

THE TWO ORIGINAL BUILDINGS

From The Daily Union in 1886:

The fact of two buildings down there on the flats is pretty generally known. State Senator Charles Stanford had organized a company with John McQueen and built these two buildings at (what later appears to have cost \$72,000.) McQueen resigned before any machinery was in place and Senator Stanford died unexpectedly so that the project was stranded.

From an article published a few years ago in the Union-Star:

"Walter McQueen resigned his position as general superintendant of the then existing locomotive works and with Senator Charles Stanford, N. I. Schermerhorn and some others organized the McQueen locomotive works. About eight acres of land were purchased and two large buildings were erected on the site of the present General Electric works at a cost of about \$80,000. But before any machinery was put in the buildings Mr. McQueen resigned and Senator Stanford died and the project came to a standstill." The same article continues to tell of the prospect of getting the Edison works here and states that a committee was selected to see what could be done in the matter. "The most prominent of these who interested themselves were Col. Robert Furman, John A. DeRemer, William B. Schermerhorn and Judge Alonzo P. Strong." The same article states that the number of workers was afterward increased to ten but does not state the names of any of those added.

On May 26, 1886 (Wednesday) the Daily Union stated: "John A. DeRemer appointed receiver for the McQueen Locomotive Works. Action was brought on the grounds that the company have not paid in their capital stock and have not for a year carried on a lawful business." The Union also stated that \$90,000 was asked for the property, which consisted of twelve acres of land and two buildings.

MR. VAN DUSEN RECALLS EVENTS

Chief Ben Van Dusen distinctly recalls the events of the time and says that "the Edison people were in Albany, stopping at the old Delevan House. They were negotiating for an island in the river there. Col. Furman heard of it and went there as fast as he could get there. He saw these men at the Delevan House and told them that here in Schenectady were two buildings already built and ready for occupancy: well located and suitable for their use. He not only persuaded them to see these buildings but at once secured barouches from Matt DeFreest's livery stable and brought the crowd over here as quickly as practicable." "That," states Mr. Van Dusen, "was the first they knew about these buildings and Col. Furman engineered the whole visit. He got word to men here to meet them on their arrival."

\$7,500 HAD TO BE RAISED.

"The history of the negotiations of the sale of the McQueen works is known to the Union. It is well understood that the sale was made for \$45,000. The Edison Company offered to give \$37,500 for the property which was refused by the McQueen Company who fixed upon \$45,000 as their lowest figure. Citizens contributed \$7,500. The consent to the transaction of all McQueen Company stockholders was obtained by Mr. John A. DeRemer, Col. Furman and others and the result is a sale. Mr. A. P. Strong did much to further the transfer and several business men contributed handsomely." Daily Union, June 23, 1886.

Daily Union, Monday, May 31:

The negotiations for the purchase of the McQueen Locomotive works are still pending owing to the inability thus far of the citizens who are interesting themselves in the scheme to raise the difference between the sum offered by the New York concern for the works and the price demanded by the stockholders. The amount still lacking to make up the difference at 3:30 this afternoon was \$2,500. and Col. Robert Furman and Mr. A. P. Strong were endeavoring to raise this sum by subscription.

Mr. John A. DeRemer went to New York today to hold the negotiating firm to their offer if possible until all possible endeavor shall have been made here to close the bargain.

Star, Tuesday, June 1st.

(Brief Mention)

"Col. Furman raised a few hundred dollars more today toward the sum wanted for the purchase of the McQueen Locomotive Works and he says there is no doubt about the sum being raised."

It was a long, hard task to raise \$7,500 in those days. Edward F. Cohen, president of the New York State Wholesale Grocers Association worked for Jonathan Levi in the summer of 1886 when the Edison Machine Company was sold the McQueen Locomotive Works. Although a young man today in appearance and manner, Mr. Cohen is 72. He was, therefore, 30 in 1886 and could remember clearly happenings of that time.

He has resided here since 1878 and therefore was well acquainted with Schenectady men in 1886. He recalls an incident that appears to have happened June 2nd, and makes the following statement:

MR. EDWARD F. COHEN CLARIFIES HISTORY.

Mr. Cohen said "I remember as distinctly as though it happened a year ago a very warm summer afternoon in 1886. I was in my shirt sleeves and it was so warm that I went out in front of the store to get the air. We had no awnings in those days but it was on the shady side of the street. The Mohawk Bank was next door to us. It had a brown stone porch at that time and there were N. I. Schermerhorn, Charles Thompson, Sam W. Jackson, Bob Furman and another. Mr. Levi came out also in his coat sleeves. He observed the men there and said "What are you up to: robbing the bank?"

"You are just the man we want to see," said Furman, "We have all that money subscribed except the last \$500 and we must get that. DeRemer is in New York waiting for a telegram from me and we are stuck. Just think what it would mean to Schenectady to have another locomotive works in the other end of the town! (What he meant was understood by all. It was meaning that to have another establishment of equal importance to the locomotive works.)

(Chief Detective Ben Van Deusen was very close to Col. Furman at that time as he had been employed by the colonel before that date, in his boyhood. Chief Van Deusen states that this conversation went all over town and that the exact words Mr. Levi said were "If you say it is all right I'll do it".)

Mr. Cohen states further that Mr. Levi told Col. Furman that he would give \$250 of that needed \$500 if they could get the rest of it.

"Col. Furman said: Jonathan I will give the other \$250 in addition to the amount I have already subscribed. Thereupon he wrote a telegram and told the unnamed man to take it right up to Harry Dennington and have it sent at once right to DeRemer in New York.

The N. I. Schermerhorn referred to in this interview was the grandfather of N. I. Schermerhorn now president of the Citizens Trust Company. Charles Thompson was cashier of the Mohawk National Bank and Mr. Cohen distinctly remembers that it was about 4 o'clock as that was the time the bank closed in those days.

Mr. Cohen recalls also that Col. Furman stated to Mr. Levi that the Edison works would employ 200 by Oct. 1st: 400 by January 1st and 1,000 within three years and in time probably 2,000. Then followed the remark about "another Locomotive Works in the other end of town."

THE ANONYMOUS \$500 ACCOUNTED FOR.

That this was the culmination of a hard fight was shown by the following, printed on May 31st in the Evening Star: "The gentlemen engaged in circulating the subscription list with the object of raising \$7,500 to make the \$45,000 raised \$3,800 Saturday." (The Edison people were induced to offer \$37,500 for the land and buildings while the Stanford Estate placed their lowest asking price at \$45,000.)

The Star continues: "In the evening Messrs John A. DeRemer, Col. Robert Furman and A. P. Strong drove out to the residence of the Stanford family hoping that the latter might be induced to accept less than the \$45,000 for the works but they answered that as they had \$72,000 invested in the shops and land on which they were placed they did not feel like accepting anything below \$45,000."

The Star had the following on Wednesday, June 2nd:

"A. P. Strong said this afternoon that he had been informed that all but \$500 of the \$7,500 intended to go towards the purchase of the McQueen locomotive works had been subscribed."

The above is an important connecting link.

That was probably the afternoon Mr. Cohen remembers so well. This would also seem to explain the anonymous subscription of \$500 shown in the list of contributors given herewith. The two subscriptions of \$250 each and Col. Furmans statement that he would give \$250 in addition to the subscription already made would just make the suppressed subscription.

On June 3rd the Evening Star printed this: The success of the efforts of Col. Robert Furman, H. S. Barney, T. W. McCamus and others to raise by subscription \$7,500, the amount necessary to make up the balance of the \$45,000-----asked by the executors of the Stanford estate for the McQueen works property (a new manufacturing concern having offered \$37,500 for the property) is now assured."

On Wednesday, June 23rd the Daily Union carried the following:

"An Associated Press dispatch from New York City this afternoon conveys the welcome intelligence that the McQueen locomotive works have been transferred to Thomas A. Edison, the electrician. Mr. Edison is a large stockholder in the company which has probably made the purchase."

PROPERTY TRANSFERRED TO THOMAS A. EDISON

Daily Union, Friday, June 25th

Telegram

To George W. Cottrell. The transfer of the McQueen Locomotive Works property to the Edison Machine Works is consummated. The deed just delivered.

J. A. DeRemer

(George W. Cottrell was publisher of the Union.)

(The Union followed this with quotations from the Commercial Advertiser, Tribune, Sun and Morning Journal.)

The Union, Tuesday, June 30th in an interview states the location in New York City of the Edison works: 104 Goerk Street, extends north from 584 Grand Street. Charles Batchelder, general manager. 450 men employed. John Kreusi will manage Schenectady works.

Members of the Edison Machine Works are: Thomas A. Edison, H. M. Livor, Charles Batchelder, Samuel Insull, John Kruesi, J. P. Morgan of Drexel, Morgan and Co. and J. Hood Wright also of Drexel, Morgan and Co.
Also shops at Bridge Street, Brooklyn.

LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS TO FUND

On June 28th the Daily Union carried the following:

"The following is a list as far as can be obtained of those who subscribed toward the \$7,500 to overcome the difference between the price asked and that offered for the McQueen Locomotive Works, and the amount given by each. The name of a party who subscribed \$500 is omitted by request and there are also a number who subscribed \$10 each who are not included below."

\$500 SUBSCRIPTIONS

John A. DeRemer	Barney & Co	Cash
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\$200 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Col. Robert Furman	T. H. Reeves & Co	D. D. Cambell
Jonathan Levi & Co	Veeder & Van Voast	P. Veeder
Garrett S. Veeder	Millard & Crane	Horace Egleston
	W. G. Schermerhorn	

\$150 SUBSCRIPTIONS

A. P. Strong

C. L. Blakeslee

\$100 SUBSCRIPTIONS

C. N. Yates

J. C. Sauter

Henry Bradt

Judge J. Landon

Levi Case

W. McClyman

Clark Witbeck

I. N. Christler

Richard Fuller

Hon. J. G. Graham

Madison Vedder

B. L. Conde

A. Brown & Son

A. T. Vedder

Charles G. Ellis

W. T. Hanson & Co.

Edwards & Olmstead

Dr. Mynderse

Brandt, Yates & Van Dyck

E. N. Schermerhorn & Co

\$50 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Gilbert Degraff

J. W. Darrow & Son

E. W. Moore

W. E. Van Deusen

Barhydt & Burch

Samuel Myers

\$25 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Alderman Garling

Gilbert Brougham

Wood Bros.

Dr. McDonald

J. G. Green

Levi Clute

J. Sanders' Sons

Joseph Levi

Eagan Brothers

Harman Consaul

Frank J. Atwell

H. Dennington

Ira Brownell

R. T. Moir

J. J. Hart

William Stoops

Andrew Frederick

James Donaldson

Levi Young

Reese & Hartley

John Barhydt

George Buskirk

G. N. Caleb

C. E. Scott

G. W. Cottrell

A. A. Marlette

Stevenson Bros.

W. H. Helmer

J. G. Ackerman

Dimont & Son

J. H. Van Auken

S. H. Veeder

J. A. Rickard

F. B. Huber

A. M. Powers

Dr. Faust

F. C. Krueger

L. R. Reagles

Thos. McClyman

Holtzmann & Fitzsimmons

INTERVIEW WITH JAY A. RICKARD:

Mr. Rickard tells of the tranquil living of Schenectadians in the "80-ties." His home was where the Street Railway building now stands and he says he used to sit on his front porch and look down State Street where all was quiet and tranquil. He smoked his pipe in peace. In recalling the names of his neighbors he mentioned Nick Schermerhorn whom he said was a very wide awake citizen and interested in all public matters.

COL. ROBERT FURMAN WAS FAR SIGHTED

Of "Colonel Bob" as he termed Col. Robert Furman, Mr. Rickard said: "He saw further into the future than any other man who ever lived in this city. He was far and away ahead of us all in public spirit." He said his subscription was solicited by John DeRemer who called alone.

INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES HOLTZMANN, SR.

In an interview with the late Charles Holtzmann, Sr. the Union-Star of October 3, 1917 says: "Col. Furman was in the thick of everything. Mr. Holtzmann calls him the Father of Greater Schenectady. To him, more than any one else was due the fact that the Edison Company located here in 1886.

According to the newspaper files the works started operation here on Thursday, October 14th 1886.

In an interview with Mr. Edison by a representative of the Daily Union the negotiations on the part of the Edison Machine Works were conducted by George Place.

"Col. Furman was the man who promoted the G. E. here. He was a very energetic man." Edward Cohen.