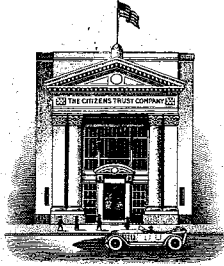


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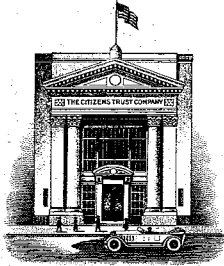
## THE CITIZENS TRUST COMPANY SCHENECTADY, N.Y.

### Early History of the Electrical Industry in Schenectady

It might be well before attempting to relate the story of the early history of the Electrical Industry in our city to give a picture of what Schenectady was before <sup>that time</sup> ~~said industry~~ came here.

This typical old Dutch city, proud of its history, had as its principal industry in ~~the early 30's~~ the Ellis Locomotive Works, known also as the Schenectady Locomotive Works, Union College was also located here, and several manufacturing plants making Underwear, Brooms, etc. Now, what was on <sup>T</sup> the site of the present General Electric Company? ~~Those of us who were born here, as well as those who lived here during that period can visualize; that there was one broad acreage running from the old Westinghouse Agricultural Works, southwesternly for nearly two miles to the old Meyers Farm, then southernly from the Erie Canal to the Delaware and Hudson Railroad, and easternly to the property of the New York Central Railroad, with a broad roadway running through said property from the end of Dock Street, now known as Erie Boulevard to~~

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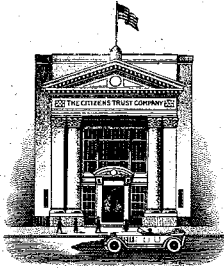
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~~the foot of Bellevue Hill.~~ This large acreage was used for the major part for the raising of broom corn located as it was in the beautiful Mohawk Valley with its wonderful fertile lands. / It ~~stood out as one of the important centers of the broom industry, until the same was moved on to the more fertil fields of Illinois and the Middle West.~~ The only buildings on <sup>the</sup> said plot were the Jones Car Works, a plant of not very great magnitude. - If I may be a bit personal at this point in reciting the story, part of this land was my grandfather's broom corn fields, and as a boy I had the pleasure of romping over the same. -

You can further visualize that what is now known as Bellevue Hill, was a continuation of the old plank road which ran through the present General Electric plot, there was the old Schermerhorn Pond and its adjacent rye flour mill, ~~which was located on the southeasternly side of said hill,~~ and across the road from it an historical old Dutch home built of hewn timbers and construction of the Seventeenth

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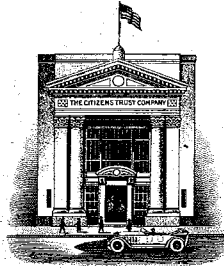
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Century Period. Back of that was the broom factory of my late ancestor but no other building existed at that time with the exception of the historical old Toll Gate on the top of Bellevue Hill, which was the main road through to the Cherry Valley turn-pike, everything being farm lands with the exception of the old fair-grounds, which were situated at the top of Bellevue Hill, facing Westinghouse Place.

I have tried to visualize and make a frame to the mental picture which I will now give regarding the early history of the electric industry now in Schenectady.

How little do we realize that the small incidents of today may shape themselves into something colossal within one decade. How little did the residents of our city back in the early 80's think that a little misunderstanding between the management of the Ellis Locomotive Works and the late Walter McQueen, Master Mechanic of this Company, would be the laying of the corner stone of the world's largest electrical industry, and subordinating Schenectady's largest industry at that time to secondary position as far as employees and volume of business is concerned.

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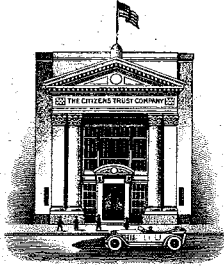
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After leaving said company, Mr. McQueen, together with the late Senator Charles Stanford, and the late N. I. Schermerhorn, etc., founded the McQueen Locomotive Works and caused to be erected the two buildings, on one of which, you are today placing the Memorial Tablet to the Great Edison. These buildings were never used as a locomotive works, as Mr. McQueen and the management of the Ellis Locomotive Works became reconciled (and he therefore returned to his former position as Master Mechanic of said company.) The result of which these two buildings were left vacant (as Mr. McQueen was the master mind in the construction of locomotives.) Messrs. Stanford and Schermerhorn in the meantime had died. The stockholders, therefore offered said property for sale and the price asked for this plant and thirteen acres of land was forty-five thousand dollars.

( There was no active Chamber of Commerce or Board of Trade at that time, so the matter was left in the hands of the citizens of Schenectady to procure

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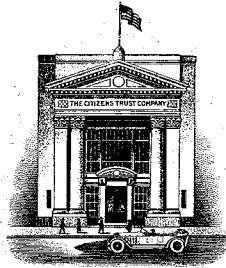
## THE CITIZENS TRUST COMPANY SCHENECTADY, N.Y.

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occupants for these two buildings so that Schenectady could increase its industries.) It was brought to the attention of some of the original stockholders, that the Edison Machine Works located in Georck Street, New York City, were very desirous of moving their factory to a city of much smaller size than New York as they believed housing and labor conditions would be much better and they would be free from all strikes, etc.

A meeting was held at the Y.M.C.A. which was attended by many of the professional and business men of that time: namely, Attorney John A. DeReemer, Judge Alonzo P. Strong, William G. Schermerhorn, President of the Schenectady Bank, Howland S. Barney, Founder of the H. S. Barney Company, Jonothan Levi, founder of J. Levi and Company, Colonel Robert Furman and a few others. After much discussion it was thought wise to send Mr. DeReemer to New York to consult with Mr. Edison and his officials. (Mr. DeReemer reported that there was much competition existing with other cities who were all anxious to procure said company, such as Buffalo, Albany, Worcester, Mass. etc.) But the Edison people were sold both on the construction

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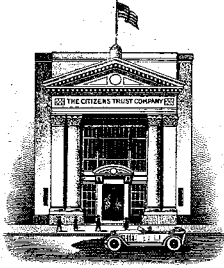
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of the buildings and the wonderful location - its close proximity to two railroads, namely, the New York Central, and the Delaware and Hudson. Mr. DeReemer received an offer of \$37,500. which he immediately wired to his associates stating that he was positive that this was their final bid; (furthermore, that the proposition must be closed at once, as they had received greater inducements from other cities.) Forty-five thousand dollars was the lowest price the stockholders of the McQueen Locomotive Company would take for their plant (realizing even at that price they were incurring a big loss). Another meeting was immediately called, and the above named men who attended the first meeting decided there was but one thing to do, and that was to guarantee the difference in price of \$7,500. which they did. They immediately wired to accept of \$37,500. for the complete plant. In a few days this amount was raised by the committee from the merchants and real estate owners of this community by popular subscription. So in July, 1886 the Edison Machine Works came to Schenectady and in

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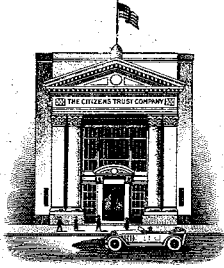
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1890 or thereabouts the Lamp Works, Tube Works, and Pulley and Shaft Works, all Edison Subsidiaries, were brought to Schenectady. About that time the Edison Electric Company was formed. Two years later the Edison Electric Company merged with the Thomson-Houston Company of Lynn, and Schenectady was made the important plant of the General Electric Company.

The development that followed was so large that the defunct Jones Car Works was purchased together with a very large acreage, including all land running to the properties of the two railroads. Then people realized what a wonderful industry had come to their city, on account of its rapid growth. It was demonstrated that Kruesi Avenue, named after one of the pioneers, Mr. John Kruesi, who came with Mr. Edison when they moved to Schenectady, must be closed if the employees were to be handled in a satisfactory manner. Therefore, a committee was appointed, consisting of W. G. Schermerhorn, W. T. Hanson, Sr., Charles F. Veeder, to raise thirty thousand dollars by popular subscription, the estimated cost for the property and the closing of

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said street. The proposition was carried through successfully. I might add that the committee was greatly helped in their work by the efficient aid given by the late Joseph P. Ord, Vice President of said company. As a result of this action the General Electric Company was given sufficient acreage in which to develop their fast growing industry and have their plant complete in every detail without any sub-division or streets. This incident also occurred in the early 90's.

I believe from that period on most of you are conversant with the wonderful development that has taken place. Today, we have with us not only the largest Electrical Industry in the world, but also one of the best managed corporations, with an outlook that is most promising - which should mean great prosperity, not only to the Stockholders of the General Electric Company, but to the Citizens of Schenectady, known the world over as the Electrical City.

Respectfully submitted,

*N. I. Schermuhorn*