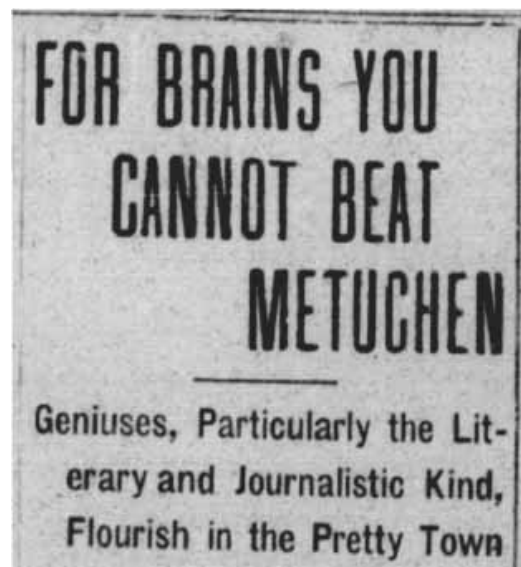
The borough's easy accessibility to urban centers like Newark and Jersey City, fine homes and bucolic setting made it attractive to New York bankers and engineers, newspapermen, authors, editors, illustrators, and artists. An 1898 brochure called "Why Metuchen is a Desirable Home" stated that Metuchen was attractive "...to those desiring a home, a dwelling place, among worthy and cultivated people... Display is ridiculed; equality is the rule; and the exclusiveness is directed against bad manners and bad morals."



While its reputation as a cerebral community later became based on its intellectual luminaries, the numerous cultural and literary societies equally gave a foundation for Metuchen's reputation. In 1879, the Young Men's Literary Society was established. Mrs. Hester M.

Poole, a poet, feminist and literary critic, founded the Quiet Hour in 1895 to discuss literature, social matters and feminism. The Metuchen Book Club was formed in 1879 and the public library in 1885 (first library building pictured above). In 1888, the Delphic Dramatic Association was established. Added to these were the Chautauqua Literary Circle and the Grosvenor's Club, both active groups at the end of the 19th century. In addition to the literary societies, there were civic organizations such as the Borough Improvement League and numerous fraternal organizations.

It was soon after the turn of the century that Metuchen started to be referred to as the Brainy Borough in the local papers. Although there may be even earlier references, the name was in use as early as 1908, as evidenced by a November 6 article in *The Daily Home News*, whose headline declared, "For Brains You Cannot Beat Metuchen." Cataloging "the Geniuses, Particularly the Literary and Journalistic Kind, [who] Flourish in the Pretty Town," and seeing fit to remark on the presence of "Lots of Clever Women, Too," the writer lists more than two



dozen of Metuchen's luminaries, nearly half of them female artists and writers.

The "Brainy Borough" is the name by which Metuchen is rapidly becoming famed throughout the entire state and while the fact that it is the center of intellectuality and culture is well known, few realize how extensive is that personnel of that justly renowned aesthetic colony just across the Raritan.

Sojourners in Metuchen have frequently remarked the universal atmosphere of sociability and lack of snobbishness in the borough and that the social life of the community is all that it should be under conditions so propitious is well known.

Many members of the colony, while their names are familiar to those in touch with literary, artistic, and musical activity, enjoy only the modest competence that too often is the reward of the toiler in these pursuits, but fortunately wealth cuts small figure in the life of the borough and one is taken at his own worth.

All that is required is that one observe the customs of refined society and contribute to the general welfare and entertainment of the colony.

The Daily Home News, November 6, 1908.

Although the name of the article's author is not provided, it may have been Truman T. Pierson, a self-described freelance newspaper correspondent writing for "all papers of New York, Philadelphia, Newark, Perth Amboy, Plainfield, New Brunswick." A Metuchen resident with many hats, this entrepreneurial jack-of-all-trades also dabbled in real estate and insurance, managed the Metuchen Gas Light Company, served as the Metuchen postmaster, and was vice president of both the state and national postmasters' associations. He later claimed to have been the first to give the moniker "Brainy Borough" to Metuchen. As a journalist, however, Pierson may not have been completely unbiased, as he was the son of the architect John Noble Pierson

and the older brother of Aylin Pierson, one of the luminaries listed in the article.

The following year, the *New Brunswick Times* noted that there was some dispute over who should get the credit for the nickname.

Who discovered the "brainy borough" of Metuchen? A local paper is patting itself on the back occasionally and boasting that it first gave the entertaining information to an anxious world that Metuchen sheltered a remarkable gathering of brainy men and women. But a show down will prove that it is wrong again. It was the Times which first published the "brainy borough" story. The story excited considerable interest throughout the state and got into a Newark paper. Our local contemporary copies the article as it appeared in the Newark paper and then modestly poses as a discoverer.

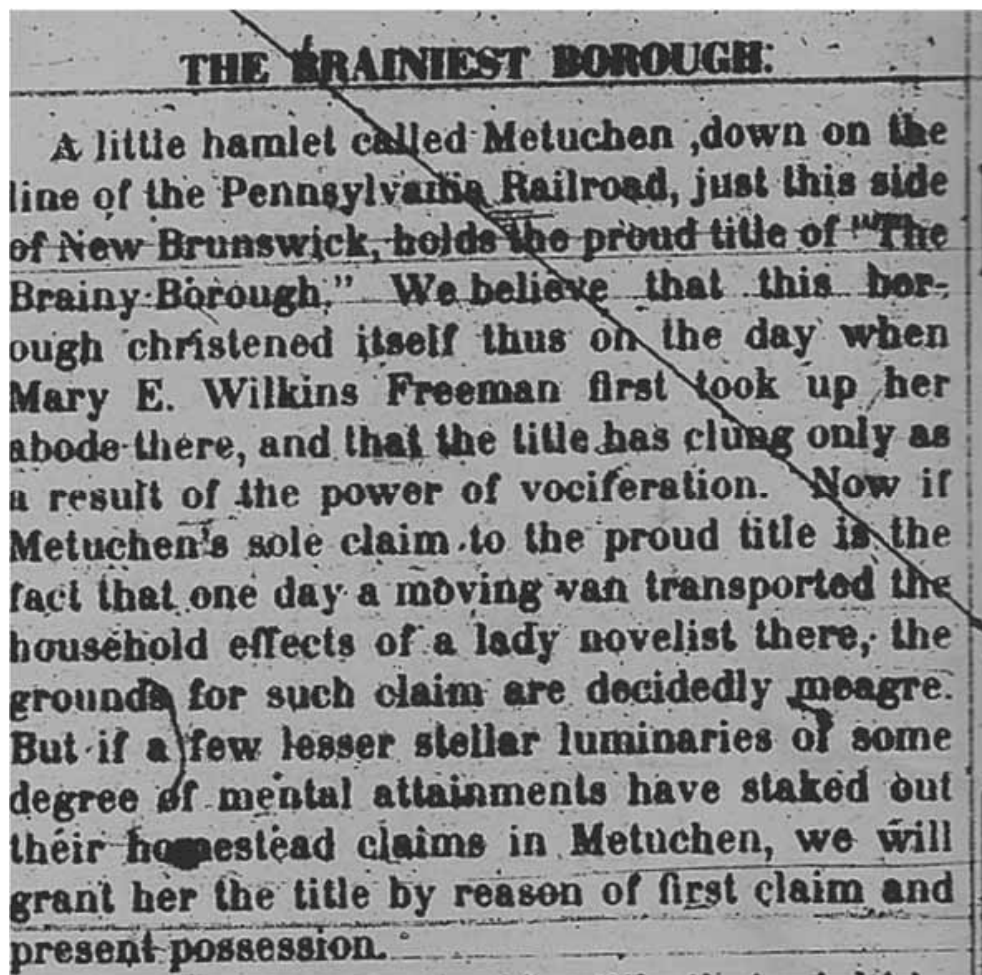
New Brunswick Times, November 24, 1909.

The "local paper" mentioned is likely the *Metuchen Recorder*, in which articles about Metuchen's cerebral assets regularly appeared. In 1910, the paper noted that the "honor we enjoy of being known as 'the brainy borough' is principally due to the brilliant women who adorn our community."

Regardless of who should receive credit, the name was in common use in the early 1910s, when, according to records in the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society's archives, the editors of both the *Metuchen Recorder* and the *Independent Press* met on a commuter train. The two began a lively discussion as to which borough, Metuchen or Glen Ridge, was in fact the brainier of the two municipalities and this conversation led into the "Battle of the Brainiest Borough."

The "Battle" with Glen Ridge

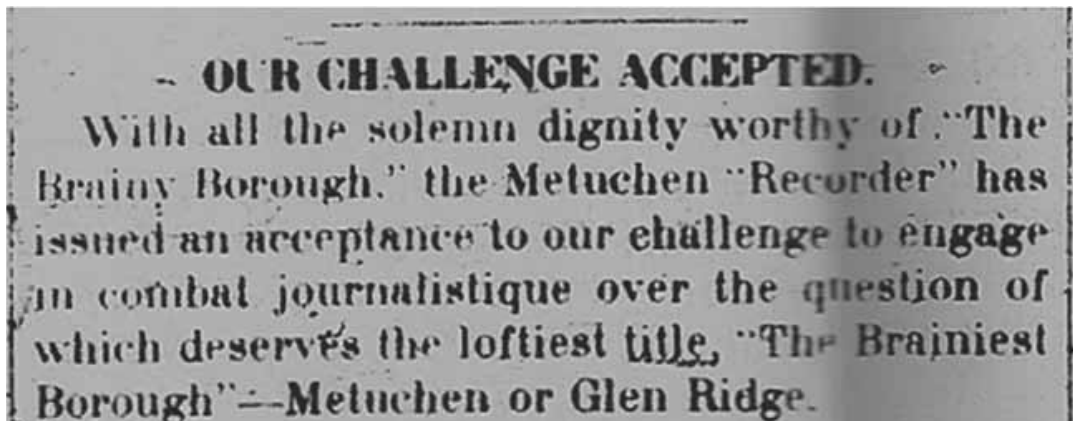
On March 3, 1914, the *Independent Press* of Bloomfield, New Jersey issued its written challenge to Metuchen to compete against Glen Ridge in order to prove which borough had the most "mental celebrities" and could thus call itself "The Brainiest Borough." According to this first article, Metuchen had given itself the title of "Brainy Borough" when the nationally known novelist Mary Wilkins Freeman had moved to Metuchen several years earlier.



In order to prove that Glen Ridge went beyond brainy to the brainiest, the *Independent Press* challenged the *Metuchen Recorder* to each week deliver the name and highlights of one of its mental celebrities. This would be countered by Glen Ridge during the following week, and whichever community ran dry of

names first would be the loser.

As printed in the March 20, 1914 edition of *The Independent Press*, Metuchen accepted the challenge to “engage in combat journalistique”:



Over the course of the next couple of months, the witty bantering back and forth continued with Metuchen introducing a name and Glen Ridge responding.

It was during the summer of 1914 that the Great War, World War I, began in Europe. In the August 7, 1914 edition, under the headline “Battle of Brains Rages,” *The Independent* wrote that now that “the European war occupies the center ring, and even the entire main tent, the Metuchen-Glen Ridge controversy will prove but a side show... but in the side tent it will certainly continue to rage just as hotly until the *Metuchen Recorder* runs out of ammunition and raises the white flag.” The tongue-in-cheek war references continued in the ensuing months.

At times it appears that each side took breaks from this good natured combat to attend to more important business, but the battle clearly continued on. The battle even drew attention from larger urban newspapers, and on April 25, 1915, the *New York Press Sunday Morning* printed a full-page feature on the contest. The entirety of this article is reprinted at the end of this booklet.

In July of 1915, after Metuchen had put forth its eighteenth name, there was a delay in response from Glen Ridge. Metuchen “promised our Glen Ridge friends that if they could stay in the contest long enough, we would name all the 57 varieties of brains which combine to make Metuchen the

brainiest borough in New Jersey,” but sensing its opponent to be out of ammunition, now declared victory.

We believe that the time is now ripe; that the decision is now proper, and the occasion now demands that we, the Metuchen ‘*Recorder*,’ in championing the cause of our borough, announce Metuchen, New Jersey to be the rightful and proven bearer of the title, ‘The brainiest borough,’ by virtue of the fact that, while still bountifully supplied with ammunition for continuing this struggle and we stand ready to attack, no vestige of life, nor sign of hostility, is further heard from opposing forces.

Independent Press and Bloomfield Citizen, August 13, 1915.

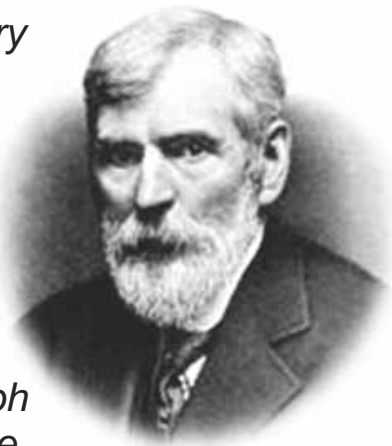
Glen Ridge fired back immediately with some of the least civil wordplay of the entire contest and insisted it was still “very much in the fight and full of confidence.” It then pronounced its eighteenth name and asked for Metuchen’s nineteenth.

This volleying of names continued into the fall of 1915, nearly two years after it had initially begun. On November 5, 1915, Glen Ridge declared that Metuchen was “Hugging the Beam” and had rounded out its first score of nominations in the Brainiest Borough contest, and it put forth its twentieth as well. The following pages feature the twenty candidates that Metuchen presented to Glen Ridge.

The November 1915 entry is the last one found for the battle in the *Independent Press and Bloomfield Citizen*, and as mentioned in the introduction, there are no extant copies of the *Metuchen Recorder* which could provide additional details. There may have been an official declaration of victory or defeat, but that has not been located. However, Metuchen remains to this day the Brainy Borough, with its post office and postal mark, and in the years following this “battle” the nickname was widely used in the press to describe Metuchen, but not Glen Ridge. So, perhaps Metuchen decided it was best, with all of the real and very brutal combat at the time, to declare victory quietly and assume the title graciously.

Henry Mills Alden

The first name put forth by Metuchen was Henry Mills Alden (1836-1919). A long-time resident and vestryman at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Alden served as the managing editor of Harper's Weekly for 50 years and was often referred to as the "Dean of American Magazine Writers." It was through him that figures such as Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, Helen Keller, Ogden Nash, and Joseph Pulitzer visited Metuchen. Others made a more permanent connection to the borough as well; Poet Joyce Kilmer married Alden's stepdaughter, and the writer Mary Wilkins met and married Dr. Freeman here.



By reason of learning, character and prominence, as well as by years of life and length of residence in Metuchen, we head our list with the name of Henry M. Alden. The veteran editor of "Harper's Magazine" has filled that conspicuous position for many years with great distinction during which long period he has not only been the friend and associate of the leaders of American literature, but as the author of much that made "Harper's" dear to the lives of thinking readers and by his other literary works, has contributed largely to the mental and spiritual growth of his time.

To his discovery and introduction through "Harper's Magazine," many writers of talent (including the lady* mentioned by the "Independent Press") owe their first opportunity and continued encouragement in winning their laurels.

Mr. Alden selected Metuchen for his home nearly two score years ago, since which time his elevating influence and genial personality has been a valued asset in the community. Now nearing four score years of useful life, his public career is honored by all and enhanced to us by civic pride and personal [e]steem.

Independent Press, March 20, 1914.

* "the lady" refers to Mary Wilkins Freeman, see pages 5 and 15.

Charles Volkmar

The second name given by Metuchen was that of ceramic artist Charles Volkmar (1841–1914). The 1910 Census lists him as living on “Bound Brook Road” (currently New Durham Road) and Volkmar Place,



where his house and the kilns were located. Pictured at left are five Volkmar tiles recently donated to the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society.



Among those whose residences here has established our title of ‘Brainy Borough,’ some have passed beyond and to them we will not refer in this connection with the one exception whom I now name second in our list. Last month we published the obituary of Charles Volkmar, who for many years conducted the Volkmar Potteries here, which attracted connoisseurs of ceramic art from afar. Visited by Metuchen citizens with pride, their delighted guests were permitted to see the famous Volkmar vases in the making.

Mr. Volkmar was born in Baltimore in 1841 and was the son of a famous German portrait painter. He lived abroad for many years, studying in Paris, where he was a friend of Millet and other great artists of that period. Returning to America, he was the first to introduce painting under glaze on tiles and in this work became famous. He was a member of all the ceramic societies and was recognized as the greatest ceramic artist. The Volkmar green especially is known to all lovers of the art, and Volkmar vases are highly prized in homes of wealth and culture all over the land where Metuchen thus became known as their birthplace. One of his sons, who inherits his father’s talent and was associated with him here, recently established the Durant Potteries at Bedford, N.Y.

Independent Press, April 3, 1914.

F. Marmaduke Potter

*Metuchen's third candidate was minister and educator Francis Marmaduke Potter (1888–1952). A biographical novel by his daughter, June Potter Durkee, *Travels of An American Girl*, chronicles the family's years living abroad. According to telephone directories, they lived at 129 Hillside Avenue in 1930.*



To show that we are not limited to our older citizens in sustaining Metuchen's reputation as the Brainy Borough, we name next on our list one of our youngest distinguished fellow-townsmen, F. Marmaduke Potter.

Twenty-six years of age last month, this young man has recently been chosen Principal of Voorhees College, at Vellore, India, an institution having over one thousand students.

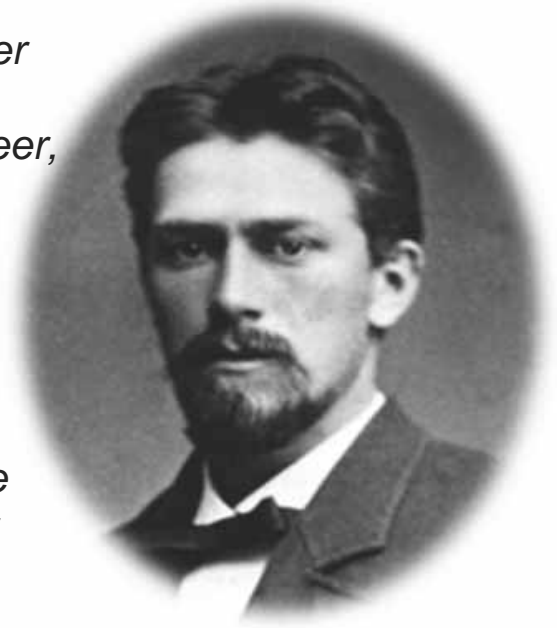
The son of Dr. and Mrs. E. I. Potter, he secured his preliminary education in Metuchen Public School, then Rutgers College at New Brunswick, where he got his B.A. degree, then took the M.A. degree at Columbia University, and won a Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford, England, where he spent three years with high honors.

The Rhodes Scholarship was awarded him by examination before judges at Princeton, where his record at Rutgers showed first honors in scholarship, music, and athletics. His moral character and social leadership were considered in awarding the Rhodes Scholarship. Metuchen friends have especially enjoyed his genius with the violin, on which he is an accomplished performer. Mr. Potter also graduated from the Rutgers Theological Seminary and was ordained to the ministry of the Reformed Church. His future bids fair to reflect still more credit on the Brainy Borough.

Independent Press, April 17, 1914.

Gustav Lindenthal

For Metuchen's fourth, the Recorder put aside the cultural arts and education and presented an engineer, Gustav Lindenthal (1850-1935). The International Bridge Conference annually awards a "Gustav Lindenthal Medal" for bridge engineering in his honor. Pictured on the following page is a 1917 photograph of the Hell Gate Bridge over New York's East River (on file at the Library of Congress).



We now present the name of one of our most distinguished citizens, who has not climbed the Andes Mountains in an automobile, but who has reached the summit of fame in his profession — Gustav Lindenthal — who resides with his wife and daughter at “The Lindens,” which is one of Metuchen’s beautiful homes. He was born in Austria in 1850, studied at colleges at Brunn and Vienna from 1864 to 1870, and was employed in surveys and construction of railroads and bridges in Austria and Switzerland until 1874, when he came to America.

From 1874 to 1877 he was engineer at Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, thereafter consulting engineer in construction of Western railroads with main office at Pittsburgh until he moved to New York City in 1892.

He is originator, chief engineer and architect of a proposed bridge over the North River with a single span of 3,100 feet.

He was Commissioner of Bridges for the City of New York in 1902 and 1903, during which time he completed the construction of the Williamsburg Bridge and made the

plans for the Blackwell's Island and Manhattan bridges.

He was a member of a board of six consulting engineers who planned the tunnels and terminals of the Pennsylvania Railroad, under the North and East Rivers and in New York City. He is now building the Hell Gate Bridge for the New York Connecting Railroad, which, when completed, will be the boldest and longest steel bridge in the world.

He is president of the North River Bridge Co., member of the British Institute of Civil Engineers, Canadian Society of Civil Engineers, and of Verein Deutscher Maschinen Ingenieure in Berlin. He is also a notable contributor of papers and essays on engineering subjects to scientific journals and engineering societies.

Independent Press, May 1, 1914.



Walter Williams

For the fifth nomination from Metuchen, the Recorder chose a mind for business, Walter Williams (1867-1947). The photograph of Mr. Williams at right is courtesy of his family member, Pat Dana Paul. On the following page is the Williams' gracious estate, Roselawn, which sat on Park Avenue. He retired from Woolworths in 1932.



We now point with pride to Walter Williams as a high type of successful merchant who has achieved prominence in commercial channels. Beginning life as a New Jersey boy, born on a farm, possessing character, energy and ambition, he soon displayed marked ability to command advancement by inherent merit and industry. Associated with Woolworth when that genius was starting on his remarkable career, Mr. Williams soon proved himself one of the most valuable aids in the development of the chain of stores which now stretches across this country and also with branch establishments in Europe, equally successful.

Being conspicuously identified with the buying end of the business, it is largely through the keen judgment of Mr. Williams in recognizing what lines of merchandise would be most desirable for the patrons of their many stores and in finding the best sources of supplies, that public confidence and patronage has come to the enterprise in such a large measure. In connection

with his work he makes frequent trips to Europe in search of factories capable of furnishing the quantity and quality of products at a price which permits the enjoyment in American families of many articles of utility and beauty, and previously obtainable, excepting at much more cost than the famous five and ten cent standard of the Woolworth stores.

In building an organization capable of running so enormous a business, Mr. Williams has been an important factor and is a director and large stockholder of the company.

Interested in other commercial enterprises also, he still finds time to enjoy the social life of Metuchen, where his beautiful country mansion, "Roselawn," is the centre of hospitality. He, with his charming wife and daughter are delightful hosts and their residence here adds much to the attractions of the Brainy Borough.

Independent Press, May 29, 1914.



S. S. Carvalho

Metuchen's sixth candidate was newspaperman Solomon Solis Carvalho (1856-1942). He and his wife, Helen, were noted collectors of fine Chinese Porcelain. His daughter, Sarah, married the son of the fifteenth candidate, William Crehore.



When Hearst came to New York with a barrel of money to spend in the newspaper business, he sought the services of those who furnished the brains for big dailies already successful in Manhattan.

For many years the New York "World" had been building the Pulitzer fortune, and its business manager was Mr. S.S. Carvalho, so even the big salary paid him by the "World" was no barrier to Hearst's determination to get the best talent known for his own project, and accordingly Mr. Carvalho became the business manager of the New York "Journal."

The phenomenal growth of the circulation and advertising patronage of the "Journal" and "American" was the outcome of the combined shrewdness of the organization acquired by Hearst, but probably no department was so important as that in charge of Carvalho. As newspapers were bought or started in other cities from the profits of their New York enterprise, Mr. Carvalho became the general manager of a larger business, which now includes a chain of daily papers extending across the continent, and a number of magazines and other publications.

Mr. Carvalho is reputed to receive a salary equal to that of the President of the United States, and by the same sagacity which makes him so valuable to Hearst, his personal investments have made him a very wealthy man—the reward of the commercial brand of brains.

About fifteen years ago, Mr. Carvalho bought a fine old place in Metuchen which he named Red Top, and as the years have passed, he increased his real estate until he now owns several hundred acres here. With a fine residence and full equipment of other buildings adjoining the original homestead, he also now owns two other residences on the opposite side of Plainfield Ave. and controls that thoroughfare for possibly half a mile.

Mrs. Carvalho was a brilliant newspaper writer before her marriage and gave up a position of prominence in journalism as "Nell Nelson" to become the wife of the subject of the review.

Independent Press, June 19, 1914.

Mary Wilkins Freeman

Mary Eleanor Wilkins Freeman (1852-1930) was a nationally renowned and prolific author who famously socialized with Mark Twain and other literati of her day. She moved to Metuchen in 1902 upon her marriage to Dr. Charles Freeman, whom she had met here in 1895 while visiting Henry Mills Alden.



Residence of Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, Metuchen, N. J.



*The couple first lived at 207 Lake Avenue (see above), an older house which was extensively renovated for them. They were married in the front parlor on New Year's Day, 1902. They later built and resided at 159 Lake Avenue (this house was destroyed by fire). Her 1905 book, *The Debtor*, caused a local scandal when it was revealed to have been based on Metuchen's social life.*

*According to her obituary in *The New York Times*, she worked for many years during her youth as secretary to Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. and, along with Edith Wharton, was one of the first two women elected to the National Institute of Arts & Sciences in 1926. She was also elected to the American Academy of Letters, whose bronze doors in New York City still carry the inscription "Dedicated to the Memory of Mary E. Wilkins Freeman and the Women Writers of America."*

continued on following page

When the genial editor of *The Metuchen Recorder* composed his latest nominating speech in the brainiest borough controversy, he must have had banging on his sanctum wall either the motto “brevity is the soul of wit” or “short but sweet.” For his effort added only these original remarks to the literature of said controversy:

“Our breezy contemporary, *The Independent Press*, came forward again last week with another candidate to represent their ambitious claim as a rival borough of brains” in the following words {Here was inserted our article on Mr. Fearons}.

Then *The Recorder* continued, “Dear Glen Ridge, it has taken so much of our valuable space to reproduce the life story of Mr. Fearons [Glen Ridge’s last candidate] that we’re glad to take this opportunity to add to our list one of our many brainy citizens who is so well known even in Glen Ridge that we only have to publish the name: **Mary Wilkins Freeman**.”

Independent Press, July 10, 1914.



Wilkins Freeman, seated in the foreground, at Mark Twain’s 70th birthday celebration at Delmonico’s in New York City in 1905. Seated to her right is Henry Mills Alden.

William D. Stevens

William Dodge Stevens (1870-1942) was known for his detailed renderings of the upper class and illustrations such as the war bond poster below. He was born in Tidioute, Pennsylvania and studied at the Art Institute of Chicago from 1889 to 1892.

Upon leaving the West, Mr. Stevens went abroad where he studied art, and upon returning to his native land, he came to New York, where he and his Brother, also an artist of some repute, established a studio. This done, he looked about for some place suitable for residence not far from his place of business and finding that Metuchen filled the bill as well as any town its size and location, he and his brother took up their residence here, thereby adding another type of brains to Metuchen's select collection.

Mr. Stevens has done a very great amount of illustrating for all of the leading periodicals of the day and has contributed with regularity to the "Youth's Companion" for the past fifteen years. He is a member of the Player's Club of New York City and as he is still a young man will, in all probability, live to reflect still more honor on his home town.

Mr. Stevens was among those mentioned in the list of celebrities from Metuchen in the 1914 edition of "Who's Who," recently published, thereby establishing him as among the country's notable men.

Independent Press, July 24, 1914.



Reverend J.G. Mason

Metuchen's ninth nomination was the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen, James Gilbert Mason (1841-1937). According to his obituary, he was 96 and the borough's oldest resident at the time of death. He had been a close friend of Thomas Edison's and had run for the offices of President, Governor, and Senator on the Prohibition Ticket.



If length of residence in the Brainy Borough suffices to command the respect of our contemporary, we may well state at the beginning that Dr. Mason has lived in Metuchen for nearly forty years.

Born in Jonesboro, Tenn., he entered the sophomore class of Williams College when but seventeen years of age, was prominent in literary and debating societies and president of Mills Theological Society. Graduated in 1863 as bachelor of arts and in 1866 took his M.A. degree. He also graduated in 1866 from Union Theological Seminary, New York City, and was ordained in the Presbyterian ministry the same year. After several pastorates, including the Church at his home town in Tennessee and North Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C., he spent a year in Oriental travel, and after declining several calls to city churches, he accepted the pastorate of the Presbyterian Church of Metuchen in 1877 and still successfully occupies that position. Before entering the ministry, he was for a short time a principal of the high school at Warren, Pa. and also was with Sherman to Atlanta in U.S. Sanitary Commission in 1864.

Dr. Mason, as an author, has written for Church publications and also a history of Metuchen. He has been a commissioner to General Assembly six times and fraternal delegate to General Synod of Reformed Church. In 1884 he received his D.D. from Maryville College of Tennessee. In addition to his services to the Presbyterian Church, he has exerted an influence in the general welfare of his town, county and state, participating freely in public life and always displaying the courage to defend his convictions forcefully.

In 1912 he was nominated for the office of state senator, and in 1913 was the candidate of the Prohibition Party for governor of New Jersey. During his campaign he spoke in nearly one hundred towns in different sections all over the state with eloquence and vigor remarkable for his years.

Independent Press, August 7, 1914.

A. Clark Hunt

Dr. Alonzo Clark Hunt (1858-1937) graduated from Princeton in 1878 and Columbia in 1881, and lived for most of his life at 625 Middlesex Avenue, near the intersection with Lake Avenue (see property noted as E.M. Hunt on the 1876 map). He died in a gun accident at his summer home in Mantoloking.



And now to the pleasant business of this friendly debate: Here's to the health of A. Clark Hunt, M.D., who for so many years, we forebear to count them, has contributed to the health of others all over New Jersey by his efficient services in connection with the State Board of Health. This important and in many respects omnipotent adjunct of the administration of our commonwealth, owes its existence in very large measure to the late Dr. Ezra Hunt, father of the subject of this sketch, who was virtually the founder of the State Board of Health in New Jersey.

While benefitting greatly by the special preparation for his lifework resulting from heredity, and enthusiasm absorbed in home environment during youth, and later in the study of medicine, yet Dr. Hunt demonstrated his independent ability in the private practice of medicine for some years before accepting a position on the State Board of Health.

Born in Metuchen, graduating from Princeton, and then from the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York [now Columbia], and pursuing further studies abroad, Dr. Hunt located in the practice of medicine at Metuchen, from which work he was appointed to a position with the State Board.

For a good many years he has been assistant secretary of the State Board, and also chief of the division of medicine and sanitary inspection, which has made necessary travel all over the state and resulted in personal acquaintance with members of the medical fraternity and local boards of health in every section of New Jersey. He has also represented the state as delegate to other states and to national conferences of health and sanitary experts.

His contributions to the upbuilding of the health department in New Jersey have been manifold, and by his recognized ability in his profession he has shown Metuchen's right to the title of Brainy Borough wherever he has represented us.

Independent Press, August 21, 1914.

George S. Silzer

Although already considered to be a worthy candidate in 1914, George Sebastian Silzer (1870-1940) became even more prominent after the contest. He was elected and served as Governor of New Jersey from 1923 to 1926, then was chairman of the New York Port Authority from 1926 to 1928. His Metuchen home is still extant on Graham Avenue, and he is also remembered for his active role in St. Luke's Episcopal Church and the formation of the Metuchen Golf & Country Club.



The "Recorder" thus far has prided itself on the fact that while Glen Ridge has mentioned three editors and two captains of industry, it has not once been guilty of repetition even as to vocation.

We there, sticking to our principle, name another type of brains heretofore omitted by both sides and take great pleasure in presenting the Hon. George S. Silzer.

For many years, Mr. Silzer has lived in the Brainy Borough and has long been recognized as one of the brightest and ablest lawyers in this part of New Jersey. He has always been thoroughly interested in and loyal in his support of any of the affairs of his home town and certainly deserved a place of importance in Metuchen's Hall of Fame.

Born in New Brunswick, April 14th, 1870, he graduated from the High School there in 1888 as valedictorian of his class. Upon finishing his high school course he entered the Columbia Law School, and having completed the course there, he was admitted to the bar in 1892.

He was admitted as Counsellor in 1899 and practiced law in New Brunswick while he resided in Metuchen. While in New Brunswick he served on the Board of Examiners for admission to the bar, and is secretary of the association there.

Mr. Silzer has served on the New Brunswick Board of Aldermen as a member of the Third Ward, and was chairman of the Democratic County Committee. In 1906 he was unanimously nominated for State Senator by his party and successfully conducted his campaign on the principle of anti-bribery. He was re-nominated without opposition in 1909 and was reelected. He was made prosecutor in March, 1912, in which capacity he has served until very recently when he was named by Governor Fielder to succeed Justice Charles T. Black, as Circuit Court Judge.

Judge Silzer has always been a prominent figure in state and county as well as local politics, and has done much to earn for Metuchen the proud title she bears.

Independent Press, September 7, 1914.



Campaign ephemera & photographs from the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society archives, including Silzer and his family on the veranda of his home, and his home at 79 Graham Avenue.

“The McCulloughs”

Illustrator William A. and Author Annie Willis McCullough lived on Essex Avenue according to 1910 census records, and were aged 52 and 47, respectively, at the time. In 1921 they are listed in directories as residing at 304 Main Street. On the following page is an illustration drawn by William to accompany one of Annie’s poems, “An Order for the Grocer.”

Not far from the centre of town is a cozy little house that is the Mecca for many young pilgrims. Over that threshold pass many childish feet, for here the children love to come, and here children are royal guests, always sure of a hearty welcome.

In this house dwell two who are so closely associated in life and their work that it would be difficult to include one without bringing in the other. These two, who are one, are William A. McCullough, child artist, and his wife, Annie Willis McCullough, writer of children’s stories and verses.

Modest to the point of shyness, Mr. McCullough declares there is little to tell about his art life, but those who know of his work do not agree with him. He is a Western man, born in Wisconsin, and migrating to Chicago while yet a young man, later proceeding to New York.

Mr. McCullough’s great specialty is children. He is the portrayer and illustrator of childhood... In paintings of children and as an illustrator of child-life, he excels. He has painted many beautiful pictures that have the unusual composition of landscape and children combined. These have been sold all over the country. His pictures have been exhibited both East and West, and some have been published as prints in black-and-white or in color.

In the line of illustration he has done many books for children and adults, and he has worked for all the leading juvenile magazines, also “Harper’s,” “Metropolitan,” “Woman’s Home Companion,” “Youth’s Companion,” and other periodicals.

Although Mr. McCullough has not given portrait work much attention, he has done some work along that line. His sketch of Mrs. Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, the novelist, made at the time of the New York "Herald's" Anglo-American contest between novelists, and published in the "Herald" with her prize-winning novel, "The Shoulders of Atlas," was declared by many of her friends to be the best likeness of her ever published.

Mr. McCullough's other specialty is in contrast to children. He is an illustrator of wild animals, and many such sketches have appeared. He has also done many clever cartoons.

Mrs. McCullough's specialty is children's verses, of which she has had enough published to fill several volumes. Poetry not being "commercially profitable" as the publishers in this utilitarian age declare, they have not appeared in book form, but Mrs. McCullough has had a little book of children's stories, also a book of children's songs issued. Many scattered poems of child-life have been set to music, appearing in school song books, and sheet music form. Any who have read her tripping verse, so full of the real play spirit, could not fail to understand why they find a place on the pages of the ever-loved "St. Nicholas," "Youth's Companion," and all the leading juvenile periodicals. It is interesting to know that Mrs. McCullough got into writing for children through marrying an artist of child life, her first published child-verse appearing in "St. Nicholas" within the first year after her marriage.

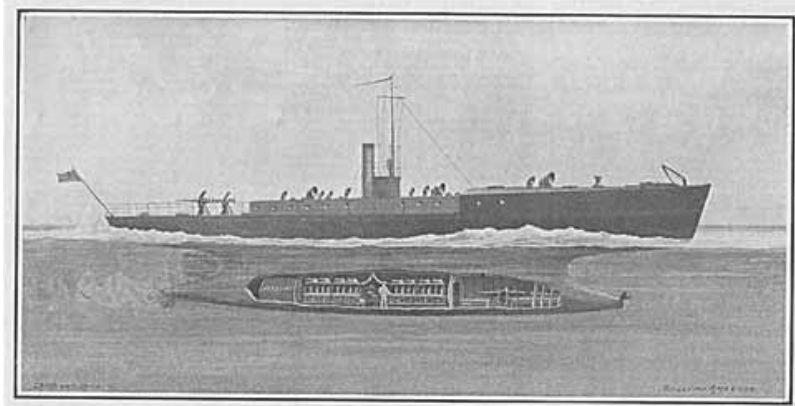


AN ORDER FOR THE GROCER.
By Annie Willis McCullough.

Independent Press, October 2, 1914.

C. McKnight Smith

Illustrator Charles McKnight Smith is listed in the 1910 census as living with his wife, Jessie, on Highland Avenue. At right is an illustration that appeared in Scientific American.



We also have been delayed in submitting our next celebrity by reason of the strenuous life, which chases the weekly days of publication so rapidly that last week found too much typesetting in the last hours as we followed the Glen Ridge exchange by deferring til now, paying tribute to another of our talented citizens, Charles McKnight Smith.

Born in Perth Amboy, he married in Metuchen and has been a resident of the borough most of the years since that important event. In the eighties he connected himself with "The Daily Graphic," an illustrated afternoon newspaper, where he remained until that publication suspended, when he devoted his time to study and work in the field of art, and especially to naval and Marine work. Here his technical knowledge of all classes of vessels advanced him steadily, until his work became well known among the daily, weekly, and monthly periodicals. In the fall of 1890 Mr. Smith compiled and illustrated in colors "Drift from the Sea of Life," a volume of sea verses and texts, which proved to be one of the successful books of the holiday season. After this his time was particularly devoted to the illustrating and picturing of the ships that have now placed the United States among the first navy powers of the world.

During the Spanish American war, Mr. Smith's pictures of the naval engagements were exceptionally fine to the situations, and few of the readers of the daily and afternoon papers failed one time or another to see his work the best of which was published in the pictorial Saturday supplements. Among other pictures which he has executed are the entire series of the international yacht races for the "America Cup," numerous steam and sailing yachts. In the mercantile marine, Mr. Smith's work is fully represented by pictures of numerous ships of the International Navigation Co., Cunard, White Star, Fabre, French Transatlantique and many of the coastwise stream lines, as well as several of the large ocean tugs. In the reproduction of both color and black and white, his work is generally known through the "Scientific American," with which he has been connected for the past twenty years.

The original painting of the Japanese battleship Mikasa, one of his well-known pictures, painted for that publication, was exhibited at the St. Louis Exposition in 1905.

Many of his naval pictures have been copied and republished in foreign periodicals, such as the "Sphere," "Black and White," "The Illustrated London News," and many others. Reproductions of Mr. Smith's work may be seen in the American Book Company's text books, now in use in our public schools. At present Mr. Smith is engaged on a large oil painting for the Pittsburg Steamship Company, illustrating their fleet of ninety-three vessels. This picture, when completed, will be one of the exhibits of the United States Steel Corporation at the San Francisco exposition next year.

To technical, naval, engineering, and shipping interests the minuteness of detail and faithful depicting of intricate mechanisms made his efforts fully appreciated as well as valuable to the interests of those immediately concerned.

Independent Press, November 6, 1914.

William Dinwiddie

The 1910 census includes the multi-talented William Dinwiddie (1867-1934) as living on New Durham Avenue with his large, extended family and household staff. At right is Mr. Dinwiddie in the Philippines in 1899. On page 29 is a photograph taken by Dinwiddie of Teddy Roosevelt and the Rough Riders.



It is given to many men to achieve in one line but the story of William Dinwiddie, one of Metuchen's best arguments in favor of its right to be called "The Brainy Borough" is told, it is a story of achievement in many lines. And each achievement has been one in which brains count.

Mr. Dinwiddie is author, statesman, artist, efficiency expert, ethnologist, and scientific farmer.

Perhaps it is as a war correspondent that Mr. Dinwiddie is best known. The breaking out of the Spanish American War saw him off for Cuba as the representative of the New York "Herald" and "Harper's Weekly." He was with Col. Roosevelt at San Juan Hill and saw all the important engagements on the island, and later he was with the American troops in the Philippines. His descriptions of these battles made his name a byword with American newspaper readers.

Mr. Dinwiddie's ability as a war correspondent made his services in demand at the outbreak of the Boer war, and he went to South Africa to follow the British troops again as the representative of the New York "Herald" and "Harpers Weekly." The Russo-Japanese war saw Mr. Dinwiddie in the field once more. As the representative of the New York "World" and "Leslie's Weekly" he was one of the first correspondents to go out with the Japanese army. He followed General Kuroki's army all through Manchuria and his stories and photographs in American and English newspapers and magazines attracted the greatest attention.

Aside from his stories of the wars – and some of these, notably his description of the death of General Lawton in the Philippines, and the fight at Bloody Angle in Cuba, are regarded as classics – Mr. Dinwiddie has written books on the opportunities of Puerto Rico and Japan. His “Puerto Rico and Its Possibilities,” for which he was especially commissioned by the Harpers, is looked upon as the standard work on the subject. Mr. Dinwiddie has been the Sunday Editor of the New York “Herald,” an associated editor of the New York “Herald,” and has held important desks on other New York papers. He was selected by William H. Taft, when Governor-General of the Philippines, to be the editor of the Manila “Cable News.”

President Roosevelt selected Mr. Dinwiddie for one of the provincial governors of the Philippines during the days of his reconstruction. He was in charge of the province of Lopanto-Bontoc and brought about a stable government there, where there had been absolute chaos.

As an artist Mr. Dinwiddie’s photographs have attracted the attention of the world. They have been hung in many important exhibitions. He was retained by the Baltimore and Ohio to take a set of views along the line which won his wide praise. At that time he made a photograph which was for years the largest photographic negative ever made. His war pictures were reproduced in almost every country in Europe.

As a business man and efficiency expert, Mr. Dinwiddie has been likewise notable. Most of the nation’s captains of industry have sought his aid and advice at one time or another, and he has played an important part in many big business campaigns.

Working under the direction of the Bureau of American Ethnology and the Smithsonian Institute, Mr. Dinwiddie did extensive research work in the southwestern part of the United States and in Mexico. He also made extensive studies in this

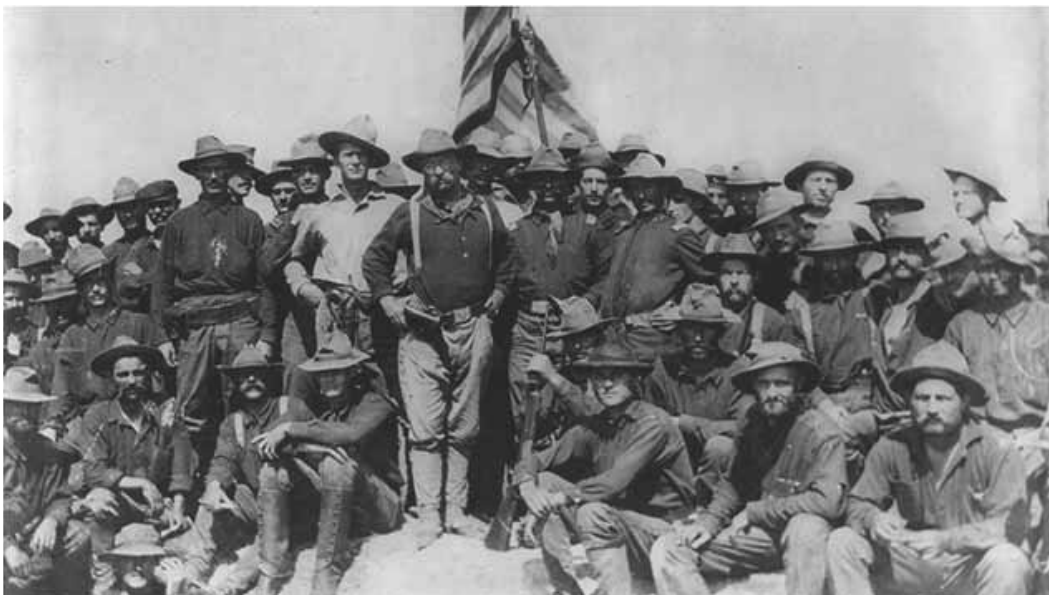
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science along the shores of Chesapeake Bay. It was his writings on this subject which attracted newspaper attention to him. He has been regarded as one of the country's foremost writers on scientific topics done in popular style.

Here in Metuchen Mr. Dinwiddie – or the Colonel as he is better known – is famous principally for “Alinsawac.” It is his home place. “Alinsawac” is a word in one of the Philippine jargons for “The Home of the Wild Man,” but what has been already told of the owner of the Metuchen Alinsawac is sufficient to show it is a misnomer. Mr. Dinwiddie's place is one of those where two blades of grass constantly grow where there was but one before. He is a scientific and intensive farmer. His monster incubator, his countless flocks of white leghorns, his great swarms of bees, his orchards, cornfields, melons – everything he has attempted to grow has brought hordes of visitors to Metuchen from every direction.

His latest achievement is as a mushroom grower. His beds are among the largest in the world and the excellence of the product has made them very much in demand. As in all other things, Mr. Dinwiddie has gone to growing mushrooms on a scientific basis and his plant is recognized as the last word in the industry.

Independent Press, December 4, 1914.



William W. Crehore

The 1910 census includes engineer William W. Crehore (1864-1918) living on New Brunswick Avenue with his wife Ann, five daughters, and four sons. The sketch shown on the following page is from his chapter on Modern High Buildings in DuBois' The Stresses in Framed Structures.

The ease with which we sustain our title of the Brainy Borough against the challenge of Glen Ridge has never been more convincingly shown than by present response, when we write of our distinguished fellow citizen, William W. Crehore.

William W. Crehore, civil engineer, was born in Cleveland, O, on February 3, 1864, and graduated from Yale University, the Academical Department in 1886, the Sheffield Scientific School in 1888. Before entering college he had had a long and thorough training in the practice of civil engineering with his father, the late John D. Crehore of Cleveland, a civil engineer of the old school, doing a general practice, and for many years a member of the local Board of Health.

After graduating from Yale, he was for two years principal of the High School of Norfolk, Va. being employed during vacations by the Pennsylvania Railroad as an inspector of erection of bridges and structures, subsequently he was in the employ of the Philadelphia Bridge Works at Pottstown, Pa., the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company at Baltimore, and the Old Wallis Iron Works in Jersey City, all of which companies did a large and varied business in heavy construction. In the year 1894 he became a corporate member of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

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In the year 1893 he opened an office in New York City and ever since that time has maintained a private practice as consulting engineer on construction: designing and supervising the construction of factory buildings, power houses, hotels, office buildings, loft buildings, ...sheds, warehouses, hospitals, bridges, etc. on more than forty different sites on Manhattan Island alone and in many other cities throughout the country.

During the last eighteen years he has been a contributor to engineering and architectural journals; was author of the chapter on Modern High Buildings in DuBois' *The Stresses in Framed Structures*; also of chapters on Theoretical Consideration of Design in Foster's *Wooden Trestle Bridges*: contributed to the *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers*; was author of "Protection Brood," published in 1912, and of articles on economic subjects for publication in magazines. During the last ten years he has frequently served as engineering expert in litigation and arbitration cases, both in an advisory capacity and as a witness.

Independent Press, January 8, 1915.

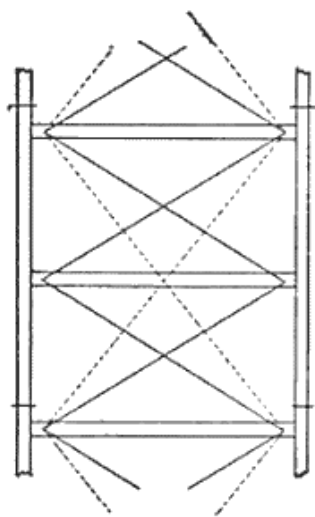


Fig. 15.—Wind Bracing by means of Rods.

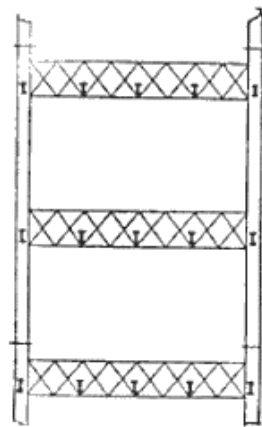


Fig. 16.—Wind Bracing by means of Lattice Girders.

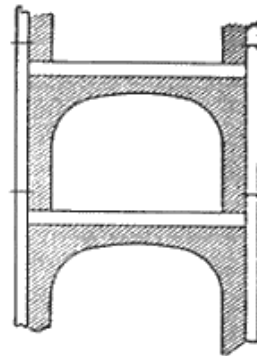


Fig. 17.—Wind Bracing by means of Portals.

Charles S. Edgar

Clay magnate Charles Smith Edgar (1848-1917) passed away at his Kaolin works in Georgia, but is buried in Hillside Cemetery. The office building at 10 Station Place was the local headquarters of Edgar Clays. He donated the land for the current Edgar School. There is even a town in Florida named Edgar after the family and their business.

Among the pioneers of the present great clay business of this vicinity, one of the ablest and certainly the most successful, is one who in every way measures up to the highest standards of scientific and commercial achievement in his line, and is also honored by his fellow townsmen for his personal qualities and good citizenship. We refer to Charles S. Edgar.

Descending from a noble old Scotch family of great antiquity and marked distinction, whose records may be consulted in the very noteworthy English work "Genealogical Collections concerning the Scottish House of Edgar," with a memoir of James Edgar, private secretary of the Chevalier St George; the New Jersey lines springs from the Edgars of Keithock, Forfarshire, Scotland, an estate the ultimate proprietorship of which was transferred to David Edgar, ancestor of the present Edgars of New Jersey.

Charles Smith Edgar, son of Albert Edgar, was born on the old Tappan homestead at Bonhamtown, Raritan Township, Middlesex County, N.J., September 22, 1848. Reared on his father's farm, he became at an early age attracted by the superior quality of the clay on that property and vicinity, and as the resulting tests demonstrated its availability for terra cotta and other purposes, he entered into copartnerships with his brothers for putting it on the market.

This association continued until 1884, since which time Mr. Edgar has continued his clay interests in the vicinity of Metuchen, under his personal name. From early life, during his travels throughout the states, he devoted a portion of his time to prospecting. Hearing on one occasion, while on a business visit to Boston, a somewhat circumstantial account of the existence of fine

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clay deposits in Florida, which had never been developed and of which, indeed, all exact traces had been lost by negligence, he made several prospecting tours through that state, finally in 1890 discovering the bed in Putnam County, at a place now called Edgar in his honor.

This led to the production on a large scale by Mr. Edgar and afterwards by others of the remarkably fine grade of potter's clay, known as "Florida Clay," which in the past nineteen years has been universally used, entering largely into the manufacture of vitrified tiles and sanitary Rockwood, Delaware, fine China, and other delicate wares.

The Edgar Plastic Kaolin Company, organized by Mr. Edgar, of which he is the head, owns some 2,000 acres of Florida clay lands and has an annual producing capacity of 18,000 tons. Recently he has been instrumental in organizing and establishing the new firm of Edgar Brothers, now engaged in mining clay in Milltown, N.J. and in putting up Kaolin works at McIntyre, Ga. In this firm his associates are M.A. Edgar, I.O. Edgar and David R. Edgar.

The improved machinery used in the various mines and works represents to a large extent the personal inventions or ideals of Mr. Edgar. He resides in Metuchen with a winter home in Florida. Mr. Edgar is a genial, kindly man, very much respected in the community and has always been a liberal contributor to all worthy causes. His recent offer of a five-acre tract of land to the Metuchen Board of Education, on which to erect a new school, is only one of his many generous deeds.

Independent Press, March 12, 1915.



10 Station Place and Edgar School.

LEWIS Nixon

Naval architect and shipbuilder Lewis Nixon (1861–1940) worked in his field for fifty years and was considered a national authority on shipyard management. He and his wife, Sally, also kept an apartment in New York City, in the McKim, Mead & White designed building at 998 Fifth Avenue, the first super-luxury apartment house and home to Vanderbilts and Guggenheims. An interesting side note is that his grandson, Lewis Nixon III, was featured prominently in the miniseries Band of Brothers about the Second World War.



Metuchen has among her brainy citizens another man of world-wide fame, Lewis Nixon. Born at Leesburg, Va., he received his early education there, graduated from the United States Naval Academy at the head of his class, and was sent to the Royal Naval College at Greenwich, Eng., by the Navy Department.

In 1884 he was transferred to the construction corps of the Navy. In 1890 he designed the battleships Oregon, Indiana and Massachusetts, and then resigned from the Navy to become superintending constructor of Cramp's Shipyard at Philadelphia.

In 1895 he resigned and started the Crescent shipyard at Elizabeth, N.J. on his own account, where he built one hundred vessels in six years, among others, the submarine torpedoboat Holland, the monitor Florida, the torpedoboat O'Brien and the cruiser Chattanooga.

Mr. Nixon is president of the Standard Motor Construction Co., and proprietor of the Lewis Nixon Shipyard. He was appointed by Mayor Van Wyck of New York as president of the East River Bridge Committee, and is a trustee of the Webb's Academy and Home for shipbuilders. Mr. Nixon was

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a Tammany Hall Democrat and succeeded Richard Croker as the leader of Tammany Hall; he was also chairman of the finance committee of the Democratic National Committee in 1894; member of the New York State Commission to the St. Louis Exposition; member of the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Naval Academy in 1902, by appointment of President Roosevelt.

Mr. Nixon has been received in special audiences by the King of England, the Pope, and Emperor Nicholas of Russia.

He was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention at Buffalo in 1906 and is a member of the following clubs: Union-Democratic, Brook, Press, New York Yacht, Atlantic Yacht, Columbia Yacht, Ocean Yacht, Staten Island Metropolitan, Army and Navy (Washington), J. Rittenhouse (Philadelphia), Richmond County Country Club, and Westchester County Country Club.

Mr. Nixon is now rebuilding the powder works on the outskirts of Metuchen, employing about two hundred men in construction and when complete it will be a big addition to the industries of this section. He and his wife reside at "Uplands" which is one of Metuchen's many handsome homes.

Independent Press, May 28, 1915.



Frank O. Thompson

According to the 1920 census, fraternal organizer Frank O. Thompson (1868-1946) and his wife, Mabel, lived at 267 Woodbridge Avenue.

So now, we present a modest citizen of our little town who helps to spread our fame more particularly in fraternal lodge circles.

Born in Hightstown, N.J. some forty years ago, Frank O. Thompson moved to Metuchen in 1904 and began his career in fraternalism as a field man for the Woodmen of the World, a fraternal insurance order which is one of the best and largest in America, with a membership now rapidly approaching the million mark. When Mr. Thompson began his work as an organizer there was no membership in New Jersey, but in seven months he started seven lodges, and the national leaders of the order made him manager for New Jersey.

In 1905 he had 125 members to his credit, and now the number has grown to 6,500 men of New Jersey who belong to the Woodmen of the World and follow his lead with enthusiastic approval. At the state camp recently held in Newark, Mr. Thompson was elected Head Consul of New Jersey, a position just created by reason of the large membership attained through his efforts in this state, and he is now attending the National Convention of Woodmen at St. Paul as the delegate from New Jersey.

He has organized ninety-five camps and inaugurated uniformed ranks, which include sixteen companies, composing the 141st and 162d Regiments. Mr. Thompson being now colonel of the 141st Regiment.

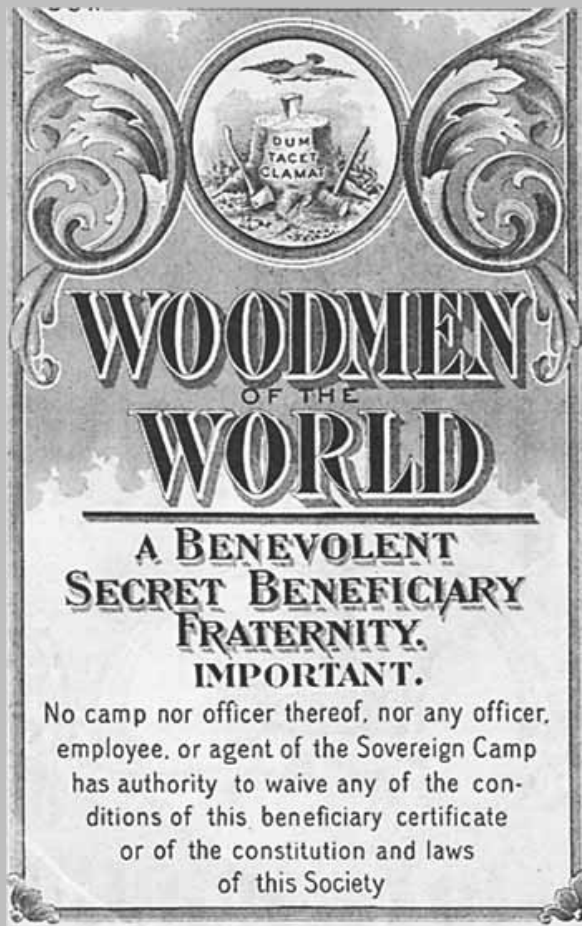
His remarkable success as a fraternal organizer is most conspicuous in the cities of Perth Amboy and Trenton — in the former he started a lodge with 200 members and it now has 2,000; in Trenton he organized a camp of only 20, and it now numbers over 2,000.

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None of the other prosperous fraternities in New Jersey have grown as fast as the Woodmen of the World. At one time Mr. Thompson initiated a class of 600 men at Trenton, and at another time, 356 in Perth Amboy. New Jersey Woodmen recently won a silk flag contest with Connecticut, Wisconsin and Minnesota for the greatest general progress. The National Convention of Woodmen of the World meets every two years, and Mr. Thompson has represented New Jersey at five successive national sessions – at Norfolk, Va.; Detroit, Mich.; Rochester, N.Y.; Jacksonville, Fla. and at the one now convening at St. Paul, Minn.

While making a success at the business of organizing and managing an insurance fraternity, he is not only influencing them to provide protection for their families in the event of their death, but his work also brings men together in fraternal living by which they help one another in good citizenship, and add to the enjoyment of life by good fellowship.

Having achieved notable prominence in fraternal circles of New Jersey, he is now attracting favorable attention among the order throughout the nation — and incidentally, Metuchen is, by his entrance in this contest, taking a long lead away from Glen Ridge.



Independent Press and Bloomfield Citizen, July 30, 1915.

Aylin Pierson

In the years following the contest, Aylin Pierson (1886-1955) continued his work as an architect and was eventually joined by John MacWilliam, with whom he designed Roosevelt Hospital in Edison in addition to nearly 70 public schools and additions.



[O]ne of the fifty-seven kinds of brains we spoke of that make Metuchen famous belong to a young man who designs and builds schools, so we next name Aylin Pierson.

This young architect was born in Metuchen only thirty years ago, the son of J. Noble Pierson, who is also an artist of ability, and is associated with his father in their profession as architects. Mr. Pierson has specialized in school building and already has designed and supervised the construction of about a score of fine schools winning in competitions with the best of that profession in New York and New Jersey.

His firm now have six public school buildings in process of erection, including the one hundred thousand dollar addition and remodeling of the Perth Amboy High School.

They are now completing a most handsome high school building at Flemington costing about fifty thousand dollars; a grammar school at North Plainfield at a cost of thirty thousand dollars; a nine-room school at Linden; and others at Dunellen, Kenilworth, Bound Brook and Woodbridge recently completed testify to the Pierson talent.

In a competition comprising some of the best-known architects of New York and New Jersey, the Pierson plans were selected solely on their merit for the new school to be built in Metuchen.

As an authority on public school building, Mr. Pierson is recognized as thoroughly understanding his specialty and we, therefore, present his name as well qualified for high place in the list of citizens which warrants calling Metuchen "The Brainiest Borough."

Independent Press and Bloomfield Citizen, September 3, 1915.

John Duffy

Metuchen's last nominee was John Duffy (1883-1974). He remained with the Lehigh Valley Railroad until his retirement as a Vice President in 1952. He is pictured here, second from the right, on a special excursion to promote trade.



John Duffy, who has resided in Metuchen the last three years, belongs to the constantly growing class of business men who found their early training and apprenticeship in the newspaper field. Mr. Duffy is now the advertising and publicity agent of the Lehigh Valley Railroad with headquarters at the general offices of the system in New York, but prior to his entrance upon this work he saw thirteen years of experience as a reporter and news editor on several important newspapers.

Mr. Duffy was born in Memphis, Tenn. He received the degree of A.B. at the Christian Brothers College there, and afterwards did post-graduate work at the Catholic University of America and the Illinois College of Law. His first newspaper work was in Memphis. Later he was with the Chicago Tribune and New York World. He served as news editor of Leslie's Weekly and as a representative of this publication made a study of progressive methods in municipal development which attracted considerable attention some of his investigations in this direction being published in pamphlet form after appearing in the weekly. He was associated with the campaign which helped to bring about the recent reform in the currency system of the United States, devoting his time to organization and educational work in New York State.

In his present position, Mr. Duffy has charge of all the advertising and other publicity of the Lehigh Valley Railroad.

He also has written a number of articles on topics of interest to railroad workers which have appeared recently in magazines devoted especially to railroad matters.

Independent Press and Bloomfield Citizen, November 5, 1915.

OTHER “BRAINS”

Although not mentioned in the contest with Glen Ridge, listed below are some additional Metuchenites mentioned in the archives of the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society for contributing to the Borough's reputation for “Brains.” Most of the names come from the “Prominent People” chapter in the *History of Metuchen* compiled in 1931 by the Metuchen High School graduating class. This history relied heavily on interviews the students conducted with long-time residents of the borough.

Edward Ardolino, Noted sculptor. Among his projects are the entrance pediments to the National Archives.

Frank Ballou, Cartoonist for magazines such as *Puck* and *Judge*.

Peter Edward Burrowes, Lecturer, essayist, and poet. Noted for his early 20th century Socialist writings and author of “The Crime of Richard Ruby” and “Revolutionary Essays in Socialist Faith and Fancy.”

Captain Charles B. Carman, Architect and engineer. Known for his work at Raritan Arsenal.

John Ciardi, Award-winning writer and poet.

William Coleman, Writer associated with the agricultural magazine “The Country Gentleman.”

Charles L. Corbin, Partner in the Jersey City law firm of Collins & Corbin, specializing in railroad taxation.

René Coudert, International Lawyer.

Anthony DiLorenzo, Sculptor and ornamentalist.

Frank F. Dole, Noted dog fancier and kennel editor of the *New York Tribune*.

Clement W. Fairweather, Architect and president of the

American Institute of Architects (AIA) – New Jersey from 1925 to 1926. Designed Metuchen’s Reformed Church and the former Borough Hall.

Manning Freeman, Democratic “Boss” of Middlesex County.

Frank Gallagher, Journalist for the *Brooklyn Citizen* and *Brooklyn Eagle*. Served as State Senator for King’s County New York.

Abel Hansen, Ceramic & porcelain engineer. Served as president of the New Jersey Clay Workers’ Association.

Thomas L. Hanson, Secretary to New Jersey Governor Larson.

Charles F. Heartman, Collector and dealer in rare books.

Douglas Hicks, County Prosecutor.

Dr. Theodore Whitfield Hunt, Professor and physician.

Joyce Kilmer, Poet, remembered most for his poem, “Trees” (did not live in Metuchen, but was married in St. Luke’s to Henry Mills Alden’s step-daughter).

Jerome Lemelson, Prolific inventor.

Chester Lord, Managing editor of the *New York Sun* for over 30 years.

Roy H. Minton, Ceramics engineer and author on the use of materials and kilns.

Dr. C.C. Mook, Associate Director of Vertebrate Paleontology at the Museum of Natural History.

F.M.P. Pearse, Assistant United States attorney of Newark and secretary to Governor Silzer.

J.K. Powell, Real estate agent and president of N.J. Realtor’s Association.

Charles A. Prickett, Editor of the *Metuchen Recorder* and highly involved with the battle with Glen Ridge over the title “Brainy Borough.”

Mr. Philip T. Ruegger, President of the Oil Association of N.J. and the Lorraine Oil Company.

F.G. Sinclair, Officer of the Bank of the United States.

E. Holden Spear, *New York World* Business Manager.

W.D. and Dalton Stevens (brothers), Artists and illustrators, primarily for periodicals.

Thomas.W. Strong, extremely successful late 19th century engraver and publisher.

John L. Sullivan, Boxing champion. Reported to have trained here at Thomas Allen’s hotel on Plainfield Avenue (now St. Joseph’s High School).

C.B. Veghte, President of the New Brunswick Trust Company.

Frederick A. Whitaker, Partner in General Ceramics Co.

Rev. Edward R. E. Wilson, Bishop of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Rev. Fred Zimmerman, President of the N.J. Classis of Dutch Reformed Church.



From left to right, Joyce Kilmer, John Ciardi, and Jerome Lemelson.

BRILLIANT WOMEN

Many of these women were mentioned in the November 6, 1908 edition of *The Daily Home News* as some of the reasons that "For Brains You Cannot Beat Metuchen," and these women undoubtedly contributed to *The Metuchen Recorder's* assertion in 1910 that the "honor we enjoy of being known as 'the brainy borough' is principally due to the brilliant women who adorn our community."



Julie/Julia Hart Beers (Kempson), Hudson River School Artist. Painting primarily under the name 'Beers,' she is known for her landscapes and was one of the first American women to be recognized as a painter and an artist. Her home, "Firtree Cottage," is on Woodbridge Avenue.

Helen Christine Bennett (Mrs. B.F. Maupin, pictured above), Non-fiction writer for periodicals such as the *American Magazine*, *Pictorial Review*, *McCall's*, and *Collier's*. Published "American Women in Civic Work" in 1917, now considered an important resource on the history of the Suffrage movement.

Helen C. Carvalho, Writer for the *NY Evening World* under the pen name of "Nell Nelson."

Ruth R. Mook, Geologist. Studied at Wellesley and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Active in many civic organizations.

Mary Stranahan Hart Pattison (pictured at right), Suffragist, womens' club leader, and domestic engineer. Published scientific analyses of methods to make women's work in the home more efficient. Lived on Rose Street.



Hester Martha Hunt Poole (pictured top right), Feminist writer, associated with Clara Barton, Susan B. Anthony, Frances Willard, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Founder of the Quiet Hour Club. Lived with her husband Cyrus O. Poole on a large estate off current-day Rose Street and Rolfe Place.



Helen Norris Prickitt (pictured at right), Women's Club leader, and pioneer leader in the fight against Mosquitos in the State. Pianist, and news-editor of the *Metuchen Recorder*. Lived at 76 Clive Street.



Dorothy Richardson (pictured below right), Special writer for the *New York Sunday Herald*. Published "The Long Day" about the life of a working-class girl in 1905.



Abbie E. Underwood (see page of her illustrations below), Artist and illustrator. For more than 25 years she



was an illustrator on the staff of the *New York Sunday Sun*, providing the illustrations for a regular two-page fashion spread. Lived on Spring Street and at 43 Linden Avenue. A collection of her papers and illustrations is archived at Columbia University.

New York Press Sunday morning

Included here are images of the entire feature on the "battle" between Glen Ridge and Metuchen that appeared in the April 25, 1915 edition of the *New York Press Sunday Morning*, reproduced from the framed copy of this page on file at the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society.



Jersey Towns in Lively Contest to See Which Is More "High Brow"



This article was published about two-thirds of the way through the battle with Glen Ridge. We've chosen to reproduce all of it because of the highly entertaining style of writing.

THE RIVAL HALLS OF FAME

GLEN RIDGE.	METUCHEN.
EDWARD P. MITCHELL, editor of the <i>New York Sun</i> .	HENRY M. ALDEN, editor <i>Harper's Magazine</i> .
WILLIAM T. SAMPSON, Rear Admiral, U. S. N., (deceased).	CHARLES VOLKMAR, ceramic artist, (deceased).
JOHNSON MARTIN, general manager for S. A. Motor Exportation Company.	F. MARMADUKE POTTER, principal of Voorhees College, Vellore, India.
CLEMENS HERSCHEL, consulting hydraulic engineer.	GUSTAV LINDENTHAL, consulting engineer and bridge builder.
ROBERT STERLING YARD, editor of the <i>Century Magazine</i> .	WALTER WILLIAMS, director of the Woolworth Co.
GEORGE W. FEARONS, general attorney Western Union Telegraph Co.	S. S. CARVALHO, manager of Hearst's publications.
THOMAS L. MASON, editor of <i>Life</i> .	MARY WILKINS FREEMAN, authoress.
FREDERICK E. WILLIAMS, artist.	WILLIAM D. STEVENS, illustrator.
FRANCIS HORACE TEALL, lexicographer.	REV. J. G. MASON, D. D., clergyman.
LAWRENCE FEARY, author.	A. CLARKE HUNT, M. D., sanitation expert.
WILLIAM J. AYWARD, artist-author.	GEORGE S. SILZER, jurist.
MRS. JOHN W. STEWART, philanthropist.	"THE McCULLOUGHs," child artist and poet.
CONRAD ROSSIGNOL, artist.	C. McKNIGHT SMITH, artist.
A. M. REYNOLDS, park engineer.	WILLIAM DINWIDDIE, war correspondent, etc.
DR. GEORGE H. EARP-THOMAS, bacteriologist.	WILLIAM W. CREHORE, expert consulting engineer.
	CHARLES S. EDGAR, clay merchant.

Each Names Its Famed
Residents to Show It Has
Best Right to Be Called
the "Brainy Borough."

EDITORS, AUTHORS AND
MAGNATES IN THE LISTS

By ALLEN SANGREE.



ON a certain delightful spring morning Charles A. Prickitt, editor of the Recorder, left his home in Metuchen, N. J., for the trolley car—a distance considerably less than a paarsang, by no means so ~~great~~ as a furst; to be accurate, just a block and a half, New York measurement. Birds sang sweetly; the 10,000 White Leghorn chickens on the poultry farm hard by clucked merrily; S. S. Carvalho's windmill spun around enterprisingly, and Editor Prickitt felt at peace with all the world. Several citizens waited for the car and smiled appreciatively as the editor casually ran an appraising forefinger over the medulla oblongata of a village lad on his way to school. They knew he was saying, "Promising material for Brainy Borough," and it pleased them.

Metuchen's transport facilities consist for the most part of a single trolley car operated by a russet-cheeked, wide-awake motorman whom Editor Prickitt pointed out to me as "the most popular person in town." The motorman afterward handed back the title to Mr. Prickitt. Be that as it may, the latter on this particular occasion was horrified, astounded and flabbergasted when the other, his face the picture of tragedy, gave him a copy of the Glen Ridge Press with a scare head on the following:

Metuchen's Claims Assailed.

"A little hamlet called Metuchen, down on the line of the Pennsylvania Railroad, just this side of New Brunswick, holds the proud title of 'The Brainy Borough.' We believe that this borough christened itself thus on the day when Mary E. Wilkins Freeman first took up her abode there, and that the title has clung only as the result of the power of vociferation. Now, if Metuchen's sole claim to the proud title is the fact that one day a moving van transported the household effects of a lady novelist there, the grounds for such claim are decidedly meagre. But if a few lesser stellar luminaries of some degree of mental attainments have staked out their homestead claims in Metuchen, we will grant her the title by reason of first claim and present possession. However, there is a nobler title that might be bestowed upon a borough which shows symptoms of running to brains. This title, 'The Brainiest Borough,' we hereby bestow upon Glen Ridge, to have and to hold, unless Metuchen can present better claims."

To say that Editor Prickitt was dazed is to put it weakly; but, being a solid, hustling New York business man when not turning out copy for the Recorder, his feelings quickly shifted as this challenge confronted him: "The argument, if the Recorder signifies its intention to join issue, is to consist of the publication in each newspaper every week the name of one of its borough's mental celebrities and the wherefore of such celebrity. The loser is to be the paper which first runs dry of names."

News Spreads Like Fire.

Like wildfire news of this impertinent challenge spread not only through Metuchen, but all over that part of New Jersey 'twixt Newark and New Brunswick, oozing out to every point of the compass. Reaching the station, Prickitt was speedily gathered into a maelstrom of excited citizens brandishing copies of the Glen Ridge Press, arms raised invokingly to the one man who had the medium to hurl back the insult. A few timid or ultra-conservative persons counseled ignoring the matter on the premises that it was really too absurd; also that it might bring disagreeable publicity. Metuchen was on such a pinnacle, they pointed out, that the carpings of Glen Ridge or any other borough could not even scar it. But there was an element in the challenge that riled Mr. Prickitt and many others, namely, that the editor of the Press had formerly been a common or garden reporter on the Metuchen Recorder. He had been taken into the bosom of the community, learning its history and habits; hence he could now be regarded as little better than an ingrate; a viper, if you please.

Editor Prickitt, after several conferences with borough officials, took up the gauntlet, with the result that a good part of the State now rocks with a conflict unique even in Jersey, which has staged some queer ones. Similar to the strife in Europe, this began with furious charges and counter charges, then eventually subsided to an intrenched warfare, finally breaking out again viciously, venomously. At this writing the score stands 16 to 15 in favor of Metuchen. The enemy promises to fire a broadside next week, and if he does Field Marshal Prickitt has a huge shell of high explosive to cast back in the personage of Lewis Nixon, who lately has set up business in Metuchen.

It is well-nigh impossible for a stranger even to nibble at this conflict without taking sides. The writer tried his best to remain neutral, but is bound to confess that he felt himself slipping toward Metuchen for the one reason that Glen Ridge has nearly twice as many inhabitants. It is as though one pitted the Giants against a bush league team, in that McGraw has the whole country to pick from. On the other hand, one must give Glen Ridge credit for digging up a list of celebrities whose habitation had not previously been advertised extensively. Furthermore, its champion of the Press was handicapped in bucking against a renowned authoress who could well afford, as the track expression goes, to give away weight for age.

Editor Prickitt realized this, and his opening attack was planned in masterful fashion. Her guns all set to repel Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, the Glen Ridge forces must have been demoralized when, instead, Metuchen headed her list with that eminent editor, Henry M. Alden. When this shell exploded Metuchenites slapped one another on the back, shook hands and winked slyly. Doubtless some recalled the classic toast:

“Here’s to old New England,
Home of the sacred cod,
Where the Aldens talked with Lowells
And the Lowells talked with God.”

Not that New England has anything to do with Metuchen, which can stand on its own record, and, for that matter, Mr. Alden has made his home in the brainy borough for more than two-score years, so that he is some residenter. It was through his family that Mary Wilkins met Dr. John Freeman; through his influence and advice partly that Mrs. Wilkins achieved such fame. The veteran editor of Harper’s not only has been the friend and associate of the leaders in American literature during a long and distinguished life, but, as Editor Prickitt mentioned, was the “author of much that made Harper’s dear to the lives of thinking readers.” Metuchen sat back with a sigh of confidence. What could Glen Ridge display in contrast?

The Press Comes Back.

But the editor of the Press, if he felt any, betrayed no fear. "We, too," replied he, "will head our list of the mental celebrities of Glen Ridge with the name of a veteran editor, Edward P. Mitchell of the New York Sun." The fact that Mr. Mitchell may not be so widely known as Greeley, Dana, Bennett or Raymond is logically accounted for by the Press in that journalism "has abandoned the personal style of writing." At the same time it is maintained that the "power of the press has gained rather than lost by the change, and of the men upon whom has rested the responsibility of wielding this power for the betterment of political, social and moral conditions none has proved worthier of the trust than Mr. Mitchell, upon whom fell Mr. Dana's mantle."

It was magazine editor versus newspaper editor, and the public was evenly divided. In looking up the events of this strange conflict, the writer concluded that both generals suffered in the opening bout. How else is one to ascribe the singular strategy of Prickett in next putting forward a deceased citizen, Charles Volkmar? And, furthermore, the Glen Ridge manager replied with an equally defunct resident, Admiral William T. Sampson. For various reasons these selections did not cause any great amount of dispute, and yet the names figure in the line-up and will be inscribed with the others upon the great marble tablets now being quarried. Mr. Volkmar was a friend of Millet and other great artists, a member of all the ceramic societies, and was the first, according to Metuchen authorities, to introduce painting under glaze on tiles. "The Volkmar green

especially is known to all lovers of art, and Volkmar vases are highly prized in homes of wealth and culture all over the land, where Metuchen thus became known as their birthplace."

A Young Aspirant.

The Glen Ridge editor, as stated, came back with Admiral Sampson, claiming the same privilege "of naming just once a Glen Ridger who moved away to the Beyond, after shedding lustre upon his home place by his accomplishments while on earth." There appears to have been a brief truce at this point, during which both forces agreed to name only "brainy citizens in the flesh," whereupon Metuchen followed with F. Marmaduke Potter.

This was an exceedingly popular nomination, for, though but 26 years old, Mr. Potter is a native son, a product of the Metuchen public school—and Metuchen is proud of its educational facilities. In addition to a \$60,000 building in use, another and more expensive one is about to be erected. The town now is full of brains as an egg with meat, and with these extra advantages—ehue! But of Citizen Potter. Graduating from Rutgers and Columbia, he won a Rhodes scholarship and is now principal of Voorhees College at Vellore, India, an institution having more than

1,000 students. Besides this, "Metuchen friends have especially enjoyed his genius with the violin, on which he is an accomplished performer."

Well might Glen Ridge tremble. "I guess that'll hold 'em a while," was the general comment. "They got no one to set up against Marmaduke, being a Rhodes scholar and gone to India."

Editor Prickitt was so elated that he allowed himself to declare: "We are properly styled the brainy borough because we have more kinds of talent than Heinz has of pickles, and we will name more than fifty-seven varieties if Glen Ridge and its newspaper hold out that long."

The answer to this was a reprinted cablegram: "Arrived safely this morning at Santiago. Highest altitude 13,000 feet. Everything snow above 11,000 feet. Terribly cold. Two weeks in mountains crossing continental divide. Feat never before accomplished. Great excitement Santiago and Valparaiso."

This Shot Told.

This concise message from the southern hemisphere meant that the double honor of being the first to cross the continent of South America and the first to scale the Andes in an automobile had fallen to Johnson Martin, whose home is at No. 65 Ridgewood avenue, Glen Ridge. Somehow or other the shot told. True, Marmaduke Potter had

a Rhodes scholarship and lives in India, but to top the Andes with the Stars and Stripes—that was big league stuff, requiring brains as well as physical endurance.

Metuchen was plainly worried. R. Bruce Crowell, 82 years old, district clerk of the Board of Education, a job which he has held for forty years, called upon Prickitt. "It's serious, Charley," said he. "Who have you got in mind? We think you'd better announce Mrs. Freeman right now."

But Prickitt only chuckled. The thing was too easy. Whom did he have in reserve? Who but one of the most famous engineers in this or any other country—Gustav Lindenthal, who resides with his wife and daughter at the Lindens, a show place in Metuchen. Arriving in America from Austria in 1874, everybody must admit that Mr. Lindenthal has kept the snow off his feet. Consulting engineer of the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, builder of railroads in the West, Commissioner of Bridges for the city of New York in 1902 and 1903, when he completed the construction of the Williamsburg Bridge and made plans for the Blackwell's Island and Manhattan bridges, and consulting engineer for the tunnels and terminals of the Pennsylvania Railroad under the North and East rivers, his reputation is world wide.

Resources Seem Unlimited.

"I guess that settles it," thought Metuchen. "Lindenthal has them on ice. We won't even need to use Mary Wilkens."

But the resources of Glen Ridge appear to be unlimited. Clemens Herschel, whose fame as a hydraulic engineer, the Press says, is as high in scientific circles as that of Mr. Lindenthal, was the come-back, and his work on "Continuous Revolving Drawbridges," published in 1875, gives him standing in Mr. Lindenthal's own specialty. For original research, Glen Ridge shows that Mr. Herschel wrote another volume, "Frontinus and the Water Supply of the City of Rome." He is member of just as many societies and clubs as Mr. Lindenthal, and to all intents they look like a fifty-fifty stand-off.

It was at this stage that the Glen Ridge challenger departed from his usual custom of meeting like with like. That is, he declined issue on a captain of industry, Walter Williams, the buying genius of the Woolworth stores and a New Jersey boy, nominating against him another magazine editor, Robert Sterling Yard of the Century. The wisdom of this is questioned by some citizens, even in Glen Ridge, and every one fears that it will cause a nasty complication when the committee of judges meets to decide. To weigh and

compute the brains of a magazine editor is one thing; to estimate those of a great merchant something entirely different.

Editor Prickitt should worry; he was just starting to unlimber the heavy siege guns. Reverting to journalistic genius, his next candidate was S. S. Carvalho, whose home, Red Top, is but a stone's throw from the Prickitt plantation. "Mr. Carvalho is reputed to receive a salary equal to that of the President of the United States," announced Editor Prickitt, "and by the same sagacity which makes him so valuable to Hearst, his personal investments have made him a very wealthy man—the reward of the commercial brand of brains."

An Unusual Combination.

So here was a combination editor and captain of industry, and beyond that wed to a woman who before marrying Mr. Carvalho achieved eminence as a newspaper writer under the name of "Neil Neilson." Things looked pretty sickly for Glen Ridge.

Yes, they did—not. "When it comes to the question of brains," retorted the Press editor, "George Hadsall Fearons of Glen Ridge is the peer of any man the Recorder or any other paper in the country can name, and we are proud to be able to name a man of such parts as one who, with a beautiful home in our borough, contributes by his residence here toward our claim of the title 'The Brainiest Borough.'"

Mr. Fearons was born in Newport, Ky., in 1851; graduated from St. Francis Xavier College of Cincinnati; practiced law with his father and with John G. Carlisle. Jay Gould picked him for general attorney of the Western Union Telegraph Company; he organized the American District Telegraph Company, with a capital of \$10,000,000; organized myriad other concerns; is director in more than fifty companies, and—well, Fearons completely overbalanced S. S. Carvalho. The big moment had arrived. Editor Prickett was dramatic. He simply swung, in large type, the legend “Mary Wilkins Freeman,” and Metuchen waited breathlessly for the answer.

“The big moment had arrived.
Editor Prickett was dramatic.
He simply swung, in large type, the legend
‘Mary Wilkins Freeman,’ and Metuchen
waited breathlessly for the answer.”

Here was the reply: “Our desperate contemporary having at last offered the name of Mary Wilkins Freeman, we take pleasure in overwhelming it by the name of Mr. Thomas L. Masson. Mrs. Freeman is a distinguished author. Being a distinguished author, however, is with Mr. Masson purely an incident. For twenty years he has been managing editor of Life, and has probably made more distinguished authors in that period than any other man in America.”

Crux of the Dispute.

As this seemed to be the crux of the historic dispute, albeit more celebrities are now in the line-up, Mr. Masson was interviewed something as follows:

"Can you give some authoritative information about yourself?"

"I can, but nobody would believe it. For example, everybody in these parts appears to take me seriously."

"How do you account for that?"

"Probably because in unguarded moments they have read some of my attempts at humor."

"Then you do not consider yourself a humorist?"

"I certainly do. I have been connected with the Board of Education for nine years. That is sufficient to establish my claim."

"Mr. Masson, what are your favorite works? I see that you have three or four thousand volumes about you."

"Yes, I have gathered these together so that when my children grow up they will continue to avoid reading them. My favorite works are Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason,' the Bible, Thucydides's 'History of Greece' and Miss Smith's society column in the Newark News."

"And what are your favorite works of fiction?"

"The monthly reports of the Glen Ridge Borough Council meeting."

"Mr. Masson, we are particularly interested to know some of the things for which you are distinguished."

"I divide with General Frank D. Potter the honor of being the worst golf player in N Jersey."

Was There a Plot?

Mr. Masson declined to be drawn more nearly into the controversy, and one may readily understand why. Renowned as he is, it is no joke to be pitted against the enemy's high card. If the dispute waxes much hotter each and every candidate—still in the flesh—may be prevailed on to speak, for unquestionably the spark of town loyalty gleams vividly. As one may observe in the complete batting order, counting substitutes, each borough has distinguished personages after Tom Masson and Mary Wilkins Freeman and Metuchen has Lewis Nixon for an ace in the hole. Ship-builder, inventor, financier and politician, Mr. Nixon may have been lured to Metuchen for this sole purpose. Editor Prickitt looked "devilish sly" when the writer suggested this. At any rate, there he is, employing 150 men in an ammunition manufacturing plant, and he will be hard to beat.

Metuchen counts on eventually winning because of its wonderful organization. It is the most organized town in America. Even the public schools have self-government, their own Mayor and Council.

The two volunteer fire companies, with their automobile apparatus, each with its own clubhouse, land on a blaze so swiftly that a pyromaniac with seven-league boots could not escape. The Shade Tree Commission has put out more than 600 trees in the last two weeks. The Borough Improvement League, seven hustling churches, twelve fraternal orders, three literary societies, the Metuchen Club—all these zip along at high speed, ever with an eye to keeping Metuchen in the brain van. Name your odds.

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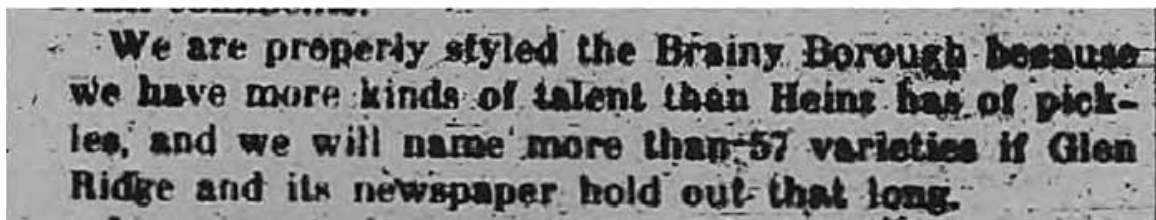
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Independent Press, May 1, 1914

Jersey Township Lively Contest to See Which Is More "High Brow"

Each Names Its Famed Residents to Show It Has Best Right to Be Called the "Brainy Borough,"

EDITORS, AUTHORS AND MAGNATES IN THE LISTS

By ALLEN SANDREE.

OF a certain selected group meeting Charles A. Hixson, editor of the *Recorder*, left his house in Princeton, N. J., for the study of the other town's residents and their names. He was accompanied by a reporter, and a clerk and a bull. For this occasion, Hixson was invited to the State Fair by the other town's residents. He is currently writing upon, among other things, the names of the residents of the other town, and the names of the residents of the other town. He is currently writing upon, among other things, the names of the residents of the other town, and the names of the residents of the other town.



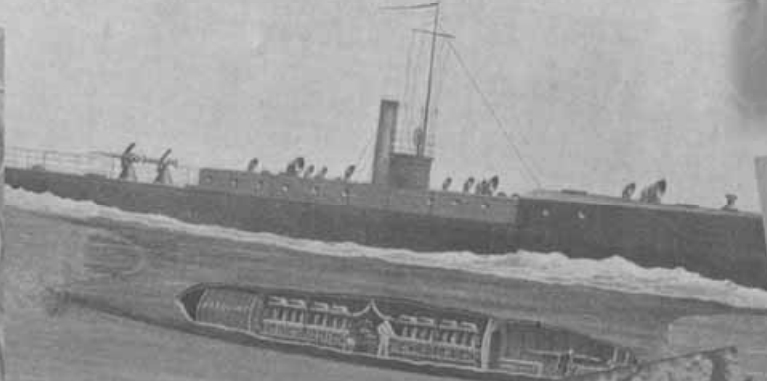
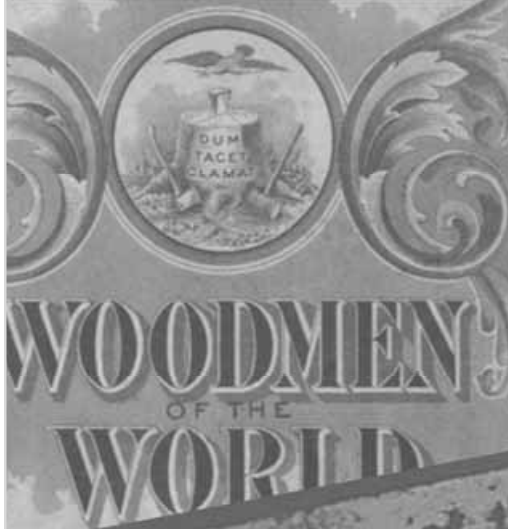
Glen Ridge and Metuchen Carving Their Rock of Fame.

THE RIVAL HALLS OF FAME	
GLEN RIDGE	METUCHEN
EDWARD F. HITCHCOCK, editor of the <i>New York Sun</i>	HENRY M. ALDEN, editor <i>Harper's Magazine</i>
WILLIAM T. HAMILTON, Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy	CHARLES VOLCKMAR, veteran artist, Lancaster, Pa.
	F. BALMAINER POTTER, principal of Princeton College, Princeton, N.J.

propose the names of a resident of the other town to be added to the list of names of the other town's residents. He is currently writing upon, among other things, the names of the residents of the other town, and the names of the residents of the other town.

Metuchen's Claims Amplified.
The town's residents are proud of their names and their achievements. They are currently writing upon, among other things, the names of the residents of the other town, and the names of the residents of the other town.

in which it is to be used without taking into account the fact that the other town's residents are also proud of their names and their achievements. They are currently writing upon, among other things, the names of the residents of the other town, and the names of the residents of the other town.



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Grant Funding has been provided by the Middlesex County Cultural & Heritage Commission Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders through a grant provided by New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of State.

...of the Williamsburg Bridge and
...the plans for the Blackwell's Island and Manhattan
...a board of six consulting engi-
...and terminals of the
...East Riv-
...Railroad.
...longest
...CO., mem-
...London
...Canadian Societ
...American Society of Civil Engineer
...Deutsche Maschine
...He is also a notable contribut
...subjects to scie